

Writing Letters in Song China (960-1279): A Study of its Political, Social, and Cultural Uses



Lik Hang Tsui
Pembroke College
University of Oxford

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Oriental Studies

Trinity 2015

**Writing Letters in Song China (960-1279):
A Study of its Political, Social, and Cultural Uses**

**Lik Hang Tsui
Pembroke College
University of Oxford**

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Oriental Studies
Trinity Term 2015

ABSTRACT

Even though there has been no lack of scholarly attention to Chinese epistolary texts as a source of information, discussions of the functions and practices of letter writing in imperial China are very limited. This thesis deals with how elites in Song dynasty (960–1279) China exchanged personal and political information by writing and sending letters to each other, and how the genre of letters functioned in its various forms throughout the socially transformative and culturally active period. Through contextualizing epistolary material—such as letters in manuscript and print form, letter collections, and epistolary manuals, as well as sources in other genres that describe letter writing practices—I explore the multifaceted uses of letter writing for literati officials. The study provides a systematic view of the functions of Song letter writing in political, social, and cultural realms by investigating its complex practices. Using letters in several sub-genres by important literati figures such as Mi Fu, Li Gang, and Sun Di, it illustrates the main aspects of letter writing, including format, rhetoric, topical content, and handwriting. In view of the roles played by letters exchanged among Song scholars, this research on literati correspondence provides a window on how interpersonal relationships were conducted by written exchanges during that period. It also sheds light on how epistolary culture was transformed by the literati community during one of the key periods of Chinese civilization. These insights will contribute to the research of Chinese literati culture and related fields, such as the social history of middle period China, and will also be useful for comparing China’s epistolary culture with the world’s other letter writing traditions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My most immediate debt of gratitude is to my advisors Prof. Hilde De Weerdts and Prof. Barend ter Haar. It is my good fortune to have their remarkable support of my study. If I have become a more serious scholar over these years, it is because of their guidance.

My sincere thanks also go to my teachers in Oxford: Peter Ditmanson, Tineke D'Haeseleer, Margaret Hillenbrand, Hiroe Kaji, Dirk Meyer, Laura Newby, and Justin Winslett. Some of the themes in this thesis benefited enormously from their classes that I was fortunate enough to attend. I would also like to thank my colleagues and students at the Institute for Chinese Studies and China Centre, Oxford for making it such an enjoyable department to teach in, especially to Prof. Hanrietta Harrison for her advice on juggling research and teaching.

I have been fortunate to have the help and support of teachers, colleagues, and friends at other institutions that I have studied in. I must thank my teachers and peers at Peking University for the inspiration that they provided through their teaching and their ongoing support, especially Prof. Deng Xiaonan 鄧小南. As a wonderful role model she has made a profound impact on my intellectual growth over these years. I hope the result of my efforts will not disappoint her.

I am indebted to the Rhodes Trust and the Lee Hysan Foundation for funding my study at Oxford. My research at the Academic Sinica in Taiwan was generously funded by their Fellowship for Doctoral Candidates in the Humanities and Social Sciences and I must thank my gracious hosts there, Professors Nau Lap-yin 柳立言 and Li Hsiao-ti

李孝悌, for making my stay in Taiwan extremely rewarding. I am also very grateful to financial assistance from the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange. Thanks are also due to Pembroke College and China Centre, Oxford for grants to fund research and conference trips. During my doctoral study I was part of the project “Mapping Knowledge Transmission through Citation Patterns in Notebooks” directed by Prof. De Weerd and funded by the British Academy. Working for the project had inspired many of the questions that involved notebooks by Song authors.

My comrades at Oxford have been tremendously supportive and it was a greatly enjoyable experience to embark on this journey with them: Dongsob Ahn, Jewel Yun-ju Chen 陳韻如, Ken Cheuk 卓嘉健, Marshall Craig, Jiazhi Fengjiang 馮蔣佳之, Rens Krijgsman, Liu Qian 劉倩, Gary Luk 陸志鴻, Edward Luper, Monica Merlin, Yegor Grebnev, Charles Wong, and Samuelson Yin. Many of them have read portions of this thesis and have given thoughtful comments.

I also wish to thank the following teachers and friends for going beyond their call of duty and commenting on drafts of my chapters: Elad Alyagon, Chen Ling 陳玲, Gao Keli 高柯立, Charles Hartman, Ho Koon-wan 何冠環, Peng Lijing 彭李菁, and Philip Watson. Prof. Glen Dudbridge offered meticulous suggestions on Chapter 5 and saved me from many errors. My understanding of epistolary culture and Chinese history has been greatly enriched over the years through conversations and correspondence (although by email and not letter writing) with Chen Wen-yi 陳雯怡, Chu Ping-tzu 祝平次, Alexei Ditter, Jennifer Eichman, Bernard Gowers, Charles Hartman, Kobayashi Takamichi, Liu Ching Cheng 劉靜貞, Liu Jiang 劉江, Liu Yin 劉寅, Lu Miaw-fen 呂妙芬, Li Qiang 李強, Liu Chen 劉晨, Antje Richter, Shih Chen-tao 史甄陶,

Benjamin Ridgway, Douglas Skonicki, Chelsea Wang, Wang Fan-sen 王汎森, Wang Ruilai 王瑞來, Endymion Wilkinson, Wu Ya-ting 吳雅婷, and Wu Zheng-wei 吳政緯. Thanks are also due to Karen Barrett for her expertise in copyediting.

Parts of this thesis in its earlier manifestations have been presented at seminars, conferences, and reading groups at the University of Oxford, Columbia University, London School of Economics and Political Science, University of California, Berkeley, University of Colorado at Boulder, Henan University, Lingnan University, National Chi Nan University (Taiwan), National Tsing Hua University (Taiwan), Academia Sinica, Harvard University, University of California, Davis, Hangzhou Normal University, and SOAS. I am grateful to the organizers of these events for inviting me and to the participants for their incisive comments. I have also received feedback on how to translate my sources in the Classical Chinese weekly reading group in my department in Oxford and I would like to thank all its members.

Minh Chung, David Helliwell, Joshua Seufert and their colleagues at the Bodleian Libraries in Oxford, the staff at Peking University library, and the librarians at the Fu Sinian Library at Academia Sinica have all provided excellent services. I also wish to acknowledge the timely online services of various librarians from the United Combined Digital Reference Service (UCDRS) 全國圖書館參考諮詢聯盟 in China. Bi Yun 畢雲, May Chan, Jewel Yun-ju Chen, Cheng Yi Meng 鍾逸明, Agnes Ng, Ellen Pang, Lena Rydholm, Tong Jianping 仝建平, and Yang Yan 楊妍, Zhang Yi 張禕 have all acquired research materials from various libraries and bookstores for me or shared their own work to me. I also owe profound debts to scholars who have prepared critical editions of texts that I have cited in this thesis.

I would like to thank my examiners David Pattinson and Robert L. Chard for

reading my thesis and giving many constructive comments at my viva. I am indebted also to Anne Gerritsen and Jennifer Guest, the examiners of my transfer and confirmation examinations.

At the time of finalizing this thesis in May 2015 I am deeply saddened by the passing of Anthony Yu 余國藩, a great humanist and scholar whom I had the fortune to meet when I decided to embark on doctoral study. Despite his departure, he will always remain my role model. I dedicate this thesis to his memory.

Final thanks are due to my parents, my parents-in-law, and my wife Ting Guo 郭婷. This thesis would not have been completed without their warm support and understanding, especially the unending love of my parents. Ting has been exceptionally good at taking care of me and helping me rethink the structure of my thesis; it is a true blessing that we can share our ups and downs in (not just academic) life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>A Note on Conventions</u>	4
<u>Chapter 1: Introduction</u>	6
Opening Remarks and Research Questions	6
Epistolary Culture in Song China: Existing Scholarly Literature	11
Research Approach	15
Sources Used in this Study	22
Organization of this Thesis	27
<u>Chapter 2: Letters as Genre</u>	31
Introduction	31
Zhazi Documents: An Overview of its Bureaucratic Uses	33
Zhazi Letters: Historical Examples in Manuscript Form	37
Spillover Effects of Bureaucratic Writing Conventions and Genre Transformation in Literati Discourse	45
Conclusion	65
<u>Chapter 3: Letters as Communication about Transactions</u>	67
Introduction	67
Commissioning Epitaphs as a Tricky Business	70

Finding, Buying, and Visiting Burial Sites: Soliciting Help by Writing

Letters 88

Asking for Favors on Behalf of Others 94

Closing Remarks 97

Chapter 4: Letters as Political Communication 102

Introduction 102

Li Gang and the Grand Councilors in the Early 1130s 108

Commander and Communicator in the Field 118

Maintaining Effective Communication: A View from an Outpost 128

Conclusion 138

Appendix 1 Li Gang's Letters to Lü Yihao, 1131–33 141

Appendix 2 Li Gang's Letters to Qin Gui, 1131–33 143

Chapter 5: Letters as Aesthetic Objects and Cultural Assets 145

Introduction 145

Epistolary Communication as Exchange of Writings and Objects 149

Communicative Contexts of Mi Fu as Letter Writer 156

The Reproduction and Reception of Mi Fu's Letters in the Southern

Song 168

Closing Remarks 184

Chapter 6: Letters as Writing Models 187

Introduction 187

Encyclopedias in Song Society 188

Reorganizing Epistolary Material (1): Phraseology	203
Reorganizing Epistolary Material (2): Letter Templates	210
Reorganizing Epistolary Material (3): Sample Letters by Song Writers	221
Conclusion	233

Chapter 7: Conclusion **236**

A Review of my Findings	236
Scholarly Contributions and Limitations of this Thesis	238
Future Directions for Study	248

Bibliography **251**

I. Primary Sources	251
II. Secondary Sources	257

A NOTE ON CONVENTIONS

Translating and Quoting Chinese Sources

All translations in this thesis are my own unless otherwise stated. For extensive quotation of Chinese primary sources, I have opted to include the Chinese so that readers can draw their own conclusions on my interpretation.

Suggested substitutions of characters are given in brackets in the quoted sources. I strive to follow original characters as closely as possible especially when I am quoting from pre-modern editions.

Romanization and Spelling

Quoted secondary sources that contain romanization of Chinese will all be in *pinyin* for the sake of consistency. I adopt the American spelling of words in this thesis.

Dates

Dates of historical figures mentioned are only given in the first instance if known. The years of the Song court calendar are converted into the corresponding Western year, but months and days are not converted into the Gregorian calendar. For example, the eighth day of the fifth month of the second year of the Shaoxing reign will read as 1032/5/8.

Book Titles

Apart from titles that are very familiar to students of Chinese history, Chinese book titles are translated into English for the first time in the main text and are left transliterated in other occurrences in the main text and footnotes. I have retained the form of Chinese characters (traditional or simplified) of such titles in the footnotes.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used for commonly cited references. For full details of these titles, see Bibliography.

CSJC	叢書集成初編
LGQJ	李綱全集
NJCD	內簡尺牘
QSBJ	全宋筆記
QSW	全宋文
SJZB	宋集珍本叢刊
SKQS	四庫全書
SKTY	四庫全書提要
XNYL	建炎以來繫年要錄
XXSK	續修四庫全書

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Opening Remarks and Research Questions

On a day between 1074 and 1076, Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101), arguably the best known literary figure of Song 宋 dynasty (960–1279) China, wrote a letter to Qin Guan 秦觀 (1049–1100) who was a young poet at the time:

I drank several goblets of wine with my guests last night. Then I wrote a letter to Li Duanshu [Zhiyi] (1038-1117?) under the lamp, and also a letter to you. I then went to sleep. Today I took the two letters out to look at them; the handwriting in the letter to Duanshu is neat, but the letter to you is so sloppy.¹ I must have been quite drunk last night! I originally wanted to rewrite the letter, but I wanted you to see how I look when I am drunk over a distance of a thousand *li*, so that you can have a laugh. Send me a word when you are unoccupied. It keeps me from feeling lonely. I will say no more. 某昨夜偶與客飲酒數盃，燈下作李端叔書，又作太虛書，便睡。今日取二書覆視，端叔書猶粗整齊，而太虛書乃爾雜亂，信昨夜之醉甚也。本欲別寫，又念欲使太虛於千里之外，一見我醉態而笑也。無事時寄一字，甚慰寂寥。不宣。²

1 This letter that Su Shi wrote during the night might be the final 55 characters of Su Shi 蘇軾, “Da Qin Taixu qishou 答秦太虛七首,” 1, in *Su Shi wenji* 蘇軾文集, ed. Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 52/1534.

2 Idem. 2, 52/1535.

At the time of writing Su Shi was either on his way to his post as Prefect in Mizhou 密州 in Shandong or already serving in that post, and had not known Qin Guan for very long.³ Literati figures in Song China sent letters like these to each other regularly. Their letters served many purposes; sometimes it was just for a laugh or to keep in touch, but other times it was for more serious purposes. For example, Su Shi later wrote the prominent statesman Wang Anshi a letter in 1086 to recommend Qin Guan to government office.⁴ Even if it was only a brief letter like the one quoted above, there was a lot that the letter writer conveyed. Moreover, letters could be kept and reread, serving much more than merely a form of carrier of messages. The handwriting that the letters were in was also a talking point among letter writers. Letters such as this one by Su Shi reveal how literati officials in traditional China communicated and socialized.

The thesis is about the epistolary culture that consists of letters like the one by Su Shi—what we can learn from how these literati officials wrote letters to each other? This study deals with how elites in Song dynasty China exchanged not only generic, but also personal and political information by writing and sending letters to each other, and how the genre of letters functioned in its various forms throughout the historical period. In other words, I am writing a social, cultural, and political history of Chinese epistolary culture during the tenth to thirteenth centuries, in which I pay special attention to epistolary material that was produced and circulated in the Southern Song period (1127–1279).

Letter writing is important for understanding the history of human

3 See Julia Ching, “Ch’in Kuan,” in *Sung Biographies*, ed. Herbert Franke (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1976), 235.

4 See Ronald Egan, “The Northern Song (1020-1126),” in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, Vol. 1, eds. Kang-I Sun Chang and Stephen Owen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 428.

communication due to the rudimentary fact that it is one of the several most important communication technologies ever invented. In China, during the long historical period between the invention of writing and the spread of telegraphy in late-Qing China in the nineteenth century, and probably long afterward, letter writing was the most used medium of written communication between educated individuals.⁵ The social practices of letter-writing were never stagnant and had enormous impact on the lives and culture of the elites. Earliest material evidence of letter writing in China can be traced back to as early as 224 BCE,⁶ and the epistolary tradition has lived on even after being superseded by newer technologies in the 1990s.⁷ Notwithstanding the preponderance of new media, letter writing has remained a major force in communication even today. I focus on the Song dynasty, an era in imperial China in which almost all realms of the arts flourished and a community of literati scholars dominated the cultural and political scene. During this time, letters not only became an increasingly important and sophisticated literary genre, but also were a crucial element in the construction of a common cultural knowledge, a medium of transmission for philosophical and religious ideas, material for publications, and above all—as always—an important medium of communication for the elite. Every government official was required to be literate and able to write letters and other documents, so the writing and reading of epistolary texts was an indispensable part of

5 On telegraphy in China, see Yongming Zhou, *Historicizing Online Politics Telegraphy, the Internet, and Political Participation in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); Thomas S. Mullaney, “Semiotic Sovereignty: The 1871 Chinese Telegraph Code in Historical Perspective,” in *Science and Technology in Modern China, 1880s-1940s*, eds. Jing Tsu and Benjamin A. Elman (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 153-184; Wook Yoon, “Dashed Expectations: Limitations of the Telegraphic Service in the Late Qing,” *Modern Asian Studies* 49, no. 3 (2013): 832-57.

6 See Antje Richter, *Letter and Epistolary Culture in Early Medieval China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), 18-20.

7 Critics have only now begun to reflect on the vanishing art and practice of letter writing. For example, see Simon Garfield, *To the Letter: A Journey through a Vanishing World* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2013).

the daily lives of literati officials in Song China.⁸

Given the various functions of letter writing and the obvious high frequency of its use, learning about the epistolary practices of the time is key to understanding the social life of the elite in Song China. Furthermore, the letter writing practices of Song China also had a profound influence on other East Asian epistolary cultures.⁹ Having recognized its significance, this thesis attempts to examine epistolary culture in tenth to thirteenth century China extensively.

Even though there has been no lack of attention to these letters as a source of information, discussions of the functions and practices of letter writing—the actual production of such common documents—are very limited.¹⁰ In examining these texts, I am primarily interested in using them as historical materials that contain unique and useful information about communication. I hope to answer the following questions: What were the specific functions of epistolary communication in Song China? In what ways did the letter writing practices support these functions and how did contemporary authors discuss and assess these practices? What did such authors had to experience when they had to write a letter? How do the various forms of epistolary materials circulating in the period relate to the practice of letter writing?

8 On specific requirements see Zhang Dianyou 张典友, *Songdai shu zhi lunlue* 宋代书制论略 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2012).

9 The relatively well documented are its influences on the Tangut Xi-Xia, Japan, and Chosŏn Korea. See Zhao Yanlong 赵彦龙, *Xi Xia wenshu dang'an yanjiu* 西夏文书档案研究 (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2010), 233-42; Komatsu Shigemi 小松茂美, *Tegami no rekishi* 手紙の歴史 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976); Markus Rüttermann, “‘So That We Can Study Letter-Writing’: The Concept of Epistolary Etiquette in Premodern Japan,” *Japan Review* 18 (2006): 57-128; JaHyun Kim Haboush, *Epistolary Korea: Letters from the Communicative Space of the Chosŏn, 1392-1910* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

10 To take as an example, even though the exchange of letters has had a considerable influence on the shaping of literary thinking and writing, and that many works are still extant, the entire *Cambridge History of Chinese Literature* contains little more than one page on epistolary writings of this era. See Ronald Egan, “The Northern Song (1020-1126),” 463-64.

Although the original context of many of the extant epistolary texts has been lost, the specific background against which many letters were written can still be studied by learning about epistolary practices. I draw on historical sources from other genres to learn about these practices in this study. A detailed reading of letters combined with other types of historical sources can yield a useful contextualization of letters—which I utilize to analyze epistolary writings that have been for the most neglected, or not discussed from this perspective. Chapter 2, for example, examines entries from notebooks that reflect letter writing practices, while Chapter 4 utilizes political records, including memorial and chronological histories, to reconstruct the political functions of Li Gang’s 李綱 (1083–1140) letters. After all, epistolary communication was but one aspect of the interactions among literate individuals, which involved many forms of communication; thus, written correspondence should never be studied in isolation.

The correspondence of the Chinese literati provides excellent material for the study of knowledge shared by literati communities, especially in a transformative period such as the Song. Almost all members of society communicated by letters, from the emperor and the highest level of imperial government officials to soldiers and merchants.¹¹ Since almost all of the extant materials were produced by the educated elites of the time, my study focuses on the scholar official class whose members maintained regular interactions with one another by letter writing. During Song China we see development of communication networks as well as more sophisticated and stable systems of official transport. Government officials were

11 Even illiterate commoners had a way of communicating through letters by hiring specialists to read and write for them. On such specialists in later periods, especially the remains of these in Hong Kong, see James Hayes, “Specialists and Written Materials in the Village World,” in *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, eds. David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, Evelyn S. Rawski (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 75-111.

allowed to use the government's postal courier service for their correspondence.¹² As for the material aspect, paper and writing tools were also cheaply available to these cultural elites. These institutional and material factors made it possible for these scholar officials to correspond continually.¹³

Epistolary Culture in Song China: Existing Scholarly Literature

The manners in which writers approached major literary genres, such as poems, lyrics and essays, as well as how that affected the social impact of those genres in the Song, have received a considerable amount of scholarly attention.¹⁴ However, researchers have not yet thoroughly looked into written correspondence from that time, either as a major medium of communication in history or as an important

12 Peter J. Golas, "The Courier-Transport System of the Northern Sung," *Papers on China* 20 (1966), 1-22; Zhao Xiaoxuan 趙效宣, *Songdai yizhan zhidu* 宋代驛站制度 (Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1983); Liu Guangsheng 劉廣生 and Zhao Meizhuang 趙梅莊, *Zhongguo gudai youyi shi* 中國古代郵驛史 (Beijing: Renmin youdian chubanshe, 1999), 254-56 & 327-29; Cao Jiaqi 曹家齊, *Songdai jiaotong guanli zhidu yanjiu* 宋代交通管理制度研究 (Kaifeng: Henan daxue chubanshe, 2002).

13 Ji Ruoxin 嵇若昕, "Songdai shu'an shang de wenfang yongju 宋代書案上的文房用具," *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 29, no. 1 (2011): 49-80; Yanchiuan He, "The Materiality, Style, and Culture of Calligraphy in the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127)," Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 2013, Ch. 2.

14 The social uses and transmission of poems and lyrics are studied, for example, in the following works: Stuart H. Sargent, "Contexts of the Song Lyric in Sung Times: Communication Technology, Social Change, Morality," in *Voices of the Song Lyric in China*, ed. Pauline Yu (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 226-56; Colin S. C. Hawes, *The Social Circulation of Poetry in the Mid-Northern Song: Emotional Energy and Literati Self-Cultivation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006); Zhang Gaoping 張高評, *Yinshua chuanmei yu Songshi tese: jianlun tushu chuanbo yu shi fen Tang-Song* 印刷傳媒與宋詩特色——兼論圖書傳播與詩分唐宋 (Taipei: Liren shuju, 2008); Qian Xisheng 錢錫生, *Tang-Song ci chuanbo fangshi yanjiu* 唐宋词传播方式研究 (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2009); Peng Junhui 彭軍輝, *Shehui xinxi chuanbo shiye xia de Tangsh Songci* 社會信息傳播視野下的唐詩宋詞 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2010); Tan Xinhong 譚新紅, *Songci chuanbo fangshi yanjiu* 宋詞传播方式研究 (Wuhan: Wuhan daxue chubanshe, 2010); Wang Zhaopeng 王兆鵬, *Songdai wenxue chuanbo tanyuan* 宋代文學传播探原 (Wuhan: Wuhan daxue chubanshe, 2013).

literary genre in its own right. As Antje Richter explains, “in China, letters are still rarely perceived as a genre that needs and deserves to be treated on its own in order to realize its potential. Letters are utterly marginal, and if they are mentioned in more general literary scholarship at all... there is no reflection on the epistolary character of these texts.”¹⁵ Letters also had no significant role in the Confucian canon. It is astonishing that, although the writing and reading of epistolary communication were an indispensable part of the daily lives of cultural elites in premodern China, the number of academic studies on Chinese letters from every historical period taken together is still far fewer than the academic writings on the epistles by any of the important individual authors from the European tradition, such as the Pauline epistles or letters by Cicero.¹⁶ Given that astonishing statistic, this thesis argues for an in-depth study of Chinese epistolary culture especially in Song China, an era in which the genre matured.

Before embarking on my doctoral research, I had undertaken sufficient preliminary explorations of Chinese epistolary culture to be convinced of the need for a study of Song epistolary culture specifically. In conducting studies that use letters as historical sources,¹⁷ I realized the dearth of academic attention devoted to letter writing as an important mode of communication among elites in Song China. Both generic and case studies on Song epistolary culture are somewhat limited. In regard to the existing studies about letter writing in traditional China, scholar Zhao Shugong’s history of epistolary literature is among the first systematic attempts to examine

15 Richter, *Letter and Epistolary Culture in Early Medieval China*, 7.

16 See *Ibid.*, 5-6.

17 For instance Xu Liheng 徐力恒 [Lik Hang Tsui], “Liang-Song zhiji de Suzhou yu defang zhixude huifu: yi zhanluan hou defang jianshe wei zhongxin de kaocha 两宋之际的苏州与地方秩序的恢复——以战乱后地方建设为中心的考察,” *Henan daxue xuebao* 河南大学学报, no. 2 (2011): 81-91.

Chinese letters from a literary perspective. Since his survey covers a much broader period of time, his discussion of Song writers is very brief.¹⁸ Zhao also takes epistolary sub-genres to be relatively fixed, in contrast to the dynamic nature that I attribute to the genre here. Meanwhile, Zeng Zaozhuang, in his detailed study of Song prose, has outlined the characteristics of and common topics covered in epistolary sub-genres, laying the basis for a better understanding of the genre as a whole.¹⁹ As I finalize this thesis, the Western encyclopedic work and the first study of Chinese epistolary literature and culture in its entirety in *any* language, entitled *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, has just been published. Its wide-ranging articles show capably the multiplicity and diversity of Chinese epistolary culture, including the various characteristics of epistolary material covered in this thesis. Chapter 2 is based on my own contribution to this edited collection.²⁰

As far as I am aware, the first systematic study devoted exclusively to letters from Song China is a 2008 doctoral dissertation by Jin Chuandao.²¹ It contains many useful insights into the features of letter writing in this period, especially with reference to the more important literary figures. While his attention is devoted to collections that contain texts by key Northern Song authors, my thesis extends to letters from the period after the southward move of the Song court in the early twelfth century—a time that, according to many historians, saw profound social changes impacting communication among scholar officials. I provide a much more

18 Zhao Shugong 赵树功, *Zhongguo chidu wenxue shi* 中国尺牍文学史 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1999).

19 Zeng Zaozhuang 曾枣庄, *Song wen tonglun* 宋文通论 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2008), 779-827.

20 Lik Hang Tsui, “Bureaucratic Influence on Letters in Middle Period China: Observations from Manuscript Letters and Literati Discourse,” in *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, ed. Antje Richter (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 363-97.

21 Jin Chuandao 金传道, “Bei-Song shuxin yanjiu 北宋书信研究,” Ph. D. diss., Fudan University, 2008.

comprehensive treatment of the larger social, political and literary context of letter writing among the literati.

Most studies of letters by individual authors have until now focused on Su Shi. These works are mostly interested in either the literary value of his epistolary writings or the biographical information that his letters contain.²² My study is more concerned with the functions of communication in letters written by other individuals. Among the individuals that are studied in this thesis, like Qin Guan, Mi Fu 米黻/米芾 (1051–1107) was an acquaintance of Su Shi and part of his epistolary network. Then again, the writings of Li Gang and Sun Di, also examined herein, were heavily influenced by Su Shi's style.²³ My thesis broadens the research on letters to materials by authors in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, especially those who were influenced by his work. There are only a couple of other Song writers aside from Su Shi who have been the subject of significant prior research: One is Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072), whose letters have received increased attention in recent years since the discovery of 96 of his letters in Japan was announced in 2012,²⁴ and the other is

22 Ronald C. Egan, "Su Shih's 'Notes' as a Historical and Literary Source," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 50, no. 2 (1990): 561-88; Xu Yuefang 徐月芳, *Su Shi zouyi shudu yanjiu* 蘇軾奏議書牘研究 (Banqiao, Taipei: Tiangong shuju, 2002); Huang Qifang 黃啟方, *Dongpo de xinling shijie* 東坡的心靈世界 (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 2002), 31-58; Ronald C. Egan, "Su Shi's Informal Letters in Literature and Life," in *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 475-507.

23 For his literary talent Sun Di was viewed as Su Shi's successor. See Charles Hartman, "The Reluctant Historian: Sun Ti, Chu Hsi, and the Fall of the Northern Sung," *T'oung Pao* 89 (2003): 131-37. On Su Shi's influence on Li Gang, see Benjamin Ridgway, "From the Banquet to the Border: The Transformation of Su Shi's Song Lyrics into a Poetry of National Loss in the Restoration Era," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 34 (2012): 57-103.

24 For these 96 letters, see Dong Yingshou 東英壽 [Higashi Hidetoshi], "Xinjian jiu shi liu pian Ouyang Xiu sanyi shujian ji cun gao 新見九十六篇歐陽修散佚書簡輯存稿," *Zhonghua wenshi luncong* 中華文史論叢, no. 3 (2012): 1-28; Higashi Hidetoshi 東英壽, *Ōyō shū shinhakken shokan kyūjūroppen: ōyō shū zenshū no kenkyū* 歐陽脩新発見書簡九十六篇：歐陽脩全集の研究 (Tōkyō: Kenbunshuppan, 2013); Hong Benjian 洪本健 ed.,

Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989-1052).²⁵ Building on works that focus on such individual writers, this thesis pays more attention to contextualizing the epistolary practices of these and other important Song writers.

I have benefited from research on the epistolary culture of other periods in imperial Chinese history as well.²⁶ Also, my understanding of elite communication in Song China has been deepened by studies dealing with communications infrastructure in imperial China. These include research on the government's postal courier system and relevant regulations, transportation routes within the Song empires, and so on.²⁷ These studies provide useful background for my investigation on the actual epistolary practices of representative Song writers.

Research Approach

Although letter writing is an activity thoroughly familiar to human society, some

Xinjian Ouyang Xiu jiu shi liu pian shujian jianzhu 新見歐陽修九十六篇書簡箋注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2014). Studies of these letters include several articles in *Wuhan daxue xuebao* 武汉大学学报, no. 5 (2012); Dong Yingshou 東英壽, “Xinjian Ouyang Xiu shujian kao 新見歐陽修書簡考,” *Donghua hanxue* 東華漢學, no. 15 (2012): 275-288. It is hoped that these letters will spark more interest in topics relevant to Chinese epistolary culture in the future. I discuss Ouyang Xiu's views on letter writing in Chapter 2.

25 Endo Takatoshi, “To My Dear Elder Brother: Fan Zhongyan's Letters,” in *The Study of Song History from the Perspective of Historical Materials*, ed. Research Group of Historical Materials in Song China (Tokyo: Ando Insatsu Kogyosha, 2000), 3-24; Hu Ke 胡珂, “Di shui cang hai: Fan Zhongyan ‘Shi lu tie’ suojian Bei-Song shidafu tongxin xingwei 滴水藏海：范仲淹《师鲁帖》所见北宋士大夫通信行为,” *Zhongguo shehui lishi pinglun* 中国社会历史评论 13 (2012): 81-94; Fang Jian 方健, *Bei-Song shiren jiaoyou lu* 北宋士人交游录 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2013).

26 For example, Richter, *Letter and Epistolary Culture in Early Medieval China*; Richter ed., *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*; David Pattinson, “The Chidu in Late Ming and Early Qing China,” Ph.D. diss., Australian National University, 1998; Dániel Z. Kádár, *Historical Chinese Letter Writing* (London: Continuum, 2010).

27 Golas, “The Courier-Transport System of the Northern Sung,”; Zhao Xiaoxuan, *Songdai yizhan zhidu*; Cao Jiaqi, *Songdai jiaotong guanli zhidu yanjiu*; Zhang Jinpeng 张锦鹏, *Nan Song jiaotong shi* 南宋交通史 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008).

degree of definition is nonetheless necessary to set the parameters of this study.

I define “letters” as written documents conveying messages from one or more person(s) at a specific time and place that are explicitly addressed to one (or occasionally more) person(s) in another place. As a connector of two points, these messages are a channel of communication to an addressee who is not present, and they make explicit references to the addressee’s time and place.²⁸ Thus, “letter writing” refers to the production of documents carrying messages that are for others. It is important for my purposes that these are “messages” from person(s), and not messages from an agency or government office such as might be conveyed in bureaucratic documents—that is to say, these are messages that some individuals have written in order to communicate with other individuals.²⁹

This writing, and the resultant exchange of messages, is what I mean by “epistolary communication,” although I often use the shorthand “communication” in the following pages. One type of epistolary communication that I study in this thesis is “political communication”. My inquiry into political communication in Song China differs from that of modern political communication studies that focus on mass media. Since such media did not yet exist at the time,³⁰ my use of the term is slightly

28 This is not meant to imply that a letter always pinpoints the location of the addressee at a specific time; nonetheless, it indicates “space-time distance” between the writer and the addressee. On this kind of self-referentiality, see Patrizia Violi, “Letters,” in *Discourse and Literature: New Approaches to the Analysis of Literary Genres*, ed. Teun A. van Dijk (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1985), 152-57.

29 Official statements exchanged between government officials to communicate governmental matters, namely, *biao* 表 (memorials), are therefore excluded. They are documents exchanged by people in their official capacities, not as individuals. This is not to say, however, that there are no personal messages contained in such documents at all. For a discussion of the relationship between certain sub-genres of letters and bureaucratic documents see Chapter 2; E. D. Edwards, “A Classified Guide to the Thirteen Classes of Chinese Prose,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 12, no. 3/4 (1948): 774-76.

30 Even though scholars have identified prototypes of it, the “media landscape” (if we can speak of one) in Song China was fundamentally different from what theoreticians of

different from conventional usage.³¹ Instead, I am adopting the term “political communication” as analytical shorthand for the act of exchanging information and opinion among political elites. The primary concerns of this communication were state affairs and policies, topics which were also central to the concerns of the letters discussed in Chapter 4.

The term “epistolary material” in this thesis refers to the artifacts that these activities of letter writing and political communication produced. These artifacts include epistolary manuscripts and their reproductions; in their “afterlife” as material objects, they were not always considered as letters or read as such, but merely collected as calligraphic art. This study also looks at this early repurposing of letters in Song China, arguing that the original context of communication in which they were produced in—what one might call their “epistolarity”—is critical for making sense of calligraphic collections and reproductions of letters.³² How letters became precious objects is discussed in Chapter 5. Epistolary material also includes epistolary manuals, which are composed of letters or parts of letters. How editors reorganized letters into manuals is the subject of Chapter 6. These chapters try to historicize the full experience of producing and handling epistolary works in the Song period.

communication are mainly concerned with. For some explorations of Song prototypes in mass media, see Zhu Chuanyu 朱傳譽, *Songdai xinwen shi* 宋代新聞史 (Taipei: Zhongguo xueshu zhuzuo jiangzhu weiyuanhui, 1967); Hilde De Weerd, “Court Gazettes’ and ‘Short Reports’: Official Views and Unofficial Readings of Court News,” *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 27, no. 2 (2009): 167-200; Wang Zhaopeng 王兆鵬, “Songdai de ‘hulian wang’: cong tibi shici kan Songdai tibi chuanbo de tedian 宋代的“互联网”——从题壁诗词看宋代题壁传播的特点,” *Wenxue yichan* 文学遗产, no. 1 (2010): 56-67.

31 According to one widely adopted definition, political communication “refers to all processes of information (including facts, opinions, beliefs, etc.), transmission, exchange and search engaged in by participants in the course of institutionalised political activities.” See Denis McQuail, “Political Communication,” in Mary Hawkesworth and Maurice Kogan eds., *Encyclopedia of Government and Politics* (London: Routledge, 1992), 1: 471.

32 “Epistolarity” can be defined as the properties of letters that create meaning. For an important theoretical discussion see Janet G. Altman, *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982).

This study views the epistolary genre as a dynamic and changing entity. Although letters have seldom been studied as an independent topic in Chinese literary studies, as I have explained, secondary studies on classical Chinese literature are nonetheless useful for understanding the wide range of genres by outlining and explaining their key features.³³ While these studies help to make sense of the main differences between sub-genres, they represent a static and fixed view of genre. The same is true of some works on traditional Chinese epistolary sub-genres. Such a view is problematic because it tends to assume little or no overlap in the formal, rhetorical, and thematic features of sub-genres of letters (and even of other genres as well). This view does not reflect the reality of Chinese epistolary texts. Why? Because the genre of Chinese letters is fluid and can often be placed in multiple categories of sub-genres which span across the personal-public spectrum in their usages.³⁴ For example, a poem addressed to an acquaintance could have been part of a letter, and conceptually it could fit the broadest definition of a letter previously mentioned.³⁵ Consequently, a clear-cut arrangement of sub-genres is not possible. In fact, theorists on genre more generally have warned against the risk of taking individual genres as a “rigid trans-historical class exercising control over the texts which it generates.”³⁶ When studying a genre that is as adaptable, malleable, and engaged with social relationships

33 Many studies refer to the introductory works on literary genres by Wu Ne 吳訥 (1372-1457) and Xu Shizeng 徐師曾 (1517-80); see Wu Ne 吳訥, Xu Shizeng 徐師曾, and Chen Maoren 陳懋仁, *Wenti xushuo* 文體序說 (Taipei: Da'an chubanshe, 1998). The summaries of epistolary sub-genres in these Ming works are quite cursory, however.

34 For example, epistolary works fall into multiple genres in Liu Xie's 劉勰 (ca. 465–ca. 532) *Wenxin diaolong*. Richter, *Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 49–62.

35 For example, see the discussion in Zeb Raft, “The Space of Separation: The Early Medieval Tradition of Four-Syllable ‘Presentation and Response’ Poetry,” in *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 276-306.

36 John Frow, *Genre* (London: Routledge, 2005), 23.

as letters, we need to take an alternative approach.³⁷

In order to emphasize the dynamic literary context of Song Chinese letters, one of the more refined approaches to the epistolary genre would resonate with what Hans Robert Jauss proposes in his seminal essay, “Theory of Genres and Medieval Literature.” Jauss advises to “ascribe no other generality to literary ‘genres’... than that which manifests itself in the course of its historical appearance”, for genres “cannot be deduced or defined, but only historically determined, delimited, and described.”³⁸ In other words, a discourse about the genre under concern is only meaningful when one historicizes the genre. When scholars deal with the problem of genre, they should not only “relinquish the substantialist notion of a constant number of unchangeable essential characteristics for the individual genres,” but also discard the notion that genres are closed systems. Jauss therefore suggests we study the “reciprocal relations that make up the literary system of a given historical moment.”³⁹ Even though Jauss is concerned mainly with the vernacular literatures of medieval Europe, his approach is also instructive when applied to traditional Chinese letters, including those from Song China that are studied in this thesis. Accordingly, I attempt not to essentialize the features of epistolary subgenres, but rather to understand them in the context of epistolary practices in history.

With each chapter of this thesis explaining a different use of epistolary material in Song China, together they constitute a series of interlinked case studies on letter writing, mainly drawing from epistolary material circulating in the Southern Song.

37 See the reflection on letters as a genre in Margaretta Jolly and Liz Stanley, “Letters As / Not a Genre,” *Life Writing* 1.2 (2005): 1–18.

38 Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982), 79-80.

39 *Ibid.*, 105.

Three chapters (chapters 3, 4, and 5) focus on letters by individual literati officials, while the other chapters (chapters 2 and 6) focus on types of epistolary material.

My selection of three letter writers—Mi Fu, Li Gang, and Sun Di—for detailed attention is based on an assessment of the depth and importance of their letters socially, culturally, and politically. They were all literati officials of notable social status and none of their letters have yet received adequate academic examination despite these authors' historical significance.

Although Mi Fu was not the only writer whose letters demonstrated a close relationship to calligraphy and whose works were treasured and republished by later Song figures—famous personalities such as Su Shi, Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045–1105), and Lu You 陸游 (1125–1210) also come to mind in that connection—among these literati figures he was without any question the *most* committed to the art of calligraphy. Therefore, Mi Fu provides a unique case for my study of the calligraphic aspect of epistolary culture, as his letters were preserved and reproduced primarily in a calligraphic context.

As for Li Gang, he was a very important political figure in the first half of the twelfth century. A prominent statesman who deeply influenced Song foreign policy, his crisis management and leadership, and how his contemporaries evaluated these left a lasting mark on the politics of the time. The political communication that we see in his letters therefore makes very important material for studying the policymaking functions of letter writing. Examining such material enables us to understand how this important figure utilized an alternative channel other than formal bureaucratic documents to communicate with his superiors on official business.

Among the three letter writers studied extensively in this thesis, Sun Di was the

least well known. Nonetheless, the amount of extant letters by Sun Di ranks third among all Song letters that have identifiable authors, after towering figures like Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) and Su Shi.⁴⁰ They offer valuable insights into how literati scholar with everyday transactions in letter writing. His elegantly-written letters—many very brief—had a clear publication history and, obviously, an extensive readership in the late Song.

Arbitrary as this selection of cases studies may be, I am convinced that focused and in-depth investigation of the letters by these historical figures—who have not received any scholarly attention as letter writers—will be more instructive than a broad coverage of all available epistolary sources from this era. It allows me to contextualize such material in a narrative and present new ways of thinking about imperial letter writing and the material that its practices produced.

Since letter writing is about communication, this is a work that adds historical depth to the study of communication in China’s past. It is important to consider the variables of “who says what to whom in which channel to what effect” in epistolary communication because each of these variables is crucial to the understanding of letter writing as a medium of communication.⁴¹ Accordingly, I have devoted attention to these contextual questions. This study sees letters are seen as an interactional flow of messages that are not isolated from each other. I stress the importance of specific historical contexts in interpersonal interactions in understanding such communication. In view of the socio-cultural and political changes in Song society in the late eleventh and twelfth century in particular, as studied by historians such as Robert Hartwell,

40 Ping-tzu Chu conducted this count and it is based on the *Quan Songwen* 全宋文 [Complete Song Essays] (hereafter QSW) collection.

41 The quotation is from Harold Lasswell’s classic formula of communication. See Asa Briggs and Peter Burke, *A Social History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet* (London: Polity, 2002), 5.

James T. C. Liu, Robert Hymes, and Hilde De Weerd, ⁴² among others, I am well aware that the communication and letter writing practices dealt with here are products of a historical period that saw many transformative developments. These include the consolidation of a literati official class and literati culture, the rise of a print culture, turbulent political upheavals brought on by foreign invasions and power struggles at the imperial court. These historical developments are linked to the epistolary practices described in this thesis, which looks, for example, at how political power shaped official correspondence, and the relationship between print culture and the proliferation of commercially printed epistolary manuals. In my study I place my case studies of letter writers and epistolary materials in such historical contexts.

Sources Used in this Study

In the following subsections I introduce the multiple types of historical material that I draw my sources from.

Relevant epistolary sub-genres in the Song period include *shu* 書 (formal letters), *chidu* 尺牘 (notes), *xiaojian* 小簡 (informal notes), *zhazi* 笥子 (memoranda), and *qi* 啟 (greetings).⁴³ There is much cross-pollination and overlap

42 Robert M. Hartwell, “Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations of China, 750-1550,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 42.2 (1982): 365-442; James T. C. Liu, *China Turning Inward: Intellectual-Political Changes in the Early Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1988); Robert Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen: The Elite of Fu-Chou Chiang-Hsi, in Northern and Southern Sung* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Hilde De Weerd, *Information, Territory, and Networks The Crisis and Maintenance of Empire in Song China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, forthcoming in 2016).

43 For translations of these sub-genres I have consulted Robert M. Hartwell, “A Guide to Documentary Sources of Middle Period Chinese History: Documentary Forms Contained in the Collected Papers (wen-chi) of Twenty- One T’ang and Sung Writers,” *Bulletin of Sung-Yuan Studies* 18 (1986): 133–82. In order to differentiate between sub-genres and to

among these sub-genres, and they are by no means fixed literary categories in history (as is further elaborated in Chapter 2). How they take shape in different sub-genres often depends on situational factors, as emphasized in my analysis of epistolary material.

When looking at these sub-genres, modern scholars tend to privilege the longer *shu* texts over more informal writing. They are especially drawn to letters that are researched as philosophical treatises, such as the ones by Chan Buddhist monk Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163)⁴⁴ and Confucian philosopher Zhu Xi.⁴⁵ For purposes of furthering historians' understanding of letter writing practices, however, the extant *shu* texts contain less remarkable epistolary features than the shorter and more informal sub-genres. Therefore, aside from my investigation into the influence of bureaucratic correspondence on the *zhazi* sub-genre in Chapter 2 and political communication in *shu* letters in Chapter 4, most of my thesis focuses on dealing with shorter sub-genres known in the Song period as *chidu* and *xiaojian*. *Qi* were ceremonial communications that officials sent to superiors and many of these can be regarded as the equivalent of elegantly written thank-you notes. I put this under the

come up with more accurate English translations for them, I do not always follow Hartwell's translations of the names of the sub-genres. On *chidu* of this period, see Pattinson, "The Chidu in Late Ming and Early Qing China," Ch. 2.

44 Natasha Heller, "Between Zhongfeng Mingben and Zhao Mengfu: Chan Letters in their Manuscript Context," in *Buddhist Manuscript Cultures: Knowledge, Ritual, and Art*, eds. Stephen C. Berkwitz, Juliane Schober and Claudia Brown (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 113-14; Miriam Levering, "Dahui Zonggao (1089-1163): The Image Created by his Stories about Himself and his Teaching Style," in *Zen Masters*, eds. Dale S. Wright and Steven Heine (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 91-116; J. C. Cleary trans., *Swampland Flowers: The Letters and Lectures of Zen Master Ta Hui* (Boston: Shambhala, 2006). Miriam Levering is preparing an annotated translation of his letters into English.

45 Ichiki Tsuyuhiko, "The Value of Zhu Xi's Letters as Historical Material: A Viewpoint from Research into the History of Thought," in *The Study of Song History from the Perspective of Historical Materials*, ed. Research Group of Historical Materials in Song China (Tokyo: Ando Insatsu Kogyosha, 2000), 129-53; Chen Lai 陈来, *Zhuzi shuxin biannian kaozheng* 朱子书信编年考证, revised ed. (Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, xinshi, sanlian shudian, 2007).

rubric of letter writing and examine the role of *qi* writings in chapters 2 and 6.

The modern edition *Quan Song wen* 全宋文 [Complete Song Prose] includes more than 17,957 letters by 611 authors, and is evidently too voluminous to cover comprehensively in a study such as this one.⁴⁶ Most of these letters are taken from various collected works (*wenji* 文集) of individual Song writers available to us, usually containing both letters and writings in many other genres. I rely on one such collection of Li Gang for the analysis of his letters—for example, in Chapter 4, where I examine the 175 extant “formal letters” (*shu*) and 39 “greetings” (*qi*) from his collection and focus on those that fulfill the function of political communication.

Apart from being incorporated into a larger corpus of writings, letters were also circulated in the Song as separate epistolary collections. It was during the Northern Song period that letters were compiled and disseminated on a considerable scale. For instance, the correspondence of figures such as Fan Zhongyan, Su Shi, and Huang Tingjian were all circulated in standalone collections.⁴⁷ As one example of such publications, I have made extensive use in Chapter 3 of such an annotated collection of Sun Di’s informal letters published in the late twelfth century.⁴⁸ This represents an effort to make use of the most original editions available.

This thesis also incorporates the analysis of epistolary manuals in Song China. These include primarily encyclopedias (*leishu* 類書) that include phraseology and templates for letter writing, and also anthologies that collected complete letters as

46 This count was done by Ping-tzu Chu. It does not include *qi* texts, so the number of texts that I define as “letters” actually far exceeds this amount.

47 See Jin Chuandao, “Bei-Song shuxin yanjiu,” 47-60.

48 Sun Di 孫覲, *Li xueshi xinzhu Sun shangshu neijian chidu* 李學士新注孫尚書內簡尺牘 (hereafter NJCD), ed. Li Zuyao 李祖堯, Cai shi jiashu 蔡氏家塾 edition, in *Zhonghua zaizao shanben* 中華再造善本 (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2005).

model writings. These anthologies have been previously studied as examination manuals or collections of literary works, but not from the standpoint of letter writing.

Calligraphic collections are an extremely useful source of Song epistolary writings since they preserve not only the contents, but also their original form. Over a hundred letters from Song times can still be found in major museums in such places as Taipei, Beijing, and some institutions in the United States.⁴⁹ The original manuscripts of epistolary texts are still available to us, making it possible not only to examine their content, but also the formal features of letters in their original state. There are various publications focusing on individual calligraphic manuscripts, but they were not usually studied as letters—rather as expressions of calligraphic creativity. There are several exceptions to this, however. As far as I am aware, scholars such as Zhu Huiliang, Peter Lorge, Fu Hongzhan, and Hu Ke have made concrete attempts to examine such manuscripts from the Song period as letters.⁵⁰ Calligraphic letters by Buddhist monks have also attracted some scholarly attention.⁵¹

49 A complete list of extant epistolary manuscripts has yet to be compiled, but the number remaining from the Southern Song is estimated to be under a hundred. See, for example, Xu Bangda 徐邦達, *Gu shuhua guoyan yaolu (Jin, Sui, Tang, Wudai, Song shufa)* 古書畫過眼要錄 (晉、隋、唐、五代、宋書法) (Changsha: Hunan meishu chubanshe, 1987). For an incomplete but extensive collection of reproduced images of such manuscripts from the Song and Yuan periods, see Shanghai shudian chubanshe 上海書店出版社, *Song-Yuan chidu* 宋元尺牘 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2000).

50 Zhu Huiliang 朱惠良, “Song dai ceye zhong de chidu shufa 宋代冊頁中的尺牘書法,” in *Songdai shuhua ceye mingpin tezhan* 宋代書畫冊頁名品特展, ed. Guoli Gugong bowuyuan 國立故宮博物院 (Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 1995), 10-20; Peter Lorge, “Song Gaozong’s Letters to Yue Fei,” *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 30 (2000): 169-73; Fu Hongzhan 傅紅展, “Cong Xue Shaopeng ‘Danian tie’ kan chidu de wenti yu shufa 从薛紹彭〈大年帖〉看尺牘的文体与书法,” *Zijin cheng* 紫禁城 (2005 supplement vol.): 126-127; Hu Ke, “Di shui cang hai.”

51 Uta Lauer, *A Master of his own: The Calligraphy of the Chan Abbot Zhongfeng Mingben (1262-1323)* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2002), Ch. 3; Han Tianyong 韓天雍, *Zhong Ri Chanzong moji yanjiu: jiqi xiangguan wenhua zhi kaocha* 中日禪宗墨迹研究——及其相關文化之考察 (Beijing: Zhongguo meishu xueyuan chubanshe, 2008); Heller, “Between

Lorge focused on letters by Emperor Gaozong (1107–1187, r. 1127–63) and made the following remarks:

These fine pieces of calligraphy are not only of tremendous aesthetic value, they are also, setting aside the important issue of forgery, some of the most primary of primary sources. Historians frequently overlook these sources, perhaps because they are more associated with art history.⁵²

Moreover, recent studies have made use of extant manuscripts to look at other genres of writing in Tang-Song China—for example in gauging the textuality of poetry (by Christopher M. B. Nugent)⁵³ and in studying bureaucratic documents (by Deng Xiaonan and Zhang Yi).⁵⁴ Inspired by these and other explorations, I would like to stress the usefulness of examining manuscripts in the study of Chinese letters. Epistolary manuscripts are valuable sources not only because they are primary documents that provide useful historical information, but also due to their preserved form as “most primary of primary sources”.⁵⁵ We are able to consider their physical and visual attributes, and can be more certain about the formats of letters than by only consulting transmitted texts, which were almost always heavily edited.⁵⁶ For example,

Zhongfeng Mingben and Zhao Mengfu”; Hu Jianming 胡建明, *Songdai gaoseng moji yanjiu* 宋代高僧墨蹟研究 (Hangzhou: Xileng Yinshe chubanshe, 2011).

52 Lorge, “Song Gaozong’s Letters to Yue Fei,” 169.

53 Christopher M. B. Nugent, *Manifest in Words, Written on Paper: Producing and Circulating Poetry in Tang Dynasty China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2010). For an insightful discussion of Nugent’s approach, see David McMullen, “Boats Moored and Unmoored: Reflections on the Dunhuang Manuscripts of Gao Shi’s Verse,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 73 (2013): 83-145.

54 Deng Xiaonan 鄧小南 and Zhang Yi 張禕, “Shufa zuopin yu zhengling wenshu: Song ren chuanshi moji juli 書法作品與政令文書：宋人傳世墨蹟舉例,” *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 29.1 (2011): 81-100.

55 Of course, this is not to say that they have been untouched since they were being written. Connoisseurs often added colophons and seals to these manuscripts, and even mounted them on paper, scrolls, albums. These all altered their original physical state.

56 The epistolary texts in transmitted collections are often abridged versions of original letters. Other aspects of letter writing, such as the way envelopes were inscribed and folded, are only very rarely preserved. See Zhu Huiliang, “Songdai ceye zhong de chidu shufa,” 14;

I examine closely such features in the manuscripts of two *zhazi* letters in Chapter 2, and discuss the traces of information about epistolary communication in the well-chronicled and much-valued calligraphy by Mi Fu and its reproductions in Chapter 5. Given the body of extant epistolary manuscripts and rubbings made from engravings of such manuscripts from Song China, I take a closer look at these primary material to see what information about epistolary practices they offer.

Organization of this Thesis

The first chapter following the introduction in this thesis lays the basis for my discussion of the epistolary genre. It focuses on letters as a genre and bureaucratic influences on letter writing. The following three chapters examine epistolary communication in action, presenting case studies to illustrate the various functions of epistolary material. These functions include: making and responding to requests; communicating about political affairs; and, by virtue of their calligraphy, serving as aesthetic objects and cultural assets. The final chapter before the conclusion examines epistolary manuals, presenting and organizing epistolary materials that were produced by the letter writing practices discussed in the earlier chapters. Though a comprehensive view of all aspects of epistolary culture in Song China lies beyond the scope of this thesis, these chapters interweave a discussion of the following key aspects of letter writing in Song China: format, rhetoric, topical content, and handwriting of letters.

Chapter 2 deals with the problem of genre in letter writing, arguing for a

Wang Shizhen 王使臻 and Wang Shizhang 王使璋, "Gudai shuxin fengzhen fangshi de yanbian 古代書信封緘方法的演變," *Xungen* 尋根, no. 5 (2010): 41-49.

dynamic view of it by examining the influences of bureaucratic documents on letters. I first outline the bureaucratic uses of *zhazi* 笥子 documents, then examine how these shaped letter writing as observed in two extant manuscripts from the twelfth century. I then discuss how literati scholars accounted for these bureaucratic influences in correspondence, notebooks, and encyclopedias. Such texts show how writing conventions of epistolary subgenres were constantly changing in response to these influences, and the extent to which letter writers took these changing norms into account when writing to one another. This chapter sheds light on a very important aspect of traditional Chinese epistolary culture, namely, the impact of bureaucratic practices on the writing conventions of personal letters.

The second part of my thesis consists of case studies of letters by three writers, each case study serving the purpose for studying a unique type of letter. Chapter 3 analyzes epistolary communication in everyday life by using letters by the literati official Sun Di. Among his letters I focus on those written to ask his acquaintances for favors about life and death, as well as the ones that were responses to such requests from others. A great wealth of epistolary sources containing information about how they conversed about everyday transactions is available, preserved predominantly in collected works. By making use of letters and other sources by and about Sun Di, I aim to reconstruct the finite detail of the interactions between him and his epistolary contacts, so as to demonstrate and analyze the role of letter writing in a literati scholar's social life. In reading epistolary writings, at what levels were individuals in Song China conversing with each other in letters? How did they get their meaning across when these literati officials were responding to their peers on specific issues in social life? These questions are seldom at the core of inquiry in studies on Chinese history. This study will not only shed light on Chinese epistolary culture, but also on a

topic that continues to interest many scholars of imperial Chinese history—the actual workings of interpersonal interaction among learned elites.

When I examine political communication in letters in Chapter 4, I turn to letters that are longer and more formal. An empire, in Harold Innis' classic formulation, is “an indication of the efficiency of communication.”⁵⁷ Even though more official channels such as memorials were regularly used, scholar-officials also maintained interactions with each other by letter writing in order to communicate their opinion on policy while reacting to the challenges in political realms. Though the Song empire was radically reduced after the Jurchen invasions, long-distance communication remained indispensable for the bureaucracy to function efficiently. In this chapter I focus on Li Gang's thirty-odd formal letters written to the two Grand Councilors Lü Yihao 呂頤浩 (1071–1139) and Qin Gui 秦檜 (1090–1155) in the early 1130s. Letters played a prominent role in political communication and shaped court policies, such as strategies for suppressing local rebellions and the allocation of military resources. I show that letter writing also provided an important channel for officials from outside the imperial court to reflect on their communication with policymakers at court—in other words, their meta-communication.

Letter writing in Chinese history was associated with calligraphic ideals from very early on and no study of traditional letter writing is complete without taking this aspect of epistolary culture into account. In Chapter 5, I examine letters by the renowned calligrapher Mi Fu. His calligraphy was reproduced by admirers from the twelfth century onward in various compendia. In what contexts were these letters written and how did contemporaries regard the calligraphic value of such works? By

⁵⁷ Harold A. Innis, *Empire and Communications* (Victoria/Toronto: Press Porcépic, 1986), 7.

making use of Mi Fu's extant manuscripts and the model letters compendia based on them, I will study him as a letter writer and shed light on the socio-cultural context in which his works were canonized. I also reconstruct the reception of his works in the Southern Song in order to understand the role of calligraphy in the epistolary culture of the time.

My final chapter investigates models for letter writing in from the Song and early Yuan periods. These encyclopedias, as discussed in Chapter 6, synthesized Song epistolary culture by reorganizing three types of epistolary material for its users: phraseology for letter writing, letter templates, and complete texts of letters by Song writers. These encyclopedias took over the functions of earlier collections, such as Sima Guang's *Shuyi*, that had offered epistolary models. As commercially-printed, multi-purposed titles, the references that they provided for letter writing grew more numerous and much more comprehensive toward the end of the twelfth century and beyond.

This thesis concludes by arguing that the communicative acts of the cultural and political elites of Song China resulted in the multi-faceted use of epistolary material which I examine in my study. I highlight the significance of letter writing by these elites as a notable part of the traditional high culture of China, and their important contribution to our understanding of the culture of this historical period. Underscoring the merits of studying epistolary culture in order to better understand literati interactions, literary production, elite politics, and print culture in Song society, I also suggest some directions for further study.

CHAPTER 2

Letters as Genre

Introduction

Since most extant letters were produced by acting or former officials, bureaucratic documents exerted a considerable influence on the writing conventions of letters in Song China, especially those observed in an epistolary sub-genre called *zhazi* 笺子. We have a substantial number of extant manuscripts from that era, as well as descriptions in contemporary accounts such as notebooks and encyclopedias. By closely examining some of them, I aim to shed light on one of the universal aspects of Chinese epistolary culture, namely, the impact of bureaucratic writing practices on the conventions of writing personal correspondence. This is an important phenomenon to investigate before dealing with other epistolary practices in the following chapters. It will also be beneficial for this study to place relevant genre theories within their social-political context in Song China.¹ In a period when most of the highly literate members of the empire served the government or were aspiring to forge a career in officialdom, it is nearly impossible to draw a clear distinction between the writing practices of

1 For a useful overview of genre theory in Song China, see Ren Jingze 任竞泽, *Songdai wenti xue yanjiu lungao* 宋代文体学研究论稿 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2011). Although slightly dated, studies on other genres from traditional China still deserve attention, such as Cyril Birch ed. *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974); Kang-i Sun Chang, *The Evolution of Chinese Tz'u Poetry from Late T'ang to Northern Sung* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

bureaucratic correspondence and personal letters.² Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to unpack the specific historical changes in genre dynamics relating to letters, especially to underline the influence of bureaucratic genres, in order to set the stage for discussion on the uses of personal letters. This bureaucratic influence was a reflection of the close relationship between genre and politics in the literary world of traditional China; in fact, many genre systems emerged in relation to—and were shaped to a considerable extent by—the imperial administration and its elite members.³

In this chapter, I will first introduce the *zhazi* sub-genre in more detail and explain its bureaucratic origins. Then I will examine how actual texts in that sub-genre fulfilled the needs of epistolary communication by providing a close reading of two Southern Song manuscript letters and their contexts in the following section. After this, in order to discover how contemporaries described and reflected on changes in the writing conventions of letters, I analyze literati discourse on the transformations of epistolary sub-genres. The goal of combining these analyses is to provide perspectives that complement each other for studying the problem of genre in historical letters.

2 In a recent study Pablo Ariel Blitstein persuasively argues against a public-private dichotomy for early medieval correspondence. Indeed, even for Song letters it is more useful to adopt a bureaucratic (or “impersonal”)/personal framework of analysis. See Pablo Ariel Blitstein, “Liu Xie’s Institutional Mind: Letters, Administrative Documents, and Political Imagination in Fifth- and Sixth-Century China,” in *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 330-62.

3 Lena Rydholm, “Genre Theory in China: The Concept of Genre and the Influence of Ancient Literary Theory and Politics on the Development of Genres and Genre Theory,” in *Genrer och genreproblem: teoretiska och historiska perspektiv/Genres and their Problems: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives*, eds. Beata Agrell and Ingela Nilsson (Göteborg: Bokförlaget Daidalos, 2003), 95-104, esp. 96-99.

Zhazi Documents: An Overview of its Bureaucratic Uses

Throughout most of Song history, officials relied on the courier-transport system operated by the imperial government to carry messages to their acquaintances afar, who were often serving in officialdom as well. Many of the documents that carried such messages, however, were not bureaucratic documents, and served little or no administrative purposes. Those correspondences resembled what we today would call “personal letters” rather than bureaucratic documents. What makes *zhazi* interesting and worthy of study is that it referred to texts from both sides of this spectrum: it originally referred to a range of official documents including memorials and orders⁴—but it also became the name of a type of personal correspondence between literati officials by the twelfth century. I will refer to the former as “*zhazi* documents” and the latter as “*zhazi* letters” throughout this thesis and especially in this chapter.

How do we decide whether a text was a *zhazi* or not? I must stress that even modern ideas about the identity of genres arise from categories in traditional anthologies in China. The shaping of genre theory has always gone hand in hand with anthology making. The close relationship between the two goes back at the very least to the *Wen xuan* 文選 compiled in the sixth century, if we focus specifically on the genre of letters.⁵ Genre labels and titles were often assigned when the texts were edited and anthologized, and not when they were initially composed by writers. Therefore if one takes the genre labels and titles of Chinese letters as they can be seen in anthologies, and uses them uncritically as the sole criteria for genre classification, there would be

4 Edwards, “A Classified Guide to the Thirteen Classes of Chinese Prose,” 774, 776.

5 James R. Hightower, “The Wen Hsüan and Genre Theory,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 20 (1957): 512-33. On letters in *Wen xuan*, see David R. Knechtges, “Letters in the *Wen xuan*,” in *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 189-238.

the risk of jumping to conclusions.⁶ For this reason, the *zhazi* letters referred to here are always texts designated as such by Song authors, rather than by posthumous editors or anthologists. I will only be discussing texts as *zhazi* letters if I have proof that the writers intended to write them in that form.⁷

Building on existing research in Chinese on institutional history and Song official documents, I will explore the nature of *zhazi* by asking the following questions: how was a *zhazi* historically defined? How did its functions change and what do we know about the genre-consciousness of *zhazi* in the Song period?⁸ The compound “*zhazi*” was derived from the word *zha* 札 with the addition of an empty suffix *zi* 子. Glossed as “a bundle of wooden tablets tied together, on which characters were written,”⁹ *zha* refers to the material for writing letters and official documents on. During early medieval China, compounds containing *zha* 札 (including the alternative character 笱) often denoted written communication directed to others, such as the category *bizha* 筆札 in Liu Xie’s *magnum opus* of literary theory, *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍.¹⁰

To explore the bureaucratic uses of *zhazi*, it will be useful to explore the range of documents that were associated with *zha* and *zhazi* in Song China. During the Tang, there already appeared bureaucratic documents that were regarded as a form of

6 This point is also stressed in Richter, *Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 40.

7 Usually this is most certain when the writers themselves referred to their texts as *zha* or *zhazi* in the closing section of the text, which is true for the two *zhazi* letter manuscripts that I examine and all the other *zhazi* letters cited in this chapter. Out of literary considerations, letter writers used various names in the main text to refer to their letters, but the mention of *zha* or *zhazi* in the closing section was unique to the format of *zhazi* letters.

8 On genre-consciousness, see David Duff ed., *Modern Genre Theory* (London: Longman, 2000), xiii.

9 Paul W. Kroll, *A Student's Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 588.

10 Richter, *Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 57.

zhazi, but they were mostly called by different names. Ministers wrote these documents for reporting to the core policymaking offices in the central court.¹¹ *Chaoye leiyao* 朝野類要 [Assorted Affairs at Court and in the Country], a guide to administrative terms first printed in 1236, provides information about the names and functions of main document types in the Song dynasty.¹² In its “Documents” (Wenshu 文書) section, terms that were associated with *zha* and *zhazi* include the following:

- A. *yuzha* 御箭 (supreme imperial mandate)¹³
- B. *shengzha* 省箭 (Secretariat order)¹⁴
- C. *zouzha* 奏箭 (memorial)¹⁵
- D. *tangzha* 堂箭 (Administration Chamber order)
- E. *bai zhazi* 白箭子 (expository dispatch)
- F. *shuaizha* 帥箭 (Military Commission order)¹⁶

From the glossary’s explanations of these various types of documents, a general picture of their functions can be deduced. Types A and B were characterized as

11 For a Song perspective on this, see Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, *Guitian lu* 歸田錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 2/29.

12 For an index of this title, see Stephen Hsing-tao Yü, *An Index to the Ch’ao-yeh lei-yao: A Thirteenth-Century Glossary of Bureaucratic Terminology Compiled by Chao Sheng* (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, 1974).

13 Zhao Sheng 趙昇, *Chaoye leiyao* 朝野類要 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007), 4/83; Hartwell, “A Guide to Documentary Sources of Middle Period Chinese History,” 182.

14 Zhao Sheng, *Chaoye leiyao* 4/85. See Li Quande 李全德, “Cong tangtie dao shengzha: lue lun Tang-Song shiqi zaixiang chuli zhengwu de wenshu zhi yanbian 从堂帖到省札——略论唐宋时期宰相处理政务的文书之演变,” *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大学学报 2 (2012): 110-14; Zhang Yi 张祎, “Zhongshu, Shangshu sheng zhazi yu Songdai huangquan yunzuo 中书、尚书省札子与宋代皇权运作,” *Lishi yanjiu* 历史研究 5 (2013): 50-66.

15 Zhao Sheng, *Chaoye leiyao* 4/86. These were also called “memorials for palace meetings” (*shangdian zhazi* 上殿箭子). See Zhou Jia 周佳, “Bei-Song shangdian zhazi tanyan 北宋上殿札子探研,” *Shixue yuekan* 史学月刊 4 (2012): 34-39.

16 Zhao Sheng, *Chaoye leiyao* 4/88. The “Bureau of Military Affairs order” (*shumiyuan zhazi* 樞密院箭子) is mentioned under “Tangchu” 堂除 (Departmental appointment) in 3/68, but does not have an entry of its own.

administrative orders that were sent downwards in government, such as those drafted in the name of the emperor and councilors from top government agencies. They became imperial edicts upon signing by the Grand Councilors, and would then be announced. From the 990s onwards, the administrative orders Song Grand Councilors issued relied heavily on *zhazi* documents.¹⁷ Types C to F were statements and recommendations submitted by high officials to their superiors at court, such as those to Military Commissioners (*anfu zhizhishi* 安撫制置使) in Type F. Many of these were policy recommendations that high level officials (usually above the rank of Prefects [*zhizhou* 知州]) submitted to the throne.¹⁸

From this we see that *zha/zhazi* documents had extensive uses within the government, including in both upward and downward communication between the court and government officials. Since the label *zhazi* referred to both government documents and personal letters, the elasticity of the sub-genre label *zhazi* for referring to various kinds of government documents is a key phenomenon for understanding how the writing conventions of one influenced the other.¹⁹

17 Zhang Yi, “Zhongshu, Shangshu sheng zhazi yu Songdai huangquan yunzuo,” 50-53.

18 On their specific uses, see Hu Yuande 胡元德, *Gudai gongwen wenti liubian* 古代公文文体流变 (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2012), 121-24. On the role of *zhazi* documents in local administration, see Pingtian Maoshu 平田茂树 [Hirata Shigeki], *Songdai zhengzhi jiegou yanjiu* 宋代政治结构研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010), 334-59.

19 On the elasticity of this label also see Deng Xiaonan 邓小南, “Shuhua cailiao yu Songdai zhengzhi shi yanjiu 书画材料与宋代政治史研究,” *Meishu yanjiu* 美术研究, no. 3 (2012): 21n77.

Zhazi Letters: Historical Examples in Manuscript Form

Having explained the uses of *zhazi* documents, I will devote this section to the discussion of the content and writing conventions of two *zhazi* letters from the thirteenth century. The original manuscripts of these two texts are still available to us, making it possible not only to examine its content, but also the formal features of a *zhazi* in their original state. Given the body of extant epistolary manuscripts from Song China, especially the increasing number of *zhazi* letters since the early Southern Song, a closer look at the various kinds of information they offer will hopefully provide an addition to our understanding of historical letters.

The two manuscript examples that I examine here reveal how elements of bureaucratic documents were introduced in the *zhazi* letter sub-genre.²⁰ They were not products of political communication;²¹ instead they represented the socializing activities between officials. The first of my two examples was written by the minister Zhao Ding 趙鼎 (1085–1147). According to modern scholar Xu Bangda, it is the earliest *zhazi* letter still extant in manuscript form.²² For this and the next example, I have retained all blank spaces and line breaks from the original text, and have added punctuation and line numbers for easy reference:

20 For other Southern Song *zhazi* letter manuscripts that follow similar writing conventions, see He Chuanxing 何傳馨 ed., *Nan-Song yishu yu wenhua: shuhua juan* 南宋藝術與文化•書畫卷 (Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 2010), 352-55.

21 I will focus on political communication in letter writing in Chapter 4.

22 The image is not included here due to copyright reasons. See Figure 10.1 in Richter, *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 370.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1 鼎以罪名至重，不敢復當郡寄。尋具 | Because of my extremely serious |
| 2 奏陳，未賜 | transgressions, I did not dare to serve again |
| 3 俞允。區區之私，不免再陳悃悞。伏望 | as Prefect. Soon after I |
| 4 鈞慈，曲垂 | reported this to the court, I was not granted |
| 5 贊助。俾遂所請，實荷 | permission. It is therefore unavoidable that I |
| 6 終始之賜。鼎方在罪籍，不敢時以書至 | set forth my sincerity in this trifling personal |
| 7 行闕。併幸 | matter again. I humbly |
| 8 憐察。 | ask you to gracefully grant |
| 9 右謹具 | your endorsement. If my request is fulfilled, |
| 10 呈，伏候 | it will really be owing to |
| 11 鈞旨 | your constant favor. I am still put out of |
| 12 八月口日特進知泉州軍事趙鼎筭子 | favor, so I do not dare to send letters |
| | regularly to |
| | your residence. I hope you will grant |
| | your sympathetic understanding upon |
| | reading this. |
| | Carefully preparing the above for |
| | submission, |
| | I humbly wait for |
| | your important orders. |
| | [space] day of the eighth |
| | month, Zhao Ding [signed], |
| | Specially Advanced Military |
| | Prefect of Quanzhou. |

Xu Bangda suggested that the manuscript could have been written to the minister Zhang Jun 張浚 (1097–1164) in 1139, when Zhang was administering

Fujian.²³ In this period of Zhao Ding's life, he had already been removed from important posts at court. He asked to retire in late 1138 and was granted a sinecure, and then served as Prefect of Quanzhou in 1139 for about a year. He confronted the minister Qin Gui 秦檜 (1090–1155) and his men who had growing influence in the court,²⁴ but Zhao Ding later found himself in a very frustrating position; he was charged with employing an excessive number of guards in his entourage on his way to the Quanzhou post, and was therefore forced into retirement in 1140. This partly explains why he told the addressee that he desired to resign from his post, and why he regarded himself as having fallen “out of favor.”²⁵

The significance of this *zhazi* letter to our discussion here is that it shows how a *zhazi* letter was different from a *zhazi* document. Unlike what we would expect to see in a *zhazi* document, it was not a piece about any specific policies but was written to a colleague in a personal capacity. Composed in a very polite manner, Zhao Ding in this *zhazi* asked the recipient, possibly Zhang Jun, to accept and endorse his resignation from his post as Prefect. By writing in such a sub-genre and also in regular script, he made his message more reverential and polite. This is an understandable choice as he was making a request to the addressee in the letter.

Apart from what was explicitly said in this *zhazi*, its formal features provide its recipient (and other potential readers) cues for putting the message in perspective. Although David E. Pollard and Eva Hung remarked that “the greatest merit of letters is the liberty they enjoy, for the writer suffers no constraint of form and little of

23 Xu Bangda 徐邦达, *Gu shuhua guoyan yaolu (Jin, Sui, Tang, Wudai, Song shufa)* 古书画过眼要录 (晋、隋、唐、五代、宋书法) (Changsha: Hunan meishu chubanshe, 1987), 422-23.

24 I discuss Li Gang's encounters with Qin Gui in another context in Chapter 4.

25 Edward H. Kaplan, “Chao Ting,” in *Sung Biographies*, 78-80; Liu, *China Turning Inward*, 122-28, esp. 122-23.

convention,”²⁶ I would argue that this is a rather romantic and unrealistic view of much of traditional Chinese letter writing. Conventions do exist in many of the highly formalized epistolary sub-genres, and writers observed them in most cases. Some of features in bureaucratic documents have become an essential practice for writing a letter to an acquaintance.

An important convention includes spacing (*pingque* 平闕) in letters, where line breaks (*ping*) and blank spaces (*que*) were introduced in a document to express respect and emphasis. Spacing was observed by writers as early as the third century BCE in letters on wooden tablets.²⁷ The formal practice continued during imperial times; for example, early medieval writers such as Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303–361) also followed this practice occasionally, as can be seen in copies of his letters.²⁸ The practice of spacing was institutionalized in state regulations on bureaucratic documents in Tang ritual codes,²⁹ and later in history, Song literati officials also observed this in the documents they wrote to fulfill their official duties. In instances where letters were written to colleagues in government, especially those of a superior rank, spacing was very common. Apart from *zhazi* letters, spacing is also seen in letters of other sub-genres, as it is in some epistolary manuscripts from the 1160s discovered on the reverse side of the pages of an edition of Wang Anshi’s collected writings.³⁰ The fact that those letters were used as recycled paper along with other

26 Pollard, David E. and Eva Hung, “Editor’s Page,” *Renditions* 41-42 (1994): vi.

27 Peng Lizhi 彭砺志, “Chidu shufa suojian pingque xingzhi yanjiu 尺牍书法所见平闕形制研究,” in *Quanguo di liu jie shu xue taolunhui lunwen ji* 全国第六届书学讨论会论文集, ed. Zhongguo shu xie xueshu weiyuanhui 中国书协学术委员会 (Zhengzhou: Henan meishu chubanshe, 2004), 95-99.

28 Richter, *Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 114-16.

29 Peng, “Chidu shufa suojian pingque xingzhi yanjiu,” 98-99.

30 Shanghai shi wenwu guanli weiyuanhui 上海市文物管理委员会 and Shanghai bowuguan 上海博物館, ed. *Songren yijian* 宋人佚簡 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990). In this collection, texts that can be identified as *zhazi* letters include three letters by Li

bureaucratic documents in producing an edition of Wang’s collected writings is particularly suggestive; they were personal letters exchanged by literati officials, but they shared the bureaucratic features of some government documents. In Zhao Ding’s piece specifically, the verbs that are referring to the letter recipient’s side were followed followed by line breaks—such as “grant permission” (*yuyun* 俞允), “endorse” (*zanzhu* 贊助), and “understand sympathetically” (*liancha* 憐察).³¹ In the closing section of the letter, there are also additional blank spaces before the formulaic expression in the closing of a *zhazi* letter (“carefully preparing the above for submission”) and the writer’s self-designation (see fig. 1). These measures originally adopted in bureaucratic documents (such as memorials) represented a way to express reverence through the letter’s format, and often resulted in large blank spaces on the letter paper.

The second text I am examining in order to explain the writing conventions of *zhazi* letters is by the major Southern Song writer Lu You.³² This text demonstrates how a conventionalized “personal touch” was instilled into a *zhazi* letter even though it was not addressed to someone very close to the writer:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1 游近者奏 | My recent letter ³³ |
| 2 記，方以草率為愧。專使奉 | was shamefully unpolished. It was by special
envoy that |

Jian 李簡 (j. 1), two letters by Zhang Jie 張傑 (j. 2), four letters by Guan Zhen 管鎮 (j. 4), and one letter by Cai Changmin 蔡長民 (j. 4).

31 See Peng, “Chidu shufa suojian pingque xingzhi yanjiu,” 100-104; Zhu Huiliang, “Songdai ceye zhong de chidu shufa” 13-14.

32 The images of this letter are not included here due to copyright reasons. See Figure 10.2 & 10.3 in Richter, *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 373-374.

33 *Zouji* 奏記 refers especially to official letters written to a superior and therefore constitutes a polite expression here.

- 3 馳翰，所以 you sent me the letter, showing how
- 4 動問甚寵，感激未易名也。 you ask after me with affection. The way I
am touched is not easy to express.
- 5 暫還 From your return
- 6 展省，此固 for grave visitation I indeed see
- 7 龍圖丈襟懷本趣。 your Excellency the Dragon Diagram Hall
Academician's sentiment and intentions.
- 8 道中春寒，不至 I hope the spring coldness during your
journey did not make you catch a chill.
- 9 衝冒否？詔迫度不遠，旬挾或已被 I assume it will not be long before your
official promotion; in ten days there may
already be
- 10 新渥矣。 new imperial favors.
- 11 下諭舊貢院已為中丞蔣丈所先。 I know that the old examination office has
already been taken by Elder Jiang the Vice
Censor-in-chief,³⁴
- 12 新定驛舍見空閑，或可備 but there are vacancies in Xinding lodging
station where
- 13 憩泊。已令掃灑矣。它 you may stay.³⁵ I have already ordered that
it be tidied. As
- 14 委悉俟 for all your other instructions, let me wait for

34 This refers to Lu You's acquaintance Jiang Jizhou 蔣繼周 (1134-1196), who lived in Yanzhou in the final decade of his life. See Lu You's epitaph for him in Lu You 陸游, "Zhongcheng Jiang gong muzhiming 中丞蔣公墓志銘," in *Lu You ji* 陸游集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), 35/2335.

35 Xinding was the old name of this administrative region. Official travelers of the time usually stayed in government lodging stations. See Cong Ellen Zhang, *Transformative Journeys: Travel and Culture in Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), 101-10.

		them
15	面請。游蒙	when I see you in person. The fragrant ink
16	賜香墨，皆珍絕，足為蓬戶之光。下情	that you gave me is extremely precious and
		will lighten up my ramshackle household.
17	感荷之至。它俟續上狀次。	I am deeply touched. As for other matters,
		let me continue in my next dispatch.
18	右謹具	Carefully preparing the above for
19	呈	submission:
20	朝請大夫、權知嚴州軍州事	<i>Zhazi</i> by Lu You, Grand Master
	陸游笥子。	for Court Audiences, Provisional
		Military Commander of
		Yanzhou. ³⁶

This *zhazi* letter was written to greet a colleague who traveled to Yanzhou, the place where Lu You was serving as Prefect from 1186 to 1188 while he was in his 60s. One scholar suggests that Lu You wrote it in early 1187.³⁷ The identity of the recipient of this letter was referred to by Lu You as one of the Academicians in the Dragon Diagram Hall at court.³⁸

36 My transcription is mostly in line with Xu Bangda, *Gu shuhua guoyan yaolu*, 491, but not entirely.

37 On Lu You's posting, see D. R. Jonker, "Lu Yu," in *Sung Biographies*, 697. On the dating of this letter, see Yu Beishan 于北山, *Lu You nianpu* 陸游年譜 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985), 310 & 312n1.

38 A modern scholar speculates that this was Han Yuanji 韓元吉 (1118-1187). See Liu Kan 刘侃, "Lu You 'shang yi' de shufa yishu ji qi chuanshi zuopin 陆游“尚意”的书法艺术及其传世作品," *Shaoxing wenli xueyuan xuebao* 绍兴文理学院学报, no. 2 (2009): 35. This is unlikely because Lu You had not met Han in person during the five or six years before Han's death, as mentioned in Lu's eulogy for Han, "Ji Han Wujiu shangshu wen 祭韓無咎尚書文, in *Lu You ji*, 41/2393. Another possible recipient of this letter is Qiu Chong 丘壑 (*jinsi* 1163), who was an Auxiliary Academician of the Hall at the time. On his correspondence with Lu You, see Yu, *Lu You nianpu*, 311 & 316n10.

Lu You's strategy of personalization in the *zhazi* letter requires a closer look. Even though it was written to an official of a higher rank, there is a strong personal tone and an eagerness to instill Lu You's own emotions. Unlike Zhao Ding's letter, this was written in the more casual running script. This was not the first of his correspondence with the Academician. Apart from expressing thanks for receiving a letter from the Academician, Lu You also expressed gratitude for receiving fragrant ink from him, indicating the existence of an exchange of both correspondence and gifts between the two. Lu You showed his concern for the Academician by inquiring about his journey, and he also explained to the Academician that he could stay in a lodging station during his time in Yanzhou and that it had already been arranged. Apart from this, he was also expecting the Academician's promotion in the imperial government.

This way of writing personalized letters was not at all uncommon. Even emperors, such as Huizong (1082–1135; r. 1100–1126) and Gaozong of the Song dynasty wrote letters instilled with their personal opinions and emotions. Examples include the dozens of letters Huizong wrote to the Mount Mao Daoist patriarch Liu Hunkang 劉混康 (1035–1108). The emperor expressly ordered Liu not to engrave the letters on stone. Patricia Ebrey suggested that “Huizong would not have been so open in his letters to Liu if he had expected them to be carved on stone for all to read.”³⁹ She also suggests that those are letters that are “much like the letters educated men of his era wrote to each other—Huizong is not denying his rank as emperor, but he tries not to let it interfere with his relationship with a man he holds in high esteem.”⁴⁰ It is clear that

39 Patricia B. Ebrey, “Taoism and Art at the Court of Song Huizong,” in *Taoism and the Arts of China*, eds. Stephen Little, with Shawn Eichman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 99.

40 Patricia B. Ebrey, *Emperor Huizong* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 148.

there was a certain degree of personalization in Huizong's letters to Liu Hunkang, even though they were of disparate status. Needless to say, this personalization of letters also existed in correspondence exchanged between literati officials who had formal working relationships in officialdom, and who had many opportunities to interact personally via written communication.

Let us go back to make some more remarks about Lu You's *zhazi* letter. Although Lu You personalized the content of his letter, he chose specifically to write to the Academician in the *zhazi* sub-genre and not in any other sub-genre. This gives us clues about their relationship, because a *zhazi* letter would have required him to include his official titles in the closing of the text. This writing convention would of course be unnecessary and will even be too ceremonial if the letter was written to a close friend, especially when we consider that there were other epistolary sub-genres from which to choose. His alternative options also included the short informal notes that other Song writers have written, which are sometimes rather difficult to place in any kind of epistolary sub-genre. Since letter writing was heavily influenced by bureaucratic documents, the choice of sub-genre and the writing conventions that followed were closely related to how literati relationships were maintained, as my discussion in the next section will show.

Spillover Effects of Bureaucratic Writing Conventions and Genre Transformation in Literati Discourse

To place the features of *zhazi* letters in the larger context of genre developments throughout the Song period, it will be necessary to go beyond actual *zhazi* letters and investigate what writers have written about the transformation of epistolary sub-genres.

In this section, I will discuss the admonitions on letter writing in a letter by Ouyang Xiu, a towering figure in Northern Song literati culture. The letter reflects his reaction to the adoption of bureaucratic writing conventions in personal letters. I will also analyze admonitions by the Daoxue teacher Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙 (1137–1181) on how his students ought to correspond. Then I will examine the discourse about this tendency and other transformations in epistolary sub-genres in two types of texts that contain material from the literati tradition in Song China: notebooks (*biji* 筆記) and encyclopedias (*leishu* 類書).

As early as in the mid-Northern Song, Ouyang Xiu already wrote about how bureaucratic gestures and writing conventions were “spilling over” into the personal correspondence between literati officials.⁴¹ As a response to how his acquaintance Magnate Chen had written to him, Ouyang Xiu wrote a letter to criticize Chen for writing him in an improper way and to express that he was disappointed by Chen’s adoption of etiquette from bureaucratic documents for a non-official letter. To Ouyang Xiu, this was totally unacceptable among good friends. He stressed the value of writing sincere letters:

Originally I was incomparably foolish and could not hope for friendly interaction with you. But in my regular life, I have had the luck of receiving a letter of comfort from you, to whom I bow and live with like brothers. I expected it to bear your heartfelt feelings aiming for congeniality; unfortunately, on the sheet of paper you began with the name [of the addressee] and followed it with the [text of the] letter,

41 On Ouyang Xiu’s letter writing practices, see Chen Xianglin 陈湘琳, *Ouyang Xiu de wenxue yu qinggan shijie* 欧阳修的文学与情感世界 (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2012), 16-89; Li Qiang 李强, “Goutong yu rentong: Ouyang Xiu shujian zhong de wenren shijie 沟通与认同：欧阳修书简中的文人世界,” *Shi lin* 史林, no. 1 (2013): 59-68.

as if you were writing a *zhuang* or a *die* to submit to a state agency. Taking a step back, I reflect on it and it must either be due to modesty or estrangement. These are for vulgar relationships and those who flatter each other. It was not something you ought to have sent to me. 修本愚無似，固不足以希執友之遊。然而羣居平日，幸得肩從齒序，跪拜起居，竊兄弟行，寓書存勞，謂宜有所款曲以親之之意，奈何一幅之紙，前名後書，且狀且牒，如上公府。退以尋度，非謙即疏。此乃世之浮道之交，外陽相尊之為，非宜足下之賜修也。⁴²

He assigned this spillover effect of bureaucratic writing conventions to earlier times, particularly the Tang period. To substantiate his argument, he recounted the history of the various forms of written correspondence:

The only writing tools in antiquity were lead knives, bamboo, and wood. Carving wooden tablets into visiting cards was for communicating names;⁴³ putting writing on bamboo and wood was for expressing intentions and for polite greetings. When clerks in government offices dealt with official matters, the correspondence sent from higher to lower ranks were called *fu* and *jiao*. Those for delivering messages and providing opinion from lower to higher ranks were called *zhuang*, and those for interactions between the equal ranked were called *yi* and *die*. If matters were not official, when a senior notified his intention personally to his inferiors so as to warn or laud them this was called a *jiao*. When lower clerks communicated personal affairs to their superiors to greet and congratulate, it was called *jianji* and *shuqi*. Therefore, the etiquette for *zhuang* and *die* should not be applied to non-official matters. What is practiced nowadays originated with ministers from the Tang who were of high rank and powerful at that time. Those who flocked to their gates

42 Ouyang Xiu, “Yu Chen yuanwai shu” 與陳員外書, in *Ouyang Xiu quanji* 69/1007-8.

43 For excavated examples of these, see Maxim Korolkov, “‘Greeting Tablets’ in Early China: Some Traits of the Communicative Etiquette of Officialdom in Light of Newly Excavated Inscriptions,” *T’oung Pao* 98 (2012): 295-348.

considered the old etiquette to be inadequate and took it upon themselves to add to it. They began to include greetings on visiting cards—this made a *zhuang*. By the Five Dynasties, they then used the etiquette of *zhuang* and *die* to greet as if it was about official business, but only applying this to superior officials and older clerks. These falsities and errors go very far back, but the world does not trace the ancient ways and consequently thinks they are natural. 古之書具，惟有鉛刀、竹木。而削札為刺，止於達名姓，寓書於簡，止於舒心意、為問好。惟官府吏曹，凡公之事，上而下者則曰符、曰檄；問訊列對，下而上者則曰狀；位等相以往來，曰移、曰牒。非公之事，長吏或自以意曉其下以戒以飭者，則曰教；下吏以私自達於其屬長而有所問候請謝者，則曰牋記、書啟。故非有狀牒之儀，施於非公之事。相參加今所行者，其原蓋出唐世大臣，或貴且尊，或有權於時，搢紳湊其門以傳，嚮者謂舊禮不足為重，務稍增之，然始於刺謁，有參候起居，因為之狀。及五代，始復以候問請謝加狀牒之儀，如公之事，然止施於官之尊貴及吏之長者。其偽繆所從來既遠，世不根古，以為當然。⁴⁴

Ouyang Xiu then evaluated his interactions with Magnate Chen again, propounding how inappropriate it was for Chen to send him a letter that resembled an official dispatch, rather than a personal note:

There is no one who does not know this nowadays. The reason why it has not changed is because it has already become a custom deeply rooted in people's habits, so there is no way of changing it. When gentlemen establish interactions and share common pursuits with their teachers and friends, they are still expected to exchange sincere handwritten notes. This is still close to the practices of antiquity. Alas! Greeting and bidding farewell do not belong to official business; adopting the etiquette of *zhuang* and *die* for superior officials was already inappropriate according

44 Ouyang Xiu, "Yu Chen yuanwai shu," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, 69/1008.

to ancient practice, not to mention using it for close friends and social equals who bow to and live with each other like brothers! Is Your Excellency going to treat me with the moral behavior of a friend and yet begrudge the trouble of a handwritten note? Do you intend to treat me with constraining customs and deep-rooted habits, and try to repay my sincerity by adopting conventional etiquette? If not, then you are going with vulgar ways of superficial flattery. So here I lay out my sincere thoughts to you. 居今之世，無不知此，而莫以易者，蓋常俗所為積習已牢，而不得以更之也。士或同師友、締交遊、以道誼相期者，尚有手書勤勤之意，猶為近古。噫！候問請謝，非公之事，有狀牒之儀以施於尊貴長吏，猶曰非古之宜用，况又用之於肩從齒序、跪拜起居如兄弟者乎！豈足下不以道義交遊期我，而惜手書之勤邪？將待以牽俗積習者，而姑用世禮以遇我之勤邪？不然，是為浮道以陽相尊也。是以不勝拳拳之心，謹布左右。

From the perspective of scholar-officials who were familiar with the literary features of epistolary sub-genres, which sub-genre to use for different occasions and to what formal features to adhere to reflected precisely how one preferred to interact and one's views on relationships. Without doubt, those who were adopting the "vulgar ways" in their correspondence were equipped with the classical literary training to write in different sub-genres according to their purposes. This explains why choices pertaining to sub-genres and writing conventions mattered in interactions. Chen's choice of epistolary sub-genre certainly resulted in embarrassment in his interaction with Ouyang Xiu. Although Ouyang Xiu's expressed his criticisms elegantly, he contended that Chen was overly polite and formal in his writing, and hence Chen's letter was a disappointment.⁴⁵ He argued that the conventions for writing about

45 On some more examples of criticizing friends in letters from an earlier period, see Anna M. Shields, *One Who Knows Me: Friendship and Literary Culture in Mid-Tang China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2015), 239-64.

“official” and “non-official” matters should be clearly distinguished. The writing conventions for official correspondence were too formal and bureaucratic, and not be used when writing to peers who share honest friendship. Basically, the involved in this kind of correspondence was only meant for the purpose of shallow flattery. In practice, however, the bureaucratic logic was obviously seeping into writing conventions of literati officials.

This kind of bureaucratic influence on letter writing continued throughout the subsequent periods in the Song dynasty, and the *zhazi* as a sub-genre of letter writing emerged within this context. The writing conventions and etiquette that elevated the addressee seemed to have an impact even outside officialdom. In 1169/10, Lü Zuqian, as the Instructor of the prefectural school of Yanzhou, announced seven rules as part of his school regulations (*xuegui* 學規) to his students and requested them to spread the news among their peers. Most of the rules on the list concerned letter writing and they including the following:⁴⁶

- **When registered students are to correspond, they should only use one sheet [of paper]. Empty formalities should not be adopted.**

Examples include “your learning ranks between heaven and man,” “you are soon to receive imperial favors,”⁴⁷ “your respectful, heavenly appearance,” “I prostrate a hundred times,”⁴⁸ and exaggerating one’s official titles.

在籍人將來通書，止用一幅，不許用虛禮。[謂如“學際天人”及“即膺召用”、“台候神相”、“百拜”、過呼官職之類。]

- **When corresponding, the format of *zha* is not allowed. Do not alter the**

46 Lü Zuqian’s original annotations of his regulations are in square brackets.

47 One should be reminded of similar remarks in Lu You’s letter previously quoted: “in ten days there may already be new imperial favors.”

48 On the use of this phrase, also see Zhu Yi 朱翌, *Yijueliao zaji* 猗覺寮雜記, in QSBJ, vol. 3:10, *xia*/71.

[addressee's] name [i.e. use original names].

通書不許用筭目，不許改名。

- **Only correspond to discuss issues in doubt. Write only about concrete matters when talking about yourself.**

(This refers to when you talk about your movements and whereabouts.)

通書止許商榷所疑，自叙實事。[謂自叙出人行止之類。]

- **When corresponding, do not exchange money, silk, playthings, and objects as tokens.**

(“Playthings” refer to illustrations, paintings and recreational objects for the desk; “objects” refer to inkstones, fans, and similar miscellaneous objects.)

通書不許以幣帛、玩物為信。[玩謂圖畫及几案玩具。物謂研扇凡什物之類。]⁴⁹

By this time, the conventions of writing letters in the *zhazi* format even influenced students in prefectural schools who were preparing for examinations and government service. Since the students that Lü Zuqian was teaching were not all staying in the same locality but scattered in various prefectures, the students often had to communicate by writing letters.⁵⁰ Lü Zuqian forbade them to adopt excessive etiquette when doing so; this included the number of the sheets of paper used for a letter, the polite expressions adopted in the letters, how the letter recipients were addressed, the format of the letter,

49 Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙, *Lü Zuqian quanji* 呂祖謙全集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2008), 361. I am grateful to Liu Ching-cheng for drawing my attention to this source. On the intellectual context of these regulations, see Liu Zhen 劉真, “Songdai de xuegui he xiangyue 宋代的學規和鄉約,” in *Songshi yanjiu ji* 宋史研究集, vol. 1, ed. Songshi yanjiu hui 宋史研究會 (Taipei: Zhonghua congshu weiyuanhui, 1958), 367-91; Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, “Either Self-Realization or Transmission of Received Wisdom in Confucian Education? An Inquiry into Lü Zuqian's and Zhu Xi's Constructions for Student Learning,” in *Educations and Their Purposes: A Conversation among Cultures*, eds. Roger T. Ames and Peter D. Hershock (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 270-88.

50 Chen Wenyi 陳雯怡, *You guanxue dao xueyuan: Cong zhidu yu linian hudong kan Songdai jiaoyu de yanbian* 由官學到書院：從制度與理念的互動看宋代教育的演變 (Taipei: Lianjing chuban, 2004), 81-82.

and even the content of the correspondence. Writers from Song China were quite aware of the changes in all of these aspects.

I now turn to other discussions of epistolary sub-genres, which not only explain the different kinds of influences from official documents, but also attribute those influences to high level officials who had control over state power and hence exerted influence on bureaucratic writing conventions of literati officials. These discussions, drawn from literati discourse in notebooks and encyclopedias, reveal contemporary views on the transformations of epistolary sub-genres.

Letter writing was not a topic that warranted systematic analysis in the literary culture of the time. The epistolary genre was often traditionally regarded as a marginal literary genre, and discussions about letter writing seldom made their way into specialized works of literary theory in the Song period. For example, a work on rhetoric by Chen Kui's 陳騭 (1128–1203), *Wenze* 文則 [Rules of Writing] only contains passing mention of the origins of correspondence in the *Zuozhuan*, but does not go into the specific ways of writing letters.⁵¹ The Song literati did discuss epistolary sub-genres in jottings on miscellaneous matters, however. Notebook jottings were appropriate for these kinds of discussions because letter writing conventions involved topics such as recent political history, literati interactions, as well as the collection of manuscripts by famous figures. These were all of interest to

51 On *Wenze* and its discussion on genre, see Andy Kirkpatrick, "China's First Systematic Account of Rhetoric: An Introduction to Chen Kui's *Wen Ze*," *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 23, no. 2 (2005): 103-52, esp. 145-46; Cai Zongyang 蔡宗陽, *Chen Kui "Wenze" xin lun* 陳騭《文則》新論 (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1993), 543-59.

literati scholars who were recording hearsay and their observations in the notebooks they kept.⁵²

An important example of these is from Zhao Yanwei's 趙彥衛 (*jinsi* 1163) notebook *Yunlu manchao* 雲麓漫鈔 [Casual Notes from the Cloudy Foothill]. He opened his account by tracing the old standard of letter writing and explaining how it changed to the *zhuang* sub-genre:

The ancient standard of correspondence was to use either “I kowtow” or “I prostrate again” or “I present” [at the end]. People of the Tang began the switch to *zhuang* and wrote at the end: “Earnestly submitting this *zhuang* of greetings, I cannot go into detail. I end this *zhuang* earnestly.” Or: “Earnestly submitting this *zhuang*, I cannot go into detail. I end this *zhuang* earnestly. Month and date. Official so-and-so, *zhuang* submitted to official so-and-so.” 古尺牘之制，「某頓首」、或「再拜」、或「啟」。唐人始更為狀，末云：「謹奉狀謝，不宣，謹狀。」或云：「謹上狀，不宣，謹狀，月日，某官姓名，狀上某官。」⁵³

To explain how later developments differed from this, Zhao Yanwei then paraphrased Sun Guangxian's 孫光憲 (ca. 900–968) notebook *Beimeng suoyan* 北夢瑣言 [Miscellaneous Conversations from Dreams of the North] to explain changes in the Tang period. They originated in an official's correspondence with his superior:⁵⁴

Lu Guangqi of the Tang was put in a post by Zhang Jun, the Commissioner for State Revenue. While [Zhang] Jun was on an expedition to Bingzhou and Fenzhou, whenever Lu [Guangqi] wrote him a letter he would use a new sheet [of paper] for

52 Cong Ellen Zhang, “To Be ‘Erudite in Miscellaneous Knowledge’: A Study of Song (960-1279) Biji Writing,” *Asia Major*, 3rd series 25, no. 2 (2012): 43-77.

53 Zhao Yanwei 趙彥衛, *Yunlu manchao* 雲麓漫鈔 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996), 4/63 (with modifications in punctuation).

54 On this work, see Mark Halperin, “Heroes, Rogues, and Religion in a Tenth-Century Chinese Miscellany,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 129 (2009): 413-16.

every matter he discussed. 唐盧光啟受知於租庸使張濬，濬出征并汾，盧為致書疏，凡一事別為一幅。

This type of correspondence was composed of multiple sheets of paper, and each sheet was intended for a separate issue. This was during a time when the delivery of letters was probably not too reliable due to the wartime situation. Writing in such a way made it possible for Lu Guangqi to discuss a particular issue on a sheet of letter paper, write whenever there was something to report to Zhang Jun, and send the sheets of letter paper off in a stack whenever convenient. Even if not all the sheets were successfully delivered, Zhang Jun could still comprehend parts of the message with the sheets that he received. When put together, the sheets of paper formed an interlinking flow of written messages.⁵⁵ This prompted the later practice of using multiple sheets of letter paper instead of only one. Sun Guangxian then added that the candidates of the civil service examinations in the late Tang period followed this way of letter writing. Since they aspired to enter officialdom, they often put much effort in sending greetings to government officials. While doing so in order to make themselves known and to become officials themselves, they applied the writing conventions of bureaucratic correspondence.⁵⁶

After quoting Lu Guangqi's impact on letter writing practices, Zhao Yanwei goes on to explain changes in letters of greeting:

55 Sun Guangxian 孫光憲, *Beimeng suoyan* 北夢瑣言 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981), 4/26. See the explanation in Wu Liyu 吳麗娛, "Zai lun fushu yu biezhi" 再論複書與別紙, *Yanjing xuebao* 燕京學報 13 (2002): 116-21.

56 Sun Guangxian, *Beimeng suoyan* 4/26. This is comparable to the letters studied in Victor H. Mair, "Li Po's Letters in Pursuit of Political Patronage," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 44 (1984): 123-53. Also see Wang Quan 王全, *Tangdai ganye yu wenxue* 唐代干謁与文学 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011), 108-114; Alexei Ditter, "Civil Examinations and Cover Letters in the Mid-Tang: Dugu Yu's (776-815) 'Letter Submitted to Attendant Gentleman Quan of the Ministry of Rites,'" in *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 643-74.

I have not heard any other person doing the same since then. Since the late Tang, ceremonial letters for celebrations have been called *qi*. The official title of the recipient was omitted at the beginning of the first sheet, and then another sheet was used for communicating greetings. And then a sheet for expressing good wishes from afar and asking the recipient to take care of themselves [literally: to have a good appetite]. Each of the [latter] two sheets contained six lines; there were three sheets in total. During the Xuanhe (1111–18) and Zhenghe (1119–25) periods, the titles of the recipient were stated before the *qi* and that was for one envelope. The aforementioned two sheets with six lines each formed an official *qi*. Another stack of seven sheets was for another envelope. 後不聞他人為之。唐末以來，禮書慶賀為啟，一幅前不具銜，又一幅通時暄，一幅不審邇辰，頌祝加飡，此二幅每幅六行，共三幅。宣政間，則啟前具銜，為一封，又以上二幅六行者同為公啟，別疊七副為一封。

The *qi* were letters of greetings exchanged between officials whose content mainly dealt with non-official matters.⁵⁷ Zhao Yanwei then explained subsequent developments, including the emergence of *zhazi* and its conventions:

While Qin Zhongxian [Gui] held state power and a *zhazi* was submitted to him, the format was to omit “I kowtow” and “I prostrate twice” at the beginning, and to add: “Carefully preparing the above. Submitted on date. Name of official.” A *zhazi* can use as many as ten sheets and more. The word “submitted” was omitted when writing to someone on equal terms. In the third year of the Qingyuan period (1198), the ban on using multiple sheets of paper was reinforced; only three sheets were used. After that, only one sheet was used. It was especially simple and convenient. 秦忠獻當國，有投以笱子者。其制：前去『頓首』、『再拜』，而後加『右謹具』，申呈

⁵⁷ Zeng Zaozhuang, *Song wen tonglun*, 444-78.

月日，具官姓名』，笱子多至十餘幅，平交則去『申』字。慶元三年，嚴疊楮之禁，祇用三幅云。後又祇許用一幅，殊為簡便。⁵⁸

The format of a *zhazi* letter put forward here is in line with that of the *zhazi* letters examined in this chapter. Unlike most other epistolary sub-genres, the most common format of a *zhazi* letter was to leave out the formulaic greetings at the beginning of the letter, and to begin directly with the main content. Also, full official titles were usually given in the closing section of the letter.⁵⁹

Lu You, who wrote the second *zhazi* letter examined earlier, also reflected on the shifting uses of epistolary sub-genres during his time. He described how the conventions of letter writing became difficult to handle for writers of different times:

During the Xuanhe period, although people's customs already tended towards flattery, they still favored simplicity. As time passed, there appeared at the same time the parallel prose *jianqi* and *shoushu*. The *jianqi* was the mainstay, therefore the *shoushu* was seen as the shorter note [*xiaojian*]. They were still in separate envelopes though. Occasionally, the letters would not reach the recipient together due to problems in delivery by courier clerks, so both were put in the same envelope. These were called “double letters.” In the early years of the Shaoxing period (1131–62), Grand Councilor Zhao Yuanzhen [Ding] was powerful and the times were troublesome. People were worried that he would not have the time to read both of the “double letters,” so they put their titles and native place on a separate sheet of paper, directly stating for what they were asking and submitted it together [with the “double letters”]. This was called the “triple envelope.” Later, they reverted to using only “double letters”, but as for the shorter note, the number of sheets used increased to as many as ten sheets. When Qin [Gui] the Grand Preceptor was managing the

58 Zhao Yanwei, *Yunlu manchao* 4/63-64 (with modifications in punctuation).

59 Lü Shuqing, “Songdai zhazi ji qi shuxin xingzhi kaoxu,” 23. Also, compare with examples from early medieval China in Richter, *Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 76-78.

state, some adulator held power and became Regent of Jiankang. Whenever he sent a letter, he would draft as many as a hundred sheets but use a tenth of them. Therefore people could no longer bear the trouble and became fed up with it. All of a sudden they switched to using *zhazi*, and everyone thinks it is a bit more convenient. 宣和間，雖風俗已尚諂諛，然猶趣簡便，久之，乃有以駢儷牋啟與手書俱行者。主於牋啟，故謂手書為小簡，然猶各為一緘。已而或厄於書吏，不能俱達，於是駢緘之，謂之雙書。紹興初，趙相元鎮貴重，時方多故，人恐其不暇盡觀雙書，乃以爵里或更作一單紙，直敘所請而並上之，謂之品字封。後復止用雙書，而小簡多其幅至十幅。秦太師當國，有詔者嘗執政矣，出為建康留守，每發一書，則書百幅，擇十之一用之。於是不勝其煩，人情厭患，忽變而為笥子，眾稍便之。⁶⁰

The *zhazi* sub-genre, which Lu You considered to be more convenient when writing about government affairs, appeared to have been conceived as a solution to this problem in letter writing conventions. However, as the following remarks of Lu You show, the writing of *zhazi* later also ran into problems:

In just a while, *zhazi* expanded from two sheets to ten sheets, and every sheet had to bear the official title of the recipient. This made it even more troublesome, but “double letters” were still considered natural for congratulations and the like. Towards the end of the Shaoxing period when the Duke of Wei, Shi [Hao, 1106–1194], was the Grand Councilor, he ordered scribal clerks to print according to gazettes provided by clerks stationed in the capital⁶¹ and not from “double letters.”⁶²

60 Lu You 陸游, *Lao xue'an biji* 老學庵筆記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), 3/37.

61 These referred to personnel who manned the representative offices of their local authority in the capital.

62 On gazettes disseminated by the Song court, see Zhu Chuanyu 朱傳譽, *Songdai xinwen shi* 宋代新聞史 (Taipei: Zhongguo xueshu zhuzuo jiangzhu weiyuanhui, 1967), 24–37; You Biao 游彪, “Songdai liuzhuan wanglai de guanfang ‘wenzi’ 宋代流转往来的官方‘文字’,” in *Zhengji kaocha yu xinxi qudao: yi Songdai wei zhongxin* 政绩考察与信息管道——以宋代为中心, ed. Deng Xiaonan 鄧小南 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2008),

People in later times followed this practice, so “double letters” were no longer used in government. Yet the *jianqi* was not abandoned. It contained small, tightly spaced handwriting on one or two small sheets of paper, just like in a *zhazi*. It was then sealed in the regular manner.⁶³ Now it is still done in this way. But as for local governments, “double letters” are still used.⁶⁴ 俄而笱子自二幅增至十幅，每幅皆具銜，其煩彌甚。而謝賀之類為雙書自若。紹興末，史魏公為參政，始命書吏鏤版從邸吏告報，不受雙書，後來者皆循為例，政府雙書遂絕。然賤啟不廢，但用一二矮紙密行細書，與笱子同，博封之，至今猶然。然外郡則猶用雙書也。

Lu You reported on how the formal features of the epistolary sub-genres were regularly changing. This dynamic process cannot be stressed more in his treatment of the topic, with parts in which he described the fluctuations as happening in “all of a sudden” or only in “just a while.” Another important phenomenon that Lu You described about literati letters of his time is that the dividing line between the official and the non-official spheres was blurred and fluctuating. As both he and Zhao Yanwei recorded, the writing conventions of letters were often shaped by political circumstances of the time and how literati officials interacted with the main political actors at court, such as Zhao Ding, Qin Gui, and Shi Hao 史浩. The

379-410; Hilde De Weerd, “Court Gazettes and ‘Short Reports’: Official Views and Unofficial Readings of Court News,” *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 27, no. 2 (2009): 167-99.

63 The meaning of the term “*bofeng*” 博封 is not entirely clear to me. I follow William H. Nienhauser, Jr.’s reading of the same term in his translation of Liu Zongyuan’s 柳宗元 (773-819) “Biography of ‘Red’ Li” 李赤傳 in William H. Nienhauser, Jr. trans., “Biography of ‘Red’ Li,” in *Classical Chinese Tales of the Supernatural and the Fantastic: Selections from the Third to the Tenth Century*, ed. Karl S. Y. Kao (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 190. Some of the letters found in Dunhuang provide important evidence on how letters were sealed, see Zhou Yiliang 周一良 and Zhao Heping 赵和平, *Tang-Wudai shuyi yanjiu* 唐五代书仪研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1996), 59-61; Wu Liyu 吴丽娱, *Tang li zhiyi: Zhonggu shuyi yanjiu* 唐礼摭遗：中古书仪研究 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2002), 245-46. Also see Wang Shizhen and Wang Shizhang, “Gudai shuxin fengzhen fangshi de yanbian.”

64 Lu You, *Lao xue’an biji* 3/37.

ways in which officials wrote to those influential figures spilled over into the personal letters that they exchanged with their colleagues.

These transformations were also noted in literati's notebook entries about the letters they collected, for instance in a notebook by Zhang Shinan 張世南, a less known scholar of the late twelfth and early thirteenth century, who collected literati correspondence.⁶⁵ Some of the letters he wrote about originally belonged to the eleventh century official Peng Ruli 彭汝礪 (1042–1094). Zhang admitted that he was surprised by the discrepancies between Peng's letters, which all dated from 1067, and correspondence of Zhang's own time. He explained how Peng received letters from from others:

“During the winter solstice, the New Year Festival, and the first day of every month, the officials who were in posts outside the capital would send him a *zhuang* 如冬至、年節、月旦，凡在外官，皆以狀至。”

Quoting one of them in full, Zhang remarked that the way literati officials greeted each other with *zhuang* letters was “very different from present-day [conventions]” 與今大異.⁶⁶ Discussing the *zhuang* sub-genre rather than *zhazi*,⁶⁷ Zhang demonstrated that the dynamic character of epistolary sub-genres was not confined to *zhazi* letters, but also shared by other sub-genres of correspondence. Writers obviously noticed the changes in how the sub-genres of *zhazi*, *qi*, and *zhuang* were written and used in social interactions.

65 On this notebook, see Zhang, “To Be ‘Erudite in Miscellaneous Knowledge’,” 65-77.

66 Zhang Shinan 張世南, *Youhuan jiwén* 游宦紀聞 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 1/8.

67 See the types “congratulatory petition” and “thank-you petition” in Hartwell, “A Guide to Documentary Sources of Middle Period Chinese History,” 154-56. On the *zhuang* sub-genre, also see Wu Liyu 吳麗娛, “Xia qing shang da: liang zhong ‘zhuang’ de yingyong yu Tangchao de xinxi chuandi 下情上達：兩種“狀”的應用與唐朝的信息傳遞,” *Tangshi luncong* 唐史論叢 11 (2008): 65-70.

The transformations that the literati scholars were recounting, however, did not merely regard the material form of a letter. Conventions including the number of sheets of letter paper used, and whether the correspondence was handwritten by the writer himself also mattered:

My grandfather had handwritten prescriptions of medicine written in albums of old letter paper. From them I see that in the Yuanyou period (1086–94) even monks and Daoist priests... did not exaggerate the official titles [of their addressees]. In the early years of the Shaoxing period, literati officials still wrote *shouzhuang* to communicate their names [in visits], and they handwrote them on small bamboo paper.⁶⁸ None of the letters that they exchanged were not written by themselves, even when high officials were writing to their subordinates. Since *zhazi* were used, it fulfilled the formalities but it made people emotionally detached from each other. Sima [Guang] Wengong (1019–1086) once said, “It is not prudent to use more than three sheets of paper in a letter to a superior official.”The letters he wrote are only one or two pages. This can be seen in his many letters engraved in stone. 大父有手札藥方，乃用舊門狀紙為策牘。見元祐間雖僧道謁刺.....官稱略不過呼。紹興初，士大夫猶有以手狀通名，止用小竹紙親書。往還多以書簡，莫非親筆，小官於上位亦然。自行笥子，禮雖至矣，情則反踈。司馬溫公嘗言：「與貴官書簡，有采紙數過三，皆不謹。」.....所書止一兩幅，世多石本，可見也。⁶⁹

It was preferable for letters to be written by oneself rather than a clerk. Also, it was regarded by some to be troublesome to use too many sheets of paper in a

68 According to a tenth century account, writing letters on bamboo paper was a guarantee for confidentiality as the letter paper would easily break upon opening. Tsuen-hsuei Tsien, *Collected Writings on Chinese Culture* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2011), 82.

69 Zhou Hui 周輝, *Qingbo zazhi jiaozhu* 清波雜誌校注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994), 11/479 (with modifications in punctuation). On more about Sima Guang's epistolary practices, see Chapter 6.

letter since it might appear excessively polite and thus run the risk of alienating close acquaintances. This was also why Lü Zuqian forbade his students to use more than one sheet of paper, as in his quoted regulations above. Exaggerating one's titles was another empty formality that he criticized. This problem is discussed in another notebook entry in *Yunlu manchao*:

Before the Xuanhe period, literati officials who were on equal terms addressed each other with their style names. Even when they interacted with superior officials they did not exaggerate the superior officials' titles. If it was someone who belonged to the rank of Grand Master or above, then they only addressed him as "Grand Master Assistant." In Qin Zhongxian's [Gui] letters to others he often addressed them as "elders." People of the time imitated this. Even when writing a letter to someone younger, they addressed the person as an "elder." Those above the rank of Prefect were addressed as "Grand Masters for Court Discussion," and those below it were addressed as "Academicians." After Qin [Gui] died, ministers indicted him. Not long after that, those who were addressed as "Grand Masters for Court Discussion" in the past were advanced to "Superior Grand Masters of the Palace," and the "Academicians" were advanced to "Grand Masters for Court Discussion." This problem has become even more serious in recent years. All those with the rank of Prefect and above are now called "Superior Grand Masters of the Palace" or "Grand Masters for Thorough Service." 宣和以前，士大夫輩行相等，皆稱字，雖通上官，亦不過呼；若大夫以上，祇云「運判大夫」之類。秦忠獻與人簡尺，多云「丈」，世俗倣之，雖貽晚進書，亦云「丈」。知州以上則稱「朝議」，以下皆稱「學士」。秦薨，臣寮論列。未幾，昔日之「朝議」進而為「太中」，「學士」進而為「朝議」。近年尤甚，知州以上，皆有「太中」、「通奉」之稱矣。

70

70 Zhao Yanwei, *Yunlu manchao*, 4/63 (with modifications in punctuation).

This account specifically focused on the official titles that were used to refer to letter recipients. The general trend was an inflation of those titles as a result of trying to be polite in letters. Again, shifts in the writing conventions of letters were observed to be associated with Qin Gui. Powerful politicians like him were described to have a big impact on the manner in which officials wrote to each other and also the perversion of names and titles in their correspondence.⁷¹

After examining sources from notebooks, I now turn to briefly discuss the discourse on epistolary sub-genres in an encyclopedia. A number of household encyclopedias during the late Southern Song and Yuan periods served the function of epistolary manuals and spread literati knowledge about correspondence to wider circles. These collections anthologized letter templates and model letters that could have been useful for readers who routinely needed to write letters.⁷²

I draw my sources from an encyclopedia attributed to the late Song figure Liu Yingli 劉應李 (1247?–1324?). In explicating epistolary sub-genres, the editor of the encyclopedia provided the following account for *zhazi*:

The *zha* genre did not exist in writings before the Tang. In the collected writings of Ou [-yang Xiu] and Su [Shi] there appeared *zouzha*, which were words of ministers reporting to the emperor. There were no letters of the *zha* genre among their other pieces of correspondence [in their collected writings]. If multiple paper sheets and line breaks were used in a letter, then those were just called *chidu* or *shoujian*.

71 The attribution of these influences to Qin Gui also had to do with his vilification after his death. See Charles Hartman, “The Making of a Villain: Ch’in Kuei and Tao-hsüeh,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 58 (1998): 59-146.

72 On these encyclopedias, see Hilde De Weerd, “The Encyclopedia as Textbook: Selling Private Chinese Encyclopedias in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries,” *Extrême-Orient, Extrême-Occident* 1 (2007): 77-79; Stephen H. West, “Time Management and Self-control: Self-help Guides in Yuan,” in *Text, Performance, and Gender in Chinese Literature and Music: Essays in Honor of Wilt Idema*, eds. Maghiel van Crevel, Tian Yuan Tan, Michel Hockx (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 113-18. Also see Chapter 6 of this thesis.

Recently, the *zha* sub-genre is always adopted when writing a *qi*. Its use of line breaks and multiple sheets of paper is exceedingly troublesome. Those who in the future put effort in composition should reform this genre. 筭，唐以前文無此體，至歐、蘇集中有奏筭，乃臣告君之辭。其餘書翰往復亦不見有筭躰，凡疊幅提頭只曰尺牘、手簡。如近體用啟必用筭，提頭疊幅不勝煩瀆，後之用工翰墨者宜變此體矣。⁷³

The first half of the passage was referring to *zhazi* documents, but the second half was about *zhazi* letters. Again, this represented another indication of the close relationship between the two. The editor also noticed the problems with the contemporary writing conventions of *zhazi* letters; writing according to its usual conventions had become increasingly difficult.

The number of sheets of letter paper in particular received mention in multiple entries. One mentioned the following:

Several sheets of paper were used. Each was for writing a paragraph of the *zhazi*.... All lower officials used this format when corresponding with superior officials. After that, literati officials found it troublesome to write, so they only used one sheet for *qi* and *zha*. And small handwriting in chancery regular script was preferred. 用紙數幅，一幅寫一段筭子.....小官之事長官皆用此式。後士夫以其文繁，啟、筭各只用紙一幅，並吏楷小書為尊。⁷⁴

In another instance, the editor wrote again about the reform in the use of letter paper:

“Since multiple sheets were troublesome, later only one sheet of paper was used. Every paragraph opens with a new line. There are formats with five line breaks,

73 Liu Yingli 劉應李, *Xinbian shiwen leiju hanmo quanshu* 新編事文類聚翰墨全書, in XXSK, vol. 1219, 1/[384].

74 *Idem.*, 4/[401]. For more about using multiple sheets of paper, see Chapter 6.

seven line breaks, and even nine line breaks... 盖疊幅既繁，後只用紙一幅，開寫每一段一提頭，有五提頭、七提頭，至九提頭.....”⁷⁵

As hinted in these comments from the editor, although the use of *zhazi* had already become the convention, it no longer met the needs of contemporary writers. If this persisted, it would soon be replaced by other sub-genres with higher suitability or it would itself be adapted into a form that was more acceptable for writers. This echoes Lu You’s account in his notebook cited earlier, in which he indicated the conventions that *zhazi* letters entailed solved some of the problems. However, in the account in Liu Yingli’s encyclopedia, a *zhazi* letter had become too troublesome to write even at that time. These show how epistolary sub-genres were actually constantly transformed by writers and their conventions.⁷⁶

All these discussions validate the view that epistolary sub-genres are not typified objects that do not change over the course of history. Letter writers were quite conscious of these changes in writing conventions and had to make decisions while they wrote. As a reappraisal of genre theory suggests:

Logically, since they reflect their cultural, situational, and generic contexts, and since those contexts change over time, genres, too, must change over time. Since groups of people use genres to suit their purposes, and since those purposes change as the groups change, genres, too, must change in their purposes. Since people use and recognize genres as they go about their daily lives, and since the nature of those daily lives changes over time, genres, too, must change in their daily uses. Since

75 Idem., 4/[405].

76 In fact, this process of constant readjustment was also reflected in the etiquette manuals called *shuyi* 書儀, which were mostly discovered in Dunhuang. See Patricia B. Ebrey, “T’ang Guides to Verbal Etiquette,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 45 (1985): 581-613. On the reforms that occurred in the writing conventions of letters and the use of letter paper, see Wu Liyu, *Tang li zhiyi*, 252-58 & 278-90; Wu Liyu, “Zai lun fushu yu biezhì,” 107-22. For more about *shuyi*, see Chapter 6.

people use genres to construct recurring situations out of variable events, genres, too, must adapt to variation. If they are to survive, genres must change.... Genres must be flexible synchronically and changeable diachronically.⁷⁷

The literati discourse on epistolary sub-genres that I have examined is a reflection of this dynamic at work. How letters ought to be written constantly changed, and writers were fully aware of this fact. When literati officials communicated official matters to their colleagues and interacted with them regularly, the need to adapt an epistolary sub-genre like the *zhazi* to their own practical needs would have been quite natural.

While I have examined how official documents impacted the writing conventions of letters in this chapter, the influences did not only come from one direction. Letter writing also affected how works in other genres were written in traditional China, but this would deserve a study in its own right and will not be covered in this thesis.⁷⁸

Conclusion

In this chapter, I analyzed the bureaucratic influence on Chinese letters in Song China. Using two *zhazi* manuscripts as examples, I have demonstrated how the *zhazi* epistolary sub-genre was subject to the influence of bureaucratic documents. I have also explored literati discourses on genre transformation involving shifts in writing conventions. It is hoped that this investigation shows why any study of classical Chinese

⁷⁷ Amy J. Devitt, *Writing Genres* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004), 89.

⁷⁸ An interesting point of comparison is that letters played a critical role in the formation of genres throughout history in the West. For an overview, see Charles Bazerman, "Letters and the Social Grounding of Differentiated Genres: Letter Writing as a Social Practice," in *Letter Writing as a Social Practice*, eds. David Barton and Nigel Hall (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000), 15-29.

letters should give ample consideration to the dynamic nature of the sub-genres involved and the possible impact from the writing conventions of other genres, especially from bureaucratic documents.

These kinds of bureaucratic influences on letter writing can be better understood if we consider the fact that most literati scholars were eagerly seeking for or had begun their political careers. The rise of a politically engaged literati official was one of the most remarkable characteristics of Song society. Given their multiple identities in the imperial bureaucracy, scholarly learning, and social life across many regions in China, the elites often met with multi-faceted needs to communicate with each other in different capacities. They needed to maintain bonds with other men in officialdom. The rise to power of powerful councilors during the Southern Song also fueled this need, and definitely influenced the way officials wrote to each other.⁷⁹ Facing such needs, the literati officials borrowed the writing conventions from what they adopted in their work on a regular basis as government officials. When adapting the *zhazi* sub-genre to their needs, they gradually developed new norms of writing letters. This fluidity and instability of epistolary writing conventions was recognized and recorded by the literati, and their descriptions provide us with valuable information about how literati officials actually wrote to each other and how they reflected on this activity. They also enable us to better understand what a “personal” letter meant historically for literati officials in the Song dynasty. In the next chapter, I will examine some more personal letters to reveal the role of letter writing in the social life of literati scholars.

⁷⁹ On how the politics of the Southern Song gave rise to a sycophantic culture in literary circles, see Shen Songqin 沈松勤, *Nan-Song wenren yu dangzheng* 南宋文人与党争 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005), 426-63.

CHAPTER 3

Letters as Communication about Transactions

Introduction

This chapter aims to analyze epistolary communication in everyday life, using letters by the literatus Sun Di 孫覲 (1081-1169) as a case study. In particular, I focus on the letters he wrote to ask for favors, as well as his responses to ones that asked him for favors. A great wealth of epistolary sources by Sun Di and others containing information about how people conversed about their everyday life is available, preserved predominantly in collected works. By making use of letters and other sources by and about Sun Di, I aim to restore as much detail as possible about the interactions between him and his epistolary contacts to illustrate the role of letter writing in a literati scholar's everyday life.

How did they get their meaning across when these literati officials were responding to their peers on specific issues in everyday life? They often had to deal with financial transactions with others, and conduct these by letter writing—in what ways did they do it, without embarrassing or antagonizing anyone? These questions are seldom at the core of the inquiry in studies on Chinese history. It is hoped that this study will not only shed light on Chinese epistolary culture, but also the actual mechanisms of interpersonal interaction among learned elites, and how considerations about these interactions figured in their everyday lives.

Sun Di was “first and foremost a literary official.”¹ Born in 1081, his compositions already received great praise as early as the 1120s and he was even considered to be the literary successor of the famous writer Su Shi.² Sun Di was especially famed for his parallel prose essays, and this of course was a big advantage for writing letters, as these were often in parallel prose.³

Although he was talented in composition, Sun Di acquired a fairly notorious reputation from the mid-Southern Song onwards because he was criticized for being an opportunist in the final years before the fall of Kaifeng in 1127/1. According to the important study by Charles Hartman, the Neo-Confucian thinker Zhu Xi (1130-1200) staged a very influential attack on Sun Di. He accused Sun of taking part in drafting a “declaration of submission” to the Jurchens, and that Sun had detested Li Gang 李綱 (1084-1140), the irredentist leader of the pro-war faction against the Jurchens whom I will study in Chapter 4. Hartman further pointed out that:

The ultimate purpose of his exercise is to deflect blame away from Li Gang for events that contributed significantly to the collapse of Northern Song. In essence, Zhu Xi attempted to craft a *daoxue* version of the Northern Song fall. This version recast Li Gang as a *daoxue* moral paragon and as an exemplar for a continued aggressive political and military stance against the Jurchen invasion of the North.⁴

As indicated here, Zhu Xi’s attack portrayed Li Gang as the loyal minister who missed the chance to rescue the Northern Song court from its downfall. And it also ruined Sun’s reputation in posterity. With this in mind, it is useful to give a brief account of what actually happened in Sun Di’s life from a modern historian’s perspective.

1 Hartman, “The Reluctant Historian,” 136.

2 Ibid., 136-37.

3 For further discussion of the reasons for this, see Chapter 6.

4 Ibid., 118.

Sun's career as an official was much less successful than his life as a writer. He acquired the *jinshi* degree in 1109 and progressed in various governmental offices, for example, in the Imperial Library and Imperial University, as well as being the Prefect of Pingjiang 平江 (present day Suzhou in Jiangsu Province) in the late 1120s.⁵ During the reign of Gaozong 高宗 (1107-1187; r. 1127-62), the first emperor of the Southern Song, he antagonized the powerful minister Qin Gui who dominated the government.⁶ Accused of misappropriating military supplies, Sun Di was banished to Xiangzhou 象州 in the remote Guangxi in 1132. Although he later had redress, he remained in seclusion in the Taihu Lake area for nearly two decades until Qin Gui's death. In spite of ongoing political turbulence in the mid-twelfth century, and although he was no longer as active, Sun Di held central and local posts until two years before his death in 1169.⁷

In this chapter, the letters that I extract from Sun Di's collected works are all short notes.⁸ In general, even the longest of these usually do not exceed 100 characters. Often written in a form of brief and informal manner, these letters are nonetheless elegant and refined. All the letters that I discuss in detail in this chapter are taken from *Neijian chidu* 内简尺牘 [Inner Letters], a collection of Sun Di's letters. I will take a closer look at the textual history and functions of this collection as

5 On his two tenures in Pingjiang, see my study in Xu Liheng, "Liang-Song zhiji de Suzhou yu defang zhixude huifu."

6 I further discuss Qin Gui's political career and his involvement in power struggles in Chapter 4.

7 For a chronology of Sun Di's life see Chen Xiaolan 陈晓兰, "Sun Di shengping ji qi wenji xiang kao 孙覲生平及其文集详考," in *Sun Di yanjiu wenji* 孙覲研究文集, ed. Sun Di jinianguan 孙覲纪念馆 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2006), 54-65. I pay closer attention to Sun's official career in "Ruins, Reconstruction, and Ruminations: Personal Accounts in Literati Letters during the Song-Jin Wars", paper presented at Association of Asian Studies Annual Conference, Chicago, March 28 2015.

8 Sun Di 孙覲, *Hongqing jushi ji* 鸿庆居士集, SKQS ed., vol. 1135. I have also consulted the edition collected in QSW, vols. 158-161.

an epistolary manual in Chapter 6, so here I will mainly focus on what texts in it tells us about Sun Di as a letter writer. The material in *Neijian chidu* were mostly penned in Sun Di's late years, because the majority of his earlier writings were believed to have been lost in 1127/6 when he had to flee from local bandits.⁹ A general impression that one would get from reading the letters in *Neijian chidu* is that they were mostly written while Sun Di resided in the Taihu area after 1135.¹⁰ That was a period when he was no longer politically active, even though he still held some official titles.

Although originally presented as model letters, *Neijian chidu* contains many sources that carry helpful historical information for my inquiry in this chapter. I must stress that reading his letters in conjunction with his writings in other genres (such as epitaphs in this case) is very useful, since it helps to reconstruct the interactive social context of Sun Di's relations with his acquaintances. After all, the epistolary communication should be seen as part of the multiple kinds of social interactions that literati officials had, and should be studied as such.

Commissioning Epitaphs as a Tricky Business

In Song China, anybody with sufficient resources would have their epitaphs

9 I will discuss the handling of local bandits in this period in Chapter 4. On these incidents in Sun Di's life, see my "Ruins, Reconstruction, and Ruminations."

10 Chen Xiaolan, "Sun Di shengping ji qi wenji xiang kao," 83-84. The 70 *juan* manuscript edition of Sun's collected works printed during the Ming, *Nan Lanling Sun Shangshu daquan wenji* 南蘭陵孫尚書大全文集 [*Complete Collected Works of the South Lanling State Affairs Department Minister Sun*], contains more of his earlier correspondence. Only 26 out of 834 letters in that edition are reportedly the same as those in *Neijian chidu*, according to a postscript by Sheng Xuanhuai 盛宣懷 cited in Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書, *Songren bieji xulu* 宋人別集敘錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1999), 757. On this edition, see Chen Xiaolan, "Sun Di shengping ji qi wenji xiang kao," 82-83; Hartman, "The Reluctant Historian," 133n63.

(*muzhiming* 墓誌銘) inscribed on stone for burial in tombs. They were carved on stone or stone-like material, and were placed in or around the person's tomb.¹¹ The epitaphs constitute a type of biography for the deceased person, eulogizing and presenting how that person ought to be remembered. Since these epitaphs were writings that dealt with the dead but were composed by the living, the practice of epitaph writing produced an arena in which the living engaged in a conversation about how a deceased individual should be commemorated. This social custom of eulogizing by producing epitaphs in Song China is well known to students of Chinese history, but not much work has been done on the communication involved in getting those epitaphs written.¹² In this section, to investigate how the production of these texts in social life often required the exchange of correspondence, I will give a close reading of Sun Di's letters that involved writing epitaphs.

I will first explain why writing epitaphs for someone was often a tricky business and required the kind of extended negotiations as we can see in epistolary writings. People commissioned epitaphs for deceased members in their family, and it was understandably an honor to have a famous literary writer to compose an epitaph for the family. Ouyang Xiu, for example, as an essayist with great fame and important intellectual stature in the Song, had also met many such requests.¹³ Similarly, Sun Di had received numerous requests for epitaphs ever since he had acquired the reputation

11 For an introduction to these, see Angela Schottenhammer, "Characteristics of Song Epitaphs," in *Burial in Song China*, ed. Dieter Kuhn (Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 1994), 253-76; Beverly J. Bossler, *Powerful Relations: Kinship, Status & the State in Sung China (960-1279)* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1998), 10-11.

12 Recent studies that made use of epistolary sources include Cong Ellen Zhang, "Writing Fan Zhongyan's Epitaphs," paper presented at "Conference on Middle Period China, 800-1400," Harvard University, June 2014.

13 Requests for writings and reactions to them are also mentioned in the letters of other reputed Song literary scholars, for example, Su Shi. See Egan, "Su Shih's 'Notes' as a Historical and Literary Source," 575-76.

of a masterful prose writer.

Meeting these requests usually entailed receiving payment, or at least presents from the deceased person's family.¹⁴ For the person who agreed to write the epitaph, the concern was often how to strike a balance between objectivity and flattery. As Alexei Ditter as shown in his study of mid- to late-Tang commissioned epitaphs, writing epitaphs on commission can be quite lucrative but the cost of commissioning such texts was negotiable.¹⁵ It was the same in the Song period; negotiating an agreeable price between the two parties would be tricky, given that the requester had recently suffered the loss of a family member, and that the price was directly correlative to the literary expertise of the epitaph writer. The requester might know the epitaph writer in person.¹⁶ Therefore, if not carefully handled, the negotiation process of commissioned epitaphs would occasionally result in arguments and disputes.¹⁷ These of course were undesirable, so it made careful communication between the two parties very necessary. It is for these reasons that commissioning epitaphs for the deceased and responding to such requests was a tricky business. What I attempt here is to study how literati officials navigated this negotiation process by exchanging letters.

14 For a broad survey of writing on commission, see Saeki Tomi 佐伯富, "Shitai fu to jumpitsu 士大夫と潤筆," in *Tōyō shi ronshū: Uchida Ginpū Hakushi shōju kinen* 東洋史論集: 内田吟風博士頌壽記念, ed. Uchida Ginpū hakushi shōju kinenkai 内田吟風博士頌壽記念会 (Kyoto: Dohosha, 1978), 193-221. Also see Bossler, *Powerful Relations*, 10-11.

15 Alexei Ditter, "The Commerce of Commemoration: Commissioned Muzhiming in the Mid- to Late Tang," *Tang Studies* 32, no. 1 (2014): 25-31.

16 Qiu Jiahui 邱佳慧, "Cong 'qingming' yu 'zhuanming' tanjiu Songdai shehui de lunchang guanxi 從「請銘」與「撰銘」探究宋代社會的倫常關係," *Donghua renwen xuebao* 東華人文學報 12 (2008): 8-10.

17 For telling examples of the complications that arose from commissioned epitaphs, especially how they resulted in disputes, see Zeng Zaozhuang, *Song wen tonglun*, 987-96; Zhang, "Writing Fan Zhongyan's Epitaphs".

My case study about epitaphs is based on five letters written by Sun Di to Meng Zhonghou 孟忠厚 (?-1157), who became a Commandery Prince 郡王 because of his family background as an imperial relative. He was the nephew of the first empress of Zhezong 哲宗 (1076-1100; r. 1086-1100). The empress, later known as the Longyou 隆祐 Empress Dowager Meng (1077-1135) had given Gaozong a lot of support, having kept the throne for him twice in 1127/4 and 1129 in critical moments of Jurchen invasion and rebellion of soldiers. Gaozong thus felt much indebted to her and almost treated her like his own mother. When she died, he appointed about 80 of her relatives to official posts in order to show his imperial favor for her.¹⁸ With this background as her nephew, Meng Zhonghou was a very influential and wealthy person that Sun Di could not easily say no to or antagonize.¹⁹ They shared something in common though; both of them were loathed by the minister Qin Gui who was dominating the political scene at the time.²⁰

In 1149/5, Meng Zhonghou's wife, Madam Wang, died.²¹ As mentioned, during the time Sun Di was not politically active but he nonetheless remained in contact with many officials by correspondence. He sent two letters of condolence to Meng:

18 For her biography, see Priscilla Ching-Chung, "Meng, Empress of Emperor Zhezong of Northern Song," in *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women: Tang Through Ming, 618-1644*, eds. Lily Xiao Hong Lee and Sue Wiles (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2014), 288-90; Pei Shuji 裴淑姬 [Sookhee Bae], "Meng huanghou yu Liang-Song zhi ji de zhengzhi 孟皇后與兩宋之際的政治," *Zhongguo shiyanjiu 中國史研究* (Korea) 20 (2002): 99-108. On the power of regents and their families in the Song dynasty, see Priscilla Ching Chung, *Palace Women in the Northern Song, 960-1126* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), Ch. 5.

19 I have greatly benefitted from email conversations with Charles Hartman and Ho Koon-wan on Meng Zhonghou's social connections.

20 I will explain why Sun Di angered Qin Gui in later in this chapter. As for Meng Zhonghou, see Han Youshan 韓西山, *Qin Hui yanjiu 秦桧研究* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2008), 220.

21 On the date of her death, see QSW, vol. 161, 3495/121. I will discuss this text in more detail below.

Letter A²²

There has been no communication [between us] for more than a month. Recently it has rained and cooled down; I hereby wish you every blessing. I have heard that the Madam of the State of Qin's funeral barge had already reached Huishan.²³ I surmise that ten days will have elapsed when she returns for the sacrifice of repose.²⁴ What I hope is that you restrain your feelings, take a larger view, and do not be too sorrowful. [Then it would be] very fortunate indeed. 聲問不通，已復弼月。即日雨涼，鈞候萬福。傳聞秦國夫人喪舟已次惠山，比及反虞，諒復過旬。所冀抑情自廣，勿過戚戚，幸甚。²⁵

Letter B

I have heard from you and I wish you every blessing on this day of the Great Heat seasonal node. After the seven offerings²⁶ for the Madam of the State of Qin, your sorrow is of course not easy to dissipate. Yet the deceased has already become detached from men and heaven; if your feelings of sadness and love are displaced, then you will get close to tying up the wind and catching the shadows. I dare to ask for your concern for the living people and please comfort yourself. 比奉報音，伏審即日大暑，鈞候萬福。秦國夫人婁(屢)經七供，悼念之情，固未易排遣。然逝者已超然在人天之上，若悲戀不置，則與繫風躡影之流大不相遠矣。敢冀

22 For the sake of convenience I assign these five letters as Letters A to E. They are all from Sun Di, NJCD, 1/4b-6a. I have rearranged the sequence of the letters to restore their original condition.

23 Huishan (present day Wuxi 無錫 in Jiangsu Province) was where Meng Zhonghou had his feoff.

24 The *yu* 虞 ritual, or the sacrifice of repose, was performed to pacify the soul of the deceased on the day of the burial after the body returns home. For a more detailed explanation, see Patricia Buckley Ebrey trans., *Chu Hsi's Family Rituals: A Twelfth-Century Chinese Manual for the Performance of Cappings, Weddings, Funerals, and Ancestral Rites* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 126-130.

25 Sun Di, NJCD, 1/6a.

26 To offer sacrifice at the funeral for seven times every seven days after a person's death.

尊生自廣。²⁷

Sun Di had heard about Madam Wang's passing away and composed these two letters of condolence. Letters A and B are interesting for they are much more informal and personal than the letter templates for funerals in Sima Guang's 司馬光 (1019-86) manual for writing, the *Shuyi* 書儀.²⁸ This discrepancy shows how informal messages were different from the ceremonial letters for occasions like funerals.

The letters do not mention whether Meng Zhonghou had brought up the request for epitaphs or not, but in the following letter, Sun Di set out to turn down such a request. Judging from this, we know that by the time Sun Di drafted the following letter Meng Zhonghou must already have asked Sun Di to write an epitaph for Madam Wang:

Letter C

Having been gratefully shown the conduct description²⁹ of the Madam of the State of Qin, I was asked [by you] to compose the inscription for the tomb. Since being convicted and punished, I have only composed tomb inscriptions for a little more than ten relatives and friends. The Madam had the enfeoffment of a great state; she was in a family with such a prestige in the grand court of the current dynasty that her funeral is managed by great ministers and commandery princes. A prominent person should be urged to write [this epitaph] in large and deeply engraved characters,³⁰ so that her greatness can be manifested to eternity. What I offer are

27 Sun Di, NJCD, 1/6a.

28 See Sima Guang 司馬光, *Sima shi shuyi* 司馬氏書儀, in CSJC, vol. 1040, 9/102-111.

29 A “conduct description” (*xingzhuang* 行狀) was presented to the person who was asked to write the epitaph, providing him with basic information about the deceased person.

30 Sun Di also used the phrase “writing in large and deeply engraved characters 大書深刻” in praising epitaphs composed by a friend: “By reading the epitaph for Zhao, I have seen it written in large and deeply engraved characters. It was widely read by people of the time and I know it contains no unfaithful words. 余觀趙君一志大書深刻，傳誦一時，知無愧辭

unintelligent words. This is the result of your care and love; you have not thought through this carefully. 蒙寵示秦國夫人行狀，令誌其墓。某罪癘(廢)以來，銘姻舊十數家而已。夫人身封大國，本朝巨室家世如此，而樞相、郡王與之治喪。當屬一時顯者，大書深刻，以表見於無窮。迺屬於不腆之辭，此公愛念之過，未之思也。³¹

Sun stressed the significance of the Madam's funeral and burial, as well as the importance of getting a prominent person to write her epitaph. Since a lady with such stature should be accompanied by an epitaph composed by a celebrated writer instead of himself, he explained why it was not appropriate for him to accept the task. By putting it this way, he was politely excusing himself from the task without antagonizing Meng. By specifying that he only wrote epitaphs for "a little more than ten" relatives and friends and was not up to the task, he was on one hand providing a reason not to write the epitaph, but also demonstrating his rich experience on the other.

Li Zuyao drew from other genres of Sun's writings to either restore the context of the letters or to enable a better comprehension of them. For example, his annotation of Letter C directly quoted Sun Di's epitaph for Madam Wang, which I discuss later in this chapter, to add more detail about her family background. The collection *Neijian chidu* also included some other types of writings by Sun Di to supplement the letters, such as poems. When Sun Di was staying in Hengshan 橫山, where his good friend Hu Songnian 胡松年 (1087-1146) was living, he wrote two letters to Hu with

矣”。 See *Hongqing jushi ji buyi* 鴻慶居士集補遺, in *Congshu jicheng xinbian* 叢書集成新編, vol. 103 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1994), 19/92.

³¹ Sun Di, NJCD, 1/4b-5a.

enclosed poems to “inspire a laugh”.³² In the *Neijian chidu*, the original texts of three poems in quatrain form were also included as a reference. Li made an additional note saying that Sun Di’s “collected works in circulation already include the three poems” related to Hengshan, but it “left out one Ancient Airs Style (*gufeng* 古風) [poem]”, therefore he was including that in the text as well.³³ We do not have enough information about the circulation of *Hongqing jushi ji* to establish whether readers of *Neijian chidu* also had access to Sun Di’s other writings. That said, Li Zuyao’s inclusion of Sun’s poems, essays, and epitaphs aided the presentation and contextualization of his teacher’s letters, if a person was only familiar with Sun Di’s writings in *Neijian chidu* and not elsewhere.

Let us now return to a reading of Sun Di’s letters to Meng Zhonghou. In Sun Di’s next letter, he found another way to refuse the task:

Letter D

For the sake of being your old follower, I do not dare to refuse to write the inscription for the secluded hall of the Madam of the State of Qin. If I were to adhere to today’s standards, then you would not have to take the pain to instruct me repeatedly—I would have labored to assist in what is necessary. However, your brother I have turned old and I have abandoned my learning. My ability to write has weakened. This would be a mistake to both [you and me]. 秦國夫人幽堂之銘，在門下之舊，不敢辭。以今世俗之所尚，則不當重勤誨飭，姑勉副所須。第衰老廢(廢)學，筆力減退，徒兩失之也。³⁴

32 Both Sun and Hu were Prefects of Pingjiang at one point, and both were marginalised politically by Qin Gui. Sun wrote a playful essay about Hu’s cats in 1142/5. See his “*Mao xiangru ji* 貓相乳記,” QSW, vol. 160, 3480/364-65. In it he mentioned that during the past five years, “each time I visited him, I stayed for several days [at his residence] 某每造公，輒留數日”.

33 Sun Di, NJCD, 3/5b.

34 *Ibid.*, 1/5a-b.

By explaining how his writing ability had waned as he grew old, Sun Di portrayed himself as an incompetent candidate for the job. The only way of acting responsibly was therefore to refuse this job. Self-denigration, as suggested by linguistic politeness research on Chinese, was one of the major strategies of expressing reverence.³⁵ The politeness achieved here can be understood as a way to avoid distrust and bad feelings on the side of Meng. Also, since Sun Di had already explained that his ability did not fit the job, even if he eventually agreed to the task there would be little leeway for Meng Zhonghou to complain about what Sun Di wrote. He was in effect managing the expectations of Meng.

In the following letter, Sun Di continued to develop the arguments he made in the previous letter by adopting allusions and heightened expressions:

Letter E

[Composing] the inscription for the [Madam of] the State of Qin is not what I can accomplish. Even if flowery masterful writers like the Assistant Teacher³⁶ or the Vice Magistrate of Yongzhou³⁷ still survive, what they might write will not be admired by people today, so how would it be possible for me [to accomplish this task]? You asked me to write because you think I can rise above the mediocre and vulgar, so I have no choice but to try my best to finish the task. Again I doubt if I can live up to your grand expectations. In spite of this, her practices of Buddhist learning should not be expounded in length [in the epitaph] for fear of introducing the “breath of vegetarian buns”³⁸ would compromise the form. I hope you will

35 Dániel Z. Kádár, *Terms of (Im)Politeness: A Study of the Communicational Properties of Traditional Chinese (Im)Polite Terms of Address* (Budapest: University of Budapest Press, 2007), 21-23.

36 According to Li Zuyao’s annotation, Sun Di was referring to Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824) here.

37 This refers to Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773-819).

38 In the terminology on literary styles at that time, the “breath of vegetarian buns 酸餡氣” is a slightly derogatory way of referring to the literary style associated with poetry by

consider this. 秦國誌文，非某所堪任。藉令大手筆如四門助教、永州司馬在世，亦非今人所尚，况如某者！執事矯群庸，猥以見屬(囑)，遂黽勉塞命，又不知能副重意否？但學佛不宜詳說，恐麩(涉)酸餡氣，害於文體，更望省督。³⁹

Sun Di explained how even if his writing ability was good enough would not help: masters such as Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan no longer had their charm, how could he be able to write something that could please everyone? Sun Di nevertheless seemed to have changed his mind just before the end of the letter. He made a point on how the epitaph for the Madam should be written—he preferred the epitaph not to go into the details of Madam Wang’s Buddhist faith. Then was this really the way he would compose the epitaph if he was the writer? Before examining what Sun Di actually wrote in the epitaph, I draw from other sources to discuss Sun Di’s behavior as an epitaph writer so that his epistolary acts and epitaph can be put in perspective.

There is quantitative evidence showing that a considerable number of Sun Di’s acquaintances asked him for epitaphs. After tracking down the epitaphs written for these people in Sun Di’s collected works, I found that at least twenty of the 91 letter recipients in *Neijian chidu* had their own epitaphs written by Sun Di. Also, according to the data in the China Biographical Database (CBDB), he had written epitaphs for at least 61 people.⁴⁰ This is quite numerous, especially if we bear in mind that he also wrote epitaphs for people like Madam Wang who were not among the recipients included in *Neijian chidu*. As Sun Di himself mentioned that he had helped to write for more than ten relatives and friends, as mentioned earlier in Letter C, which clearly

monks. See explanation in Gao Shentao 高慎涛, “Seng shi zhi ‘shushunqi’ yu ‘suanxianqi’ 僧诗之“蔬笋气”与“酸馅气,” *Gudian wenxue zhishi* 古典文学知识, no. 1 (2008): 50-57.

39 Sun Di, NJCD, 1/5b.

40 The data is available on: <http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k16229> (accessed May 27, 2014).

was a polite underestimate and may be intended to downplay his use of epitaph writing as a source of income. Writing epitaphs for acquaintances seemed to be one of the activities that he was preoccupied with while he was in seclusion:

I am put in an idle position in the countryside, but my old habit did not go away – I occasionally write epitaphs to record the good deeds of forebears. This is what people are fond of hearing about. As for writing down faithfully the grand ceremonies of an imperial reign, it should be the duty of official historians; it is none of my business. 某投閒田里，習氣不除，閒作銘誌，為父祖傳載功善。此方人情樂聞而喜道者。若一朝大典，當付史官直筆書之，非吾事也。⁴¹

We therefore have further evidence to consider Sun Di as a prolific epitaph writer who had written for acquaintances and beyond. In fact, Sun Di also wrote letters that were used for others' wedding rituals; those were probably commissioned writings as well.⁴² The communication that I am dealing with in this chapter therefore should not be seen as an isolated case; Sun Di would have conducted communications of a similar nature with other people. It is even reasonable to suggest that he only remained in de facto seclusion while he stayed in the Taihu Lake area, since he did not cut off his contact with people serving in official positions at all.

Some studies on the finances of Song officials pointed out that the living standard that their salaries supported was not very high.⁴³ Earning remuneration from

41 Sun Di, "Yu Wang Weisou tie 與王渭叟帖" 4, in QSW, vol. 159, 3449/365.

42 QSW, vol. 159, 3439/204-18. On texts about weddings in this period, Christian de Pee, *The Writing of Weddings in Middle-Period China: Text and Ritual Practice in the Eighth through Fourteenth Centuries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007).

43 The salary of Song officials is a well studied topic and they mostly agree on this point. See, among others, Yichuan Qiang 衣川強 [Kinugawa Tsuyoshi], *Songdai wenguan fengji zhidu 宋代文官俸給制度*, trans. by Zheng Liangsheng 鄭樑生 (Taipei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1977), 81-99; Winston W. Lo, *An Introduction to the Civil Service of Sung China: With Emphasis on its Personnel Administration* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987), 158-165; He Zhongli 何忠礼, "Songdai guanli de fenglu 宋代官吏的俸禄," *Lishi yanjiu 历史研究*, no. 3 (1994): 102-115; Zhang Quanming 张全明, "Ye tan Songdai

writing epitaphs may have been a rather lucrative additional income for some. In the case of Sun Di, there are sources reflecting how he intentionally composed flattering pieces for the deceased's family in exchange for a high payment, and even gained considerable wealth by doing this:

Every time Sun [Di] Zhongyi writes an epitaph for someone he gets a handsome sum of “brush moistening” remuneration. His household became wealthier because of this. The father of the Assistant Magistrate of Jinling died and wanted Zhongyi to write his epitaph. He first sent someone to tell Sun, “after you have completed the writing, I will give you both fine silk and high-quality grain in the amount of a thousand to moisten your brush.” Zhongyi enthusiastically wrote it and flattered the person's father. After the epitaph was inscribed, the promise was broken: paper and brushes, ambergris, and tea from Jian[zhou] were used as substitution for the amount [of silk and grain], and [the Assistant Magistrate] also composed a greeting to thank Zhongyi. Zhongyi could not put up with this, and wrote a piece in parallel prose in response. Part of it says: “For five pecks of rice, a biography was composed; for one thousand [ten?] rolls of silk, a stele was produced. Although this may be the way of antiquity, it is nowhere to be seen nowadays. Even though none of the words on the stone tablet standing by the side of the road are to be sorry for, the praises for the person in the tomb have become hollow.” 孫仲益每爲人作墓碑，得潤筆甚富，所以家益豐。有爲晉陵主簿者，父死，欲仲益作誌銘；先遣人達意于孫云：“文成，縑帛良粟，各當以千濡毫也。”仲益忻然落筆，且溢美之。既刻就，遂寒前盟，以紙筆、龍涎、建茗代其數，且作啓

guanyuan de fenglu 也谈宋代官员的俸禄,” *Lishi yanjiu* 历史研究, no. 2 (1997): 134-54; Wang Shengduo 汪圣铎, *Songdai shehui shenghuo yanjiu* 宋代社会生活研究 (Beijing: Remin chubanshe, 2007), 201-204; Ye Ye 叶焯, *Bei-Song wenren de jingji shenghuo* 北宋文人的经济生活 (Nanchang: Baihuazhou wenyi chubanshe, 2008), 31-70; Ihara Hiroshi, “Numerical Indices that can Reveal the Life of Song Commoners,” in *Trading Networks in Early Modern East Asia*, ed. Angela Schottenhammer (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2010), 7-8.

以謝之。仲益極不堪，即以駢驪之詞報之，略云：“米五斗而作傳，絹千[十?]”⁴⁴
匹以成碑，古或有之，今未見也。立道旁碣，雖無愧詞；諛墓中人，遂成虛
語。⁴⁵

This episode of course ended in Sun Di's disappointment. The story does not only point to Sun Di's emphasis on the rewards of writing epitaphs for others, but also hints at the fact that he anticipated a high remuneration for writing flattering epitaphs. He was therefore very irritated by the fact that he was not paid in cash for writing the commissioned epitaph. Even when he was dissatisfied, he expressed his discontent in the form of a letter.

Another source makes a similar point on how Sun Di wrote epitaphs for material gains:

Most of Sun [Zhongyi] Di's *Hongqing ji* is tomb inscriptions. He swiftly acquired a literary reputation and people from all over invited him [to write epitaphs for them] by offering gold and silk. So many approached him that he could not even entertain them all. Many of what are in his current collected works come from this. They are often flattering remarks in tomb inscriptions and does not even deserve scolding.... When I was previously in an office, an official from the same administration wrote a conduct description for someone. Censors criticized him for this, since they thought this was something that scholar officials should avoid doing. He was sacked on that day.... Zhongyi was lucky that he did not get himself discussed by censors. 孫仲益觀鴻慶集，大半銘誌，一時文名獵獵起，四方爭輦金帛請，日至不暇給。今集中多云云，蓋諛墓之常，不足咤。余在故府時，

44 This is quite likely an error in transcription. Here Sun Di's point was that getting an meager reward for composing an epitaph is not acceptable, hence the mention of five pecks of rice and ten (instead of a thousand) rolls of silk.

45 Wang Mingqing 王明清, *Huizhu lu* 揮塵錄, “hou lu 後錄” (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), 11/210 (#276). I am grateful to Hilde De Weerd for pointing me to this reference.

有同朝士為某人作行狀，言者摘其事，以為士大夫之不忍為，即日罷去……

仲益蓋幸而不及於議也。⁴⁶

The inglorious reputation of Sun's epitaph writing activities seen in these references gives us clues about the hidden motivations and subtle messages in Sun Di's epistolary acts. From the above sources about Sun Di as an epitaph writer, we have to consider the possibility that he was merely making use of his communication to secure better terms for writing the epitaph, such as more control in choosing what to write about, and how much Meng Zhonghou should be paying him for this service. Since Meng Zhonghou as an imperial relative was a powerful and very wealthy figure, this was very likely.

As I stated earlier, the negotiation was a delicate process and it required good communication skills from both sides and especially from the writer, as he had to manage the expectations of the requester before actually embarking on writing the epitaph piece. What was involved in such processes was not only the writer's approach while composing the epitaph and the content he was including, but also the reputation and the expectations of the person who was making the request, usually from the family of the deceased, as well as the remuneration involved.⁴⁷

Although Sun Di insisted on what an incompetent candidate he would be, he still composed the epitaph for Madam Wang.⁴⁸ That this epitaph is preserved is very fortunate because we can read it in parallel with relevant epistolary writings. Here I

46 Yue Ke 岳珂, *Ting shi* 程史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 6/70.

47 One estimate reports that more than 70% of the epitaph requesters were relatives of the deceased person. See Qiu Jiahui, "Cong 'qingming' yu 'zhuanming' tanjiu Songdai shehui de lunchang guanxi," 15-16.

48 From it we know that Madam Wang passed away in her residence in Pingjiang in 1149/5, dying at 59 *sui*.

will analyze how that epitaph tells us more about Meng Zhonghou and Sun Di's negotiation.

In investigating how communication between Sun Di and Meng Zhonghou was conducted through the letters, I am interested in how the epitaph described this process of interaction. In the epitaph, Sun Di recounted why he came to write this epitaph for Madam Wang, and even quoted what Meng Zhonghou wrote in reply, giving us a glimpse of the communication process. When the Madam

was about to be buried, a letter arrived from the Prince of Xin'an asking for an inscription. I chose to decline but I failed after doing so for three times. He sent a letter in reply, "The Prince of Wuxing and you were on good terms while you served in the the same court as him, and you, the Specially Advanced Lord, are celebrated for your writings. [The Prince of Wuxing] seldom approved of [the writings of others], but he only liked to recite your essays. Then it is appropriate [for you] to write an inscription for his daughter." I therefore composed the inscription. 將葬，信安王以書抵故人孫某徵銘，某辭不能，凡三反，則以書復曰：“吳興王與公同朝有好，而特進公以文章知名，少許可，獨喜誦公之文，則銘其女宜也。” 迺序而銘之。⁴⁹

According to a recent study on how and who made requests for epitaphs, the writing of epitaphs became a quasi-professional activity in Song China, and the relationships between the epitaph writers and who they were writing for became more diversified. Some changes also emerged as a result of this new development in the content of epitaph writings: explaining why and how the writer came to compose an epitaph had become commonplace in epitaphs from the Song; in contrast, before this period, even

49 QSW, vol. 161, 3495/121.

the author of the epitaph was not always identified.⁵⁰ Sun Di even quoted the correspondence of Meng Zhonghou to show how he was convinced to compose the epitaph. This paragraph of the epitaph wrote for Madam Wang is a testimony to this change in the content of epitaphs.

In Letter E, Sun Di mentioned how writing too much about Madam Wang's Buddhist faith would be undesirable. In his view, including an expository of what Madam Wang did to practice Buddhism would run the risk of making the epitaph too Buddhist in style, and hence compromising the form of the epitaph which was written for this noble madam. However, he did actually include details of Madam Wang's Buddhist faith in the epitaph that he wrote for her. According to the second half of the epitaph, the Madam

could read and understand literature from the past. She was fond of reciting Buddhist texts since young. She would light incense in the morning and candles at night, regardless of the cold or the heat. Later when [her faith] became more solid, she could connect with the Buddha and establish spiritual contact while asleep. One night, she dreamed of a foreign monk knocking on the door to ask for shelter and food. During dawn there was a person selling the portraits of the eighteen arhats. Since they were lifelike portraits, the Madam bought them without caring about the price. From then on the Madam used her reserves to help the poor. There was not a time when she did not give alms to Buddhist monks and donated gold and silk. She strictly adhered to the code and never killed a living thing for meals. She also once dreamed of ten and more people in black clothing; all were begging desperately for help. When she woke up, chirping clams were about to be served. She immediately ordered to set them free in the water. Since then she never ate

50 See Qiu Jiahui, "Cong 'qingming' yu 'zhuanming' tanjiu Songdai shehui de lunchang guanxi," 19-20.

seafood.⁵¹ Her illness became more severe, but when making arrangements for her departure, she bade farewell to her family without any signs of sadness. Those who are familiar with Buddhism consider the Madam to have come from the Golden Immortal Brahma.⁵² She took worldly principles to be empty and illusionary, as if they are the blowing wind. 於古文章，能通其讀。自少喜誦佛書，晨香夜燈，不避寒暑；晚益精練，感通佛祖，至神交於寢寐之間。一夕，夢胡僧人扣門求館穀，黎旦，有鬻十八羅漢像者，視所畫尚焉，售之不計其直。以至廩恤貧乏，供施佛僧，捐棄金繒，殆無虛日。持戒律甚嚴，未嘗殺生物供饌。又嘗夢青衣十數祈哀甚急，既寤，有餉蛤蚌者嘖嘖然，亟命縱之水中。自是，終身不御鮮食。疾益侵，區處後事與家人訣，無惘惘可憐之色。知佛者以謂夫人自金僊梵帝中來。其視世諦空幻，殆猶吹一呷而去也。⁵³

With up to 170 characters and several graphic stories portraying Madam Wang's devout Buddhist faith, the epitaph turned out to contain a considerable amount of content about Madam Wang's "practices of Buddhist learning". Her vegetarianism, offerings, and composure at the end of her life are all examples of her faith. Although the epitaph shares many elements of the portrayal of other pious Buddhist women from her time, such as those laid out in recent scholarship on Buddhist women as portrayed in epitaphs,⁵⁴ going to such lengths to write about Madam Wang's religiosity was clearly not the way Sun Di had initially suggested he would write the

51 Compare with the stories analyzed in Barend J. ter Haar, "Buddhist-Inspired Options: Aspects of Lay Religious Life in the Lower Yangzi From 1100 to 1340," *T'oung Pao* 87 (2001): 134-37.

52 The Daoist Emperor Huizong gave Shakyamuni the name "Golden Immortal of Great Enlightenment 大覺金仙". See Ebrey, *Emperor Huizong*, 365.

53 QSW, vol. 161, 3495/121-22.

54 Huitzu Lu, "Women's Ascetic Practices during the Song," *Asia Major*, 3rd series 15, no. 1 (2002): 73-108; Mark Halperin, "Domesticity and the Dharma: Portraits of Buddhist Laywomen in Sung China," *T'oung Pao* 92, Nos. 1-3 (2006): 50-100; Huang Qijiang 黃啟江, *Sizhou dasheng yu songxue daoren: Song-Yuan shehui jingying de fojiao xinyang yu fojiao wenhua* 泗州大聖與松雪道人——宋元社會菁英的佛教信仰與佛教文化 (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 2009), 81-234, esp. 171 & 230.

epitaph in Letter E.

Then this apparent conflict between what he first indicated and what he eventually wrote requires an explanation. Maybe Meng Zhonghou insisted on including this in the epitaph, and Sun Di backed down and changed his mind. It was obviously undesirable to disappoint his patron who was a relative of the imperial family. As Cong Ellen Zhang has illustrated in a recent study, there existed “the inherent conflict between the biographer’s interest in controlling his work and the role the deceased family expected to play in shaping the deceased’s legacy”.⁵⁵ It is quite likely that these stories were provided or told by Madam Wang’s family members, possibly in the conduct description sent to Sun Di mentioned in Letter C.⁵⁶ Then Sun Di would have compromised and included them in the prose section of the epitaph. It is quite probable that this was again a measure by Sun Di to please the person who commissioned the epitaph, Meng Zhonghou, as he had done with some others who asked him for epitaphs. An outright acceptance of the writing task would probably have been less advantageous for Sun Di anyway. In his study Halperin wondered how the “financial relationship” of commissioned epitaphs “affected the texts’ content”, and Sun Di’s letters concerning Madam Wang’s epitaph examined above shed an interesting light on this issue.⁵⁷ As I have shown, the payment definitely had an effect on the content of epitaphs.

⁵⁵ Zhang, “Writing Fan Zhongyan's Epitaphs.”

⁵⁶ Halperin suggested that “reference to Buddhist piety could easily have depended on a writer’s predilections as well as on what a woman actually did.” Halperin, “Domesticity and the Dharma,” 63.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 63n31.

Finding, Buying, and Visiting Burial Sites: Soliciting Help by Writing Letters

Sun Di not only responded to requests of acquaintances in his letters; he also explicitly asked for favors himself by writing. By focusing on how Sun Di found burial sites for his elder brother and two wives, and how he followed up by writing letters, we can see how Sun Di maintained good relations with some of his acquaintances.

By the mid-1130s Sun Di's wives and his elder brother Sun Guan 孫觀 had passed away.⁵⁸ Sun Di's own unstable career prevented him from securing burial sites for them, until he wrote letters to Hui Yanda 惠彥達 to inquire about monastic lands in Yixing 宜興, close to where Hui was living. Otherwise, there is very little information on Hui Yanda. Three extant short letters by him deal with this in particular:

“You told me that there are six residences available and will make an estimate of their prices. If they could be acquired, please tell me the amount and I shall send the payment. I have bothered you several times and it is not easy to express how impressed I am by your excellent conduct. 向面諭，有屋六間(間)，許為評其價。如果可得，望以數字報，即遣金併煩說也。但數有干扣，感服高義，未易具言。”⁵⁹

“I longed for news from you on the land in Peaceful Joy Mountain that I am looking for. How is it going? ...I am sending a messenger to report to you with the wish that you could provide instructions on this. It would be very fortunate if you could do so. 向懇靜樂山地，久俟一報，不知如何.....專介稟扣，望諭曲折，

58 Chen Xiaolan, “Sun Di shengping ji qi wenji xiang kao,” 55; Tsui, “Ruins, Reconstruction, and Ruminations.”

59 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 12, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/334.

幸甚！”⁶⁰

“I would like to bother you to inform the abbot about my trivial intentions about their land in Peaceful Joy Mountain. Whatever it is that he wants, it can be agreed to. 靜樂山地，欲煩招主僧諭道區區，渠有所欲，皆可從也。”⁶¹

Sun Di later recounted such efforts in a travel account about his efforts to find the burial sites. He mentioned writing to Hui Yanda to ask about the monastic land for a burial, but also that he could not pursue it at the time because he was banished to Guangxi in 1132:

I have heard from Guo [Sanyi] Shenqiu (*jinsi* 1088) the Military Commissioner that the monastery lands of Peaceful Joy Mountain are suitable for burials. When I administered Hangzhou, I divined a burial site for my deceased elder brother. I asked Hui Yanda to meet the monks at the monastery to request [to buy land from them], and he sent me a letter saying that it was possible. We were discussing the price, but then I had to relocate to the south so I was not able to do it. 余聞靜樂山寺地可葬，於郭慎求樞密二十年矣。余守杭時，卜葬亡兄，屬惠彥達抵寺僧求之，書來報可，方議於直，會余南遷，不果。⁶²

In the essay, Sun Di went on to recount the trips he made in 1135 and 1136/3:

Five years later, in the winter of the fourth year of the Shaoxing period, I finally went to see it. It was at the foot of the Bronze Coffin Mountain.... The monastery is to its right. There could be a burial there just as I have heard. But the monk no longer agreed, unlike [what Hui wrote in his] letter. He was reluctant because he wanted to sell it to rich men of the time, so I did not insist. In the 3rd month of the following year, I tried again to divine for a burial site in the mountains. We entered

60 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 35, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/342.

61 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 36, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/342.

62 Sun Di, “Jingxi xingji 荆溪行記,” in *Hongqing jushi ji*, 21/15a. I have made some adjustments to the text of this essay according to the edition in QSW, vol. 160, 3479/360-62.

Hufu to visit Hui Yanda. We arrived at his residence at night, and asked where the White Efficacious Grotto site was. Yanda said, “According to the *Book of Burial*, the sites where divine dragons meet are not suitable for burial.⁶³ But let us go see it nonetheless.” On the day of *bingshu* Yanda prepared meals in Dragon Mountain. Three *li* before arriving at Dragon Mountain, Yanda pointed at a cave called Sleeping Ox.... Its three peaks pointed at each other and the cave is surrounded from the two sides. Two streams join here. It is a desirable place for burial. I also remember when Zhou Fang of the Jin Dynasty buried his mother, Tao [Kan] Shixing pointed at the sleeping place of an ox.⁶⁴ It is auspicious and I quite prefer it. I asked who its owner was and it was Yanda who owned it. Yanda was willing to fulfill my urgent need [of finding a burial site], so a deal was struck. The sun was about to set when we passed Yanda’s self-prepared tomb, where trees [nearby] could be used for logwood. Yanda prepared some wine and we stayed in the mountains.... I used to hear that the scenery in Furong is magnificent so I wanted to pay it a visit.... On the way we divined for a burial site in Tortoise Pool to the north of Hufu, which was to bury my deceased wife Madam Wu. The date was already picked but I was frightened by rumors so I did not bury her yet. I regret this very much. I now suggest burying Madam Zhang with her. 後五年，當紹興乙卯之冬，始往觀焉，實銅棺山之麓.....寺據其右，可葬如所聞者，而寺僧不如書，有難色，方求售於當世貴人，余亦弗強也。明年三月，更卜地於山中.....

63 Hui Yanda might have had the guidelines of the *Zang shu* 葬書 in mind when he said this. See Juwen Zhang, *A Translation of the Ancient Chinese “The Book of Burial (Zang Shu)”* by Guo Pu (276-324) (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004), esp. 86-97. On divining for burial sites in the Song, see Liu Xiangguang 劉祥光, *Songdai richang shenghuo de busuan yu guiguai* 宋代日常生活的卜算與鬼怪 (Taipei: Zhengda chubanshe, 2013), 122-32.

64 During the Jin Dynasty, an elder advised Tao Kan 陶侃 (259-334) to bury his mother at the sleeping place of an ox in the mountains, and Zhou Fang 周訪 (260-32) to bury his father in another mountain. He said if they did as they were told, they could become high officials in the future, which was what actually happened later on. See Fang Xuanling 房玄齡, *Jin shu* 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1974), 58/1586.

入胡狀，謁惠彥達。夜抵其居，問白靈巖地所在，彥達云：“神龍所會合，在《葬書》不可用，然姑往視之。”丙戌，彥達具飯於龍山……未至龍山三里，彥達指一穴，名臥牛……三峰對拱，左右環合，二水交會，可葬無害也。余亦記晉周訪葬母，陶士行指牛眠地葬之，吉，意頗向之。問地主，即彥達也。彥達亦欣然赴予之急，議遂定。日將入，過彥達所營壽藏，木可材矣。彥達置酒，留宿山中……余舊聞阜蓉佳山水，欲一至其處……途又卜烏龜潭地於胡狀之北，葬亡妻吳氏淑人也。已撰日矣，為浮言所誑，又不克葬，既而悔之。今議併舉章氏淑人以附。⁶⁵

It was during the trip that Sun Di decided on the burial site of his brother and wives. Hui had accompanied him on his visit and seemed to have sold some of his own ssland to Sun. In order to express his gratitude, Sun Di sent Hui Yanda a note after the trip:

My trip of sending [the body] to burial has caused much trouble to you and your neighbors, and I have deeply benefitted from your help. How can my gratitude be expressed by hollow words? Earnestly submitting this *zhuang* letter.⁶⁶ 某葬送之役，煩擾閭里殆徧，而蒙賜厚，區區感懷，豈空言所能占敘？謹上狀。⁶⁷

As far as these letters show, Sun Di paid visits to the tombs after the burials of his brother and wives were conducted. He contacted Hui to ask for logistical assistance, which mostly had to do with transportation:

“I would like to go to Ox Mountain to visit the tomb, so I would need three covered sedan chairs. We will return in the evening. Pardon me if this bothers you.

65 Sun Di, “Jingxi xingji,” 21/15a-17b.

66 This referred not to *zhuang* as official documents (“petitions”) but to *zhuang* letters. On these see Ouyang Xiu’s discussion in Chapter 2.

67 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 21, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/337.

某欲至牛山上冢，輒假暖轎三乘，侵晚便歸。浼瀆，尚冀察恕。”⁶⁸

“I brought my children to visit the tomb and we are now staying in Xiqiao. But there are many small disturbances that have prevented us from seeing you.... I would like to borrow three sedan chairs on the seventeenth day to go to Ox Mountain. We will return by dawn. Because of your caring love, I shall not be overly polite. 攜孥上冢，已次溪橋，細故紛然，未果一見.....某十七欲假三轎至牛山，薄暮言還。恃眷愛，不自外也。”⁶⁹

“I would like to borrow a horse to go to Dragon Mountain tonight; I will return the following day. I will not forget how you treated me with great courtesy. Sorry for the trouble. 今晚欲假小騎二至龍山，來日便歸，青芻白飯，不敢略也。干扣皇恐。”⁷⁰

He received gifts from Hui Yanda as well, including tea, fruit, acorns, and even ten hoes for farming.⁷¹ He thanked Hui for these in the letters written to him. This was not a one-way flow of favors and gifts. As we can see from what Sun Di wrote, he thanked Hui several times for his hospitality during his visits to Yixing:

“I do not dare to refuse your receiving me, but please do not bother to throw a banquet. Having a meal prepared would suffice. 招呼不敢辭，乞不治具，只告設飯也。”⁷²

“I am extremely grateful that you treat me to meals during my stay. 適蒙以盛具

68 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 11, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/333.

69 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 31, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/340.

70 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 47, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/346.

71 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 25, 28, 32, 37, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/338-39 & 341-42. Gifts were often sent with letters that literati officials exchanged. In one instance, Sun Di gave 30 brushes and 300 slips of letter paper to a friend. See Sun Di, *Song Sun Zhongyi neijian chidu*, 3/386. The exchanges of objects by literati and its relation to their poems are discussed in Xiaoshan Yang, *Metamorphosis of the Private Sphere: Gardens and Objects in Tang-Song Poetry* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 149-96. See also Chapter 5 for examples on Mi Fu.

72 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 10, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/333.

延留，不任感戢。”⁷³

“Being offered lavish meals by you on my journey, I am grateful and ashamed. 大

烹致饋，旅食之光，拜貺感作。”⁷⁴

And he also sent gifts to express his goodwill:

“I am pleased that we got to chat last night. I am extremely grateful for and embarrassed by your kindly treating me to meals. I present to you four outfits in the northern style, 38 jars of wine, and six sets of bedding. I have prepared this small favor because of your caring love. Hope this is not too condescending for you. 昨晚得奉言笑為慰。大烹辱貺，重意所臨。拜嘉，感愧之深。北方衣著四端，酒三十八尊，臥席六牀，恃眷顧，輒致區區之勤。不辱斥遣，幸甚幸甚！”⁷⁵

“Of course I do not dare to present too many of these things. If I were to repay your big favors, I should do much more to requite your kindness, like the old man tying grass knots,⁷⁶ not just sending you these insignificant things! I am sorry if this offends you. 區區藉手，自不敢多致。若云酬報大德，地下當以結草。顧此微物，何足道哉！數浼，尚冀恕察。”⁷⁷

“The two small tea cakes are for you to take a sip after drinking [wine]. I present them to you, along with several kinds of food. It is embarrassing that they are so humble. 小團兩餅，可供飲後一啜，食數種同納上。薄少為作。”⁷⁸

“I present to you five jars of country wine. It would be great if you could keep

73 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 19, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/336.

74 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 30, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/340.

75 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 16, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/335.

76 This expression alludes to the act of repaying someone. An old man from the Spring and Autumn period tied grass into knots to prevent the enemies from the Qin 秦 state from running away. He did this to repay the Jin 晉 general Wei Ke 魏顆, who married his daughter and prevented her from being buried alive as human sacrifice. See *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan zhu* 春秋左傳注, edited by Yang Bojun 楊伯峻 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 764.

77 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 18, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/335.

78 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 22, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/337.

them. 村酒五罇謁送，幸恕留。”⁷⁹

“I present to you five jars of country wine for light drinking. It would be great if you could keep them. 村酒五尊供小飲，幸恕留。”⁸⁰

“I shamefully present to you two sets of bedding for use in your room. As for the cash that I borrowed from you to meet urgent needs, I have already asked a relative to check the original sum. I will send you the remaining [amount]. 臥席兩牀，謾供丈室偃仰，僭為愧。向兌錢荷周急，已屬包（胞）親契勘木（本？）直外，續致其餘也。”⁸¹

From the quoted sources above it can be seen that Hui Yanda facilitated the burials of Sun Di's family members in the mid-1130s. He had even lent him some money. Sun Di liaised with him by corresponding with him. He maintained a relationship of constant gift giving with him, as is shown in the frequent correspondence between them. When he visited the burials he had to write to Hui Yanda to ask for assistance.

Asking for Favors on Behalf of Others

The favors that I have discussed above were all directly asked for. The advantages of the indirectness of epistolary communication enabled individuals to extend their favors to acquaintances. Here I will briefly introduce an example that demonstrates this. In a letter, Sun Di had asked Wang Fu 王傅 to intervene in a property dispute that had to do with land under Chen Dezhen's 陳德振 name, but not

79 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 33, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/341 (with modifications in punctuation).

80 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 45, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/345.

81 Sun Di, “Yu Hui Yanda tie 與惠彥達帖” 44, QSW, vol. 159, 3447/345.

his own:

I knock my head and write: The elder brother of the new magistrate of Yixing Chen Dezhen was punished. His registered land was confiscated as a result, but later there were orders to have them returned to him, but there is still some land in Wuxi that he has not retrieved. It would be very fortunate if [you could send] a letter to make this point clear so that the property managers and tenants are ordered to return all the land. After orders were given to have them returned, the land did not go to the authorities, but it was not returned to Chen either. It is a great pity that it was embezzled by petty men instead. I beg for your understanding. 某頓首：新宜興宰陳德振，其兄坐累，拘籍田產，後得旨給還。獨有屬無錫者猶未盡得。一箭馳扣，望特達之，賜追幹人佃客等盡數給還，幸甚！此物自降旨（指）揮後，不屬官，又未歸陳氏，而為小人乾沒，殊可惜也。想辱矜察(察)。⁸²

Sun Di asked for help to retrieve land that had belonged to Chen Dezhen's brother and was later embezzled and occupied by property managers and tenants. These managers (*ganren* 幹人) were a new professional class in the Song that managed various kinds of property for well-off households, or disguised themselves as tenants of state-owned land to evade taxes and yield profits for landlords.⁸³ Their improper conduct of profiting from their duties was probably not that uncommon. Yuan Cai 袁采 (1163 *jinshi*), for example, had warned against the embezzlement of property by managers in his family precepts. He wrote about this in his family precepts in 1178:

Embezzlement begins with the manager taking only the slightest amount; in his heart he believes he will repay it later and so he is not yet afraid. After some time,

82 Sun Di, NJCD, 13/8a-b.

83 See Sutō Yoshiyuki 周藤吉之, *Chūgoku tochi seido shi* 中国土地制度史 (Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 1954), 65-105; Shiba Yoshinobu, *Commerce and Society in Sung China*, trans. and ed. Mark Elvin (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1970), 189-191; Dai Jinghua 戴静华, "Songdai ganren qianlun 宋代干人浅论," *Zhongguo shi yanjiu* 中国史研究, no. 4 (1982): 53-61.

when he sees that the master had noticed nothing, he gradually increases his peculations as the days and months go by. By the end of a year they are substantial. By now he is afraid but sees no way out except to cover up for himself. After two or three years, his depredations are too noticeable to be hidden. The master will want to deal with him harshly and his repentance will come too late. People who use managers should take warning from this.⁸⁴ 其始也，移用甚微，其心以為可償，猶未經慮。久而主不知覺，則日增焉，月益焉。積而至於一歲，移用已多，其心雖惴惴無可奈何，則求以掩覆。至二年、三年，侵欺已大彰露，不可掩覆。主人欲峻治之，已近噬臍。故凡委託幹人，所宜警此。⁸⁵

These problems were probably quite common among the managers employed in wealthy households. It is interesting to note that Sun Di himself probably also employed such managers for managing his sand fields in his native place Jinling 晉陵, which only required an annual payment of 29 *shi* of barley for land tax. This perhaps had already given Sun Di a sense of the conduct of these “petty men”.⁸⁶ Although I have not identified any other evidence that proves this, it seems highly probable that Sun Di and Wang Fu both know of Chen Dezhen, and hence Sun Di felt he could ask for Wang’s help on this matter.

As with the example of letters dealing with the writing of epitaphs, I again stress that this was not an isolated phenomenon. It was not only Sun Di who wrote such letters. Other contemporaries also wrote petitions to their contacts to deal with similar disputes concerning property, and even to lobby for one’s interests in a lawsuit.⁸⁷ For

84 Patricia Buckley Ebrey trans., *Family and Property in Sung China: Yüan Ts’ai’s Precepts for Social Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 301-302 (3.47).

85 Yuan Cai 袁采, *Yuanshi shifan* 袁氏世範, in CSJC, vol. 974, 3/57.

86 See Dai Jinghua, “Song dai ganren qianlun,” 54.

87 For examples of property disputes in this period, see the cases translated in *The Enlightened Judgments, Ch’ing-ming Chi: The Sung Dynasty Collection*, trans. Brian E.

example, an extant manuscript letter shows that the high official Lou Yao 樓鑰 (1137-1231) wrote to an acquaintance to seek for support in a legal case involving lineage common properties that belonged to his family in the Siming 四明 area.⁸⁸ From that letter it is clear that writing letters to contacts with the right kind of leverage in disputes was one of the main ways to act in one's own favor and that of one's social contacts. It was also easier to ask one's contacts in the local region to help than to report to the authorities.

Closing Remarks

Sun Di's five letters demonstrates how the negotiation of epitaph writing was carried out by epistolary exchanges. We do not know for certain whether the epitaph Sun Di wrote faithfully recorded the real details in the life of Madam Wang; a more interesting question to me is what social realities enabled such epitaphs to be produced in Song China. The tactful responses and the financial incentives behind are part of these realities in literati life. Meng Zhonghou managed to get the job done by Sun Di, and Sun Di secured the terms that he could agree to for writing the epitaph after refusing for several times. I have shown that Sun Di was not only experienced in

Mcknight and James T. C. Liu (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 146-90.

88 See Hou Yili 侯怡利, "Cheng tiju langzhong qizhang zhazi 呈提舉郎中契丈笥子," in *Wenyi Shaoxing: Nan-Song yishu yu wenhua, shuhua juan* 文藝紹興：南宋藝術與文化·書畫卷, ed. He Chuanxing 何傳馨 (Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 2010), 355 (I-30); Nie Wenhua 聂文华, "Xin faxian Lou Yue yiwen kaoshi: Guanyu Siming yizhuang tiachan zhengsong an 新发现楼钥佚文考释——关于四明义庄田产争讼案," (unpublished paper, 2014). I have also benefitted from Zeng Yongxuan's insights on this letter at a reading group in the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica. On Lou's influential clan, see Huang Kuanchong 黃寬重, "Songdai Siming shizu renji wangluo yu shehui wenhua huodong: yi Lou shi jiazhu wei zhongxin de guan cha 宋代四明士族人際網絡與社會文化活動——以樓氏家族為中心的觀察," *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 70, no. 3 (1999): 627-669.

writing epitaphs for others, he also communicated tactfully with others on this matter. Taking Sun Di's reputation as a greedy writer into consideration, the five letters that I have discussed are probably not an example of epistolary refusal ending in failure.⁸⁹ This is because one can reasonably doubt whether Sun Di really wanted to shy away from composing the epitaph, with his contemporary reputation as a writer who composed for remuneration. After all, polite refusals were often more ceremonial than whole-hearted, especially since he refused three times, which was the traditional norm for polite acceptance of favors or gifts. It was letter writing that made these subtle negotiations possible between literati officials.

Similarly, epistolary communication made possible the trips Sun Di had made to Yixing and his maintaining a good relationship with Hui Yanda, which was crucial for managing the burial sites of his family and probably for making visits there. In fact, all the examples that I study in this chapter involved financial transactions of some sort. They were, therefore, rather sensitive issues to negotiate in writing. Many of these transactions had to be dealt with carefully and amicably in epistolary exchanges. It also shows that epistolary sources can be mined for useful information on the economic life of scholar officials, such as their living expenses.⁹⁰

In the conversation between Sun Di and his correspondents, only the letters by the former are still available to us. I am thus only able to examine one direction of the

⁸⁹ According to linguistic research on politeness in letters, there are cultural-specific patterns in the epistolary discourse of refusals in Chinese letters. See Dániel Z. Kádár, "Historical Chinese Politeness and Rhetoric: A Case Study of Epistolary Refusals," *Journal of Politeness Research* 8, no. 1 (2012): 93-110.

⁹⁰ Examples of letters with these kinds of information are discussed in Michael A. Fuller, *The Road to East Slope: The Development of Su Shi's Poetic Voice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 261; Egan, "Su Shi's Informal Letters in Literature and Life," in *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 481-86; Qianshen Bai, "Calligraphy for Negotiating Everyday Life: The Case of Fu Shan (1607-1684)," *Asia Major*, 3rd series 12, no. 1 (1999): 72-78; David Pattinson, "Epistolary Networks and Practice in the Early Qing: The Letters Written to Yan Guangmin," in *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 796-98.

written communication between them. In spite of this, some contents of Meng Zhonghou and Hui Yanda's communication with Sun Di could still be deduced from Sun's replies and other sources. Since we are mostly relying on collected works of individual writers for their letters, the difficulty of restoring the context to epistolary sources is a common problem in the study of Chinese letters. However, apart from letters I also scrutinized an epitaph and an essay by Sun Di for relevant historical information because they help us understand the functions that the letters performed in the original social context.

In Sun Di's case, writing letters achieved some of his objectives, but being able to write gracefully was not always a blessing. Not long after Sun Di became Prefect of Lin'an in 1131, he wrote a letter to congratulate Qin Gui on his new appointment to the Council of State in 1131/2. Although it was a routine greeting that officials sent to prominent ministers who got new appointments, Qin Gui read it as a criticism of his ascension to an important post. Unlike the loyal figures that Sun Di alluded to, there were rumours about his return from captivity in 1130.⁹¹ The letter reads as follows:

I know that your uprightness is not suspected when put to examination by the ghosts and spirits;⁹² your loyalty and faithfulness have even influenced the southern barbarians. When we all made our homes on boats in the sea, you returned from the Central Plains. And when the four quarters heard the news, all wept forth tears of joy. Su Wu of Han, after all the tassels of his imperial tally had

91 Hartman, "The Making of a Villain," 88-89.

92 This expression is an allusion to *Zhongyong* 中庸 29.3: "Therefore, the institutions of the Ruler are rooted in his own character and conduct, and sufficient attestation of them is given by the masses of the people. He examines them by comparison with those of the three kings, and finds them without mistake. He sets them up before heaven and earth, and finds nothing in them contrary to their mode of operation. He presents himself with them before spiritual beings, and no doubts about them arise 質諸鬼神而無疑. He is prepared to wait for the rise of a sage, a hundred ages after, and has no misgivings." See James Legge trans., *The Chinese Classics* (London: N. Trübner & Co., 1869), 1: 314.

fallen off, returned to obtain only a post in charge of independent states; Du Fu of Tang had to wear hempen sandals to audience, and obtained only a post as Reminder. No man can compare with your loyalty as a captive among ruthless barbarians, who gathered intelligence after the defeats in the realm of the two rivers. Now that your Lordship has received the grace of the emperor who will bring imperial revival, joining the Council of State to manage important affairs. As your long-time follower, I did not have the luck to congratulate your appointment yet. But as an aging and withering man I must speak my mind to the heaven. I ask for your grace and tolerance—if I may live a life as a mediocre and unambitious person, I would not dare to forget to repay your Lordship. 審參政正直質諸鬼神，忠信行於蠻貊。盡室航海，復還中州。四海傳聞，感涕交下。漢蘇武節旄盡落，止得屬國；唐杜甫麻鞋入見，乃授拾遺。未有如公獨仗忠義於強胡劫質之中，盡得虜情於二江敗衄之後。膺受帝賚，恢復中興；登進廟堂，參秉大政。某以門牆舊物，未獲賀慶之私；而蒲柳殘年，方亟上籲天之請。敢圖恩託，曲賜優容。儻此身得樗櫟之生，則他日敢忘蛇雀之報。⁹³

Although the letter was full of praises, “Qin took it as ridiculing him. From then on he was very angry [at Sun Di] 檜以為譏己，始大怒之”.⁹⁴ Hartman explained that upon reading the letter Qin Gui

perceived a criticism: when the rest of the Court was forced to flee on the open sea, he was not there. In this reading, the references to Su Wu and Du Fu became ironic: unlike those heroes who suffered for the state and received only minor posts, Qin Gui, within several months of his return, received a major post.⁹⁵

An official later charged him with misappropriating military supplies worth 40,000

93 QSW, vol. 159, 3431/82 (with modifications in punctuation). Part of the translation is based on Hartman, “The Making of a Villain,” 88.

94 Li Xinchuan 李心傳, *Jiyan yilai xinian yaolu* 建炎以來繫年要錄 (hereafter XNYL) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2013), 42/903.

95 Hartman, “The Making of a Villain,” 89.

strings of cash,⁹⁶ and Qin Gui turned this accusation to the authorities, which resulted in Sun Di's indictment and confinement. In the time of a highly precarious political climate, even a writer like Sun Di who was a master the composition of letters was not able to avoid troubles.⁹⁷ This politically hazardous environment in the first half of the 1130s was the background of the letters which I will be examining in the following chapter.

96 Sun Di himself mentioned these funds in a letter written during this period; a rubbing of that letter is still extant. See Cao Baolin 曹寶麟, *Bao weng ji* 抱甕集 (Taipei: Huifeng bimo youxian gongsi, 1991), 21-30.

97 On such risks of literary inquisition, see Charles Hartman, "The Misfortunes of Poetry Literary Inquisitions under Ch'in Kuei (1090-1155)," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 25, (2003): 25-57. On the dominance of Qin Gui in epistolary networks, see Ming-kin Chu, "Writing Letters to Qin Gui's Clique: A Study of Zheng Gangzhong's Epistolary Network," paper presented at "Conference on Middle Period China, 800-1400," Harvard University, June 2014.

CHAPTER 4

Letters in Political Communication

Introduction

This chapter examines the role of letter writing in the political culture of Song China, as illustrated by the high official Li Gang's 李綱 (1083-1140) letters. The focus will be on political communication between high-level officials during an unstable phase in the early Southern Song when the fate of the dynasty still hung in the balance; specifically, this chapter deals with epistolary communication carried out by Li Gang within the imperial bureaucracy in the early 1130s, especially from 1131 to 1133. Based on the political context of that period, I examine how Li Gang, a prominent literati official, made use of letters as a device for communicating on state affairs with the two Grand Councilors of the time, namely Lü Yihao 呂頤浩 (1071-1139) and Qin Gui 秦檜 (1090-1155). This historical case will allow me to explain the political functions of epistolary communication.

This chapter will begin with explaining the main research questions concerning political communication in letters, followed by a section providing a basic narrative of Li Gang's career in relation to his letters in the early 1130s. Then I will turn to the actual analysis of political communication conducted by Li Gang, focusing on his views on the precarious political situation of the time, as well as how he reflected on the

communication between the Grand Councilors and himself, in order to look at the communicative powers of letters in politics. This chapter then concludes with remarks on the relationship between letter writing and political communication in the Song bureaucracy.

Political communication has long been recognized to be tremendously important to the maintenance of the Chinese empire,¹ stretched out as it always was over large distances that took weeks to cover even with the fastest transport possible, which was by postal courier on horse. As I will elaborate in this chapter, policy issues were central to the concerns of the letters that I examine here. Formal letters between officials served as an important but understudied mode of political communication in imperial China,² and they constitute the backbone of my investigation of Li Gang's epistolary writings in this chapter. By recognizing that vibrant communication between members of the political elite existed not only in official documents and verbal exchanges, but also in personal epistolary exchanges sent through governmental channels, this chapter hopefully broadens the scope of research on information channels within the government in Song China, as a response to recent calls for attention to new sources for investigating the political history of that period.³ Indeed, high officials communicated

1 On political communication in imperial China (by order of imperial period covered), see Charles Sanft, *Communication and Cooperation in Early Imperial China: Publicizing the Qin Dynasty* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014); Enno Giele, *Imperial Decision-Making and Communication in Early China: A Study of Cai Yong's Duduan* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006), Hilde De Weerd, *Information, Territory, and Networks The Crisis and Maintenance of Empire in Song China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, forthcoming in 2016); Silas H. L. Wu, *Communication and Imperial Control in China: Evolution of the Palace Memorial System, 1693–1735* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970). This, of course, omits mention of many other more narrow-focused studies of imperial communication.

2 For a recent study of political history making use of epistolary accounts from a much later period in Chinese history, see John W. Dardess, *A Political Life in Ming China: A Grand Secretary and His Times* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013).

3 In a state-of-the-field survey Huang Kuanchong stressed the usefulness of epistolary sources in the research of Song political history. See Huang Kuanchong 黄宽重, "Cong huo

with each other through many different modes, such as submitting and receiving bureaucratic documents to official bureaus, exchanging poems and essays with acquaintances, and meeting colleagues in person and communicating orally, etc.⁴ However, how literati officials utilized the epistolary genre for communicative purposes has not yet been thoroughly examined in the political history of this period in China's past; letters are often seen as much less relevant in studying bureaucratic networks since they are usually regarded as non-official, even when written by people serving in prominent government posts.⁵ As we will see below, this viewpoint is quite incorrect.

By examining regional administrator Li Gang's letters to the two policymaking Grand Councilors in the 1130s, we catch a glimpse of how officials as part of the

de zhidushi maixiang xin de zhengzhishi: zonglun Songdai zhengzhi shi yanjiu quxiang 从活的制度史迈向新的政治史——综论宋代政治史研究趋向,” *Zhongguo shi yanjiu* 中国史研究, no. 4 (2009): 15. In general, historical studies on the communication channels of the Song bureaucracy since the turn of the century have mostly focused on bureaucratic documents, and not on “non-official” material such as letters. Recent works that have this focus include Deng Xiaonan 邓小南, ed., *Zhengji kaocha yu xinxi qudao: yi Songdai wei zhongxin* 政绩考察与信息渠道——以宋代为中心 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2008); Deng Xiaonan 邓小南, Cao Jiaqi 曹家齐, and Pingtian Maoshu 平田茂树 [Hirata Shigeki], ed., *Wenshu, zhengling, xinxi goutong: yi Tang-Song shiqi weizhu* 文书·政令·信息沟通——以唐宋时期为主 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2011); Takamichi Kobayashi 小林隆道, *Sōdai Chūgoku no tōchi to bunsho* 宋代中国的統治と文書 (Tōkyō: Kyūko Shoin, 2013).

4 For instance, as learned elites of the time, literati officials from Li Gang's social circle even adapted the style of lyric poetry to communication feelings about the loss of the north. See Ridgway, “From the Banquet to the Border.”

5 A borderline exception was the *shizheng ji* 时政記 [records of current government] compiled by Song councilors and the diaries kept by officials. However, according to the findings of Hirata Shigeki, one can even consider these to be political records rather than non-official writings. See Pingtian Maoshu 平田茂樹 [Hirata Shigeki], *Songdai zhengzhi jiegou yanjiu* 宋代政治結構研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010), 190-214. In the case of Li Gang, he kept several political memoirs, including *Jingkang chuanxin lu* 靖康傳信錄, *Jiyan jintui zhi* 建炎進退志, and *Jiyan shizheng ji* 建炎时政記. Some others have unfortunately been lost, such as the 20-chapter *Xuanfu Jing-Guang ji* 宣撫荆廣記, which would presumably be useful for research into Li Gang's career in the 1130s. This also indicates that Li Gang was not only an active communicator as we shall see, but also an active chronicler of his own activities in office.

bureaucratic network expressed their opinion about policies. The core questions related to this problem can be summarized as follows: How and why could letters carry out the function of political communication? Under what circumstances did government officials carry out this kind of communication? For a high level official in the Song bureaucracy like Li Gang, what were the advantages of writing letters to top policymakers against using other communication channels? In writing such letters, how did he frame his rhetoric in order to be strategic and as persuasive as possible?⁶

Reading closely his letters to the two Grand Councilors will not only reveal distinct approaches to political communication, but can also shed light on how messages were delivered through epistolary interactions between Song elite officials. Since the activities of top officials such as Grand Councilors had implications for the empire's entire bureaucratic network, how their writings influenced and reflected relationships in officialdom will have larger implications for our analysis of power relations and the implementation of policies throughout Song China.

The sources that I make use of in this chapter are drawn from the collected works of Li Gang.⁷ In them there are 175 extant “letters” (*shu*) and 39 “greetings” (*qi*) in total. At least 16 of these epistolary texts were addressed to Lü Yihao and 17 were to Qin Gui.⁸ Although the openings and closings of these letters were probably omitted when

6 This takes up the interest on the study of rhetoric of political discourse in imperial communication in works including Giele, *Imperial Decision-making and Communication in Early China*; Garret P. S. Olberding ed., *Facing the Monarch: Modes of Advice in the Early Chinese Court* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University East Asia Center, 2013).

7 Li Gang 李纲, *Li Gang quanji* 李纲全集 (hereafter LGQJ) (Changsha: Yüelu shushe, 2004).

8 There is also an extant letter manuscript by Li Gang conventionally assigned the title “Beizhao tie 被詔帖 [Receiving an Imperial Mandate]”. Judging from its content, it might be Li Gang's reply to Lü Yihao's letter, possible written in 1134. For information about the manuscript attributed to Li, see Xu Bangda, *Gu shuhua guoyan yaolu*, 416-17. For Lü's letter see Lü Yihao 呂頤浩, “Yu Li Boji shu 與李伯紀書,” in *Lü Yihao ji* 呂頤浩集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2012), 6/73.

gathered into Li Gang's collected works, these epistolary writings still provide valuable historical material for investigating Li Gang's political career.⁹ It is evident that Li Gang himself took care of preserving his writings, especially documents that he came across in his own official capacity. He had used some of those documents, including epistolary writings, for his political memoirs.¹⁰ As with most other epistolary writings from the Song period, Li Gang's "formal letters" were much longer in length and less ornate in style than his "greetings".¹¹ The literary style of these "formal letters" was rather straightforward.

In general, there are three directions in which political communicative processes operate: downward, horizontal, and upward.¹² Li Gang's official rank was lower than that of the two Grand Councilors in the 1130s, hence his letters counted as a form of

9 "The effort to collect Li Kang's writing was presumably begun... very shortly after his death in 1140, though the groundwork was laid by himself..." See J. W. Haeger, "Sung Li Chung-ting kung chi-hsüan 宋李忠定公集選," in *A Sung Bibliography*, ed. Etienne Balazs and Yves Hervouet (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1978), 409. On the editions of Li Gang's collected works, see Wang Weiting 王卫婷, "'Li Gang ji' banben zonghui 《李纲集》版本综汇," *Keji xinxi* 科技信息, no. 15 (2008): 202-203.

10 He had drawn extensive information from "imperially brushed mandates addressed to me and memorials 被受御筆內批及表笏章奏等" to compile his *Jinkang chuanxin lu*. (QSBJ 3:5, 3/45.) According to the postface of *Jiyan jintui zhi* dated 1127/10/20, he had incorporated 6 chapters of "imperial edicts, imperial mandates, letters and itemized memorials, and administrative memorials 制誥、詔命、書疏、表笏" as appendixes to the initial edition of the title. (QSBJ, 3:5, 4/97. See also the editor's explanation in 3 & 49.) Although *Xuanfu Jing-Guang ji* which deals with this period of Li Gang's life is no longer extant, it is reasonable to postulate that some of the letters studied here were preserved for compiling it. To be sure, Li Gang wrote some of his political memoirs to absolve himself of blame and to rationalize his actions, but no evidence shows that the letters from 1131-33 studied here were tampered in any way. On his intent in writing *Jinkang chuanxin lu*, for example, see Don J. Wyatt, "The Invention of the Northern Song," in *Political Boundaries, Ethnic Boundaries, and Human Geographies in Chinese History*, eds. by Nicola Di Cosmo and Don J. Wyatt (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 226-29. For a translation of this work, see John Winthrop Haeger, "Sung Government at Mid-Season: Translation of and Commentary on the Ching-k'ang ch'uan-hsin lu." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1971.

11 For a general introduction to this epistolary sub-genre, see Zeng Zaozhuang, *Song wen tonglun*, 444-78. I discuss its features in more detail in Chapter 6.

12 See P. Norris, "Political Communication," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, ed. Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes (Amsterdam and Oxford: Elsevier, 2001), 11631-11640.

upward political communication with the court's top policymakers. The direction of Li Gang's communication with them and especially the fact that he was writing to powerful superiors who had better relations with the emperor determined his approach in communication, as we shall see in the following sections of this chapter. Li Gang only wrote letters to Lü Yihao and Qin Gui in the early 1130s, and seldom wrote any letters to them during other times—as far as we can establish from the extant record.¹³ Apart from writing to ask or express gratitude for official appointments for his family or acquaintances (such as for his three younger brothers, especially Li Wei 李緯, as well as his brother-in-law 張燾 [1092-1167] in letters to Qin Gui),¹⁴ most of the letters to both of the councilors dealt with official affairs and contained little about other topics

One of the deficiencies of Li Gang's letters for analyzing how Li communicated with others is that they only demonstrate one side of the two-way communication. Lü Yihao's collected works originally was in fifteen chapters,¹⁵ but most of the writings have been lost, so we rarely have the other end of the epistolary exchange.¹⁶ However, the letters that Li Gang wrote to Lü Yihao and Qin Gui sometimes quote their responses. One can identify these quoted materials whenever he adopted such terms in his texts as:

13 Indeed, one cannot preclude the possibility that Li Gang also wrote to them in other periods but those letters have already been lost when his collected writings were put together.

14 Li Gang, "Yu Qin xianggong di ba shu biefu 与秦相公第八书别幅," in LGQJ, 118/1127; "Yu Qin xianggong di shisan shu biefu 与秦相公第十三书别幅," in LGQJ, 118/1136.

15 Ji Yun 紀昀 et al. eds., *Qinding siku quanshu zongmu* 钦定四库全书总目 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), 156/2099.

16 As for communication conducted from the opposite direction, I have only identified one letter written by Lü Yihao's to Li Gang, which is the aforementioned letter in Lü Yihao, "Yu Li Boji shu." Poetic exchanges also existed between the two men, according to this letter and poems by Li Gang in LGQJ. At least 6 of these poems were addressed to Lü Yihao; all of these were sent in the 1130s, according to the dating that I have established from various sources.

“*meng huiyu* 蒙誨諭 [receiving your instructions and orders]”, “*fu meng huiyu* 伏蒙垂諭 [bowing down to have received your instructions]”, “*junhui* 鈞誨 [honorable instructions from you]”, “*huiyu suoji* 誨諭所及 [from what was instructed and ordered]”, and so on. Apart from the messages recovered from these places, I also draw from other writings by Li Gang and additional historical sources about Lü Yihao and Qin Gui to reconstruct at least partially how they interacted with Li Gang. These sources include Li Gang’s memorials (referred to as *zouzhuang* 奏狀 during the time) to the court and chronological records by Southern Song historians, which cover the main political events and policies in the early years of the Southern Song. It was with this information that I managed to establish more or less precise dates for most of these letters (see appendixes), which is crucial for understanding how the letters relate to the chronology of political events in the 1130s.

Having explained these aspects of Li Gang’s epistolary writings, I will begin by setting the scene in the following section by explaining the political background of this period in Li Gang’s life.

Li Gang and the Grand Councilors in the Early 1130s

The decade following the siege and fall of Kaifeng in 1126 was an extraordinary period to the Song court as well as for those living under it. The new Song court established under Zhao Gou 趙構, who later became Emperor Gaozong, was battling for survival under overwhelming military pressure from the Jin in the north. At the same time, it faced local unrest which resulted from the loss of imperial control over large areas of territory during the war. Gaozong himself was constantly on the run, meeting

crisis after crisis throughout the 1130s, until he was finally able to settle with his ministers in the city of Hangzhou, the “temporary residence [*Xingzai* 行在, or Quinsai as called by Marco Polo]” in 1138.

Li Gang had been a Grand Secretary and Prefect of the capital city shortly before the Northern Song regime met its downfall. After the siege of Kaifeng, he managed to join and serve Gaozong’s government and then became Chief Councilor for a brief period. During his tenure he fought quite hard to push forward offensives against the Jin, but insisting on a hard line and supporting the aims of the irredentist faction did not bring genuine support from the emperor. Instead, Li’s political enemies in the court like Huang Qianshan 黃潛善 (1078-1130) and Wang Boyan 汪伯彥 (1069-1141) directed fierce criticisms at him. Li was dismissed in 1127/8/18 after spending a mere 75 days in office as the first Chief Councilor under Gaozong’s reign. A particular Neo-Confucian iconography had built around Li Gang for this role, and established his posthumous image as a patriotic and able minister, as well as a staunch critic of the peace policy.¹⁷

By focusing on letters from a later period in his life, I present an analysis that diverges from the prevailing and ideologically charged narrative about Li Gang. In the 1130s he left the center of court politics and began a period in his life that is a lot less well known and rarely examined in detail by historians.

By this time he had already passed the apogee of his political career. As summed up by James T. C. Liu, being a dismissed councilor ranked high among the worst things that could happen to a civil official’s career under the political climate of that period:

¹⁷ See Hartman, “The Reluctant Historian,” 100-148.

Dismissed councilors were not accorded great respect... they were neither kept at court nor near the capital. Some of them appointed as governors or prefects did not last long in office. When criticisms against them persisted, the court would relieve them from such local offices and put them in retirement with the honorary rank and sinecure title of “temple intendancy” by which they would get nothing more than the pension normally due to high officials. The fate of a dismissed high official could be worse than retirement, depending on political tension.¹⁸

Li Gang’s life after dismissal from the councilor post matched this description. He was cast away from the central arena of Song politics and did not gain much influence, until 1132/2 when the court appointed him as Pacification Commissioner (*xuanfu shi* 宣撫使) of Jinghu 荆湖 and Guangnan 廣南 West circuits, as well as Prefect of Tanzhou 潭州 and an Academician.¹⁹

This tenure lasted for no more than two years, but as I will demonstrate by examining his epistolary sources, it produced a wealth of useful material for examining political communication in his correspondence. The 1130s was, in fact, a unique and significant period in Li Gang’s life. The precarious political environment he was in resulted in a pressing need to communicate effectively with policy makers at court. Pacification Commissioners were ad-hoc posts during wartime and extraordinary times, such as war or local unrest; the central government appointed these personnel to administrative districts, bestowing power upon them to supervise military matters at a supra-circuit level.²⁰ Apart from the military commanders who had control over

18 Liu, *China Turning Inward*, 91. On Gaozong’s councilors, see Yeong-huei Hsu, “Song Gaozong (r. 1127-1162) and his Chief Councilors: A Study of the Formative State of the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279),” Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 2000.

19 T. Yoshida, “Li Kang,” in *Sung Biographies*, edited by Herbert Franke (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1976), 571.

20 See the entry about this post in Gong Yanming 龚延明, *Songdai guan zhi cidian* 宋代官制辞典 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), 464-65.

existing regional armies who later became Pacification Commissioners, such as Han Shizhong 韓世忠 (1089-1151) and Yue Fei 岳飛 (1103-1142), many of the officials who held these posts were ex-councilors.²¹ Therefore, after years away from real political influence, Li Gang had finally returned to a post with some political authority and resources, and even armies under his command.

This was no easy undertaking, however. Li Gang came to this post at a time when the court of Gaozong faced the pressing task of suppressing local banditry. Since the Jurchen invasion numerous groups of rebels were causing disturbances, especially in areas along the middle reaches of the Yangtze.²² The Southern Song court, which clearly did not have firm control over its local troops, was unable to stop them from causing local disturbances. It was against this background that Li Gang faced the challenging task of quelling bandits in the areas under his supervision, especially those in Guangdong. Official Chen Chongyong 陳沖用 from Linchuan 臨川 rightly pointed out very soon after Li Gang received appointment in 1032/4/24 that Li's new role was far from something that he should be glad about, since it was fraught with difficult tasks. Numerous people had high expectations for Li Gang, so only if he could achieve something substantial during his tenure it could compensate for his past deficiencies. However, if he was not able to do so, his already declining career prospects

21 He Zhongli 何忠礼, *Nan-Song zhengzhi shi* 南宋政治史 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2008), 64-70.

22 For an overview of these rebellions, see Wang Shizong 王世宗, *Nan-Song Gaozong bianluan zhi yanjiu* 南宋高宗朝變亂之研究 (Taipei: Guoli Taiwan daxue chuban weiyuanhui, 1989); Tao Jing-shen, "The Move to the South and the Reign of Kao-tsung (1127-1162)," in *Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part 1: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907-1279*, ed. Denis Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 662-66. One of the rebellions during the period of transition is documented in John W. Haeger, "Between North and South: The Lake Rebellion in Hunan 1130-1135," *Journal of Asian Studies* 28 (1969): 469-88.

would be at even greater risk.²³ Moreover, the powers and resources that Li Gang's post actually entailed, and his control over local affairs were not very clearly defined at that time. One sign of this was the undecided relationship between Pacification Commissioners and Military Commissioners (*zhizhi shi* 制置使).²⁴ As Ruth Mostern aptly observed, "war, administrative competition and disarray, high taxes, and *inadequate information* formed the backdrop to the territorial construction of the Southern Song."²⁵ As a regional administrator and commander, communication with decision makers was essential to deal with the challenges in such a chaotic time, especially the problem of inadequate information.

Emperor Gaozong did not trust Li Gang, thus support from the central court had to come from other main policy makers. Personally, Gaozong was not fond of Li; he did not want Li to return to the central stage of court politics after he was dismissed.²⁶ Li Gang was criticized by some officials in the court for being associated with Cai Jing's 蔡京 (1047-1126) reformist faction, which was blamed at that time for the downfall of

23 Li Xinchuan, XNYL, 53/1092. I would like to thank Gao Keli for drawing my attention to this source.

24 On Pacification Commissioners, see Sabine Werner, *Die Belagerung von K'ai-feng im Winter 1126/27: Nach Kapitel 64-69 des San-ch'ao pei-meng hui-pien, kompiliert von Hsü Meng-hsin* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1992), 43-48; Yu Wei 余蔚, "Lun Nan-Song xuanfushi he zhizhishi zhidu 論南宋宣撫使和制置使制度," *Zhonghua wenshi luncong* 中華文史論叢, no. 1 (2007): 139-43; Zheng Liping 鄭丽萍, "Song chao xuanfushi zhidu yanjiu 宋朝宣撫使制度研究," Ph.D. diss., Hebei University, 2009, 31-37. For an example of Li Gang's own perspective on the duties of Pacification Commissioners in a memorial, see Li Gang, "Lun Xuanfu liang si zhishi qijiang chufen zouzhuang 論宣撫兩司職事乞降處分奏狀," in LGQJ, 65/692.

25 Ruth Mostern, "*Dividing the Realm in Order to Govern*": *The Spatial Organization of the Song State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2011), 227-28. The italics are mine.

26 See Wang Zengyu 王曾瑜, *Yue Fei he Nan-Song qianqi zhengzhi yu junshi yanjiu* 岳飞和南宋前期政治与军事研究 (Kaifeng: Henan daxue chubanshe, 2002), 478-509; Xu Yonghui 徐永輝, "Jianchen? zhongchen? Pingxi Nan-Song chunian de Huang qianshan, Wang Boyan he Li Gang sanwei zaixiang 姦臣? 忠臣? 評析南宋初年的黃潛善、汪伯彥和李綱三位宰相," *Tongshi yanjiu jikan* 通識研究集刊, no. 9 (2006): 133-35.

the court in Kaifeng.²⁷ Yet Li Gang's earlier tenure as Chief Councilor in 1126 was also staunchly supported by Imperial University students, especially Chen Dong 陳東 (1086-1127), even though their demonstration shortly after Li Gang's tenure had been extremely irritating to Gaozong, who feared that his authority would wane in the event of any similar incidents. The students, along with some commoners, demanded on 1127/8/25 that the court should not dismiss Li Gang.²⁸ It is not surprising then that Gaozong did not want to see an incident like this occur again. He gave a very strong response when Lü Yihao purposefully pointed out that Li's supporters were allies with Cai Jing and proponents of the 1127 demonstration, and that it almost erupted into a huge disaster. Gaozong remarked that in the event of similar demonstrations, he would order his troops to persecute all the perpetrators.²⁹ Gaozong even expressed his disdain of Li, saying that giving power to Li Gang would result in the state's demise.³⁰

My inquiry in this chapter is aided by the fact that a good number of letters by Li Gang to Lü Yihao and Qin Gui can be placed within the political narrative of this

27 Bai Xiaoxia considers these criticisms to be without sufficient grounds. See Bai Xiaoxia 白晓霞, *Nan-Song chunian mingxiang yanjiu* 南宋初年名相研究 (Guangzhou: Ji'nan daxue chubanshe, 2012), 242-43. On the reforms of Cai Jing, see John Chafee, "Huizong, Cai Jing, and the Politics of Reform," in *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics*, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 31-60; Ari Daniel Levine, *Divided by a Common Language: Factional Conflict in Late Northern Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 159-60.

28 On this incident, see Lin Yutang, *A History of the Press and Public Opinion in China* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), 46-51; Huang Xianfan 黃現璠, *Songdai taixuesheng jiuguo yundong* 宋代太學生救國運動 (Taipei: Wenxing shudian, 1956), 12-29; Ari Daniel Levine, "The Reigns of Hui-Tsung and Ch'in Tsung," in *Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part 1*, 638-39. For an interpretation of this movement see John W. Haeger, "Li Kang and the Loss of K'ai-feng: The Concept and Practice of Political Dissent in Mid-Sung," *Journal of Asian History* 12 (1978): 58-67.

29 Li Xinchuan, XNYL, 58/1173. On Gaozong's attitude, see Wang Zengyu, *Yue Fei he Nan-Song qianqi zhengzhi yu junshi yanjiu*, 492-93. When Lü Yihao made this connection he was also in effect blocking major members of Qin Gui's circle from ascent to power. See the explanation in Bai Xiaoxia, *Nan-Song chunian mingxiang yanjiu*, 252-53.

30 Li Xinchuan, XNYL, 27/615.

relatively short and well-chronicled time period between 1131 and 1133. This coincided with the phase that Lü and Qin worked jointly as councilors: only weeks after the court appointed Qin Gui as Grand Councilor of the Right in 1131/8, Lü Yihao became the post of Grand Councilor of the Left in 1131/9. This was the second time he took up the councillorship. Qin was dismissed a year later in 1132/8.³¹ However, it was not long before Lü also left his post, since he was also made to resign in 1133/9.³² These letters by Li Gang during this period provide unique information for examining the role of letter writing in the actual interactions between these three politicians.

Given the breadth of Li Gang's epistolary writings to the councilors, I will limit my inquiry to two main challenges Li encountered. First, as mentioned, Li Gang was given the main task of putting down the bandits under difficult circumstances when he was sent to his southern post. This was closely related to the governing principles that the Grand Councilor Lü Yihao proposed to the Song court: to prioritize the suppression of bandits over tackling the Song's Jurchen enemies. Lü Yihao made this point clear to Gaozong only three days after his appointment to councillorship in 1131/9. This official line was significant for Song state policies because it was the first time the newly established regime set its major policy priorities.³³ This basic orientation did not change at least until 1132/5 when Lü Yihao agreed to plans of an offensive against the

31 Unable to take hold of the Censorate, Qin Gui was criticized of building a faction around himself and was ousted by Lü. See Charles Hartman, "The Making of a Villain: Ch'in Kuei and Tao-hsüeh," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 58, no. 1 (1998): 65-66.

32 Even though Lü Yihao committed no serious mistakes during his tenure, Emperor Gaozong dismissed him in the interest of pacifying officials who were criticizing Lü Yihao. See Liu, *China Turning Inward*, 90.

33 See Sidi Zun 寺地遵 [Teraji Jun], *Nan-Song chuqi zhengzhi shi yanjiu* 南宋初期政治史研究, trans. by Liu Jingzhen 劉靜貞 and Li Jinyun 李今芸 (Taipei: Daohe chubanshe, 1995), 95-97.

Qi 齊 state, the puppet regime propped up by the Jin. The early 1130s was, however, a period of weak central administrative support and Li Gang only had minimal resources at his disposal as Pacification Commissioner. Since he operated within the areas which Lü Yihao oversaw as Commander-in-chief (*dudu* 都督), he reported military and financial matters to Lü Yihao and wrote multiple letters to Lü to discuss the orders and military arrangements announced by the court.³⁴ The first challenge of Li Gang that I will discuss is therefore how he made use of epistolary communication to explain his needs in a clear and effective manner.

The second challenge affecting Li Gang's communication with councilors was that his agenda was in many ways different from that of Lü Yihao and Qin Gui. According to writings available to us, it seems quite unlikely that Li Gang was very close to either of the two councilors, especially to Lü Yihao. In suppressing rebellions and bandits, Li Gang supported the use of militias led by regional commanders to strengthen local defenses. This had been part of his irredentist program during his short tenure as Grand Councilor in 1127.³⁵ However, in contrast, while carrying out this principle of tackling internal unrest, Lü Yihao's favored pacifying and co-opting the bandit groups into the Song army, rather than relying on military campaigns or resorting to the help of local militia in suppressing them.³⁶ Complicating this further was that Emperor Gaozong's

34 On Lü Yihao's governance, see Liang Weiji 梁偉基, "Nan-Song Gaozong chao Lü Yihao zhizheng xia de guanliao qunti gouzao tezhi 南宋高宗朝呂頤浩執政下的官僚群體構造特質," *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiusuo xuebao* 中國文化研究所學報, no. 46 (2006): 165-97; Liang Weiji, "Zhanzheng yu guojia: Nan-Song Lü Yihao zhizheng shidai yanjiu 戰爭與國家：南宋呂頤浩執政時代研究," Ph.D. diss., Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2012.

35 See *ibid.*, 61-64. On local militias in this period, see Huang Kuanchong 黃寬重, *Nan-Song difang wuli: difangjun yu minjian ziwei wuli de tantao* 南宋地方武力——地方軍與民間自衛武力的探討 (Taipei: Dongda tushu gongsi, 2002).

36 Sidi Zun, *Nan-Song chuqi zhengzhi shi yanjiu*, 95-97. For an evaluation of Lü Yihao's approach, see Wang Shizong, *Nan-Song Gaozong bianluan zhi yanjiu*, 121-45.

belief that the power of regional commanders should be limited in order for the central government to hold sway, and thus he ordered Lü to “reassert the control of the court over local government in terms of obedience to court orders, appointments, and fiscal matters.”³⁷ With a role that carried pressing military responsibilities, Li Gang had to align his understanding of the situation with that of the Grand Councilors at court in order to obtain sufficient support from them.

Even whilst serving together as Grand Councilors, Lü Yihao and Qin Gui were pursuing different goals and were involved in a personal power struggle with each other as well; this relationship affected how Li Gang wrote to them respectively.³⁸ During the early 1130s, inner circles of favorites gathered around both Grand Councilors Lü Yihao and Qin Gui respectively. In a way, this was a continuation of the factional struggles in the late Northern Song.³⁹ Gaozong noticed these struggles at court and issued an edict in 1131/10 to address the stigma of officials who previously belonged to Cai Jing’s reformist ministry, as some of the ministers that assisted Lü Yihao in implementing his policies were allegedly from that faction.⁴⁰ This was only a month after Lü’s appointment. He even issued another edict in 1132/4 to clarify on the two councilor’s responsibilities. He ordered Lü Yihao to specially deal with military affairs and Qin Gui to take care of internal matters, since he was quite aware that “the factions of these two men at that time competed wildly for promotion. 二人之黨紛然競進”⁴¹

37 Liu, *China Turning Inward*, 89.

38 The background to this power struggle is explained in Bai Xiaoxia, *Nan-Song chunian mingxiang yanjiu*, 87-92; Liang Weiji, “Nan-Song Gaozong chao Lü Yihao zhizheng xia de guanliao qunti gouzao tezhi,” 103-104.

39 See Shen Songqin, *Nan-Song wenren yu dangzheng*, 3-38. On the rhetoric of the struggles during that period, see Levine, *Divided by a Common Language*, 149-60.

40 See Shen Songqin, *Nan-Song wenren yu dangzheng*, 21-22.

41 Xu Ziming 徐自明, *Song zaifu biannian lu jiaobu* 宋宰輔編年錄校補, ed. Wang Ruilai 王瑞來 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 15/970.

The division of responsibilities between Lü Yihao and Qin Gui had in effect become the norm until Qin Gui established his absolute authority as the Chief Councilor in 1139.⁴² This signifies the path that the struggle was taking. Although Qin Gui did not succeed, it was part of his scheme to oust Lü Yihao by making Lü responsible for military affairs, so that Qin could take over domestic affairs and obtain control of more state power. This plan to drive Lü Yihao out of court was partly realized when Lü Yihao became Commander-in-chief in 1132/4, overseeing military affairs in Jiangnan 江南, Huainan 淮南, Jinghu 荊湖, and Liangzhe 兩浙 circuits. For this purpose, Lü left the court in the following month to set up an Area Command in Zhenjiang 鎮江 for this purpose. Even though this post granted him powerful command over the armies and finances of eight circuit-level regions, it provided Qin Gui with more direct control over the central government.⁴³ Li Gang, as the Pacification Commissioner operating partially within these areas,⁴⁴ reported military and financial matters to Lü Yihao through several communication channels, while at the same time also communicating with Qin Gui. Li Gang held them responsible for the orders and military arrangements announced by the central court.

With these two main challenges that he faced in the 1130s in mind, his written communication serves as an important source for understanding the actual workings of political interactions and the relationship between information and power in the early Southern Song. In light of this, my treatment here is an examination of specific political

42 Liu, *China Turning Inward*, 86-87.

43 See Liang Tianxi 梁天錫, "Nan-Song zhi dufu zhidu 南宋之督府制度," in *Songshi yanjiu ji* 宋史研究集 (Taipei: Guoli bianyiguan Zhonghua congshu bianshen weiyuanhui, 1978), 10: 229-44.

44 He later became Pacification Commissioner of Hunan 湖南 in 1132/9, after the major bandit leaders have surrendered or were suppressed. See below.

processes manifested in communications directed at councilors, and hence it deepens James Liu's interpretation of early-twelfth century Chinese politics in his assessment of the relationship between the Gaozong emperor and his councilors.⁴⁵ In examining what was occupying Li Gang's mind when dealing with these challenges in his military operations, this chapter is also relevant to Huang Kuanchong's line of inquiry in his recent study on communications in military reports.⁴⁶ Since my sources in this chapter are predominantly in the form of epistolary writings, it is hoped that this investigation supplements the existing understanding of political communication between the imperial court and regional commanders, which is mostly based on information from memorials.

Commander and Communicator in the Field

From Li Gang's perspective as a commander, what messages did he have to get across to acquire the military resources and power necessary to successfully fulfill the task of quelling the bandits and restoring order? What did Li Gang report to the councilor? In the letters to Lü Yihao and Qin Gui, Li Gang frequently requested to adjust the central government's military orders to the situation on the ground. By writing such letters to voice his opinion, Li Gang was trying to steer court policies towards the direction that would be favorable to a successful campaign in Jinghu and

45 Liu, *China Turning Inward*.

46 Huang's research looked into the collection and dissemination of military intelligence during the Southern Song defense campaign against the Mongols in Guangxi. In particular, he analyzed the memorials from a military commander to Song Lizong (1205–1264, r. 1224–64) and Lizong's orders in reply. See Huang Kuanchong, "Wan-Song junqing souji yu chuandi: yi *Kezhai zagao suojian Song, Meng Guangxi zhanyi wei li* 晚宋軍情蒐集與傳遞——以《可齋雜藁》所見宋、蒙廣西戰役為例," *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 27, no. 2 (2009): 133–66.

Guangdong. Within the political context discussed here, especially from the perspective of a local official trying to lobby more military and fiscal resources to stage a successful military campaign, writing letters to councilors provided an alternative channel to communicate policy advice and requests. By sending letters, Li Gang made use of a less formal and more personalized channel to make clear his pleas and to persuade the councilors to consider his requests.

I will now examine how Li Gang dealt with the problem of insufficient resources after he took up the Pacification Commissioner post. Li Gang was assigned his post to carry out the task of suppressing the bandits that had been rampant in Jinghu and Guangnan regions since the Jurchen invasions. The central court only allocated an army of 1,300 men under Ren Shi'an 任仕安 to his command.⁴⁷ In face of the overwhelming number of bandits, Li Gang made repeated requests to both Lü Yihao and Qin Gui for more troops. This was a direct request to the councilors, asking them to exert their influence on the allocation of military personnel using their extraordinary powers:

I recently drafted a request for troops and grain, [but] until now I have not yet received the court's orders in reply. I have been looking forward to it as if it has been for years. For days I have been receiving letters from the Bureau of Military Affairs ordering me to deal with bandits in various places. I also received official dispatches from Jinghu and Guangnan circuits requesting for reinforcements. My administration now retains Ren Shi'an's troops of over a thousand so I do not have enough to allocate. I could only respond by sending an official dispatch [but could

⁴⁷ Li Gang, "Yu Qin xiangong di er shu biefu 与秦相公第二书别幅," in LGQJ, 117/1115-16.

not do anything concrete]. Very ashamed for not fulfilling my job, I dare ask you to devote your respectful thoughts to this, and not to allow a person you have openly recommended to go through hardships behind the scenes. If so it would be very fortunate indeed. The Bureau of Military Affairs issued an order for me to go directly to Guangdong to protect the circuit. I am making the winding trip there to follow this order, however Cao Cheng's horsed bandits are invading Guangdong from only the distance of several routes.⁴⁸ The commission has just been established; even if I lead my troops to embark on the journey [now], it takes the distance of several ten routes from here to Guangdong. If the bandits are rampant, how can they be stopped? Also, the number of troops from Ren Shi'an that I command, excluding those dealing with military supplies and the army cooks, is less than one thousand in formation. Even if they hurry off to go there, they shall be very fatigued. How can one thousand men rival a hundred thousand men? If the court does not allocate the troops I requested in memorials, I must not move rashly... 近具畫一申請兵糧之類，至今未奉朝廷回降指揮，引領望之，以日為歲。日被密院札子，令處置諸處盜賊；亦得荊湖、廣南州郡文移，乞發援兵。本司目前得任仕安兵總千餘人，無可分撥，不過行移札牒備禮而已。當職任而無實以稱之，良自愧作。敢望相公特留鈞念，無推挽之於前，而使之顛沛於後。幸甚幸甚。密院札子，有旨令某逕謁廣東，保護本路，已依稟邈迤而去。然曹成賊馬侵犯廣東，近在數程之間，而其置司之初，總兵上道，其去廣東遠在數十程之外。使賊果猖獗，安能有及？又所將帶任仕安兵，除輜重火頭外，結成隊伍，不滿千人，縱使奔趨到彼，疲乏甚矣。以千兵當十萬之眾，其何以矣？非得朝廷應副前奏所踏逐兵稍成軍

48 Here he was referring to the transport routes between Nanjianzhou 南劍州 in Fujian (where he was residing at that time) to Guangdong. On these routes see Zhang Jinpeng, *Nan-Song jiaotong shi*, 85-87.

容，勢決未可輕動……⁴⁹

The Bureau of Military Affairs gave him orders to carry on with the campaign against bandits, but he lacked the men to do so effectively. He explained that in case he had to confront the bandits, his army would be easily outnumbered and would not stand a chance. Before even considering any effective attempt to put down the bandits, he must have adequate reinforcements. He even hinted at the possibility that if the court was not providing the reinforcements he needed, he would have to refrain from executing the order to send an army to Guangdong. Although he politely admitted that he was ashamed of his incapability, the letter contained his implicit critique of some of the court's military orders, especially not providing him with the armies, making it nearly impossible to carry out the task he was responsible for. Apart from these, he also expressed the following:

I humbly wish that your Excellency would specifically make a report in this spirit. If it is accepted by the court and even if it is only minimally effective, I will not shirk my responsibility to meet the region's urgent need, even if I have to go through scorching heat and vaporous miasma. I really look forward to your concern. 伏望相公特為以此意敷奏，如蒙朝廷應副，使可圖尺寸之效，雖觸隆暑，冒煙瘴，以赴一方之急，所不敢辭也。伏幸留念。⁵⁰

By showing his gratefulness to Lü Yihao and loyalty to the court, Li Gang made sure that his requests would not offend Lü. His point on reinforcements was made very clear in the letter, however.

He had to be quite cautious when dealing with Lü Yihao, not only because Lü

49 Li Gang, "Yu Lü xianggong di si shu biefu 与吕相公第四书别幅," in LGQJ, 115/1095 (with modifications in punctuation).

50 Idem., 115/1095-96.

Yihao was a councilor with extraordinary powers, but also due to the fact that Lü was rather suspicious of him. Even though Li Gang made many requests and suggestions to Lü Yihao, Lü had reservations towards the viability of his strategies. An example of Lü Yihao's views can be found in an incident from several years before. In 1129, Gaozong told his ministers that although Li Gang was loyal and righteous, and had great ambitions, his ability was very limited. Lü Yihao then accorded with the emperor and made the following remarks: "There has been no ill will between [Li] Gang and us ministers. His original intention was not to cause trouble for the country, but his talents are limited for such grand ambitions 臣等與綱素無嫌隙，原其心非故欲誤國，但志大才疏耳。"⁵¹ When Gaozong had the intention to appoint some official to a post, Lü Yihao made negative remarks about that official, saying that he belonged to Li Gang's faction. This shows both Gaozong and Lü's distrust of Li Gang. Lü's views of Li Gang matched Gaozong's attitude, therefore making it very difficult for Li Gang to gain any real support from Lü.⁵² As the editors of *Siku quanshu* put it, Lü Yihao "firmly isolated Li Gang 力排李綱" while he was Grand Councilor.⁵³

Li Gang required not only more men to deal with Cao Cheng's bandits, but also capable generals. In the letters he reported that the 8,000 men dispatched to assist his campaign were far fewer than the originally agreed number of 20,000. To compensate

51 Li Xinchuan, XNYL, 27/615 (with modifications in punctuation).

52 Lü Yihao was rather well trusted by Gaozong at that time. Gaozong once said that Lü Yihao was a "meritorious statesman" and did not have the "guilt of endangering the state 誤國大罪", and was therefore "different from Li Gang and Huang Qianshan 與李綱、黃潛善不同". (XNYL, 32/747.) Also see Hsu, "Song Gaozong (r. 1127--1162) and his Chief Councilors," 147-48; Liang Weiji, "Nan-Song Gaozong chao Lü Yihao zhizheng xia de guanliao qunti gouzao tezhi," 178-79.

53 SKTY, 156/2099.

for this, he suggested to both councilors to put the general Yue Fei and his men under his command. He explained this proposal as follows:

According to a recent imperial order, the armies of Yue Fei, Wu Xi, Han Jing, and Han Quan, currently presiding in Hunan, ought to be administered by me. I would also like to ask that the aforementioned amount [of men] be met. I have heard that Yue Fei is loyal and brave, and capable of managing a disciplined army. I ask that my request for him to be the Vice-Regional Commander of my circuit be accepted. I humbly hope that you will grant your graceful permission. If so it will be very fortunate indeed. 惟岳飛及吳錫、韓京、吳全數項軍馬，見在湖南，依近降指揮，合聽某節制，亦乞撥充前項數目。聞岳飛者，忠勇持軍，頗有紀律，輒具奏乞依畫一陳請，差充本路副都總管。敢望鈞慈特賜敷奏，俾從所請，不勝幸甚。⁵⁴

He knew very well that Yue Fei was a loyal and brave general, and was capable of managing a disciplined army. According to him, Yue Fei “is in the prime of his life. He manages the army with discipline and could achieve outstanding results. This is quite uncommon in recent times 年齒方壯，治軍嚴肅，能立奇功，近來之所少得”.⁵⁵ According to what Li Gang told Qin Gui, it was ideal to have Yue Fei under his command not only because of Yue Fei’s abilities, but also because this could tame him to be a more loyal commander:

... he should fittingly be placed under someone. With someone to tame and instruct him on rites and morals, honor and integrity, he will certainly become a distinguished general for the imperial revival. If he is allowed to take charge by himself, he will

⁵⁴ Li Gang, “Yu Lü xiangong di er shu biefu 与吕相公第二书别幅,” in LGQJ, 115/1092.

⁵⁵ Li Gang, “Yu Qin xiangong di shi yi shu biefu 与秦相公第十一书别幅,” in LGQJ, 118/1131.

get proud easily and it will spoil him. Now that he is kept in this circuit, he should naturally come under my command. When I obtain the clear instructions sent down from the court, I can then bring about his usefulness. It will be good if you can look into this.正當且使在人下，有以調御服習之，使知禮義名節，異時決為中興名將；若使便當一面，驕心易生，適所以壞之..... 今既存留本路，自合聽某節制，更得朝廷明降指揮，庶幾易為驅策。幸望鈞察。

This reasoning was exactly what Qin Gui would consider seriously and would possibly accept. His greatest fear was not the Jin, but the autonomy of local military commanders such as Yue Fei.⁵⁶ Worries about the growing power of generals had heavily influenced the policymaking process of the Song court. By suggesting the possibility that Yue Fei might become virtually autonomous if he gained too much power, Li Gang tactfully offered a strong reason to have Yue Fei placed under his command. This was not something he could easily hint at in a memorial to the court, but he could make such a point when writing to Qin Gui personally. So it was then decided at the court that Yue Fei and his men, originally recruited from bandits, were to serve under Li Gang's command during the campaign.⁵⁷

Yue Fei and his troops were instrumental in the campaign's success. He drove off Cao Cheng's men, and Li Gang eventually lured Cao Cheng into surrendering in 1132 by offering him an imperial title.⁵⁸ However, after the main forces of the bandits had been defeated and co-opted, Yue Fei no longer remained under Li Gang's command. Li mentioned on 1132/9/8 that Yue Fei had been posted to another duty, an arrangement

56 Hartman, "The Making of a Villain," 67-68. On Yue Fei's role in the politics of the time, see James T. C. Liu, "Yueh Fei (1103-41) and China's Heritage of Loyalty," *Journal of Asian Studies* 31, no. 2 (1972): 292-94.

57 Li Gang, "Yu Qin xiangong di shi er shu biefu 与秦相公第十二书别幅," in LGQJ, 117/1133.

58 See Wang Zengyu, *Yue Fei he Nan-Song qianqi zhengzhi yu junshi yanjiu*, 79-84.

that he strongly opposed:

The army of Yue Fei was recently allocated by the court to remain in my circuit to deal with bandits, under my command. I was feeling lucky to have [someone] to depend on, until Yue Fei unexpectedly reported that there was an order for him to be stationed again in Jiujiang since the bandits in this circuit were already exterminated. I am disappointed.... The court only agreed on [granting me] Yue Fei's army after I have made repeated requests. Now the order has been changed by some mere pieces of paper and empty words; I am afraid that the court has lost sense of what is important when treating commanders and generals, and this shortcoming will be seen by visionaries. It seems more appropriate to order me to look into the matter, and then issue a decree. I hope you will understand. 近蒙朝廷差撥岳飛一軍存留本路，措置盜賊，專聽某節制，方幸有可倚仗。忽聞以岳飛奏報，本路群盜已是淨盡，卻有指揮依舊屯駐九江，殊失所望.....岳飛一軍，本司累具申奏，祈告朝廷，方蒙矜從。今以飛片紙虛詞即行改命，竊恐朝廷所以待大帥與武將者，輕重不倫，為有識者之所窺測。若且下本司體究著實，然後降旨，似為得體，幸望洞察。⁵⁹

Li Gang did not agree to the decision of delegating Yue Fei to another circuit, especially when this order seemed to be made without consulting him at all. This almost amounted to ignoring his authority as Pacification Commissioner who originally commanded Yue Fei's armies, and was clearly irritating for him. Although Lü Yihao must have been aware of the new arrangement regarding Yue Fei, and was probably involved in its making, the message Li Gang sent to Lü Yihao was basically for expressing

⁵⁹ Li Gang, "Yu Lü xianggong di qi shu biefu 与吕相公第七书别幅," in LGQJ, 116/1101-1102. Compare with his "Qi ling Yue Fei qie zai Tanzhou zhuzha reng qi ling bohuan Han Jing deng junma zouzhuang 乞令岳飛且在潭州驻扎仍乞令撥还韩京等军马奏状," in LGQJ, 68/725-27.

disagreement. In his letters to Lü Yihao he repeatedly made pleas to the court to adjust and adopt certain military arrangements, in which he made tactful arguments.

When Li Gang expressed his views in the letters on policies that were not directly related to his duty as Pacification Commissioner, he often sought approval and support from the councilors by writing to them beforehand. These included one of the most important policy questions in the early Southern Song, which was debated by ministers in multiple occasions between the enthronement of Gaozong in 1127 to 1138: where to establish the imperial residence.⁶⁰ Although Li Gang's irredentist position on this matter exposed the conflicts between him and other ministers who insisted on a softer approach towards the Jin, and indirectly led Li Gang to leave his councilor post, he recognized the influence Lü Yihao had on this debate in the early 1130s.⁶¹ Having been outspoken on these fundamental policies for years, Li Gang stated his stance on this issue in his dispatches to Lü. Not long after the Southern Song court was established, he had suggested in 1127/6 that it was ideal to set up three capitals in Changsha 長沙, Xiangyang 襄陽, and Jiankang 建康.⁶² However, he no longer held such a radical view in 1132/7. He wrote Lü Yihao to argue that Hangzhou was the most favorable location to set up a base for recovering the lost territory in the north. This was the best geopolitical strategy at that time; Jiankang and Changsha were no longer viable options with the rampant banditry there.⁶³

Having explained his views on a suitable location, he then asked Lü Yihao if it

60 For details about these debates, see Lin Zhengqiu 林正秋, "Nan-Song dingdu Lin'an yuanyin chutan 南宋定都临安原因初探," *Hangzhou shifan xueyuan xuebao* 杭州师范学院学报, no. 1 (1982): 29-31; Chen Lesu 陈乐素, *Qiushi ji* 求是集 (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1984), 2: 55-67.

61 See Sidi Zun, *Nan-Song chuqi zhengzhi shi yanjiu*, 71-75 & 82-86.

62 On this proposal, see Lin Zhengqiu, "Nan-Song dingdu Lin'an yuanyin chutan," 29.

63 However, he later changed his mind and preferred Jiankang, as can be seen in a memorial in 1135. See Chen Lesu, "Nan-Song dingdu Lin'an de yuanyin," 58.

would be appropriate to submit such views to the court:

Although I do not possess the ability, I have written about this and intended to submit it to His Majesty for the court's discussion. But I fear it will cause offence, hence I do not dare to send it out recklessly. If I may share your grace and permission to report on and explain about this matter, then I shall compose my text and submit it. I write with apprehension. 某竊不自揆，嘗草具其說，欲獻於上，以備廟堂之末議；又恐僭易，未敢妄發。如蒙鈞慈，許其申陳，續當編寫以進。惶恐惶恐。

64

He made a similar explanation and put forward the same request to Qin Gui around that period:

I came up with this proposal, but do not dare to submit it rashly. If I may have you listen to my presumptuous utterances, I wish I can carry out the menial job of cutting grass and gathering firewood [i.e. to fully express myself]. I write with apprehension. 某具其說，未敢遽獻，如蒙聽其妄發，願與芻蕘同盡其愚。惶恐惶恐。⁶⁵

By putting forward his request in such ways, Li Gang was politely asking for Lü and Qin's support and endorsement. It was understood that if they agreed to his proposals, Li Gang would then draft memorials to submit to the court and make his own viewpoints clear to the emperor. Communicating his proposed measures to the Grand Councilors before submitting them to the court had added certainty to the feasibility and persuasiveness of those proposals. It provided the officials with the chance to exchange views before they were publicized and were considered by other court authorities. Once Li Gang wrote about them in memorials, the proposals would have to

64 Li Gang, "Yu Lü xiangong di liu shu biefu 与吕相公第六书别幅," in LGQJ, 115/1097.

65 Li Gang, "Yu Qin xiangong di shier shu biefu 与吕相公第十二书别幅," in LGQJ, 118/1134.

be formally discussed by ministers at court meetings and various bureaus.

In the following section, I discuss how writing letters helped to maintain effective communication. I will show that apart from discussing actual policies and viewpoints, epistolary communication provided an adaptive means for bureaucrats to reflect on and adjust the workings of political communication.

Maintaining Effective Communication: A View from an Outpost

Reviewing Li Gang's views in letters leads to another research question related to the role of letter writing in Song political history: why did Li Gang have to write letters to the Grand Councilors? With regards to the letters I am reporting on here, most of the requests were also discussed by Li Gang in other occasions. Why then was it not enough for him to put forward his opinion in official dispatches? By choosing to send a letter along with the memorials he submitted in response to court orders, it shows that Li Gang was aware of the advantages of a direct communication channel of letter writing. By sending letters he created an additional opportunity to make clear his pleas and to persuade the councilors to accept his requests. In short, letters for Li Gang was a form of meta-communication with the Grand Councilors.

Here I will examine examples where Li Gang writes explicitly about communication in his letters in the early 1130s, especially where epistolary exchanges were treated not as the sole method of communication, but as a way of complementing other communication channels and reinforcing Li Gang's opinion in them. Apart from making his views clear, he once assured Qin Gui that he was speaking his own mind in the official documents he was submitting:

The memorials and petitions from my office are all drafted and approved by me. If I have views [about something], I ought to express my loyalty by not holding back. Nevertheless I am afraid that my emotions might be too severe, and my words too crude. I humbly hope Your Excellency would pay special attention to this when discussing this; that would be very fortunate indeed. 應本司奏狀等，皆某親所草定，苟有所見，不敢不盡惓惓之忠，但恐情有所激，辭或拙直，伏望相公敷陳之際，特賜鑒念，幸甚。⁶⁶

It was quite probable that Qin Gui had read his memorials. By choosing to send a letter along with the memorials he submitted in response to court orders, this further shows Li Gang's willingness to take advantage of the non-official channel of epistolary communication:

Because the gold character placard relay was returned yesterday, I enclosed a handwritten letter in the leather case for petitionary reports. This must have caught your attention already. I fear there may be delays on the road, so I made my son copy [the letter] to submit it to you again. 昨日因金字牌遞角回，於申省狀皮筒內，嘗附手書，必已徹鈞聽。恐道路或有阻滯，再令小兒書寫拜呈。⁶⁷

He saw the act of communicating with Qin Gui by letters, in this case, as instrumental for pushing his policy recommendations, especially the suggestion to keep Yue Fei and his armies under his command. This was the reason why he had to duplicate his letter to ensure that Qin would read it and respond to it. The fact that he made his son but not a clerk copy the letters probably indicates that it was a better way to keep the letters

⁶⁶ Li Gang, "Yu Qin xianggong di liu shu biefu 与秦相公第六书别幅," in LGQJ, 117/1121.

⁶⁷ Li Gang, "Yu Qin xianggong di jiu shu biefu 与秦相公第九书别幅," in LGQJ, 117/1127. The letter that his son copied was probably "Yu Qin xianggong di ba shu biefu 与秦相公第八书别幅," in LGQJ, 117/1125-27. On asking one's sons to write letters out, also see Chapter 5.

confidential.

He wanted Qin to take seriously not only what he discussed in memorials, but also the problems he made clear in his letters:

The armies... I requested, and the money and rations to be allocated from Jiangxi to meet urgent needs were already thoroughly discussed in my memorials and letters. I ask for some of your attention; [if granted] it will be very fortunate indeed. 所乞.....等軍，及於江西支撥錢糧應副急闕，奏疏及尺牘中論之已詳。敢望少留鈞念，不勝幸甚。⁶⁸

As mentioned, he had written about the needs of supplies in other writings previously. What attracts attention here is that he repeated these requests in a letter; this demanded a more personal and direct reply than memorials to the court. He made explicit in all of the three letters quoted above that he wanted Qin Gui's personal attention.

One of the functions achieved by Li Gang's epistolary communication channel was to allow for second thoughts or clarification. One example deserves our attention here. When the court announced that Pacification Commissioner posts were cancelled in 1132/9, Li Gang wrote to Lü Yihao to query the reasons behind the cancellation:

The abolition of the Pacification Commissioner post must not be due to trivial reasons. Having received two of your letters with instructions, I still do not see mention of it, why is that so? I am deeply worried.... I humbly hope you will pay your graceful attention and specially grant some clarification; that would be very fortunate. I only dare to mention this with great trepidation because I have relied on your great care. 宣撫司之罷，不為細故，兩奉教墨，皆不及之，不知何謂？第深惶恐.....伏望鈞慈洞照，特賜辨明，不勝幸甚。恃厚眷輒敢及此，悚息之至。

⁶⁸ Li Gang, "Yu Qin xiangong di shi er shu biefu 与秦相公第十二书别幅," in LGQJ, 117/1133.

Li Gang did not see this administrative arrangement as ideal, but he could only make an inquiry in his letter and politely ask for explanation, instead of raising an objection to the Chief Councilor Lü Yihao, or arguing in a memorial to the court. Given his difficult situation as explained, raising this issue in a letter was the most appropriate option.

In fact, Lü Yihao specially arranged this change in posts to limit Li Gang's powers when an official impeached Li Gang for his imperious acts.⁷⁰ Whereas the other three Pacification Commissioners who had commanded troops along the Yangtze River – Liu Guangshi 劉光世 (1089-1142), Li Hui 李回 (?-1133), and Li Guang 李光 (1078-1159) – retained control over the original prefectures they administered, Li Gang could only hold on to Hunan as a commissioner (*anfushi* 安撫使).⁷¹ The circuits in Hubei and Guangdong, originally under his supervision, would be returned to their original administration before he took the post. According to Southern Song historian Li Xinchuan 李心傳 (1166-1243), Lü Yihao wanted special treatment for Li Gang so that his powers in his region could be kept in check. Lü even criticized Li Gang when reporting to Gaozong at court; in 1132/9 he told the emperor that he did not think a “reckless and brutal 縱暴” person like Li Gang could manage Hunan well.⁷² This reveals that Lü Yihao clearly did not want to see Li Gang become more powerful after local order was restored under his administration.

69 Li Gang, “Yu Lü xiangong di shi shu biefu 与呂相公第十书别幅,” in LGQJ, 116/1106.

70 Li Xinchuan, XNYL, 58/1173.

71 This post was conventionally translated as Pacification Commissioner, although it really was different from Li Gang's original post.

72 See Li Xinchuan, XNYL, 58/1173.

The written communications of Li Gang and his colleagues at the imperial court were of course not only confined to epistolary exchanges.⁷³ Official documents composed by ministers and local officials, such as memorials and reports to the throne and to the Department of State Affairs, played a central role in his coordination with higher authorities at the court, especially during wartime, in which prompt and accurate communication was extremely necessary.⁷⁴ Relevant to our study of epistolary culture here, however, was the fact that the delivery of these documents intersected with channels of epistolary communication. This is significant to what I am trying to argue about epistolary communication in Song China because it implies that sending letters was often an alternative way of communicating views on political matters. Li Gang had other channels of acquiring information about recent political developments apart from letters, such as from governmental reports and court gazettes (*dibao* 邸報). Government reports included both orders from the central court (for example, *zhazi* documents issued by the Department of State Affairs and Military Affairs)⁷⁵ and reports from other regional administrative units. As for court gazettes, they offered news about major policies and recent appointments to those serving in local offices. For example, Li Gang mentioned that it was in a court gazette that he read about Lǔ Yihao's

73 To be sure, apart from written communication, verbal communication between Song officials also transmitted political messages. See, for example, Alister D. Inglis, *Hong Mai's Record of the Listener and Its Song Dynasty Context* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006); Jack W. Chen and David Schaberg ed., *Idle Talk: Gossip and Anecdote in Traditional China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

74 One example would be the memorials sent to the emperor by Li Zengbo 李曾伯 (1198-1265) in the war against the Mongols, discussed in Huang Kuanchong, "Wan-Song junqing souji yu chuandi." On memorial systems in imperial China, see Giele, *Imperial Decision-making and Communication in Early China*; Silas Wu, "Transmission of Ming Memorials, and the Evolution of the Transmission Network, 1368-1627," *T'oung Pao*, Second Series 54, no. 4/5 (1968): 275-287; Idem., *Communication and Imperial Control in China*.

75 On the nature of *zhazi* documents, see Chapter 2.

appointment as the Commander-in-chief in 1132.⁷⁶

I will focus on Li Gang as sender of letters and documents here. Attachments were sometimes sent along with his formal letters to the two Grand Councilors. To go into the specific workings of this phenomenon, there is evidence showing that he included entire texts of memorials when sending off some of his letters to court officials. In one example, in Li Gang's letter to Lü Yihao on 1132/5/8 to ask for reinforcements to fight Cao Cheng, since he was unsure whether Lü Yihao had access to the five memorials he had submitted to the Department of State Affairs after Lü had left the imperial residence, Li Gang enclosed them as attachments.⁷⁷ Those memorials suggested that if the court was to provide him with the reinforcements he required, the court should disregard circuit boundaries in order to allow the forces to operate across administrative zones in carrying out their task. Commander Han Shizhong should also be involved in this action.

In other cases, Li Gang only included summaries of what he discussed in memorials submitted to the court. One example of this practice is a letter attachment to the Military Affairs Commissioner Quan Bangyan 權邦彥 (1080-1133), whom had close personal ties to Lü Yihao.⁷⁸ The attachment followed the letter to Quan Bangyan, and it included summaries of the contents of five memorials he submitted to the Bureau of Military Affairs.⁷⁹ As shown in the summaries of his memorials, Li Gang submitted a plea for authority over several armies so that he could mobilize them in his campaign. Since Quan Bangyan was Commissioner of the bureau at that time, he would have had

76 Li Gang, LGQJ, 115/1091. Hilde De Weerdts writes about literati reception of court gazettes in poems and letters, as well as its implications. See De Weerdts, "Court Gazettes' and 'Short Reports'," 181-192.

77 Li Gang, "Yu Lü xiangong di san shu biefu 与吕相公第三书别幅," in LGQJ, 115/1094.

78 On their relations see Liang Weiji, "Zhanzheng yu guojia," 77-78.

79 Li Gang, "Biefu 别幅," in LGQJ, 119/1140-41.

direct access to those documents written by Li, hence it made sense not to include full texts, but only summaries of those memorials to highlight his views. Letters accompanying the memorials provided a medium for messages that were more personal, and provided opportunities for explanation and emphasis.

The additional channel maintained by epistolary exchanges served the function of enabling smooth communication, especially when problems arose and could not be easily solved by regular, and certainly slower bureaucratic channels of communication. Li Gang paid close attention to the problem of communication because effective and efficient communication was crucial during his campaign against bandits. The delivery of intelligence from the imperial court to Li Gang was sometimes delayed and its contents were occasionally self-conflicting. In fact, even when there were no wars, delays and failure in the delivery of documents were rather common. This apparently became a serious problem in the turbulent early years of the Southern Song.⁸⁰

In one instance, Li Gang received conflicting reports on where the emperor was temporarily residing, and hence felt the need to ask Lü Yihao to provide clarification. In order to prevent undesirable incidents, Li Gang stressed the importance of promptly informing localities about the whereabouts of the emperor's headquarters. Only by doing this could the localities report and respond to the court's orders on time:

From both sides of the Yangtze River to the far reaches of Jinghu, they are all imperial territory. The need to prepare for [happenings in] autumn is pressing; we should make the orders uninterrupted on roads so that they can be obeyed and adhered to, in order to proactively prevent negligence and deceit. Now that I know

⁸⁰ For instance, the central court only became aware of the rebellion of Zhong Xiang and Yang Yao in central China after it had broken out for a year. See Haeger, "Between North and South," 483. Due to similar delays in communication, Yue Fei's army spent extra effort while chasing the forces of Cao Cheng. See Cao Jiaqi 曹家齊, *Songshi yanjiu conggao* 宋史研究叢稿 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 2006), 139-41.

where your grand residence is, I know I can report non-urgent and urgent matters to your authority, and it makes me feel extremely fortunate. At this moment the powerful enemy has not declined; the insurgents are getting closer to usurping us. They have long had the intention to pry into the southeast. The most urgent task is to alert our watchtowers and broaden our ears and eyes to pay attention to their situation. As for urgent intelligence, they should be promptly made known to the circuits so that they can make preparations in advance. 顧惟長江表裡，遠暨荊湖，盡屬部封。防秋以迫，當使號令絡繹於路，得以遵稟約束，預為提防，以免疏虞。且知大府次舍所寓，緩急有所控訴，莫之大幸。方今強敵未衰，僭竊密邇，日有窺伺東南之意。明斥堠，廣耳目，多遣間諜，以知其情，最為急務。至於警急之報，亦宜密切行下諸路，俾以先事為備。⁸¹

Because the four circuits that Li Gang was overseeing were relatively distant from the imperial residence, the information he received from the central court during wartime was often outdated and inaccurate. According to him, it often took more than a month for dispatches to reach him from the emperor's headquarters. Even if the court appointed a special envoy to deliver messages to Li Gang, they would have taken more than twenty days on the journey even if no accidents occurred.⁸² This was why he stressed the crucial importance of the accurate and prompt delivery of information. Apart from asking Lü Yihao to look into this issue, he even filed a formal request to the court to ask for a specially appointed palace attendant to handle memorials and orders related to his military campaign.⁸³ In his opinion, this measure would speed up the

81 Li Gang, "Yu Lü xianggong di wu shu biefu 与吕相公第五书别幅," in LGQJ, 115/1096.

82 Li Gang, "Yu Qin xianggong di wu shu biefu 与秦相公第五书别幅," in LGQJ, 117/1120.

83 Li Gang, "Qi chai neishi yi yuan chengshou falai wenzi zouzhuang 乞差内侍一員承受發來文字奏狀," in LGQJ, 67/710.

delivery of intelligence and would thus benefit decision making in dealing with the bandits.

The approach that Li Gang proposed in letters to Qin Gui in order to ensure smooth communication and prompt deployment was to employ the “gold character placard relay (*jinzi pai di* 金字牌遞)”, the highest order of priority in the Song courier system for official correspondence in court orders.⁸⁴ It is significant to my discussion of the use of letter writing for political communication that he achieved this by exchanging letters with the Grand Councilors. When the use of the gold character placard was granted, it would not only underline the importance and urgency of the documents relayed, but also raise the speed at which they were delivered on foot or by horse to a maximum. If Li Gang received a dispatch with a gold character placard, he could then use the placard to respond to the court with the same priority as well, hence ensuring the efficiency of communications between his office and the imperial court.

He considered placing such priority it to be “truly well-suited 實為允當” for the military campaigns he was staging against the bandits.⁸⁵ One specific instance where Li Gang found a gold character placard really necessary was when he hoped that some reinforcements could be dispatched from Hubei:

Whenever the court proclaims an edict to put armies under my command, I ask that they be issued by gold character placards. The situation is urgent and I hope this can be arranged soon. I have previously reported on this and I wait for your deliberation.

84 See Golas, “The Courier-Transport System of the Northern Sung,” 5; Cao Jiaqi, *Songdai jiaotong guanli zhidu yanjiu*, 121-25; Fan Chengda, *Treatises of the Supervisor and Guardian of the Cinnamon Sea*, trans. James M. Hargett (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2010), 206n271; Cao Jiaqi 曹家齊, “Weiquan, sudu yu junzheng jixiao: Songdai jinzi paidi xintan 威權、速度與軍政績效——宋代金字牌遞新探,” *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究, no. 2 (2009): 67-100.

85 Li Gang, “Yu Qin xiangong di wu shu biefu 与秦相公第五书别幅,” in LGQJ, 117/1120.

凡朝廷行下聖旨指揮付某軍中，乞並用金字牌，事勢急迫，庶幾早得辦集，前已具奏，並乞垂念。⁸⁶

While in Shunchang 順昌 in Fujian, Li Gang repeated the same suggestion two more times. For instance, on 1132/5/27 he wrote the following to Qin Gui:

While I was expecting the court's orders, days felt like years. Regular urgent couriers take more than a month from the temporary imperial residence to arrive here. Even appointing someone specially [to deliver it] takes twenty or more days, and only if the roads are unblocked. Being even further away from the temporary imperial residence, I am now deeply concerned that slow responses may lead to lost opportunities. I have repeatedly reported my request for His Excellency to manage this matter by using gold character placards to lay down his command. Hopefully it will be responded to then. 第溪望朝廷回降指揮，以日為歲，尋常急遞，自行在至此，月餘方到，專遣人亦需二十餘日，又需道路無阻，乃可如期。今去行在益遠，深慮報應後時，事失機會，累具申奏，乞以聖旨指揮事件，並用金字牌降下，庶幾速得被受。⁸⁷

Since he was making this request in letters and was contacting his letter recipients directly and not through writing memorials to official authorities, there were better chances that they would respond to him directly rather than through the usually slow bureaucratic channels. In the three times that he mentioned such a request to Qin Gui, he always made it clear that this was a request that he proposed to the court in memorials, and that he wanted it to be authorized. By insisting on this request and repeatedly drawing the councilors' attention to it, the court eventually granted the gold character

⁸⁶ Li Gang, "Yu Qin xiangong di si shu biefu 与秦相公第四书别幅," in LGQJ, 117/1119.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

placard to him in 1132/5-6. As I have shown, this was made possible by the meta-communication conducted in letters.

Conclusion

Studies of Chinese history tend to take the role of letters for granted when quoting epistolary sources in their analyses of political histories, without fully explaining how epistolary communication functioned in politics. This chapter makes the case that only with a more detailed analysis of the political functions of letter writing can we thoroughly understand the social role of the additional communicative medium provided by letter writing. Exchanging letters was part of an exercise that greatly facilitated other communication channels between bureaucrats in the Song, especially those in high level posts. For one thing, Li Gang's relations with Lü Yihao were far from cordial, but they managed to communicate by writing each other personally through letters, apart from the regular channels of communication in officialdom. As for Li Gang and Qin Gui, they were considered to be the respective leaders of the opposing camps of the irredentists and the pacifists, with starkly different views towards Song foreign policy. It is clear from my discussion of letters in this chapter, however, that they maintained direct communication with each other even though their stances were so divergent. Li Gang even asked for personal favors from this councilor who was often blamed as the person responsible for the military failures against the Jin. In my opinion, this serves as a reminder to us that we need to transcend the factional categories that were often used to analyze Song politics, especially the events in the twelfth century. When power struggles existed between officials there was perhaps a

greater need to communicate with the individuals with differing opinions to rally resources, hence we see figures like Li Gang writing regularly to the Grand Councilors.

Success in using epistolary exchanges for political communication did not always lead to success in the actual outcome of communication and negotiation. Due to factors other than his willingness and ability to express his views in his dispatches, Li Gang's goals as a regional commander were not fully achieved. His appointment in the early 1130s was short-lived, and came to an end soon after the immediate threat of Cao Cheng was removed. However, it suffices to say that the partial success of Li Gang in his tenure as an official with military duties was quite remarkable. The letters reveal him as a frustrated commander and local official, and his communication with the Grand Councilors did not achieve all of his goals. By employing epistolary channels to exchange information and views, however, he made constant use of letters to communicate with the councilor and vie for military support during his tenure. He was thus able to receive, even if only partially, the resources he required to put down and absorb Cao Cheng's bandits into the Song state army. If Li Gang had not written the letters to his superiors who were unsympathetic or even at times hostile to him, Li really could not get very far with any of his objectives in his official post.

Writing to Grand Councilors through letters was a means by which major officials like Li Gang could transmit his observations in localities to important actors in the core decision making apparatus within the empire's bureaucracy. The letters acted as a sort of back-channel communication between two opposing political actors who had opposing views, thus needed to keep their negotiations from the rest of the bureaucracy. This confidentiality could not be achieved through the formal channels such as memorials and reports (such as *zhazi* documents discussed in Chapter 2). Epistolary communication was also much more efficient since it did not have to go through the

administrative hurdles of more formal documents. This network of correspondences and exchanges of views between officials through written communication was exactly what shaped the Song bureaucracy. As I argue in this thesis, letter writing was a key element that enabled the literati official community to conduct its bureaucratic operations and interpersonal interactions.

Appendix 1. Li Gang's Letters to Lü Yihao, 1131-33

<u>Title</u>	<u>Source</u> <u>(LGOJ)</u>	<u>Date</u> <u>(underlined if</u> <u>stated in original)</u>	<u>Sent from</u> <u>(underlined if</u> <u>stated in</u> <u>original)</u>
He Lü Xianggong qi 賀呂相公啟	130/1251	after 1131/9/10	
Yu Lü xianggong biefu 與呂相公別幅	114/1085-87		
Yu Lü xianggong di yi shu 與呂相公第一書	115/1090-91	after 1132/2/8	Fujian lu 福建路
Yu Lü xianggong di er shu biefu 與呂相公第二書別幅	115/1091-93	1132/4	Fujian lu 福建路
He dudu Lü Xianggong qi 賀都督呂相公啟	130/1253	1132/4/27	Fujian lu 福建路
Yu Lü xianggong di san shu biefu 與呂相公第三書別幅	115/1093-94	1132/5/8	Fujian lu 福建路
Yu Lü xianggong di si shu biefu 與呂相公第四書別幅	115/1094-96	1132/5/25	Nanjianzhou 南劍州
Yu Lü xianggong di wu shu biefu 與呂相公第五書別幅	115/1096	1132/6/17	Jianchang 建昌, Nanfeng 南豐
Yu Lü xianggong di liu shu biefu 與呂相公第六書別幅	115/1096-99	after 1132/7/25	
Yu Lü xianggong di qi shu biefu 與呂相公第七書別幅	116/1101-1103	1132/9/8	<u>Hengzhou</u> 衡州
Yu Lü xianggong di ba shu biefu	116/1103-1104		<u>Tanzhou</u> 潭州

與呂相公第八書別幅			
Yu Lü xianggong di jiu shu biefu 與呂相公第九書別幅	116/1104-1105		Tanzhou 潭州
Yu Lü xianggong di shi shu biefu 與呂相公第十書別幅	116/1105-1106	after end of 1132/9	Tanzhou 潭州
Yu Lü xianggong di shi yi shu biefu 與呂相公第十一書別幅	116/1107-1108		Tanzhou 潭州
Yu Lü xianggong di shi er shu biefu 與呂相公第十二書別幅	116/1108	<u>1133/1/23</u>	Tanzhou 潭州
Yu Lü xianggong di shi san shu biefu 與呂相公第十三書別幅	116/1108-1109	<u>1133/2/19</u>	Tanzhou 潭州

Appendix 2. Li Gang's Letters to Qin Gui, 1131-33

<u>Title</u>	<u>Source</u> <u>(LGQJ)</u>	<u>Date</u> <u>(underlined if</u> <u>stated in original)</u>	<u>Sent from</u> <u>(underlined if</u> <u>stated in</u> <u>original)</u>
He Qin canzheng qi 賀秦參政啟	130/1250	after 1131/2/14	
Yu Qin canzheng shu 與秦參政書	114/1084-85	after 1131/2/14	
He Qin Xianggong qi 賀秦相公啟	130/1250	after 1131/8/23	
Yu Qin xianggong di yi shu 與秦相公第一書別幅	117/1111-13		
Yu Lü xianggong di er shu 與秦相公第二書別幅	117/1113-16		
Yu Lü xianggong di san shu 與秦相公第三書別幅	117/1116-17		
Yu Lü xianggong di si shu 與秦相公第四書別幅	117/1117-19	<u>1132/5/25</u>	<u>Nanjianzhou</u> 南劍州 ⁸⁸
Yu Lü xianggong di wu shu 與秦相公第五書別幅	117/1119-20	<u>1132/5/27</u>	<u>Shunchang xian</u> 順昌縣
Yu Lü xianggong di liu shu 與秦相公第六書別幅	117/1120-21		<u>Shaowu 邵武</u>
Yu Lü xianggong di qi shu 與秦相公第七書別幅	118/1124-25	<u>1132/6/17</u>	<u>Nanfeng 南豐</u>

88 Incorrectly put as “Jiannan zhou 劍南州” in LGQJ, 117/1117.

Yu Lü xianggong di ba shu 與秦相公第八書別幅	118/1125-27		Tanzhou 潭州
Yu Lü xianggong di jiu shu 與秦相公第九書別幅	118/1127-30		
Yu Lü xianggong di shi shu 與秦相公第十書別幅	118/1130-31		
Yu Lü xianggong di shiyi shu 與秦相公第十一書別幅	118/1131-33		<u>Jizhou 吉州</u>
Yu Lü xianggong di shier shu 與秦相公第十二書別幅	118/1133-35	between 1132/8/11 and 1132/8/30	
Yu Lü xianggong di shisan shu 與秦相公第十三書別幅	118/1135-36		<u>Hengzhou 衡州</u>

CHAPTER 5

Letters as Aesthetic Objects and Cultural Assets

Introduction

Letter writing in Chinese history was associated with calligraphic ideals from very early on and no study of Chinese traditional letter writing is complete without taking this unique aspect of epistolary culture into account. As I have written elsewhere in collaboration with a medieval historian of Europe, a comparison of the epistolary cultures of Song China and twelfth century Latin Europe shows that the most observable difference between the two lies in the materiality of letter writing. There were high-value books at the time in Europe, but never letters. Correspondents were celebrated for their eloquence, but not for the physical production of letters and their handwriting.¹ Hence no calligraphic tradition associated with letter writing developed in medieval Europe. Most correspondents dictated their letters to scribes, and their letters were not valued as physical objects, unlike the calligraphic letters in China that were written paper readily available to scholars, which I discuss in this chapter. For Song China, the renowned calligrapher Mi Fu 米黻/米芾 (1051-1107) stands out as an exemplary case for the investigation of this phenomenon in epistolary culture. In this

1 Xu Liheng 徐力恒 and Xiong Yong 熊雍 [Bernard Gowers], “Shi er shiji de Zhongguo he Xi-Ou de shuxin wenhua 十二世纪的中国和西欧的书信文化：一个比较,” *Beida shixue* 北大史学 20, forthcoming.

chapter, by making use of his extant manuscripts and other relevant sources from the Song, I will study Mi Fu as a letter writer and how his works were received in the Southern Song in order to understand the role of calligraphy in epistolary culture of the time.

As Qianshen Bai comments on the Chinese letter writing tradition: “As personal letters became collectible objects, they passed through different hands.... A keen awareness that letters were collectible led to a conscious effort to make their literary style and the calligraphy in which they were written the objects of aesthetic appreciation.”² This can be traced at least to early medieval China and the “classical” calligraphic tradition that stemmed from that era, based on the fourth century Jin 晉 Dynasty masters such as Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303-361) and Wang Xianzhi 王獻之 (344-86), whose works Mi Fu knew extremely well and learned by studying and imitating their style.³ As a lover of calligraphy, Mi Fu was very conscious of his artistic pursuits and of the fact that his handwriting was highly valued during his own time. This makes Mi Fu an very interesting letter writer for my research purposes. When he wrote letters, it was clear to his contemporaries and himself that he was not only exchanging personal messages but also objects of fine and collectible art. Art historians alike have highlighted Mi Fu’s uniqueness in this phenomenon. As Nakata Yujiro points out, “It is in Mi’s letters that we find the most perfect expression of his ideal style of calligraphy.”⁴ Peter Charles Sturman makes a similar point but further elaborates on

2 Qianshen Bai, “Chinese Letters: Private Words Made Public,” in *The Embodied Image: Chinese Calligraphy from the John B. Elliott Collection at Princeton*, eds. Robert Harrist Jr. et al. (Princeton: The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1999), 382.

3 Lothar Ledderose, *Mi Fu and the Classical Tradition of Chinese Calligraphy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

4 Nakata Yujiro, “Calligraphic Style and Poetry Handscrolls: On Mi Fu's Sailing on the Wu River,” in *Words and Images: Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting*, eds. Alfreda Murck and Wen C. Fong (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), 100.

the relationship between Mi Fu and the letter writing tradition:

The letter, or personal note, precisely because of its causal nature and presumed spontaneity, was especially prized in China as the genre of writing that most directly and truthfully reflected the person behind the brush. When calligraphy first began to be recognized for its self-expressive potential in the first century, letters of notable personalities with fine writing skills were carefully preserved by their recipients. Three hundred years later the art of letter writing attained a peerless level of refinement and appreciation in the Jin dynasty.... This was the tradition to which Mi Fu considered himself heir, fully recognizing that the format of the letter allowed him to present in the most direct way possible his two great assets: his personality and calligraphic skill.⁵

This suggests that studying how the calligrapher Mi Fu wrote letters and the reception of those works will be highly useful for understanding the culture of Chinese letters.

In this chapter I make use of the rich body of extant manuscripts attributed to Mi Fu as source material.⁶ I have already underlined the usefulness of utilizing calligraphic pieces in this study in Chapter 2, and shall not repeat this here. Numerous transcriptions produced by Song authors are also available, such as transcribed collections of manuscripts put together by connoisseurs such as the Southern Song collector Yue Ke 岳珂 (1183-1240).⁷ Anecdotal literature about Mi Fu and other sources about his works in both their original and reproduced form will also provide

⁵ Peter Charles Sturman, *Mi Fu: Style and the Art of Calligraphy in Northern Song China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 103-104.

⁶ The most complete collection of calligraphy by Mi Fu is Gugong bowuyuan 故宮博物院 and Jiangsu Zhenjiang shi Dantu qu renmin zhengfu 江蘇鎮江市丹徒區人民政府 ed., *Mi Fu shufa quanji* 米芾書法全集, 31 vols. (Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 2010). For a list of Mi Fu's holographs including letters and other writings, see Shui Laiyou 水賚佑, *Mi Fu shufa shiliao ji* 米芾書法史料集 (Shanghai: Shanghai shuhua chubanshe, 2009), 859-82.

⁷ Yue Ke 岳珂, *Baozhen zhai fashu zan* 寶真齋法書贊, in CSJC, vol. 1629.

useful information in this chapter.

Mi Fu was not the only calligrapher whose letters demonstrated a close relationship to calligraphy. But he stands out as a unique case for studying of epistolary culture because he was famous for his calligraphy much more than for other things, unlike other Song scholars who were equally revered for their political careers and literary achievements. Mi Fu's letters were not published in separate collections during the Song, unlike Su Shi or Huang Tingjian's letters.⁸ Nonetheless his calligraphy was preserved in model letters compendia and transcribed collections of manuscripts, so we are able to read his letters. Model letters compendia (*fatie* 法帖, sometimes otherwise translated as “model calligraphy” or “rubbing collections”) are collections of rubbings taken from engravings of calligraphy, so that the brushwork can be best preserved.

In the rest of this chapter, I will explore the following topics in order to study the calligraphic aspect of epistolary culture in Song China through Mi Fu and his works: First, I will examine how calligraphy belonged to part of the exchanges that literati scholars conducted in Mi Fu's lifetime. Mi Fu wrote in order to send his calligraphy to others, who were often individuals that admired and treasured his writings. Mi Fu's calligraphy had even become something that possessed a market value in the Song period. Then I look at the communicative contexts in which Mi Fu composed and delivered his letters, so that I can assess how he treated the writing of letters. He was not at all a conventional letter writer, and for this reason he was greatly admired by the imperial court, especially the Gaozong emperor who appointed Mi Fu's son Mi Youren 米友仁 (1074-1151) as the official connoisseur of his letters. So in the following section I also discuss how literati scholars in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were

8 Jin Chuandao, “Bei-Song shuxin yanjiu,” 50-51.

much interested in producing model letters compendia that reproduced Mi Fu's letters, which preserved them and made them more accessible. But let us begin by focusing on his lifetime.

Epistolary Communication as Exchange of Writings and Objects

In the scorching heat of the summer in 1101, the empire-wide famous scholar-official Su Shi passed by Zhenzhou 真州 in the fifth month, where Mi Fu was serving at the time. For him it was the second time he had met Mi Fu, a person whom he had spoken highly of, after eight years of intense political struggles and purges. Aware that Su Shi was ill, Mi Fu sent him a medicinal drink that he made personally from creeping liriopse 麥門冬.⁹ When this stomach-soothing drink arrived at Su Shi's residence, he was just waking up from his sickbed. Extremely touched and grateful, Su Shi composed a short poem and sent it to Mi Fu to thank him, not long before Su Shi passed away in the same year.¹⁰

This anecdote is a testimony to Su Shi and Mi Fu's memorable friendship,¹¹ but it also reminds us of the exchanges that Song literati scholars were regularly engaged in with each other. Letters were usually not isolated objects in the exchanges between Song literati officials. Apart from other writings like poems, they often accompanied

9 On the medicinal properties of this plant, see Pan Fujun 潘富俊, *Zhongguo wenxue zhiwuxue* 中國文學植物學 (Taipei: Maotouying, 2012), 274. For gifts of a medicinal nature from other people mentioned in Su Shi's letters, see Chen Yunru 陈韵如, "Cong shuxin kan Bei-Song shiren de shehui wangluo yu yiliao ziyuan jiaoliu: yi Su Shi wei ge'an de chubu kaocha 从书信看北宋士人的社会网络与医疗资源交流——以苏轼为个案的初步考察," paper presented at "The 15th Congress of the Chinese Society of Song History", Henan University, Kaifeng, Aug. 2012.

10 See Luo Yonglai 罗勇来 and Heng Zheng'an 衡正安, *Mi Fu yanjiu* 米芾研究 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2012), 117.

11 For an overview of their interactions, see *ibid.*, 113-19.

objects such as gifts exchanged between men, and we know about them because these gifts were often mentioned in their letters. As Ronald Egan underlined in his study of Su Shi's informal letters,

A wide variety of material goods figures prominently in these personal letters and is one of their most memorable aspects. It is mostly quite humble items (vegetables, ointment, dried fish, a footwarmer, tea, etc.) that are being sent back and forth. Still, it is evident that the exchange of these things was important, perhaps as important as the notes themselves, in affirming affection and friendship. Collectively, the notes evoke an image of Song dynasty China being crisscrossed by runners carrying notes and small gifts.¹²

These gifts also often contained objects that demonstrated the aesthetic taste of the literati, as studies on imperial Chinese literati culture have already shown.¹³

With these objects literati usually sent letters and short notes, and with their handwriting these often became objects that collectors and connoisseurs prized. For the calligraphy and for the fame of the authors, letters of famous cultural figures were sometimes even seen as marketable objects in the Song, with their value mentioned in some of the writings by literati scholars. First, let us look at an anecdote about Su Shi's letters in a notebook:

Luzhi [i.e. Huang Tianjian] said jokingly to Dongpo [i.e. Su Shi], "In the past Right Army Wang [i.e. Wang Xizhi] wrote calligraphy in exchange for geese. Whenever the gluttonous Han Zongru obtains a letter from you, he will be offered more than ten *jin* of mutton by Yao Lin the Commander-in-chief of the Palace Command in exchange for them. Well, those letters can be called 'calligraphy in exchange for

12 Egan, "Su Shih's 'Notes' as a Historical and Literary Source," 574.

13 See, for example, Yang, *Metamorphosis of the Private Sphere*.

mutton' then.” Dongpo gave a big laugh. One day, Dongpo was in the Hanlin Academy composing various pieces for the imperial festival. Every day Zongru wrote several letters in order to get Su Shi's replies to them. He ordered an emissary to stand in front of the courtyard to make the request more urgent. Laughing, Dongpo said to him, “Deliver the following message to the officer: I refrain from slaughter today [because it is an imperial festival].” 魯直戲東坡曰：“昔王右軍字為換鵝書，韓宗儒性饕餮，每得公一帖，於殿帥姚麟許換羊肉十數斤，可名二丈書為換羊書矣。”坡大笑。一日，公在翰苑，以聖節製撰紛冗，宗儒日作數簡，以圖報書，使人立庭下，督索甚急，公笑謂曰：“傳語本官，今日斷屠。”¹⁴

The handwriting of Su Shi almost became something one could barter with collectors for goods, and both Huang Tingjian and Su Shi himself were well aware of this. Such letters with commercial value were taken good care of, as one would expect. For instance, Su Shi himself mentioned carefully handling an epistolary manuscript that he acquired:

Recently I purchased a letter written by my late uncle; I myself provided it with a front mounting and backing and added a superscription and colophon. 近購得先伯父手啟一通，躬親裱背題跋。¹⁵

This letter by his uncle Su Huan 蘇渙 (1000-1062) had commercial value as he had to buy it from someone, and it also had a sentimental value because he long revered this uncle. This was why we see his careful treatment of Su Huan's letter; he did it not only to preserve and conserve the letter, but also to add further information with his

14 Zhao Lingzhi 趙令時, *Houqing lu* 侯鯖錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002), 1/51 (with modifications to punctuation).

15 Quoted in R. H. van Gulik, *Chinese Pictorial Art as Viewed by the Connoisseur: Notes on the Means and Methods of Traditional Chinese Connoisseurship of Pictorial Art, based upon a Study of the Art of Mounting Scrolls in China and Japan* (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1958), 183.

superscription and colophon. This is something we also observe in what compilers of model letters compendia do to the manuscripts that they gather together, as I will discuss below.

For collectors precious objects like these epistolary manuscripts were only to be exchanged for other goods when facing dire financial circumstances, as illustrated by the following anecdote about the selling of another literati scholar's letters:

In Xie Jingyu's [Lun]¹⁶ household, there is a compilation of more than ten of Chen Wuyi's [Shidao] letters. He gave all of them to the Brewery Agency officials in exchange for charcoal, which shows how poor he is. 謝景魚家有陳無已手簡一編，有十餘帖，皆與酒務官託買浮炭者，其貧可知。¹⁷

Why Xie Lun would have bought charcoal from a brewery is not obvious at first sight, but the distilling of alcoholic drinks in the state monopoly enterprise actually must have involved boiling, therefore it is safe to say that the raw material of state distilleries included firewood.¹⁸ It is then not surprising that charcoal might also be used for boiling and some of the surplus material may be sold to residents nearby to make some profit. Without enough cash, Xie Lun resorted to exchanging his collection of literati scholar Chen Shidao's 陳師道 (1052-1101) correspondence for this charcoal. The officers at the Brewery Agency must have been aware that these letters had a market value, and could be sold for something else.

16 Xie Lun's 謝淪 courtesy name is Jingyu. See Lu You, *Lao Xue'an biji*, 1/12.

17 *Idem.*, 6/77.

18 The evidence that supports this includes the records about the expenses for firewood in the accounts of one of these agencies in Shuzhou 舒州 in Anhui Province. See Sun Jimin 孙继民 and Wei Lin 魏琳, *Nan-Song Shuzhou gongdu yijian zhengli yu yanjiu* 南宋舒州公牍佚简整理与研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2011), 34-98 *passim*. Also see Meng Zhang, "Accounting, Pricing and Profit Distribution: Evidence from the Account Books and Regulations of a State-owned Wine Enterprise in Southern Song China," paper presented at "22nd Annual Columbia Graduate Student Conference on East Asia," Columbia University, New York, Feb. 2011, 25.

This shows that epistolary manuscripts by famous figures in the Song definitely possessed a market value. This was especially the case for letters by Mi Fu. The entry on him in the imperial catalogue *Xuanhe shupu* 宣和書譜 [Catalogue of Calligraphy in the Xuanhe Collection] mentioned the popularity of his calligraphy:

When Mi Fu wrote calligraphy, people competed to sell the merest scraps of paper with a few characters on as precious ornaments, so much that the shoes of the people asking for inscriptions and tablets filled his door. 方芾書時，其寸紙數字人爭售之以為珍玩，至於請求碑榜而戶外之履常滿。¹⁹

Mi Fu's popularity had even caught the attention of the imperial connoisseurs at Huizong's court. People visited Mi Fu's residence, and even made journeys from afar to obtain his valuable calligraphy. Mi Fu once wrote in a letter,

An acquaintance of mine came from Changzhou to ask for calligraphy for carving. No inns are conveniently available, can he stay in the boat in the harbor for one or two days? 有相識來自常，求書刻，逆旅不便，欲假巷（港）口舟中令住一兩日可否？²⁰

With such popularity, admirers must also have asked for calligraphy by writing to Mi Fu. There is record of him responding to some of these requests in his epistolary communication, including this letter below:

Fu writes: As for my awful handwriting that you requested, what characters would you like? Let me know. I bow my head. [For] official Zhang Maoyi.

芾啟：要惡札，是

19 *Xuanhe shupu* 宣和書譜, ed. Gui Dizi 桂第子 (Changsha: Hunan meishu chubanshe, 1999), 12/234. For more about Mi Fu's entry in this catalogue, see Patricia B. Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture: The Collections of Emperor Huizong* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 252-53.

20 Cited in Shui Laiyou, *Mi Fu shufa shiliao ji*, 56 (with modifications in punctuation).

甚字？

批及。芾頓首。

章侯茂異。²¹

Upon getting a reply to this letter, Mi Fu would have written out the requested characters and sent them back. Whether remuneration was involved in these exchanges is unknown, but as discussed in Chapter 3 we can be certain that for some other kinds of writing such as epitaphs, remuneration was often paid to the writer.

As a practitioner, and also a connoisseur and collector of calligraphic art, Mi Fu's correspondence with friends often involved topics about calligraphy. Sometimes calligraphy was not only given as gifts, but sent as part of a series of transactions of cultural objects such as stones, brush stands, and inkstones. A well-studied aspect of this was how Mi Fu built a collection of calligraphy through exchanging some of his objects for calligraphy, especially those by Jin masters, which he cherished most. This is adequately reflected in the content of some of his letters.²² I will not go into the details of that aspect here, but epistolary communication was one of the principal ways he communicated with other collectors and exchanged information and views on calligraphy with them, as well as a means for negotiating deals of transactions in an elegant and polite way.

Since his calligraphy was so highly regarded by contemporaries, it was crucial that

21 Xu Bangda, *Gu shuhua guoyan yaolu*, 354-55. In the transcription I have preserved the line breaks in the original manuscript, which I find to be a notable feature in Chinese letter writing, as discussed in Chapter 2.

22 See Ledderose, *Mi Fu and the Classical Tradition of Chinese Calligraphy*, 45-49; Sturman, *Mi Fu*, 74-86. For an example, see my discussion of one of his letters in Lik Hang Tsui, "For the Love of Calligraphy: A Letter by a Chinese Calligrapher," *Manuscript of the Month*, *Manuskriptkulturen in Asien, Afrika und Europa*, http://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/mom/2014_10_mom_e.html (accessed Dec. 28, 2014). This letter is also expertly studied by Cao Baolin 曹寶麟, "Mi Fu 'Qiezhong tie' kao 米芾《篋中帖》考," *Shu pu* 書譜, no. 61 (1984): 50-53.

he wrote in the distinct style that he was recognized for when he wrote for other people. Even though Mi Fu did not write out all of his letters by himself, many of them were probably written in the signature style that he was known for. He mentioned in one of his letters that an earlier letter had been written out by one of his sons:

The clerk is on holiday, so my son is writing the letter. Please do not be offended. I bow deeply again. 書表司與假，遂小兒作書，不罪不罪！芾再拜。²³

He was probably dictating the letter to his son. As he explained with some pride in one of his treatises on calligraphy:

The placards written by Wu Huan from Jiangnan and Wang Zishao of Dengzhou in large clerical script are full of archaic resonances; my son Yinren [i.e. Mi Youren] writes with large clerical script on placards as skilful as them. My younger son Yinzhi writes inscriptions in large characters in my name, and they look no different from my own. Xu the Vice Minister²⁴ especially adores his small standard script, and has said, “When [you send] informal notes to me, please ask your son to write.” He was referring to Yinzhi.²⁵ 江南吳峴、登州王子韶大隸題榜古意盎然，我兒尹仁大隸題榜與之等。幼兒尹知代我名書碑及手大字更無辨。門下許侍郎尤愛其小楷，云：“每小簡可使令嗣書。”謂尹知也。²⁶

From this it is also clear that some of the characters that Mi Fu was asked to write, possibly those commissioned by others, were actually done by his son who acted as his

23 For a reproduced image of the rubbing, see *Zhongguo fatie quanji* 中國法帖全集, vol. 10, *Song Yingguangtang tie* 宋 英光堂帖 (Wuhan: Hubei meishu chubanshe, 2002), 3/308-309.

24 This refers to Xu Jiang 許將 (1037-1111).

25 This talented son refers to Mi Youzhi 米友知 (1084-1103), who is much less well-known than Mi Youren. About him see Cao Baolin 曹寶麟, “Mi Youzhi xiao kao 米友知小考,” in Cao Baolin ed., *Zhongguo shufa quanji (di 37-38 juan) Song, Liao, Jin bian: Mi Fu juan* 中國書法全集 (第 37-38 卷) 宋遼金編：米芾卷 (Beijing: Rongbao zhai, 1992), 35-36.

26 Mi Fu 米芾, “Haiyue mingyan 海岳名言,” in Pan Yungao 潘云告 ed., *Songdai shu lun* 宋代書論 (Changsha: Hunan meishu chubanshe, 1999), 174.

ghostwriter. Even he thought his son's handwriting looked entirely the same as his own. The calligraphic style of letters certainly mattered.

Therefore, letter writing in the context of literary culture at the time was not merely an act of exchanging messages, or “corresponding”. Writing a letter to another literati scholar was also an exchange at another level. Contemporaries valued letters written in graceful calligraphy because calligraphic skill was a crucial part of the virtues of literati scholars and also an aspect of the projection of a public persona. It was a sign of attainment that would attract admiration from others. Members of the literatus actively collected or even requested figures like Mi Fu to write for them, so that the manuscripts could become part of their collection. The importance of the materiality of letters marks a sharp distinction with epistolary culture in Latin Europe of the same period, since a calligraphic tradition in letter writing did not exist there at the time.²⁷

Communicative Contexts of Mi Fu as a Letter Writer

Before delving into the communicative contexts of Mi Fu's correspondence, I will first look at the transmission of his works since they provide useful information for restoring such contexts.

During Mi Fu's lifetime there were many more of his works circulating than those extant today.²⁸ Liu Kezhuang 劉克莊 (1187-1269) recorded in an account that,

There is a note by Mi Yuanzhang that reads, “The collected works of me your brother,

27 See Xu Liheng and Xiong Yong, “Shi er shiji de Zhongguo he Xi Ou de shuxin wenhua.”

28 See Zhou Xinglu 周兴禄, “Mi Fu wenji liuchuan kaobian 米芾文集流传考辨,” in *Wei wangsheng ji juexue: Zhongguo renmin daxue guoxue yuan xuesheng youxiu xueshu lunwen ji* 为往圣继绝学：中国人民大学国学院学生优秀学术论文集, ed. Huang Pumin 黄朴民 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2010), 306-316.

works are much fewer than that of Su Shi, because many of them were lost after his death.³⁴ One cannot be certain why they were lost, but a twelfth century critic's observation may partially explain this:

“Mi Yuanzhang's poetry is absolutely wonderful, but people seldom praise him for that because it is concealed by the reputation of his calligraphy. 米元章賦詩絕人，而人罕稱之者，以書名掩之也。”³⁵

The interest in Mi Fu's poetry had been dwarfed by that in his calligraphy. He was known primarily to be a calligrapher, more than a writer or a poet.

Both Yue Ke and Mi Xian's editions did not contain a separate section for epistolary writings,³⁶ but the manuscripts of Mi Fu's letters that Yue Ke had access to were still quite numerous, as I will later show. Clearly, Mi Fu had written many letters, but many of them have not survived, at least not in the transmitted collections available to us. Most letters that we have by Mi Fu are in original manuscript form or in reproduced form as model letters compendia or rubbings. Thanks to these artifacts and their transcriptions, there is still ample material to catch a glimpse of literati communication in action. Sturman, Jay Xu, and myself have already studied on the basis of actual manuscripts how Mi Fu calligraphic style went together harmoniously with the content of his letters, hence I will not repeat this kind of stylistic analysis here.³⁷

1998), 160-268. The two letters are in 4/21a-24a [203-204].

34 See the comparison of the number of Su Shi and Mi Fu's poems in Ronald Egan, *The Problem of Beauty: Aesthetic Thought and Pursuits in Northern Song Dynasty China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 199. According to this there are 258 extant poems by Mi Fu. Poems were often sent with letters and sometimes they cannot be entirely separated, even though they belong under different headings in collected works. I discuss this phenomenon in Mi Fu's works in “Mi Fu shuzha guankui: yi shuxin wenhua he shufa wei zhu de kaocha 米芾书札管窥——以书信文化和书法为主的考察,” *Beida shixue* 北大史学 20, forthcoming.

35 Ge Lifang 葛立方, *Yun yu yangqiu 韻語陽秋* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984), 2/6b-7a [30-31].

36 See R. H. van Gulik, *Mi Fu on Ink-stones* (Peking: Henri Vetch, 1938), 2-3.

37 Sturman, *Mi Fu*; Jay Xu, “Opposite Paths to Originality: Huang T'ing-chien and Mi

Instead I will examine the communicative contexts of his letters, so that the role of calligraphy can be better understood within the larger social and political culture of letter writing.

Many of Mi Fu's letters are short, informal notes no more than several sentences.³⁸ From the brevity of these letters it is clear that a good number of his letters served as messages exchanged prior to verbal communication at personal meetings. Mi Fu often wrote as if he did not have to wait for long until he could meet the recipient in person. In such cases, Mi Fu and his letter recipients were probably based in the same localities. This is why we often see messages similar to the following in his notes:

“As for the rest, let the messenger tell you face-to-face. 餘並人吏面占。”³⁹

Then Mi Fu was relying on a messenger to carry a written note to go with the spoken message. There are other notes such as these:

“As for the rest, let us wait until I pay a visit to the gates and chambers of your office and residence. What is on my mind is not what I can put on paper. 其餘俟趨省詣府，造門叩閣，所懷非紙所罄。”⁴⁰

“Let us wait until I see you face-to-face. 俟面干也。”⁴¹

“Let me tell you when we meet. 區區容面敘。”⁴²

“I shall explain to you face-to-face. 區區面罄。”⁴³

Fu,” in Harrist Jr. et al. ed., *The Embodied Image*, 261-67; Tsui, “For the Love of Calligraphy.”

38 This is similar to those discussed in Egan, “Su Shih's ‘Notes’ as a Historical and Literary Source,” 561-88.

39 Yue Ke, *Baozhen zhai fashu zan*, 19/267.

40 Ibid., 19/267.

41 Ibid., 19/275.

42 Ibid., 19/274.

43 Ibid., 19/274.

This demonstrates neatly how written communication in letters did not act as a full substitute for oral communication; oral and written communication were carried out at the same time by individuals like Mi Fu and his acquaintances when possible.

Even letters that are longer than these express the irreplaceable urge to meet in person with someone, rather than just corresponding with them. Examples include the correspondence between Mi Fu and Su Shi. In 1101, Su Shi wrote to Mi Fu just before they met:

Over the last two days my illness has increased rather than subsided. Even though I have been moved outside of the yamen, where the wind and air are a bit fresher, I feel empty and fatigued, unable to eat and barely able to speak. My son acquired this poem “Rhapsody on the Tower of the Precious Moon” somewhere. He was not even halfway through reciting the clear, jade-like sounds, when listening I suddenly rose from lying on the bed and became much enlivened. My big regret is that in the twenty years we have known each other I have never fully recognized your hidden depths. It is like this rhapsody—superior to what the men of the antiquity wrote, not to mention those of our generation. Surely the world is always filled with people like myself, deaf and insensitive! It will not be long before you, Sir, make your name as a matter of course, without need of people like me saying this. I would like to talk with you, but I really cannot. Perhaps if we wait a few days?⁴⁴ 兩日來，疾有增無減。雖遷閤外，風氣稍清，但虛乏不能食，口殆不能言也。兒子於何處得《寶月觀賦》，琅然誦之，老夫臥聽之未半，躍然而起。恨二十年相從，知元章不盡，若此賦，當過古人，不論今世也。天下豈常如我輩聵聵耶！公不久當自有大名，不勞我輩說也。願欲與公談，則實未能，想當更後數日耶？⁴⁵

44 Translation based on Sturman, *Mi Fu*, 177-78 (with modifications).

45 Su Shi, *Su Shi wenji*, 58/1781.

Even just after this meeting, Su Shi wrote a letter to Mi Fu again:

I write: For eight years in the Lingnan region I was cut off from family and friends, but I have not missed them. I only thought of [Mi] Yuanzhang's cloud-soaring spirit, his clear and virile writings, which eschew the vulgar, and his transcendent calligraphy, which partakes of the divine. When would I see you again and cleanse myself of these malarial poisons that have accumulated over the years? Now that I finally had the opportunity to see you, nothing more need be said. I will not go on here.⁴⁶ 某啟。嶺海八年，親友曠絕，亦未嘗關念。獨念吾元章邁往凌雲之氣，清雄絕俗之文，超妙入神之字，何時見之，以洗我積歲瘴毒耶！今真見之矣，餘無足言者。不一一。⁴⁷

In both of these letters Su Shi's urge to meet Mi Fu figured prominently, and epistolary communication was the means for them to express that a meeting in person was unparalleled.⁴⁸ I will return to the topic of their exchanges below, but let me now continue to introduce how letters like these were delivered.

Although government officials like Su Shi and Mi Fu were usually allowed to make use of the governmental courier system in sending letters, the delivery of letters was not at all reliable and efficient. Delays and failures in deliveries were common even in political communication and the dissemination of military intelligence, as shown in Chapter 4, so it must also be expected in the delivery of letters for personal purposes.

"I fear that the previous letter was actually not delivered. 恐前書真不達耳。"⁴⁹

"Tianqi⁵⁰ wrote you a letter. Has it arrived? 天啟曾有書去，達否？"⁵¹

46 Translation based on Sturman, *Mi Fu*, 178 (with modifications).

47 Su Shi, *Su Shi wenji*, 58/1783.

48 This topos seen in examples of letters from the Six Dynasties is analyzed in Richter, *Letters and Epistolary Culture in Early Medieval China*, 127-34.

49 Yue Ke, *Baozhen zhai fashu zan*, 19/270.

50 Tianqi is Cai Zhao's 蔡肇 (?-1119) courtesy name. He wrote the epitaph of Mi Fu.

51 Yue Ke, *Baozhen zhai fashu zan*, 19/271.

“Therefore I write you a letter again, and enclose the previous letter with it.... I will not repeat here what I have written there. 故再奉啟，并前狀上納..... 區區已具右狀中者，不重述。”⁵²

These remarks in various letters show when corresponding with acquaintances, it was not at all certain whether the previous letter from Mi Fu had reached the recipient. Mi Fu sometimes tried to confirm this with his letter recipients in epistolary exchanges:

“I submit this letter on the 25th day. I have received your letter sent on the 14th day. 二十五日，芾上啟。得十四日書。”⁵³

“Yesterday I have written clumsily [a letter] for the messenger to express my thanks. I expect it to have reached you already. 昨以手拙，附專介以代占謝，恭想已達左右。”⁵⁴

It was quite probable that he had to wait for messengers to pass by when he wanted his letter delivered. For example, in one letter he remarked that:

“I composed this letter last night but did not get to send it 昨夕作此簡，未及遣”⁵⁵

At least one of the epistolary manuscripts by Mi Fu was written to deal with official business,⁵⁶ similar to the function of the formal letters discussed in the previous chapter, but this is generally quite rare among Mi Fu’s extant works. The confidentiality of the messages in letters was also an occasional concern of Mi Fu. He once asked an unspecified recipient of a letter not to leak his personal views towards a colleague of his:

52 Ibid., 19/272.

53 Ibid., 19/273.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid., 19/276. For the calligraphy of this, see *Zhongguo fatie quanji*, vol. 10, *Song Yingguangtang tie*, 325. It is not entirely clear whether the letter Mi Fu referred to here was the previous letter in collected Yue Ke, *Baozhen zhai fashu zan*: “I have been starving my guests. I prostrate. To my friend Anzhong. 餓殺客也。芾頓首。安中吾友。”

56 Xu Bangda, *Gu shuhua guoyan yaolu*, 353-54.

The Assistant Magistrate is quite strict, and never responds to my messages [of greeting]. I have heard that he acts strictly according to regulations. Oh, that inspires awe. I respectfully submit the above letter. Let me ask you not to reveal these words that I have said; I fear that he might be angry with me. 主簿甚嚴，傳語皆不答。聞有甚條貫，吁可畏哉。謹奉啟。咨叩勿泄此語，恐相惱。⁵⁷

Specifying the confidentiality of the message in a letter like this was not uncommon during the time, as official and personal correspondence was mixed in their deliveries by the official courier service. What was unique to the way Mi Fu wrote letters, however, was how he was seen to have the persona of an eccentric but extremely talented artist.

Mi Fu was not only famed for his calligraphic talent, but also well known for his eccentric persona, which both he and others took part in constructing.⁵⁸ How did this reflect in how he wrote letters? An anecdote in a notebook shows that people around Mi Fu paid special attention to how the calligrapher wrote:

One day Mi wrote a letter in reply to someone. Some of his relatives and old acquaintances peeped through the window secretly, and saw that when he was about to write “I bow twice”, he put down the brush on the desk, straightened his clothing and bowed his head twice. 又一日，米回人書，親舊有密於窗隙窺其寫至“芾再拜”，即放筆于案，整襟端下兩拜。⁵⁹

This anecdote is part of the literature that established the eccentric artist persona of Mi Fu as a cultural icon in Song China. Although there had been discussion of whether this was just put on by him or reflective of his real temperament,⁶⁰ the

57 Yue Ke, *Baozhen zhai fashu zan*, 19/271.

58 See, for example, Egan, *The Problem of Beauty*, 211-19.

59 Zhou Hui 周輝, *Qingbo zazhi jiaozhu* 清波雜誌校注, 11/465.

60 Ting Ch'uan-ching, *A Compilation of Anecdotes of Sung Personalities*, trans. by Chu Djang and Jane C. Djang (Taipei: St. John's University Press, 1989), 502.

anecdote in my opinion is more telling when we set aside the issue of whether it actually happened but rather interpret it as an account of how Mi Fu was seen as a different letter writer than his contemporaries. His actual bodily gesture of bowing his head here along with mentioning it in a letter deserves special attention. In what was usually adopted by letter writers as a strategy aiming “for a sense of immediacy and presence by foregrounding the body of the writer”, the presence that resulted from an epistolary exchange was usually intended to overcome the physical absence.⁶¹ In Mi Fu’s case, however, being physically absent did not mean that he did not have to act upon what one conventionally wrote in the letter, at least when he was portrayed by his contemporaries. When he wrote about bowing in a letter, he actually bowed. This amused those who saw such a gesture of Mi Fu and this hints at the fact that doing this was quite disparate from the norm of the time.⁶² To write about bowing had already become no more than an empty ritual in letter writing, not unlike the conventions that came to be associated with bureaucratic correspondence that I have discussed in Chapter 2. Therefore, when it comes to the case of Mi Fu, his way of treating letter writing was deemed by his acquaintances to be unique. This peculiar action of Mi Fu as seen by the people close to him did not only represent his eccentricity,⁶³ it also showed that he equated his personal presence with his epistolary presence to the extreme. This was of course relevant to his pursuit in the art of calligraphy which wove artistic style and personality together.⁶⁴ What he wrote was what he was.

61 On human presence in epistolary communication, see Esther Milne, *Letters, Postcards, Email: Technologies of Presence* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 53. See esp. Ch. 2.

62 See the interpretation in Zheng Yimei 郑逸梅, *Chidu conghua* 尺牍丛话 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2004), 4.

63 As interpreted in Ting, *A Compilation of Anecdotes of Sung Personalities*, 502.

64 For Northern Song literati views on this, see Amy McNair, *The Upright Brush: Yan Zhenqing’s Calligraphy and Northern Song Literati Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1998), 10-15.

Mi Fu took very seriously the writing of letters as tokens of human interaction, even after having finished writing them. Here I will revisit Mi Fu and Su Shi's interactions in 1011 to make this point. Not long after they met each other for the second time, Su Shi died in 1011/7/28. Mi Fu wrote a mourning poem to lament his death. In the annotations Mi Fu provided for the poem, he recounted his written correspondence with Su Shi:

Su Shi said in his letter, "My regret is that in the thirty years we have known each other I have not fully recognized you."⁶⁵ I replied by saying, "If there are still things in me that you do not fully recognize, when we cultivate the achievements of Yang and Xu,⁶⁶ we travel to imperial palaces in the celestial skies. When we meet each other at that time you shall fully recognize them." Now that I think about it, they were all words of farewell. 公簡云：“相知三十年，恨知公不盡。”余答曰：“更有知不盡處，修楊許之業，為帝宸碧落之游，異時相見，乃知也。”今思之，皆訣別之語。⁶⁷

Ominous words as they may seem, those letters from Su Shi became messages of farewell between Mi Fu and Su Shi that attested to their relationship. In the poem, Mi Fu also mentioned a letter by another good friend Xue Shaopeng 薛紹彭 (?-1109?), who was in a post in Zizhou 梓州 in Sichuan at that time,⁶⁸ in the line “A letter that

65 This was rephrasing Su Shi's letter cited earlier: “My big regret is that in the twenty years we have known each other I have never fully understood you 恨二十年相從，知元章不盡”.

66 Whom he was alluding to here is not entirely clear to me. It is possible that he was referring to Yang Xiu 楊修 (175?-219) and Xu You 許攸 (?-204), who were both talented ministers executed by Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220) under the Wei. See Rafe de Crespigny, *A Biographical Dictionary of Later Han to the Three Kingdoms (23–220 AD)* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 916 & 962.

67 Mi Fu 米芾, *Bao Jin yingguang ji* 寶晉英光集, in CSJC, vol. 1932 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1936), 4/25 (with punctuation modified).

68 For dates of Xue Shaopeng's career, see Lu Huiwen 盧慧紋, “Xue Daozu shufa fenqi yu xiangguan wenti 薛紹彭書法分期與相關問題,” in *Kaichuang dianfan: Bei-Song*

arrived told me that Su Shi's fellow village men hoped that he would return to his native place 書到鄉人望還舍”.⁶⁹ Mi Fu quoted that Xue had mentioned in his letter, “people and elders from Su Shi's native place have longed for him to return 鄉人父老咸望公歸也”.⁷⁰ This made clear that this line in the poem was drawn from the first-hand experience reported by Xue Shaopeng. Unfortunately, Su Shi was never able to return to his native place throughout his life, making his passing away even more unfortunate. In this case, letters were not only devices for forging a human presence in interpersonal interactions, but also something that he could use and keep to commemorate and mourn for the loss of this presence when a good friend had passed away then.⁷¹ In this sense letters did not only overcome the physical distance between two people, but also symbolized the legacy of the dead, or the bonds between the living who were in memory of the dead.

The example above did not imply that all of Mi Fu's letters were solemn and serious. Some were actually quite light-hearted. For example, in a letter Mi Fu bluntly asked Jiang Zhiqi 蔣之奇 (1031-1104), who was twenty years his senior, to recommend him for promotion in the imperial court. He presumably did this after Jiang assumed the duty of Co-Administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs (同知樞密院事) in 1101.⁷² His letter reads:

I am turning old! Please do not shy away from speaking out at court to recommend me, saying: “The talent of Mi Fu of Xiangyang is among the ranks of Su Shi and

de yishu yu wenhua yantaohui lunwenji 開創典範：北宋的藝術與文化研討會論文集, ed. Wang Yaoting 王耀庭 (Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 2008), 668-72.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 4/24.

⁷⁰ Ibid. In fact, he never returned to their place of birth after his father's death in 1066.

⁷¹ I have already discussed how individuals negotiated the writing for commemorating the deceased in Chapter 3.

⁷² Luo Yonglai and Heng Zheng'an, *Mi Fu yanjiu*, 113-19.

Huang Tingjian. He is so confident of his talents that he does not join factions. But he is old now and hindered by his position in the qualification system.⁷³ If he unfortunately dies he will not be able to perfect [your] imperial achievements and add luster to your imperial grandeur. As your minister, I pity him and hope your majesty can step outside of the normal procedures to promote him to a position commensurate with his talents.” What do you think about this? I write apprehensively. 芾老矣！先生勿恤廷議，薦之曰：“襄陽米芾，在蘇軾、黃庭堅之間，自負其才，不入黨與。今老矣。困於資格，不幸一旦死，不得潤色帝業，黼黻皇度，臣△（=某）⁷⁴惜之。願明天子去常當格料理之。”先生以為如何？芾惶恐。⁷⁵

This sarcastic letter reminds us of the letters officials of the time sent to their colleagues to ask for recommendations letters for sons and relatives, such as those by Yang Wanli 楊萬里 (1127-1206) studied by historian Wang Ruilai, but this one was obviously much more informal than those.⁷⁶ Recommendation letters within the bureaucracy always required writing skillfully to the person whom one wanted help from, and a recommendation from a senior minister at the imperial court was even a bigger favor to ask for. Mi Fu managed, however, to mock himself and ask for a recommendation at the same time.

73 For an introduction to this system in the Song civil service, see Lo, *An Introduction to the Civil Service of Sung China*, 58-59.

74 According to Lu You, “people of today write ‘mou’ as ‘△’ all think this is so according to conventional custom. Actually it is the ancient script of ‘mou’. 今人書「某」為「△」，皆以為俗從簡便，其實古「某」字也。” See Lu You, *Lao Xue’an biji*, 6/81.

75 Cited in Shui Laiyou, *Mi Fu shufa shiliao ji*, 114. For a reproduced image of the rubbing, see *Zhongguo fatie quanji* 中國法帖全集, vol. 11, *Song Bao Jin zhai fatie* 宋寶晉齋法帖 (Wuhan: Hubei meishu chubanshe, 2002), 10/323&325.

76 For the functions of these letters, see Wang Ruilai 王瑞來, “‘Neiju bu bi qin’: yi Yang Wanli wei ge’an de Song-Yuan biange lun shizheng yanjiu ‘內舉不避親’——以楊萬里為個案的宋元变革论实证研究,” *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大學學報, no. 2 (2012): 117-28.

The Reproduction and Reception of Mi Fu's Letters in the Southern Song

Having seen the qualities of Mi Fu as a letter writer, it should not be difficult to understand why his works were much sought after. This section will discuss how admirers followed his style and reproduced his works in model letters compendia.

For a person like Mi Fu who was so eager to collect and examine original manuscripts by early masters, he strongly believes that one should rely on originals for learning calligraphy. Stone engravings were not faithful reproductions of calligraphy:

One should not learn from stone engravings. Even if one has one's own writing carved in stone, it is no longer his own writing. For this reason one has to look at original manuscripts; only then can one capture their flavor. 石刻不可學，但自書使人刻之，已非己書也，故必須真跡觀之乃得趣。⁷⁷

For an avid learner of classical calligraphy who was obsessed with early medieval Jin masters and studiously copied their works,⁷⁸ stone engravings were of course imperfect material for examining calligraphy or learning it. That Mi Fu made this point, however, indicates that some of his contemporaries in the Northern Song were relying on engravings to study past calligraphy. After all, to engrave calligraphy on stone or wood, and then make rubbings of them into model letters compendia was a rather effective way in preserving and making available the works of calligraphic masters. The accuracy of calligraphy was vital in reproductions, and the accuracy that rubbings and model

⁷⁷ Mi Fu, "Haiyue mingyan," 178. The translation is based on van Gulik, *Mi Fu on Ink-stones*, 6 & 8; Sturman, *Mi Fu*, 157.

⁷⁸ On him as a copyist and even a forger of Jin calligraphy, see Ledderose, *Mi Fu and the Classical Tradition of Chinese Calligraphy*, 58-61.

letters compendia ensured cannot be provided by any other method of the time.⁷⁹ Even Mi Fu himself was known to have been in charge of engraving works of Jin masters on stone in Wuwei 無為 County in 1104, naming the compendium *Bao Jin* 寶晉 [Treasuring the Jin] to mark his admiration.⁸⁰ Indeed, many learned from the imperial sponsored style of the two Wangs from compendia, such as what was known to posterity as the *Chunhua ge tie* 淳化閣帖 [Model Letters in the Imperial Archives in the Chunhua Era], the Song imperial compendium of calligraphy published in 992 which marked the canonization of the classical tradition.⁸¹ By the Southern Song, a similar phenomenon emerged for those appreciating the style of Mi Fu, and to them even imperfect reproductions meant a great deal. Those who had access to Mi Fu's letters thus worked on bringing out reproductions. The fact that letters were ego-documents that contained a lot of information about one's character also drove the publishing of these compendia.

The publication of model letters compendia in the Song period is the subject of an article by Amy McNair as well as some Chinese language studies,⁸² from which I will

79 On rubbings, see Wu Hung, "On Rubbings - Their Materiality and Historicity," in *Writing and Materiality in China: Essays in Honor of Patrick Hanan*, eds. Judith Zeitlin and Lydia Liu (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 29-72; Kenneth Starr, *Black Tigers: A Grammar of Chinese Rubbings* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2008). On the materiality of model letter compendia, see Sau Wah Ng, "Challenging the Calligraphy Canon: The Reception of Rubbing Collections in Ming China," D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 2013, Ch. 2.

80 *Zhongguo fatie quanji*, vol. 11, *Song Bao Jin zhai fatie*, 2. On the exact title of this compendium, see the discussion in Lin Zhijun 林志钧, *Tie kao* 帖考 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2000), 87-88.

81 Some editions of this compendium were engraved in wooden plates. Amy McNair, "The Engraved Model-Letters Compendia of the Song Dynasty," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114, no. 2 (1994): 209-213; Shui Laiyou 水賚佑, *Chunhua ge tie jishi* 淳化閣帖集釋 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2009).

82 McNair, "The Engraved Model-Letters Compendia of the Song Dynasty"; Xinglin 杏林, *Zhongguo fatie shi* 中国法帖史 (Jinan: Shandong meishu chubanshe, 2010), 15-136; Fang Ailong 方爱龙, *Nan-Song shufa shi* 南宋书法史 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008), 279-300; Shui Laiyou, *Mi Fu shufa shiliao ji*.

draw some information from. I will focus primarily on the significance of Mi Fu's letters in Southern Song compendia projects here. Mi Fu's works occupied a central importance in the publishing of calligraphic model books throughout the Southern Song. This was the result of the efforts of three parties: the Song royal family, Mi Fu's clansmen, and literati scholars who were collectors. Given the importance of letters in Mi Fu's artistic life, his letters were repeatedly reproduced and disseminated by these three parties. I will first discuss the imperial family's efforts in reproducing Mi Fu's letters.

In his book Peter Charles Sturman has already underlined Gaozong's interest in Mi Fu, explaining how his calligraphy became the orthodox model even for the emperor's own style of writing.⁸³ Thus I will only consider this topic briefly here. On how Gaozong became interested in the calligraphy of Mi Fu, Yue Ke provided a very telling account:

At the beginning of the imperial revival, Gaozong put his mind to calligraphy despite his extremely busy schedule. At first he was fond of Huang Tingjian's handwriting, so he reissued the "Admonitions on Stone Tablet" [which was handwritten by Huang], and the handwriting of the imperial orders he wrote to local governments is always similar to its style. After that he grew fond of Mi Fu's handwriting, and ordered his son [Mi] Youren, the Academician of the Hall for the Diffusion of Literature, to attend to him. Then His Majesty's calligraphy changed radically; he caught up with Jin calligraphers and surpassed those from the Tang. There had not

83 Shi Man 石慢 [Peter Charles Sturman], "Ke jin xiaodao de Mi Youren: lun qi dui fuqin Mi Fu shuji de souji ji Mi Fu shuji dui Gaozong chaoting de yingxiang 克盡孝道的米友仁—論其對父親米芾書跡的搜集及米芾書跡對高宗朝廷的影響," *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 9, no. 4 (1992): 89-126; Sturman, *Mi Fu*, 212-13.

been any calligraphy as fitting as those. From examining the dating of the several hundred scrolls of imperial writing that I have collected in my household, this is indeed the case. Therefore all of Mi Fu's calligraphy became part of the imperial collection and was seldom circulated elsewhere. Gaozong eventually attained the pearl of spiritual perfection in the Red Water,⁸⁴ fostering his spirit in the Northern Inner Palace after abdication.⁸⁵ When he composed *Hanmo zhi* [The Monograph on Brush and Ink] with his royal brush, he recorded many anecdotes about Mi Fu. Therefore it is known what the emperor paid special attention to—he only favored the style of Mi Fu. Many of these calligraphic works are from the imperial collection. Some of them bear the imperial seal imprints of “Book owned by Palace Treasury” or the reign name “Shaoxing”. 中興初，思陵以萬幾之暇垂意筆法，始好黃庭堅書，就《戒石之銘》以頒，而方國一筭遂皆似之。後復好公書，以其子敷文閣直學士友仁侍清燕，而宸翰之體遂大變，追晉躡唐，前無合作。珂家所藏詔墨幾百軸，以歲月考之，良是。故紹興間，公書盡歸九禁而世罕傳。最後赤水得珠，頤神北內，躬御寶跗，制《翰墨志》，多紀公遺事，益知帝心簡注，惟公是嗜。是帖多天上本，間有“內府圖書”及“紹興”寶璽在焉。⁸⁶

Indeed, the initiatives taken to preserve Mi Fu's writings in the early years of the imperial court newly established in the south proved to be critical for Mi Fu's reception in the Southern Song. After all, the fashionable calligraphic style of the time often

84 This is an allusion to a passage in the “Tiandi 天地” chapter of the *Zhuangzi*. In it the Yellow Emperor was only able to retrieve his pearl by asking Purposeless to look for it: “Huang-Di, enjoying himself on the north of the Red-water, ascended to the height of the Kunlun (mountain), and having looked towards the south, was returning home, when he lost his dark-coloured pearl.... He then employed Purposeless, who found it. 黃帝遊乎赤水之北，登乎崑崙之丘而南望，還歸，遺其玄珠.....乃使象罔，象罔得之。” This is a translation by James Legge. See <http://ctext.org/zhuangzi/heaven-and-earth#n2788> (accessed October 5, 2014).

85 In 1162, Gaozong abdicated the throne and retired to the Deshou 德壽 Palace. Contemporaries called it the “Northern Inner Palace”.

86 Yue Ke, *Baozhen zhai fashu zan*, 19/ 276-77.

followed Gaozong's tastes. Like what scholar Yang Wanli commented:

Gaozong first followed Huang [Tingjian]'s calligraphy and everyone followed Huang's calligraphy; he later wrote in the Mi [Fu] style, and everyone followed Mi's style.⁸⁷ 高宗初作黃字，天下翕然學黃字。後作米字，天下翕然學米字。⁸⁸

In 1141, Gaozong ordered the *Shaoxing Mi tie* 紹興米帖 [Model Letters by Mi Fu in the Shaoxing Era], ten chapters of Mi Fu's works, to be compiled. He did this only slightly more than three decades after Mi Fu's death, when many of Mi Fu's manuscripts could still be seen. This act of canonization and imperial recognition certainly elevated Mi Fu's status in calligraphic history. Emperor Gaozong even distributed its rubbings to be distributed to the high officials of the inner court, "an honor no other Song dynasty calligrapher enjoyed".⁸⁹ The extant version of it consists entirely of Mi's letters, which clearly speaks to the central importance of his letters in his calligraphic work.⁹⁰ It also guaranteed the preservation and transmission of Mi Fu's calligraphy, even if many of his poems and other writings had been lost by the thirteenth century.

Mi Fu's own clansmen were instrumental in the promotion of Mi Fu's calligraphic style. In Yue Ke's quote, he already mentioned that Gaozong's writing style changed radically after he had the accompaniment of Mi Youren, one of Mi Fu's sons who knew

87 Quoted in Harold Mok, "Zhao Mengjian and Southern Song Calligraphy," D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 1992, 84.

88 Yang Wanli 楊萬里, *Chengzhai shihua* 誠齋詩話, in *Lidai shihua xubian* 歷代詩話續編, ed. Ding Fubao 丁福保 (Taipei: Muduo chubanshe, 1983), 1: 145.

89 Sturman, *Mi Fu*, 213.

90 Harold Mok, "A cursory Discussion of Song Letters," in *The Pride of China: Masterpieces of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy of the Jin, Tang, Song and Yuan from the Palace Museum*, ed. Hong Kong Museum of Art (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Museum of Art, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, 2007), 75.

his father's style by heart as we have seen. As Sturman persuasively argues, the volume of Mi Fu's preserved works would not have been so large compared to other Song calligraphers if it had not been for Mi Youren's efforts.⁹¹ Even though the son's calligraphic achievements were traditionally known to be inferior to the father's, he was definitely crucial in transmitting his father's style to the Southern Song.⁹²

Mi Fu's letters were among the items that Mi Youren vetted in the imperial collection, according to Zhou Mi 周密 (1232-98). Based on an imperial manual that he saw, Zhou Mi introduced the instructions for how different types of calligraphy and paintings were handled in the imperial collection during Gaozong's reign.⁹³ Among them two categories of artifacts are directly relevant to Mi Fu's correspondence.⁹⁴ Both of these works handled luxuriously—they were to be mounted onto specified types of cloth, the scrolls were to be inlaid with rods of ivory, and special imperial seals were impressed on them to indicate they were property of the Palace Treasury.⁹⁵ The first of these two categories referred to the “authentic works of various *shi* poems, rhapsodies, and correspondence by Su [Shi], Huang [Tingjian], Mi Fu, Xue Shaopeng, Cai Xiang (1012-67) 蘇、黃、米芾、薛紹彭、蔡襄等雜詩、賦、書簡真跡”.⁹⁶ Mi Fu was listed among these three other important Song calligraphers. The four of them were the only calligraphers from the Song to be included, reflecting the imperial court's high regard

91 Shi Man, “Ke jin xiaodao de Mi Youren,” 89-126.

92 See Mok, “Zhao Mengjian and Southern Song Calligraphy,” 51-56.

93 Zhou Mi 周密, *Qidong yeyu* 齊東野語 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 6/93-102. This is translated in van Gulik, *Chinese Pictorial Art as Viewed by the Connoisseur*, 205-12.

94 The categories also included Mi Fu's copies of Jin and Tang calligraphy (Zhou Mi, *Qidong yeyu*, 6/96), which were known to closely resemble the originals. But they are not Mi Fu's original works so I omit them in this discussion.

95 Some of these seals are the same as those used for paintings in the imperial collection. See Max Loehr, “Chinese Paintings with Sung Dated Inscriptions,” *Ars Orientalis* 4 (1961): 219-84.

96 Zhou Mi, *Qidong yeyu*, 6/96. My translation is based on van Gulik, *Chinese Pictorial Art as Viewed by the Connoisseur*, 208.

for them. The following category of artifacts even lists Mi Fu independently, showing his importance: “various essays and correspondence written by Mi Fu 米芾書雜文、簡牘”.⁹⁷ The court was supposed to handle this category of manuscripts with the following:

They were then issued for Mi Youren to authenticate and examine. Cao Yanming was ordered to accompany him in categorizing and ordering them. Every ten pieces of calligraphy were grouped as a volume. The miscellaneous letters in it were made into an album. 並降付米友仁定驗，令曹彥明同共編類等第，每十帖作一卷。內雜帖⁹⁸作冊子。⁹⁹

Thanks to the collection of Yue Ke, which will be introduced in the next section, some of Mi Youren’s inscriptions to the manuscripts are still available to us:

“The letters to the right are the originals by your minister Mi Fu. Authenticated by your minister Mi Youren. I write this postface with respect. 右簡尺，先臣芾真跡。臣米友仁鑒定。恭跋。”¹⁰⁰

“The ten sheets of poems and writings on mulberry paper to the right are the originals by your minister Mi Fu. Authenticated by your minister Mi Youren. I write this postface with respect. 右楮紙詩書等十幅，先臣芾晚年真跡。臣米友仁鑒定。恭跋。”¹⁰¹

He added his inscriptions at the end of scrolls after inspecting them as imperial connoisseur for Gaozong from 1136 onwards.¹⁰² With these efforts of Mi Fu’s

97 Ibid.

98 On the use of this word to refer to letters, see Fan Lulu 樊露露, “Wang Xizhi ‘zatie’ lunlue 王羲之《杂帖》论略,” *Changjiang daxue xuebao* 长江大学学报, no. 5 (2008): 37.

99 Zhou Mi, *Qidong yeyu*, 6/96.

100 Yue Ke, *Baozhen zhai fashu zan*, 19/ 274.

101 Ibid., 19/275. Another example in an extant manuscript can be seen in Fig. 80 in van Gulik, *Chinese Pictorial Art as Viewed by the Connoisseur*, 212-13.

102 On this part of Mi Youren’s life and some examples of his encounters with his

clansmen including primarily his son Mi Youren, Mi Fu's works were transmitted and his style yielded a larger impact among literati scholars.

Apart from the efforts by Mi Fu's clansmen to collect, authenticate, and appraise his epistolary manuscripts, Mi Fu's letters were also appreciated for stylistic reasons. Mi Fu was popular because he had mastered the classical style of the Jin. He collected calligraphy from the Jin, copied and studied their style closely. Mi Fu was the bridge between Song contemporaries and the ancients of Wang Xizhi's time. As Lothar Ledderose astutely observes in his study of Mi Fu's role in the transmission of the "classical tradition" of calligraphy, Mi Fu "established and transmitted an image of the Jin dynasty that was defined through his own interpretation".¹⁰³ This image was one that was very well received in the Southern Song, as seen in the popularity of Mi Fu's calligraphic style and the reproduction of his manuscripts that went hand in hand with it. This meant that his works were highly compatible with the orthodox taste for classical style, as shown in Gaozong's efforts in learning Mi Fu's style and his praise of it, as well as eventually drawing nearer to classical styles after doing so.¹⁰⁴ Being a recent literati figure of the current dynasty, however, Mi Fu was much less elusive and more accessible to scholars of his time than the Jin masters. Another source of popularity of Mi Fu's works was because his political career was relatively free from high level factional struggles.¹⁰⁵ Compared to the styles of Su Shi and Huang Tingjian,

father's manuscripts, see my "Ruins, Reconstruction, and Ruminations."

103 Ledderose, *Mi Fu and the Classical Tradition of Chinese Calligraphy*, 4.

104 Mo Jialiang 莫家良, "Nan-Song ketie wenhua guankui 南宋刻帖文化管窥," in *Zhongguo beitie yu shufa guoji yantaohui lunwenji* 中國碑帖與書法國際研討會論文集, eds. You Xuehua 游學華 and Chen Juanan 陳娟安 (Hong Kong: Xianggang zhongwen daxue wenwu guan, 2001), 73.

105 An excellent indication was the promotion of Yan Zhenqing's style as political identification with moderate conservative reform among Song officials- cum-calligraphers including Cai Xiang, Ouyang Xiu, Su Shi, and Huang Tingjian. See McNair, *The Upright Brush*, Ch. 4.

which were also very popular in the Southern Song, choosing to imitate Mi Fu was less of a political and moral statement but more of an aesthetic choice.¹⁰⁶ As well-known actors involved in Northern Song factional politics, figures like Su Shi and Huang Tingjian also had their works reproduced in Southern Song compendia, but all in all, Mi Fu, whose political career had been quite insignificant, must have been a much safer choice.

There were calligraphers among literati circles that followed Mi Fu style, and some of them were close to the central stage of power. Wu Ju 吳琚 (?-1202?), for example, was the nephew of Gaozong's Empress Wu. His calligraphy shows close resemblance to the style of Mi Fu. During the Yuan period, his works were already regarded by some connoisseurs to be firmly rooted in Mi Fu's family tradition.¹⁰⁷ The famous painter and connoisseur Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555-1636) even made the following remarks about Wu Ju:

“Among those who learn Mi Fu's calligraphy, only Wu Ju can write completely like him. Wang Tingyun¹⁰⁸ and Zhang Jizhi¹⁰⁹ merely learned pieces and bits. Even Mi Youren¹¹⁰ does not write like Mi Fu. 學米書者，惟吳琚絕尚。黃華、樗寮一支半節，雖虎兒亦不似也。”¹¹¹

106 Mo Jialiang 莫家良, “Nan-Song shufa zhong de Bei-Song qingjie 南宋書法中的北宋情結,” *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 28, no. 4 (2011): 74-76.

107 Xia Wenyan 夏文彥, *Tuhui baojian* 圖繪寶鑒, in “*Tuhui baojian*” *xiaokan yu yanjiu* 《圖繪寶鑒》校勘與研究, eds. Jinteng Xiushi 近藤秀實 [Kondo Hidemi] and He Qingxian 何慶先 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1997), 4/3a-b [46].

108 Elder of Huanghua 黃華老人 is Wang Tingyun's sobriquet. See below for details about him.

109 Chuliao 樗寮 is Zhang Jizhi's 張即之 (1186-1266) style name.

110 Hu'er 虎兒 is Mi Youren's childhood name.

111 Dong Qichang 董其昌, *Hua chanshi suibi* 畫禪室隨筆, in *Biji xiaoshuo daguan* 筆記小說大觀, vol. 12 (Yangzhou: Jiangsu guangling guji keyin she, 1983), 1/1a [107].

“Apart from the Southern Palace Mi Fu,¹¹² there is none that Wu Ju’s calligraphy looks into. 琺書自米南宮芾外，一步不窺。”¹¹³

“Wu Ju... imitated Mi Fu in his calligraphy and they are almost better than the originals.... He authored *Yunhe ji* [Collection of Clouds and Valleys]. I was in the capital and I saw a hanging scroll by a Song person. It looked very much like Mi Fu’s work, yet there was the seal of Yunhe, so it can be confirmed as a work by Wu Ju. 吳琺.....書學米南宮，可以奪真..... 所著有《雲壑集》。余在京師見宋人掛畫，絕類南宮。但有雲壑印，遂定為琺筆。”¹¹⁴

While reading such remarks about Mi Fu’s influence, one surely needs to bear in mind that they may represent a later tendency to establish a calligrapher as part of an orthodox lineage, and connecting him to works by prominent literati figures in calligraphic history like Mi Fu is a convenient way of doing that. In fact, Amy McNair has argued that some of the influence attributed to Mi Fu, such as the influence that he had on the style of thirteenth-century calligrapher Zhang Jizhi 張即之 (1186-1263) should be more accurately seen as an effort to connect calligraphers with the classical tradition. This fabricated connection overlooks the fact that direct study of the classical calligraphic masters had declined.¹¹⁵ This consequence on how Mi Fu’s influence was perceived, however, in no way negates the fact that Mi Fu’s style did certainly get more significant and influential after the Song court was established in the south in the early and mid-twelfth century.

112 “Southern Palace” is his sobriquet because it was how people referred to the Ministry of Rites of which Mi Fu was once the Vice Director.

113 Ibid., 1/20b (116).

114 Ibid., 2/5a (119).

115 Amy McNair, “Buddhist Literati and Literary Monks: Social and Religious Elements in the Critical Reception of Zhang Jizhi’s Calligraphy,” in *Cultural Intersections in Later Chinese Buddhism*, ed. Marsha Weidner (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2001), 80-82.

Mi Fu's calligraphic style even became fashionable in the northern plains where the Jurchens were ruling. For one Wang Tingyun 王庭筠 (1151-1202), a *jinshi* degree holder and a Senior Compiler of the Hanlin Academy in the Jin court, imitated Mi Fu's style. He was even mistaken by some later scholars to be the nephew of Mi Fu.¹¹⁶ One of Mi Fu's sons-in-law Wu Ji 吳激 (1090-1142), who was a Song ambassador to the Jin but was later detained by the Jin court in the 1120s, also wrote in a style that was known to resemble Mi Fu's.¹¹⁷ Later becoming Edict Attendant of the Hanlin Academy there, he must have had considerable influence.

I will now deal with the reproduction of Mi Fu's letters in their calligraphic form from the early Southern Song to the thirteenth century. Scholars made use of the manuscripts in their personal household collections to publish model books. Shi Bangzhe 石邦哲 (fl. 1133-53) from Xinchang 新昌, for example, compiled the *Bogutang tie cun* 博古堂帖存 [Extant Calligraphy from the Hall of Conversant with Things Past] in the early years of Gaozong's rule with the rich collection in his personal library.¹¹⁸ The only Song works that were in that compendium were by Mi Fu.¹¹⁹

Another slightly later example also involves making public the collection of Mi Fu's manuscripts in the family. In 1187, Zhang Ling 張淩 engraved the letters that his forebears received from Mi Fu into the *Quanqing tang tie* 全慶堂帖 [Model Letters from the Hall of Complete Celebrations]. He introduced his rationale for doing so in the postface:

When Mi Fu served as local official in Wuwei my uncle was administering Lujiang.

116 See Li Zongjin 李宗瑾, *Xinbian Wang Tingyun nianpu* 新編王庭筠年譜 (Taipei: Xiuwei xinxi, 2005), 22-23.

117 Luo Yonglai and Heng Zheng'an, *Mi Fu yanjiu*, 191-92.

118 Mo Jialiang, "Nan-Song shufa zhong de Bei-Song qingjie," 64.

119 Sun Chengze 孫承澤, *Xianzhe xuan tie kao* 閑者軒帖考, in CSJC, vol. 1608, 14.

The friendship between them was cordial and my uncle corresponded with him personally. My father especially likes these letters, so when he got these several calligraphic works he treasured them. Now they are engraved in the Complete Celebratory Hall in Handong to be shared with those who are interested. In the year *dingwei* of the Chunxi reign.... Postface by Zhang Ling. 米南宮守無為日，先伯宰廬江，情義相厚善，往還書尺俱親染。先公平日尤嗜此書，得此數帖，每深寶惜。今用摹刻於漢東全慶堂，庶與好事者同之。淳熙丁未.....張稜跋。¹²⁰

Among the scholars that reproduced Mi Fu's works, Yue Ke was the greatest admirer. Apart from a calligraphy connoisseur in the Southern Song, he was also the grandson of the famous general Yue Fei, whom we have encountered in Chapter 4. He was extremely passionate about Mi Fu works and made significant contributions to compiling and editing Mi Fu's scattered writings. He worked in Zhenjiang twice, where Mi Fu had been for over forty years,¹²¹ and was active in acquiring and collecting manuscripts by Mi Fu. With the manuscripts that he collected he commissioned the compendium *Yingguang tang tie* 英光堂帖 [Model Letters from the Hall of Glorious Light], which was probably engraved on wood between 1229 and 1233.¹²² At least three chapters contain epistolary writings by Mi Fu under the heading "Calligraphy from Letters in the Studio of Precious Jin Treasures 寶晉齋書簡帖", and one chapter is still extant from the Song.¹²³ Yue Ke's collection of Mi Fu's letters must have been a considerably large one, because *Baozhen zhai fashu zan* 寶真齋法書贊 [Words of

120 Cited in Xu Senyu 徐森玉, "Bao Jin zhai tie kao 宝晋斋帖考," *Wenwu* 文物, no. 12 (1962): 19.

121 On his career in Zhenjiang see Wang Ruilai 王瑞来, "Yue Ke shengping shiji kaoshu 岳珂生平事迹考述," *Wenshi* 文史 23 (1984): 111-20.

122 *Zhongguo fatie quanji*, vol. 10, *Song Yingguangtang tie*, 20-22.

123 Lin Yejiang 林業強 and Cao Baolin 曹寶麟 ed., *Song ta "Yingguang tang tie" di san juan* 宋拓《英光堂帖》第三卷 (Hong Kong: Xianggang Zhongwen daxue wenwu guan, 2003).

Praise on Model Letters in Studio of the Precious and Authentic], Yue Ke's catalogue of his collection of manuscripts already contained 64 letters by Mi Fu, as well as many of his works in others genres in the 19th and 20th chapter.¹²⁴ And this count is only taken from the transmitted edition, which was reconstructed from fragments in the Qing dynasty and is clearly incomplete. At least from what we can see now from this collection, Yue Ke kept a well documented record of the manuscripts he collected and included them in *Baozhen zhai fashu zan*, which includes two chapters about the manuscripts by Mi Fu. It included his documentation of the manuscripts.

By the thirteenth century, some literary scholars began to lament the drop in quality of letter writing styles. As Yue Ke has remarked, "since the imperial revival, letters have gradually taken a turn for [undue] embellishment. The quality has waned and genuineness is now lost. 中興以來，簡筭日趨於文，降而不返，真隨以亡。"¹²⁵ Some compilers of model books must have shared this sentiment, since they began to stress the quality of their works, even if they were reproductions of relatively recent masters like Mi Fu.

For example, an aide of the minister Han Tuo Zhou 韓侂胄 (1152-1207) engraved the manuscripts in collected Han's household, and produced the compendium *Yuegu tang tie* 閱古堂帖 [Model Letters from the Hall of Inspecting Antiques]. After the death of Han, the engravings produced for this compendium became the property of the Palace Library (*Mishu sheng* 秘書省) in the imperial palace, and the compendium was renamed *Qunyu tang tie* 群玉堂帖 [Model Letters from the Hall of Various Marvels]. The eighth chapter of this work consists entirely of works by Mi Fu. As the

124 Yue Ke, *Baozhen zhai fashu zan*.

125 *Ibid.*, 22/325.

Qing connoisseur of calligraphy Sun Chengze 孫承澤 (1592-1676) expertly comments on them:

Its engraving is exquisite and the ink and paper are splendid as well. Its calligraphy by Mi Fu are better than those in *Shaoxing tie* and *Yingguang tang tie*, because Han's aide Xiang Ruoshui was talented in connoisseurship. The calligraphy was copied out by hand. 模刻極精而紙墨亦妙，其米帖視《紹興帖》、《英光堂帖》俱勝，蓋韓之客向若水精於鑒定，帖乃其手摹也。¹²⁶

Another important compendium from the Southern Song that included Mi Fu's letters is Zeng Hongfu's 曾宏父 *Fengshu tie* 鳳墅帖 [Model Letters from the Fengshan Villa].¹²⁷ Zeng published the manuscript letters he collected in 44 chapters, which made it the largest compendium of calligraphy from the Song dynasty. The first twenty chapters were done in the late 1230s and early 1240s, while the rest were published later in the 1240s and 1250s. The entire chapter 12 of this compendium was "Bao Jin calligraphy by Mi Yuanzhang 米元章寶晉帖", all of them epistolary texts by Mi Fu. As the engraved calligraphy compendium was placed in his family school, the Fengshan 鳳山 Academy in Luling, it must have been quite visible to teachers, students, and visitors alike. In explaining his rationale for bringing out this compendium, Zeng was especially conscious about preserving works from his own dynasty:

Considering the calligraphies by past worthies from previous dynasties have been well covered by in carvings and that copies made from copies have strayed farther and farther away from the originals, I intend to assemble calligraphies from the three hundred years of our dynasty of Song in a category of their own and pass them on

126 Sun Chengze, *Xianzhe xuan tie kao*, 15.

127 *Zhongguo fatie quanji* 中國法帖全集, vol. 8, *Song Fengshu tie* 宋鳳墅帖 (Wuhan: Hubei meishu chubanshe, 2002).

until eternity. 若夫異代字跡，則前賢鐫刻已備，展轉謄模，愈失其真，且亦欲類吾宋三百年間書法，自成一派，以傳無窮。¹²⁸

Since he deplored the loss of accuracy in engravings, his compendium was based on original ink-written pieces to ensure their authenticity.¹²⁹ The calligraphy of Song worthies now became publishable on their own, without the need to borrow the authority of earlier masters by including them in the model book compendium.

Mi Fu's compendium of Jin masters in 1104 was reworked to include his own writings, which amounted to a canonization of his calligraphy. Between 1254 and 1269, Cao Zhige 曹之格, an Assistant Prefect in Wuwei, worked on a compendium with the original stones that Mi Fu engraved in the same locality about 150 years ago, together with material from other compendia that he had access to at the time.¹³⁰ This resulted in a new edition of the *Bao Jin zhai tie* 寶晉齋帖. Almost all of the Jin works in it were by the two Wangs, but it also included works written or imitated by Mi Fu.¹³¹ Twelve of these are Mi Fu's letters, taking up the biggest proportion of his works in this compendium.

In short, as seen from the various projects that involve carving Mi Fu's letters and making rubbing collections from them, the reproduction of Mi Fu's in model book compendia was significant to the preservation and dissemination of epistolary writings in the Southern Song. It made its way from letter paper to stone and wood engravings, and also to paper rubbings of those engravings bound together, creating a compendium of model works. This could be interpreted as a kind of cross-media interaction or media

128 Mok, "A Cursory Discussion of Song Letters," 75 (with modifications in translation).

129 McNair, "The Engraved Model-Letters Compendia of the Song Dynasty," 224.

130 *Zhongguo fatie quanji*, vol. 11, *Song Bao Jin zhai fatie*, 2. Sau Wah Ng dates this to 1268 in "Challenging the Calligraphy Canon," 16.

131 Reprinted in *Zhongguo fatie quanji*, vol. 11, *Song Bao Jin zhai fatie*.

transfer, which happened in other realms of artistic production as well during the Song period, such as newly molded bronzes modeled on ancient forms of ritual vessels, or illustrated Buddhist prints, as studied in recent scholarship in art history.¹³² Model letters compendia were not the only type of media that letters made their way into. Letters by Song contemporaries were also engraved on stelae for the first time in the Southern Song, for example. According to Qianshen Bai, the first instance of this was when eight letters by Lu You to a Buddhist monk were carved on the back of a stele in the Zhizhe 智者 temple in Jinhua in Zhejiang in 1203, to go with an essay that commemorated the renovation of the temple.¹³³

Because of the high regard for Mi Fu's calligraphy, letters were no longer merely a single medium; in the Southern Song they became material that the imperial court and literati scholars reproduced and disseminated, and have turned into art objects that got transferred to other media as well. Thanks to this process the epistolary traces of Song China also exist in media other than paper where they originally belonged to, allowing letters to be seen by more than just their senders and receivers.

132 See Ya-hwei Hsu, "Reshaping Chinese Material Culture: The Revival of Antiquity in the Era of Print, 960-1279," Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2010, 234-66; Shih-Shan Susan Huang, "Media Transfer and Modular Construction: the Printing of Lotus Sutra Frontispieces in Song China," *Ars Orientalis* 41 (2011): 135-63; Huang Shishan 黃士珊, "Tang-Song shiqi fojiao banhua zhong suo jian de meijie zhuanhua yu zi mo sheji 唐宋時期佛教版畫中所見的媒介轉化與字模設計," in Yan Juanying 顏娟英 and Shi Shouqian 石守謙 eds., *Yishu shi zhong de Han-Jin yu Tang-Song zhi bian 藝術史中的漢晉與唐宋之變* (Taipei: Shitou chuban gufen youxian gongsi, 2014), 385-435.

133 Bai, "Chinese Letters," 384. Some have argued that they should not be eight, but only seven letters. For more information about them see Fang Ailong, *Nan-Song shufa shi*, 116-17.

Closing Remarks

As we have seen, Mi Fu's handwritten documents were much valued during the Southern Song. Let me end this chapter by citing a historical example of his calligraphy being commissioned, treasured, and reproduced. In a notebook, Zhou Hui writes:

My great grandfather considers Wang Jingong [Anshi] to be an exemplary. Having asked Wang to compose several epitaphs for his ancestors, he asked [Mi Fu] Yuanzhang to write them out. Mi wrote three copies of them, and one copy was chosen to be engraved on stone. Entitled "Tablet of the Hereditary Virtues of the Zhou Clan", it was put next to the West Lake in Hangzhou. The prose and the handwriting were called the "two extraordinary". In the early Shaoxing reign, someone was administering the capital, and intended to rub it off to engrave another piece. My great granduncle had been close to him, and he fought for it not to be destroyed. He instructed the prefect on basic values. The prefect said, "Previously I did not know that it was your family's property." My granduncle said, "Even if it was not property of my family, how can the writing of Jiefu [Wang Anshi] and the characters of Yuanzhang be destroyed?" He apologized. If not for this, the tablet will not have avoided the fate of being defaced by metal and stone. Now it is placed in Manjue Monastery of South Mountain, and not one day has passed without visitors making rubbings of it. 曾祖視王荊公為中表，既干撰上世墓志數種，托元章書之。凡書三本，擇一以入石，號《周氏世德碑》，置於杭州西湖上，文並書名「二絕」。紹興初，某人尹京，欲磨治改刻他文。偶族叔祖元仲與之素厚，爭之力，責以大義。尹曰：「初不知是公家物。」叔祖曰：「脫非某家物，介甫之文，元章之字，可毀乎？」尹謝焉。不然，幾不免金石之厄。今在南山滿覺院，

Although this did not refer to the writing of letters, the existence of an equally personal document composed by the influential statesman Wang Anshi and written in Mi Fu's renowned calligraphy meant that it was well worth preserving. This was why Zhou Hui's granduncle made the case for the stele's preservation; it was obvious that it should be preserved, no matter whose family it could have belonged to. The currency of Mi Fu's calligraphy, combined with the historical importance of Wang Anshi also meant that to the contemporaries of Zhou Hui the stele was something well worth reproducing and keeping. They made copies for themselves when they visited this monastery to the south of the West Lake, and the presence of the Song luminaries carried on as a result. This chapter shows that the presence of Mi Fu's epistolary art definitely carried on as well, in a way similar to the calligraphy he did for Zhou Hui's granduncle, thanks to the reproduction of texts used for communication and expression in the two centuries following Mi Fu's own lifetime.

This chapter has demonstrated the importance of the calligraphic aspect of epistolary culture in the Song period. A full appreciation of this aspect of letter writing must involve studying the reading of letters in various forms: in manuscript, in transmitted editions, and in engraved model books. With these several kinds of materials I have explored some of the original communicative contexts when Mi Fu wrote letters, showing how letters were not isolated written messages but were often part of a social interaction that involved also gifts and calligraphy. As documents that reflected one's calligraphy and personality, these letters by figures like Mi Fu were highly valued, and even sold and exchanged. His letters were preserved and reproduced

134 Zhou Hui, *Qingbo zazhi jiaozhu*, 5/231-32.

in various model letters compendia for their calligraphy as well.

CHAPTER 6

Letters as Writing Models

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have studied the calligraphic aspect of letter writing in Song China. In surveying model letters compendia that originated from Mi Fu's correspondence, I have discussed how epistolary manuscripts had been transformed into models for calligraphy. Looking at a different kind of model, this chapter discusses the references for letter writing in epistolary manuals. It investigates models for letter writing in *leishu* 類書 (encyclopedias, or sometimes translated more literally as "classified books") from the Song and early Yuan periods. In contrast to letter collections marketed at the cultural elite, these encyclopedias contain models for more practical and quotidian uses of epistolary sub-genres. Multiple types of epistolary material were already circulating before late Southern Song, but these encyclopedias synthesized Song epistolary culture by reorganizing such material for its users, so that they were more easily available for the expanding literate population. One way to approach such epistolary manuals would be to ask whether letter writers actually adhered to such prescriptive models,¹ but in my opinion a more helpful way of making

1 At least for *shuyi* texts before the Song, whether writers really needed these prescriptive templates for writing remains largely inconclusive, given the fragmentary information we have from epistolary manuals. See Richter, *Letter and Epistolary Culture in Early Medieval China*, 145; Paul W. Kroll, "Aid and Comfort: Lu Zhaolin's Letters," in *A*

sense of the extensive epistolary material such encyclopedias is to see them as an outcome of epistolary practices. Therefore the focus of this chapter is how epistolary material was compiled and reorganized towards this end in encyclopedias, so that epistolary practices could be conveyed. I begin by looking at the feature of such encyclopedias that contain epistolary models, then go on to investigate three types of epistolary models in the following sections: phraseology, letter templates, and complete texts of letters.

All the titles that I study in this chapter were privately published by means of woodblock printing when print culture rapidly gained in popularity. With the rise of the epistolary culture during the Song, models for letter writing became more abundantly available under a new culture of commercial print publishing for an expanding letter writing community. Models included in encyclopedias often took multiple forms and were not limited to a single kind. This was a development that continued into the first half of the Yuan dynasty.

Encyclopedias in Song Society

Most of the titles studied in this chapter are categorized as *leishu* in bibliographies. Scholars have identified works that can be called *leishu* retrospectively from as early as early medieval times, but *leishu* as an explicit bibliographic category first appeared only in the early eleventh century.² It was first used in the bibliography section of Ouyang Xiu's *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 [New Book of Tang] which was completed in

History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture, 849-50.

² Zhang Dihua 張滌華, *Leishu liu bie* 類書流別, revised ed. (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1985), 7-16; Hu Daojing 胡道靜, *Zhongguo gu dai de leishu* 中国古代的类书 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982), 5-8.

1060, and has since then become a very common bibliographic heading.³ Earlier bibliographies used the term “*leishi* 類事” (classifying affairs),⁴ which many scholars consider to be the equivalent of *leishu*. However, in essence these two categories have different emphases: *leishu* as a bibliographic category no longer shared the emphasis on “*shi* 事” (events, allusions, references, precedents) in “*leishi*”.⁵ Of course compilations that we can call “*shi*” are still included in the books under the new category of *leishu* as well, but compared to *leishi* it has a stronger emphasis on the project of “classifying (*lei*)”, or arranging topically different kinds of material under separate headings. The majority of the works that I deal with in this chapter are traditionally classified as belonging to this *leishu* category, and these works all paid close attention to the classification of textual material. Within this group, I will concentrate specifically on those pertaining to letter writing.

It should also be noted that traditional bibliographies and modern scholars do not agree entirely in their assignment of the label of a *leishu*. Certain titles bear another bibliographic identity, which will be discussed below.⁶ Although most of this chapter concerns epistolary works classified as *leishu*, my investigation also involves studying some epistolary collections that are categorized differently. To give two collection that this chapter will study as examples, Sima Guang’s 司馬光 (1019-1086) *Shuyi* 書儀 [Letters and Etiquette] is not a *leishu*; it is rather a work of “annotation to rituals”

3 Wolfgang Bauer, “The Encyclopaedia in China,” *Cahiers d’histoire mondiale* 9, no. 3 (1966): 672; Thomas H. C. Lee, “History, Erudition and Good Government: Cheng Ch’iao and Encyclopedic Historical Thinking,” in *The New and the Multiple: Sung Senses of the Past*, ed. Thomas H. C. Lee (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 2004), 178; De Weerd, “The Encyclopedia as Textbook,” 77.

4 De Weerd, “The Encyclopedia as Textbook,” 97n1.

5 Liu Quanbo 刘全波, “Lun leishu de muluxue yanbian 论类书的目录学演变,” *Tushuguan qingbao gongzuo* 图书情报工作, no. 23 (2011): 122-125, 130.

6 See Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit: The Commercial Publishers of Jianyang, Fujian (11th-17th Centuries)* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), 358n92.

(*lizhu*)⁷ or an “annotation to etiquette” (*yizhu* 儀注)⁸ according to the main Song-Yuan bibliographies. Sun Di’s *Neijian chidu* was traditionally catalogued as “collected works by an individual writer” (*bieji* 別集), and some of the encyclopedias mentioned in this chapter were at the same time classified as “general anthologies” (*zongji* 總集) in traditional bibliographies. I include such collections in my discussion because sections of many of the encyclopedias that I discuss in this chapter could also be conceived as anthologies of letters that were reorganized into predefined categories.⁹ As for Sima Guang’s *Shuyi*, as partially an epistolary etiquette book it also belonged to a class of texts that stipulated and explained etiquette rules. In short, although some of the works that I discuss below were not seen as works of *leishu* or encyclopedias that contained epistolary models, they also classified and reorganized epistolary material and also acted as manuals for individuals writing letters.

In order to understand the diversity of epistolary models available during the Song, I choose to study extensively such larger collections and encyclopedias rather than focusing on an individual title. These larger works usually place the models for letter writing “within the framework of social practices and conventions”, and were hence “consulted as encyclopedias of social life”.¹⁰ Indeed, as suggested in a modern introduction to *leishu*, “as primary texts in traditional education and handbooks of writers and poets, they provide insight into the minds and the means of the traditional

7 Chen Zhensun 陳振孫, *Zhi zhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解題 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), 6/188.

8 Ma Duanlin 馬端臨, *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011), 188/5494-95; Tuotou 脫脫, *Songshi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977), 157/5133.

9 On this, see Shi Yichao 施懿超, *Song siliu lungao* 宋四六論稿 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2005), 216.

10 Richter, *Letter and Epistolary Culture in Early Medieval China*, 140.

literati.”¹¹ Encyclopedias were part of a new trend towards diversification under the Song. The modern scholar Zhang Dihua, in explaining the proliferation of these titles in this era, lists three main reasons for the rise of encyclopedias and two of them are helpful in explaining the boom of encyclopedic titles.¹² First of all, there was widespread use of parallel prose among literati officials in Song China, a mode of writing that required more writing references than others. Secondly, the extremely competitive preparation for succeeding in the Song civil service examinations fuelled the need for published material that functioned as examination manuals. Encyclopedias contained such useful material for essay writing, and their organization often facilitated speed reading and easy access to information.¹³ One more reason that I would like to add to these explanations is that the Song imperial officials, who for their bureaucratic careers constantly had to travel around, needed to keep in contact with other officials. As it turned out, one of the main ways that this was carried out was through exchanging social letters, mostly relying on the governmental postal courier service, as I have mentioned in the previous chapters. Although the manuals included models for other occasions, such as weddings,¹⁴ but there is a heavy focus on social letters exchanged between officials that are in ornate parallel prose. They constantly sent such letters with their gifts and compositions, as discussed in Chapter 3.

Since a number of encyclopedias include a substantial amount of material from the Song and were compiled according to models developed in that period, I will also

11 Kenneth Dewoskin, “Lei-shu,” in *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*, ed. William H. Nienhauser, Jr. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 529.

12 Zhang Dihua, *Leishu liu bie*, 27-30.

13 De Weerd, “The Encyclopedia as Textbook”; West, “Time Management and Self-control.”

14 de Pee, *The Writing of Weddings in Middle-Period China*.

pay attention to some encyclopedias that were first printed during the Yuan dynasty. As I will elaborate, the book trade that produced many of the encyclopedias containing epistolary models saw a continued vitality throughout the Song-Yuan transition, a point supported by Lucille Chia's research.¹⁵ Therefore, even though some of the titles that I study here were published later than the demise of the Song regime, especially in the first decades in the fourteenth century, they were the products of an undisrupted and growing book market. They adapted a lot of content from earlier writers under the Song.¹⁶ I think it is therefore necessary to pay attention to them as well when studying letter writing models in Song epistolary culture.

In this chapter I do not discuss the models that were not specially written for letter writing. This includes works that contain phraseology for composition but do not specify that they were for letter writing.¹⁷ For example, the *Liu tie* 六帖 [Handbook of Six Strips] is such a work that presents expressions that might be applied in readers' writing, especially in examination writing where memory questions concerning the classics were asked.¹⁸ But even though "the diverse wealth of materials in the work

15 Lucille Chia, "Mashaben: Commercial Publishing in Jianyang from the Song to the Ming," in *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History*, eds. Paul Smith and Richard von Glahn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 296-302.

16 Surely, attributing a time period to epistolary manuals may be problematic since many epistolary models were adapted from earlier models that were socially circulated. But these encyclopedias often refer explicitly to the author of these models, especially the complete letters that they anthologized.

17 There are various sequels to Bai Juyi's (772-846) *Liu tie* 六帖 in the Song period, such as Kong Chuan's 孔傳 *Kongshi liu tie* 孔氏六帖 (later combined with Bai's title as *Bai Kong liu tie* 白孔六帖). *Bai-Kong liu tie* 白孔六帖 (Taipei: Xinxing shuju, 1971). Kong Chuan's work was compiled between the Jianyan (1127-30) and Shaoxing (1131-62) periods and first printed in 1166. See Li Wenlan 李文瀾, "Du Nan-Song keben 'Kongshi liu tie' shuhou 讀南宋刻本《孔氏六帖》書後," *Zaoqi Zhongguoshi yanjiu* 早期中國史研究 5, no. 2 (2013): 141-43. Another title of a similar nature is Yang Boyan's 楊伯崑 *Liu tie bu* 六帖補; see Yang Boyan 楊伯崑, *Liu tie bu* 六帖補, SKQS, vol. 948, 739-835.

18 Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A New Manual* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2013), 956.

made it useful as an aid to writing in general,”¹⁹ there is no evidence that it was compiled mainly for letter writing purposes, so I will not include it in my discussion here.

Interestingly, the search for models for writing in the broadest sense of the word during the Song period can be observed across literary genres and even across media. Published compendia provided model letters for calligraphic practice, as pointed out in the previous chapter. The increased significance of the civil service examinations during the period as an instrument in making a bureaucratic career also drove a boom in reference titles for examination preparation.²⁰ In the search for models for poetic competence, book learning was also becoming increasingly important for writers.²¹ The models established for epistolary writing therefore certainly had a wider significance than they seem to have had previously, and should be seen as part of a larger cultural trend in Song China. Surely, so long as it can be imitated, a “model for writing” can be used to refer to any kind of written work if they can be imitated in one’s own writing, in the most extreme sense of the word. In this chapter I adopt a more accurate definition. For me, models for writing letters refers to those publications that satisfy the following two conditions: firstly, these published models claim to contain exemplary literary texts; secondly, all or parts of them are intended to be resources for

19 Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 359n103.

20 Zhu Shangshu 祝尚书, *Songdai keju yu wenxue kao lun* 宋代科举与文学考论 (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2006), 261-83, esp. 276-77; Hilde De Weerd, *Competition over Content: Negotiating Standards for the Civil Service Examinations in Imperial China (1127-1279)* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007); Zhu Shangshu 祝尚书, *Songdai keju yu wenxue* 宋代科举与文学 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008), 397-425; Liu Xiangguang 劉祥光, “Songdai de shiwen kanben yu kaoshi wenhua 宋代的時文刊本與考試文化,” *Taida wenshizhe xuebao* 臺大文史哲學報 75 (2011): 35-86.

21 Yugen Wang, *Ten Thousand Scrolls: Reading and Writing in the Poetics of Huang Tingjian and the Late Northern Song* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2011).

writing, such as to act as repositories of phrases and allusions. These models could hence be either imitated stylistically or readily adopted in one's writing.

I will show that the epistolary models in pre-Song and Song China in *shuyi* and other texts were subsumed in the epistolary sections of encyclopedias from the twelfth century onwards. Here I should therefore explain briefly the tradition of *shuyi*. Although the bracket term *shuyi* has been occasionally used to describe letter writing models in medieval China in general, they actually refer to specific sets of texts.²² If we look back to the Tang period, there were three types of *shuyi* according to the existing literature. The first type was arranged in the sequence of the twelve months in a year and contained set phrases to facilitate expressiveness, probably connected to occasions in the yearly social and ritual calendar; the second was ritual-oriented and dealt with various kinds of family rites; the last was the compilation of letter templates for both official and private purposes. From this, it can be seen that other than acting as epistolary manuals, *shuyi* texts in the Tang had ritual functions.²³ Therefore when works of *shuyi* first gained a separate section in the bibliographic records in the classification of Zheng Qiao's 鄭樵 (1104-1162) compendium *Tongzhi* 通志 [Comprehensive Treatises], they were listed under the "annotation to etiquette" (*yizhu*) section in "Rites" monograph (*lüe* 略).²⁴ Twenty-two titles in 138 chapters were listed in this section, and Sima Guang's *Shuyi* is one of the most complete texts that remain extant. I will later come back to the topic of its letter templates.

22 Jin Chuandao 金传道 and Wang Ning 王宁, "'Shuyi' neirong bianzheng 'shuyi' 内容辨正," *Nei Menggu daxue xuebao* 内蒙古大学学报, no. 5 (2010): 129.

23 See Ebrey, "T'ang Guides to Verbal Etiquette"; Zhou Yiliang and Zhao Heping, *Tang Wudai shuyi yanjiu* 唐五代书仪研究, 1-7 & 18-26.

24 Zheng Qiao 鄭樵, *Tongzhi ershi lüe* 通志二十略 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), 1507-508. The "Rites" monograph section is one of the 20 monographs in the *Tongzhi*. For a list of the monographs see Lee, "History, Erudition and Good Government," 174-175.

My study of epistolary manuals here is closely related to trends in commercial publishing in the Southern Song and the first half of the Yuan period, some of which are described in studies by Ming-sun Poon and Lucille Chia's excellent studies of print culture and book publishing.²⁵ Many of the imprints discussed here were commercially printed in the Fujian region, especially the titles printed between the late twelfth and the early fourteenth century. Even with the dynastic transition to the Mongol Yuan, the book printing in that region did not suffer setbacks. Continuity in the book culture is observed especially in the Yangtze Delta towards the Yuan, according to previous research.²⁶ With the continuity seen in epistolary models in encyclopedias during the Song-Yuan transition, the same could probably be said for the Fujian region because that regional market was "integrally dependent on the Jiangnan market for its prosperity".²⁷ The use of printing that was spreading at the time supported the demand for more and easier access to useful references for writing, and hence facilitated access to primary sources and the reorganization of information in large collections.²⁸ The amount of material published in relatively affordable editions made many models for letter writing available.

An interesting aspect of this commercial publishing is the competition present in the book market during the Southern Song and Yuan dynasties. In *Sheng Song qianjia mingxian biaoqi hanmo daquan* 聖宋千家名賢表啟翰墨大全 [A Grand

25 Ming-sun Poon, "Books and Printing in Sung China," Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1979, Ch. 6; Chia, *Printing for Profit*.

26 Joseph P. McDermott, *A Social History of the Chinese Book: Books and Literati Culture in Late Imperial China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006), 56-57.

27 Peter Jakov Smith, "Introduction: Problematizing the Song-Yuan-Ming Transition," in *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History*, 13.

28 See Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 134-39.

Compendium of the Complete Memorials and Greetings by a Thousand Famous Worthies of the Sagely Song for the Purpose of Brushes and Ink], the commercial notice (*paiji* 牌記)²⁹ immediately following its preface professes the following:

The books published by booksellers that are around customarily lists names of worthies at the beginning of the volume, and have an expansive list of [content from] the classics and histories. Including this ornamental content is [merely] intended to catch the eye. Considering that it is good for nothing, it is now removed [from this title]. When you gentlemen open this book, please do not condemn it for not containings [the names of] masters. How can a well-informed person not take note of this? 書肆前後所刊，例於帙首鋪敘賢哲之名，張大經史之目，姑欲眩人耳目，以為華飾之具。今思無補一切，撤而去之，君子開卷，幸毋以烏有先生為誚。識者可不審諸！³⁰

This critique reflects both the preponderance of the commercial strategy of selling titles by anthologizing works by reputed recent authors, and publishers making editorial decisions that were active and timely responses to other similar titles on the market.³¹ Also, as Chia suggests, many of these encyclopedias drew information from older collections since it was a cheaper and quicker method of producing a publication that was sold for profit.³²

29 Also sometimes known as “copyright notice” in translation. For a selection of these, see Lin Shenqing 林申清, *Song-Yuan shuke paiji tulu* 宋元書刻牌記圖錄 (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 1999).

30 *Sheng Song qianjia mingxian biaoqi hanmo daquan*, *Hanlin zhuyi* 聖宋千家名賢表啟翰墨大全 翰林珠玉 (Naragen Tenri-shi: Tenri Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1981), 10.

31 Shi Yichao reads this colophon as a critique of *Sheng Song mingxian siliu congzhu* 聖宋名賢四六叢珠 [Collection of Pearls of Parallel Prose Famous Worthies of the Sagely Song Dynasty], a collection that was probably published in or shortly after 1196. (Shi Yichao, *Song siliu lungao*, 208.) In my estimation, it may be a more general critique than targeting one title, since Wu Huanran wrote prefaces for both *Sheng Song qianjia mingxian biaoqi hanmo daquan* and *Sheng Song mingxian siliu congzhu*.

32 Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 135.

Since publishing became a commercial enterprise, the next questions naturally followed: what kind of epistolary material was most marketable? Were there any styles and sub-genres that buyers and users of these collections and encyclopedias welcomed in particular?

Since one of the primary concerns for having letter writing models is about style, the stylistic choices seen in epistolary models are a core issue that requires our attention. Most of these models are in parallel prose, but despite this fact the use of parallel prose among Song writers is often underestimated in the scholarship.³³

Contrary to the claim that parallel prose was little practiced or marginalized by Ancient-Style Prose (*guwen* 古文) in Song China,³⁴ scholar officials wrote parallel prose on a regular basis. When examining the encyclopedias defined in this chapter, we find that almost all the letters in them are in parallel prose. This was mainly due to two reasons. First of all, usually the sub-genre that the encyclopedias contained most of was *qi* or *zhazi*, and these are letters that should ideally be written in parallel prose (although not always). In such cases, words in sentences all have their counterparts in the succeeding four- and six-character phrases and their grammatical structure is similar. Secondly, parallel prose relied more heavily on allusions than other prose types; this meant that regular expressions and fixed phrases were more helpful in its writing,

33 On parallel prose in the Song, see Christopher Leigh Connery, “Sao, Fu, Parallel Prose, and Related Genres,” in *The Columbia History of Chinese Literature*, ed. Victor H. Mair (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 244-45; Zeng Zaozhuang, *Song wen tonglun*, 366-496; Shi Yichao, *Song siliu lungao*.

34 In general, many surveys of Chinese literature fail to recognize the importance of parallel prose in Song China since most of the attention was devoted to the rise of the Ancient Prose movement. For example, see James Robert Hightower, *Topics in Chinese Literature: Outlines and Bibliographies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950), 39. William H. Nienhauser Jr. recognized that “the parallel style enjoyed a minor revival” in the Song. (Nienhauser, “Prose,” in *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*, 110.)

especially for those who were still trying to learn the style.

During the Song period writers most frequently referred to parallel prose as *siliu* 四六 (four-six prose): “People of the Song refer to prose in parallel as *siliu*. 駢儷之文，宋人謂之四六。”³⁵ Strictly speaking, not all works of parallel prose in traditional Chinese literature are in paired lines of four and six characters, but the label *siliu* prose implies that its sentences are primarily in parallel to one another.³⁶ As Christopher Leigh Connery explains, compared to *pianwen*, *siliu* “is a later appellation and refers primarily to the more highly regulated parallel prose of the post-Tang period.”³⁷ As William H. Nienhauser, Jr suggests, parallel prose regained importance in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries: “The *pianwen* of this era maintained only metrical, not tonal and grammatical, parallelism in reflecting the general Song penchant for simplification. This style was used especially in the *qi* 啟 (a type of letter), a popular genre.”³⁸ Shen Songqin’s distinction of Song *siliu* writings between those written to represent the writer himself (i.e. greetings) and those written on behalf of other people or agencies (i.e. memorials, etc.) is a very useful one.³⁹ As I am looking at correspondence in parallel prose in models for letter writing, I will only focus on Shen Songqin’s first type of epistolary writings in my investigation here.

When Liu Xun 劉壘 (1240-1319), a literary scholar born during the late Song, sums up the use of parallel prose in the context of all Song literature, he stresses its

35 Remarks by Qian Daxin 錢大昕 (1728-1804), quoted in Zhang Renqing 張仁青, *Pianwen xue* 駢文學 (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1984), 53.

36 Ibid., 55-56.

37 Connery, “Sao, Fu, Parallel Prose, and Related Genres,” 236.

38 Nienhauser Jr., “Prose,” in *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*, 110-11.

39 Shen Songqin 沈松勤, “Lun Song ti siliu de gongneng yu jiazhi 论宋体四六的功能与价值,” *Wenxue yichan* 文学遗产, no. 5 (2009): 30-33.

widespread use among literati scholars:

The early Song inherited Tang practices and prose was mostly in parallel. It was called the [Xi-]kun style. This was until when Ouyang [Xiu] followed Han [Yu] as his example to revive ancient learning. Zeng [Gong] Nanfeng and Wang [Anshi] Jinggong followed and echoed his efforts. The three Sus from the west also revived Ancient Style prose, so the old custom began to change. Like how scenery changes with the blowing wind, everyone within the seas has followed this switch [in prose style]. However, writing parallel sentences still cannot be avoided in edicts and announcements in the court, and correspondence among the gentry. Even the great scholars Ou[-yang], Zeng, Wang, and Su wrote in it zealously. It was never abandoned in the rest of the Song. It was called “four-six [prose]”, “diligent and extensive learning”, and also “practical [writings]”. When scholar officials made their way into examination halls, they mastered the “contemporary style”,⁴⁰ when they passed their examinations, then they gave up the “contemporary style” and became experts in parallel prose. If they were not [good at it] they could not be called literary scholars. The more important uses of parallel prose include building a reputation for future employment in the Hanlin Academy or literary offices; as for the less important uses, one can still use it to make acquaintance with peers and be recommended for office [by then]. Even Grand Councilors were recruited in this way, so it was an important matter back in the time. Since the migration to the south, the works by famous masters often get printed, and are recited everywhere within the seas. Remarkable figures and outstanding scholars are especially numerous in current times, and their marvelous words have spread like the wind... 宋初，承唐習，文多儷偶，謂之崑體。至歐陽公出，以韓為宗，力振古學，曾南豐、王荆公從而和之，三蘇父子又以古文振於西州，舊格遂變。風動景隨，海內皆歸焉。

40 On this see De Weerd, *Competition over Content*, 244-45.

然朝廷制誥、縉紳表啟，猶不免作對，雖歐、曾、王、蘇數大儒皆奮然為之，終宋之世不廢。謂之四六，又謂之敏博之學，又謂之應用。士大夫方游場屋，即工時文；既擢科第，舍時文，即工四六。不者弗得稱文士。大則培植聲望，為他年翰苑詞掖之儲；小則可以結知當路，受薦舉，雖宰執亦或以是取人，蓋當時以為一重事焉……南渡以來，名公著作多見梓刻，海宇誦習。近世尤多奇人俊士，妙語風猗……⁴¹

Several points deserve special mention here. First of all, even though there was the influential Ancient Prose movement since the late eighth century, parallel prose was still a style that writers could not avoid. Parallel prose still figured prominently in both court and personal correspondence. Second, parallel prose was closely connected to the civil service examinations and the pathways to a bureaucratic career, so becoming a literary scholar was almost synonymous with mastering the craft of writing in parallel prose. Third, publications of parallel prose by famous writers proliferated since the mid-Southern Song and had a growing readership.

The observations of others echo Liu Xun's first point on the prevalence of parallel prose. As the prominent twelfth century literati scholar Hong Mai 洪邁 (1123-1202) points out,

For masterful writers four-six parallel prose is the easiest [to write]. Yet there is nobody who does not write it, from [using it for] orders and decrees from the court at the top, to letters, prayers, and memorials among the gentry at the bottom. 四六駢儷，於文章家為至淺，然上自朝廷命令、詔冊，下而縉紳之間箋書、祝疏，無所不用。⁴²

41 Liu Xun 劉壘, *Yinju tongyi* 隱居通議, in CSJC, vol. 214, 21/211.

42 Hong Mai 洪邁, *Rongzhai suibi* 容齋隨筆, “Rongzhai sanbi 容齋三筆” (Shanghai: Shanghai guiji chubanshe, 1978), 505.

Letters in particular were often written in parallel prose, especially those sub-genres that tend to have formulaic content such as *qi*. This was why the editors of *Siku quanshu* made the following observation on the relationship between parallel prose and letters:

Since the Six Dynasties, many writings of correspondence were in parallel prose. But this was due to the predominant literary style of the time, not that it was done to stand out. When it comes to the Song, as for seasonal complimentary greetings, promotions or appointments in official service, and the congratulating and condoling of auspicious and inauspicious occasions, none of these did not involve using letters. There was no one who did not write greetings, and their greetings always adopted parallel prose. Therefore there are specialized [categories] within parallel prose. During the early years after the southward migration, writers like Sun Di and Wang Zao (1079-1154) produced many famous pieces.⁴³ When [Li] Liu (b. 1175) emerged much later, a smooth, balanced, and steadfast style was taken as the exemplar. It was nothing like the elegance and solemnness of the ancients. The quality went with the flow and waned ever since. Parallel prose thus became the content of outer chapters in *leishu* and [was used in] draft copies of bureaucratic documents. They are extremely excessive and overused. 自六代以來，箋啟即多駢偶，然其時文體皆然，非以是別為一格也。至宋而歲時通候、仕宦遷除、吉兇慶吊，無一事不用啟，無一人不用啟，其啟必以四六，遂於四六之內，別有專門。南渡之始，古法猶存，孫覲、汪藻諸人，名篇不乏。迨劉晚出，惟以流麗穩貼為宗，無復前人之典重。沿波不返，遂變為類書之外編、公牘之副本，而冗濫極矣。⁴⁴

The editor who penned this certainly had strong views on the stylistic decay of parallel

43 On Sun Di, see Chapter 3. For a study of Wang Zao's parallel prose writings, see Shi Yichao, *Song siliu yanjiu*, 76-115.

44 SKTY 163/2165.

prose greetings throughout the Song, but his generalization on the close relationship between parallel prose and the writing of greetings is certainly important for our inquiry here.

As for Liu Xun's second point on the relationship between the civil service examination system and parallel prose, it should especially be understood in the context of the subjects within the examination system at the time: special *ci ke* 詞科 examinations were instituted to recruit literary officials, in which candidates were asked to write official documents in parallel prose.⁴⁵ Although this did not directly encourage producing models for letter writing, it boosted the importance of the prose style that relied more on writing references than other styles. It was also the way in which some famous parallel prose writers gained office, such as Sun Di, whose letters I have studied in Chapter 3 and will further discuss in this chapter.⁴⁶ These references aided the writing of epistolary sub-genres such as *qi* which largely shared the styles of such official communications.

In writing prose like this, it was helpful for many to collect phrases that they could employ in their writing. Scholar official Ye Mengde 葉夢得 (1077-1148) complained about this practice of using fixed expressions in parallel prose, which led to the deliberate accumulation of references.

Earlier generations did not always adopt regular expressions when they wrote in parallel prose. They felt repulsed by it because it was as if writing a *fu*. But when they believed it was a suitable occasion to do so, they did not refrain from doing it. It was just that they did not force it. Since the Dagan period, those of the time compete to

45 See Zhu Shangshu, *Songdai keju yu wenxue kao lun*, 158-74; idem., *Songdai keju yu wenxue*, 88-97.

46 For information about his degree, see Nie Chongqi 聶崇歧, *Song shi congkao* 宋史叢考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 148.

take regular expressions as well-crafted, so they collect and organize them, saving them up for later use regardless of how [unsuitable] they are... 前輩作四六，不肯多用全經語，惡其近賦也。然意有適會，亦有不得避者，但不當強用之爾。……自大觀後，時流爭以用經句為工，於是相與衰次排比，預蓄以待問，不問其如何……⁴⁷

Ye Mengde disapproved of this increasing use of conventional expressions and even the habit of taking such expressions and arranging them for use in one's writing.⁴⁸

Naturally, anthologies that provide models for writing contain many works in parallel prose. This in fact is an accurate description of the material that we see in encyclopedias studied in this chapter. For instance, according to Zeng Zaozhuang, works in parallel prose accounts for more than two-thirds of those in *Sheng Song mingxian wubai jia bofang daquan wencui* 聖宋名賢五百家播芳大全文粹 [A Comprehensive Anthology of the Pervasive Refinement of Five Hundred Famous Worthies of the Sagely Song Dynasty], a sizable 110-chapter anthology of Song prose.⁴⁹ Again, it affirms the widespread use of parallel prose in Song epistolary models.

Reorganizing Epistolary Material (1): Phraseology

I will be devoting the following three sections to three distinct but interrelated types of epistolary material contained in encyclopedias published in the last decades of the Southern Song dynasty and the first half of the Yuan. These include: phraseology, letter templates, and complete texts of letters that serve as samples. In each section, I

47 Ye Mengde 葉夢得, *Bishu luhua* 避暑錄話, in QSB, vol. 2:10, *shang* 上/263.

48 *Liu tie* was probably one of the titles that served this purpose.

49 Zeng Zaozhuang, *Song wen tonglun*, 370.

will first study a collection that only presents one type of these materials; then I will examine how encyclopedias combine and incorporate these types of material in presenting epistolary models.

For each section, although the focus will be on how encyclopedias presents a certain type of material, it is important to note that most of the encyclopedic titles that I mention combine all three types in them. Hence, for instance, although Ren Guang's *Shuxu zhinan* and Sima Guang's *Shuyi* were published earlier than all the encyclopedias I study, my point is not to show the chronological change from these earlier manuals, but rather that all the three types of epistolary models are present as sections of later encyclopedias. In short, earlier compilations did not cover all three types at the same time. It was in later multi-purpose encyclopedias that the functions of all three types were taken over. They became the main source for epistolary models in the late Song period.

I will first provide a discussion of how the phrasebook *Shuxu zhinan* 書敘指南 [*Guide to Correspondence*] by Ren Guang 任廣 (c. 1100s) presented terms that were intended for writing letters.⁵⁰ It provides lists of elegant expressions used in letters and their *loci classici*, so it can actually be seen as a kind of thesaurus.⁵¹ From the fact that its editor named it a *zhinan* 指南, a “guidebook”, one can gain a sense of its function as a lexical aid and reference for writing. There is very little information about its author Ren Guang, except that he was active during the Chongning 崇寧 period (1102-

50 Ren Guang 任廣, *Shuxu zhinan* 書敘指南, in CSJC, vol. 2979-2981.

51 Bibliographic entry for this title in Hilde De Weerd ed., “Song Research Tools,” http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~songtool/IX/IX_b2.html (accessed May 23, 2015).

1106).⁵² His style name was Dejian 德儉. According to the bibliographical comment in the *Siku quanshu*, *Shuxu zhinan* was first printed during the Jingkang period (1126-27).⁵³

Shuxu zhinan was listed under the *leishu* section in Song bibliographic records. Chen Zhensun's *Zhizhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解題 [Catalogue of Books at the Zhi Studio] catalogued it as a work “entirely of four-character expressions from classics and biographies for use in correspondence 皆經傳四字語，備尺牘應用者也”.⁵⁴ Similarly, the editors of the *Siku quanshu* also considered it to be a manual for letter writing:

This entire book took regular expressions from the classics and biographies for use in informal letters. This was why the title includes ‘Correspondence’. 其書皆採錄經傳成語，以備尺牘之用，故以‘書敘’為名。”⁵⁵

This twenty-chapter title has approximately 180 categories in total, covering various aspects of social life. Each chapter contains ten sub-sections.⁵⁶ Below is a sample of the categories covered in the ninth chapter, with content in brackets elaborating on the section headings):

52 Chen Zhensun, *Zhi zhai shulu jieti*, 14/676-77.

53 Ren Guang, *Shuxu zhinan*, 1.

54 Chen Zhensun, *Zhi zhai shulu jieti*, 14/676-77. Chen's remarks are not entirely accurate. Other than four-character expressions, there are many two-character ones in this title.

55 In his preface to the reprinted Nakano Shōzaemon edition (1649) of *Shuxu zhinan*, Nagasawa Kikuya raises doubt on the judgement that the *Guide to Correspondence* was used as a reference tool for letter writing. Nevertheless he does not give evidence to support his claim. See Changze Guijuyue 長澤規矩也 [Nagasawa Kikuya] ed., *He keben leishu jicheng* 和刻本類書集成, vol. 1 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), 1-3. The entry in *Siku quanshu* probably originated from Chen Zhensun's bibliographic entry. Chen's work is generally quite reliable in keeping track of Song prints and their content, but Nagasawa did not refer to Chen's account.

56 Some categories occupy more than one sub-section. Hence there were more sub-sections than categories.

- Banquets and Gatherings (Drunkenness) 筵宴集會 (醉)
- Kitchen Work and Cuisine (Taste) 庖廚食饌 (滋味)
- Melons, Fruits, and Vegetables 瓜果蔬菜
- Wine, Sweet Liquor, and Malt 酒醴麴蘖(=蘖)
- Hymns, Music, and Reputed Instruments 歌樂名器
- Music Performers and Courtesans 樂工倡妓
- Travelling and Sightseeing (Hunting with Accompaniment and Glimpses at Sights) 遊觀賞覽 (陪從田獵窺望景物)
- Towers, Ponds, and Gardens (Pavilions and Terraces) 樓臺池園 (亭榭觀閣)
- Trees and Flowers 竹木花卉
- Chess, Archery, and Games (Game of Pitch-Pot) 碁(=棋)射博戲 (投壺)⁵⁷

Each section here consists of more than twenty expressions. The editor lists an expression that is a certain thing, notion, or action. Then it states that it “is called 曰” something else, and “can also be called 又曰” in another way. Then the *locus classicus* for each expression is given, and sometimes also additional information like the pronunciation or a brief explanation of the expression. In other words, the basic unit of the structure for presenting phraseology is like this:

I (a) 曰 **II** (b) 又曰 **III** (c) 又曰 **IV** (d)

Not all entries have this number of phrases, but they have at least two. This method of presenting the phrases was obviously intended to provide users of this manual with the required vocabulary, letting them choose from a variety of phrases which were broken down into individual units. They would only have to jump to the related section in the book and identify either one of the phrases from **I**, **II**, **III**, and **IV** to track down

⁵⁷ Ren Guang, *Shuxu zhinan*, 6-7.

expressions with similar meanings. Accordingly, the expression **I** was usually the most colloquial phrase at the time,⁵⁸ so it enables users to rely on it to arrive at **II**, **III**, or **IV**, and to select one among these more archaic and elegant expressions to adopt in their own writing. Since the editor also appended the *loci classici* of the expressions and occasionally provided further information (in a, b, c, and d) to the phrases as well, the user would have been able to make sure that these were all phrases used by famous worthies and were not made up. The whole book thus becomes a reference book for phraseology that could be used to refine one's style when drafting letters.⁵⁹ For example, in the case of the phrases under the headings listed above, one can adopt them when writing an invitation letter for a banquet, or praise one's villa in a letter after having paid a visit.

Compared to other later encyclopedias, this feature of including the *loci classici* makes it a more rigorous work in its presentation of phrases, since a number of the subsequent multi-purpose encyclopedias did not mention them at all. For this reason *Siku quanshu* editors commented that *Shuxu zhinan* was more grounded than “vulgar editions from Southern Song booksellers 南宋書肆俗本.”⁶⁰

These so-called “vulgar editions” of encyclopedias indeed contain large sections of phraseology for correspondence, and I will look at two such titles to show how topically classified phraseology is presented in encyclopedias. I will focus especially on how phrases and sentences were arranged in them.

58 Zhu Zhuxian 祝注先, “Shuxu zhinan’: yiben Songdai tongyi ciyu shouce 《书叙指南》——一本宋代同义词语手册,” *Cishu yanjiu* 辞书研究, no. 1 (1986): 71-73.

59 Unsurprisingly, the *Shuxu zhinan* can be used for writing in general and not just for letters. For a study adopting this point of view, see Tan Quanji 谭全基, *Gu hanyu xiuci xue lunwenji* 古汉语修辞学论文集 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2008), 84-107.

60 SKTY, 135/1778.

My first example concerns *Hanyuan xinshu* 翰苑新書 [The New Literary Florilegium]. According to bibliographers, the editors for each of the four parts may be different, at least according to the extant Ming manuscript edition.⁶¹ The first part (*qianji* 前集) was for letter writing and contain extensive lists of phrases.⁶² Not all the topical categories contain all of the following sub-sections, but most of them are usually present. I include a brief explanation for each of these sub-sections:

■ **Allusions from Past Dynasties** 歷代事實

These are historical precedents from the earlier literature.

■ **Allusions from the Current Dynasty** 皇朝事實

These are quotes exclusively from famous writers of the Song.

■ **For Referring to Oneself** 自敘

Humble expressions for writing about oneself are given in this sub-section.

■ **Other Quotes from Various Books** 羣書旁引

Compared to the other sub-sections, this rarely appears in the title. It involves citing phrases that do not describe the topic, but are indirectly relevant.

■ **Critical Sentences By Various Authors** 羣公精語

These include various types of writings apart from poetry, so that they can be used as allusions in writing.

■ **Poems by Past Worthies** 前賢詩詞

These are single-stanza extracts from poems so that they can be used as allusions in writing.

■ **Critical Sentences in Parallel** 四六警語

These are usually further divided into “opening sentences” (*faduan* 發端),

61 SKTY, 135/1788.

62 *Hanyuan xinshu* 翰苑新書, in SKQS, vol. 949/[3-535].

“opening parallel sentences” (*qilian* 起聯), “critical sentences” (*jinglian* 警聯), and “closing parallel sentences” (*jielian* 結聯). Despite the heading of this sub-section says “*siliu*”, there are numerous sentences here that are not in four and six characters, but all are in pairs.

Organized in such scheme, appropriate phrases and sentences are listed as separate units. Phrases and sentences are offered as compositional aids for letters.

My second example on phraseology for letter writing in encyclopedias is from the sizeable and aforementioned *Sheng Song qianjia mingxian biaoqi hanmo daquan*. Although all the epistolary sections of this work have been lost, from the table of contents this 140-chapter work obviously had a very detailed classification of occasions for *qi* letter writing, showing a strong tendency to rearrange various kinds of materials. From the organization of the other generic sections, such as for memorials of felicitation (*hebiao* 賀表),⁶³ one can assume that this work did not just reorganize material for the writing of memorials into the following sub-sections. Most probably it had also done so for epistolary material, even though the sections for epistolary sub-genres in this collection had been lost. It contains the following sub-sections:⁶⁴

■ **General Introduction** 總敘

Texts describing important historical precedents of an occasion for writing in a certain sub-genre are quoted. These texts are usually taken from the classics or histories.

■ **Parallel Allusions** 事偶

These are elegant phrases that are allusions taken from canonical works. The *locus classicus* for each is given.

63 See Edwards, “A Classified Guide to the Thirteen Classes of Chinese Prose,” 774.

64 *Sheng Song qianjia mingxian biaoqi hanmo daquan*, passim. The main texts of relevant sections have unfortunately been lost.

■ **Parallel Sentences** 句聯

This sub-section contains pairs of sentences and even pairs of multiple sentences in parallel with each other. The various types of imperial occasions and officials that these can be used for are stated.

■ **Key Paragraphs** 要段

These are abridged passages from a text. The *locus classicus* for each selection is occasionally given.

■ **Full Text** 全篇

The author is usually mentioned at the end of each text. For example, the texts that are included for “thank-you declarations” (*xiebiao* 謝表) for thanking sinecure appointments are seven essays by Qiao Yongzhi 晁詠之,⁶⁵ Zhang Shou 張守 (1084-1145), Hu Hong 胡宏 (1105-1161), Zheng Bing 鄭丙 (1121-94), and Wang Xin 王信 (1137-94).⁶⁶ Each of them are separated by a symbol traditionally known as a “fish tail” (*yuwei* 魚尾) at the top margins of the folio, so that the reader could easily identify where a piece begins and ends.⁶⁷

Not all types of document covered by this encyclopedia contain every of these sections, but this layout indicates a breaking down of epistolary material into separate units, which readers can reassemble and refine to compose writings of their own according to their needs.

Reorganizing Epistolary Material (2): Letter Templates

65 Qiao came top in the Erudite Literatus (*boxue hongci* 博學宏詞) examination in 1101, one of the *ci ke* examinations mentioned above.

66 *Sheng Song qianjia mingxian biaoqi hanmo daquan*, 21/3a-6a [403-409].

67 On these see Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 43 & 50. I will discuss anthologizing full texts of letters below.

The second type of epistolary materials is letter templates. Letter templates are customized so that users could supply information for their own use. They contained blanks or parts where information clearly was to be filled in or substituted with parts of a text, before the letter becomes complete. In this section, I first look at letter templates in Sima Guang's *Shuyi*, then those in encyclopedias in the late Song and early Yuan.

Sima Guang's *Shuyi* 書儀 [Letters and Etiquette] (also posthumously known as *Wengong shuyi* 溫公書儀 and *Sima shi shuyi* 司馬氏書儀) was an important Song manual on how rites were to be performed. Although a lot of scholarly attention has been paid to *Shuyi* in the context of the towering scholar official Sima Guang's views on rites, only a few observations have been made on the work's epistolary templates in particular, and not from the perspective of letter writing.⁶⁸

Like the *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑒 [Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government] that Sima Guang was in charge of editing, *Shuyi* was produced during Sima Guang's years in Luoyang from 1071 to 1085.⁶⁹ Those were the years when he was forced out of office by followers and supporters of the Wang Anshi reform faction, and edited both

68 Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China: A Social History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Ebrey, "Education Through Ritual: Efforts to Formulate Family Rituals During the Sung Period," in *Neo-Confucian Education: The Formative Stage*, eds. Wm. Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 287-93; Mitsuyoshi Yamane 山根三芳, *Sōdai reishetsu kenkyū* 宋代礼説研究 (Hiroshima-shi: Keisuisha, 1996), 67-141; Philip Clart, "The Concept of Ritual in the Thought of Sima Guang (1019-1086)," in *Perceptions of Antiquity in Chinese Civilization*, eds. Dieter Kuhn and Helga Stahl (Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 2008), 237-44; de Pee, *The Writing of Weddings in Middle-Period China*, Ch. 1.

69 See Xiao-bin Ji, *Politics and Conservatism in Northern Song China: The Career and Thought of Sima Guang (1019-1086)* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2005), 147-64.

Shuyi and the *Zizhi tongjian*.⁷⁰ If the latter can be seen as a source of historical and moral lessons that he found indispensable on governance, *Shuyi* was in short a reflection of Sima Guang's vision on rites for upholding the ideal order. Sima Guang compiled *Shuyi* to provide *the* standard for rituals, not only *a* standard. Obvious from the title of this work, it was produced in the tradition of *shuyi* (etiquette manuals) mentioned earlier; it was the most influential and last *shuyi* title of the Song period.

Even though *Shuyi* begins with letter templates for “private letters” (*sishu* 私書) and “family letters” (*jiashu* 家書), containing twenty-four templates for addressing various kinds of social relations, most of the other nine chapters are not about letter writing per se. They concern specific family rituals, such as those for cappings, weddings, funerals, and ancestral rites. The final two chapters include twenty-six more templates for specific uses under the funerary rites section. The templates in these sections must have circulated among sine families since we know of at least two more printed editions in the second half of the twelfth century.⁷¹

For users of the letter templates in *Shuyi*, the way it organizes relevant information about writing letters forges useful connections between form and function in letters. Because each major function or type of letter is noted and followed by a template detailing the format and rationale of such, when faced with a specific need, users could refer to the respective sections and discover in what form they should write their letters. Letter writers are required to know their own position in the social and bureaucratic hierarchy when consulting the letter templates. To take Sima Guang's templates in the

70 On his political philosophy in the *Zizhi tongjian* see Xiao-bin Ji, “Mirror for Government: Ssu-ma Kuang's Thought on Politics and Government in *Tzu-chih t'ung-chien*,” in *The New and the Multiple: Sung Senses of the Past*, 1-32.

71 See Gong Yunwei 宫云维, “Sima Guang ‘Shuyi’ banben kaolüe 司马光《书仪》版本考略,” *Zhejiang Gongye Daxue Xuebao* 浙江工业大学学报, no. 6 (2002): 640-41.

“Miscellaneous Etiquette for Those in Mourning 居喪雜儀” sub-section under his funerary rites as an example, templates for letters to be sent to people in mourning, and the responses to such letters of condolences are included.⁷² The following is the template for acknowledging others’ condolences:

Letter of Acknowledgement of Funeral Gifts 謝贈禮書

[Those in three-year mourning who have not ceased wailing do not send the letter. Usually a grandson or nephew or some other relative is asked to send the acknowledgement letter.]

With such goods in such numbers, I, the person named above, have humbly received [space] your [space] honorable compassion. Because my [name of sender of letter] such [type] relative departed from this world, [if he was a high official, say “passed away”] you have particularly conferred on me a contribution [if there are gifts, say so. My lowly feelings of sincerity are unequal to this sorrow. I earnestly prepare this writing to send up [space] my acknowledgement. Earnestly written. [space] day of [space] month of [space] year. [space] Presented up to [space] so-and-so by [space] so-and-so. Earnestly sealed by so-and-so.

[This is the ritual for superiors. If writing to an equal, change “honorable compassion” to “benevolence”, and “particularly conferred on me” to “grant to me”. Also, delete “lowly” and “sincerity”. After this, say “Earnestly presenting this carefully composed writing. Earnestly written.” Do not put the year. On the envelope put “Signed personally”. The rest is the same as the above.]⁷³

72 Sima Guang, *Sima shi shuyi*, 9/102-111. Forms of name cards (or greeting tablets) were also included for people making condolence visits. See the essay on these in Yang Zhishui 揚之水, *Songdai de huaping 宋代的花瓶* (Hong Kong: Xianggang Zhonghe chuban, 2014), 147-68.

73 This translation is based on the rendering in Patricia Buckley Ebrey trans., *Chu Hsi's Family Rituals: A Twelfth-Century Chinese Manual for the Performance of Cappings, Weddings, Funerals, and Ancestral Rites* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 144-45. The passages in square brackets were annotations in the original text.

[今三年之喪，未卒哭，不發書。多令姪孫及其餘親發謝書。]

具位某，某物若干， 右伏蒙 尊慈。以某[發書者名]某親違世[大官云“薨沒”]，
特賜賻儀。[祔奠隨事]下誠不任哀感之至，謹具狀上 謝。謹狀。 年月 日
具位 某 狀 上 某位。某謹封。

[此與尊儀也。如平交，即改“尊慈”為“仁”、“特賜”為“貺”，去下“誠”字，後云
“謹奉陳謝。謹狀”。年。封皮用面簽，餘如前。]⁷⁴

As one can see from the above letter template example, the guidelines for the phraseology offered in *Shuyi* are quite rigid. Very specific wordings are given, and even the places where spacing should be practiced in the letter are indicated.⁷⁵

The rules for writing to a superior and writing to an equal are clearly distinguished, showing Sima Guang's emphasis defining etiquette to uphold hierarchical configurations in elite society. This is understandable as a large portion of the templates provided is intended for very specific and formal occasions, such as sending a greeting message to a superior official or consoling someone on the loss of that person's grandfather or grandmother. In fact, Sima Guang insisted on this even in his own social interactions. In an anecdote, he was reported to have refused superfluous greetings sent to him:

Sima [Guang] Wengong returned to the court to become the Vice Director of the Chancellery and was later appointed to the Grand Councillorship. Whenever his guests from all around congratulated him with slightly excessive words in greetings, he often wrote back thanking them and refusing their greetings. 司馬溫公還朝作門下侍郎，至大拜，四方賓客啓語稍過重者，必以書謝卻而還之者至多。⁷⁶

74 Sima Guang, *Sima shi shuyi*, 9/104.

75 On spacing in letters, see Chapter 2.

76 Wang Zhi 王銍, *Siliu hua* 四六話, in CSJC, vol. 2615, 2/18-19.

It was further reported that he initially refused to receive a very refined letter by Wu Chuhou 吳處厚 (1053 *jinshi*), and only accepted it after Wu sent him a very detailed letter explaining why his words were not an exaggeration.⁷⁷

Sima Guang's *Shuyi* was not entirely his own creation, since in the *shuyi* textual tradition the use and adaption of earlier etiquette rules is quite common. In making sense of these letter templates, I will first discuss briefly how Sima Guang's work was adapted from earlier etiquette manuals. His text was based on earlier works of *shuyi* from the Tang and Five Dynasties such as those by Pei Chai 裴蒞, Zheng Yuqing 鄭餘慶 (748-820), and Liu Yue 劉岳 from the Tang dynasty.⁷⁸ In explaining Sima Guang's approach in the design of his ritual manual, Ebrey suggests that he

was offended that the manners of the *shidafu* had been contaminated by all sorts of deviant customs.... He made a great deal of large and small adjustments to contemporary customs, but saw these as compromises or simplifications, not improvements on classics.⁷⁹

In the section devoted to letter writing, Sima Guang makes a number of adjustments to the letter templates designed by his predecessors and contemporary customs. In the template for private letters to superiors within the clan (*Shang neiwai zunshu* 上內外尊屬), he corrects the term with which one's wife should be addressed. Sima Guang first gives his own formulation, then cites contemporary practices in the annotations. After this he gives reasons for the inappropriateness of the practices of the time. He then concludes by saying, "If the name is not correct, the speech cannot be harmonious. Gentlemen should change [the names] according to this 名不正則言不順，士君子宜

77 *Idem.*, 19.

78 Cited in Ebrey, "T'ang Guides to Verbal Etiquette," 588.

79 Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China*, 50.

有以易之”⁸⁰. This way of not just presenting one’s version of appropriate etiquette, but also explaining the rationale behind it was new to the *shuyi* tradition.⁸¹ Sima Guang reinstated authority by renegotiating rites with earlier texts, whilst at the same time trying to convince readers and users of his ritual manual why his prescriptions were better. From Sima Guang’s point of view, he intended to replace all the earlier guides by compiling a more authoritative version of protocol for rituals and ceremonies.

However, Sima Guang’s concessions to some of the contemporary customs should also not be overlooked. For instance, he agreed to adhere to new practices on how to end certain letters. In greetings directed to superior officials (*Shang zunguan shou qi* 上尊官手啟), the popular practice at the time was to differentiate between the following four expressions in the closing of the letter:

bubei 不備: “I will not include the details”

buju 不具: “I will not go into the specifics”

buxuan 不宣: “I will not explicate”

buxi 不悉: “I will not be exhaustive”⁸²

Sima Guang thought they were virtually the same, obviating the need to distinguish between them. But since there were “these differences in popular customs, the majority should be followed 世俗有此分別，今須從眾”.⁸³ Nonetheless this does not necessarily mean that Sima Guang proposed to deviate from the ways of antiquity. Instead, what he wanted was to reform the earlier imperfect ritual manuals. If new

80 Sima Guang, *Sima shi shuyi*, 1/14.

81 See Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China*, 50.

82 Sima Guang, *Sima shi shuyi*, 1/9.

83 Ibid. For similar examples, see Zhang Wenchang 張文昌, *Zhi li yi jiao tianxia: Tang-Song lishu yu guojia shehui* 制禮以教天下——唐宋禮書與國家社會 (Taipei: Taiwan daxue chuban zhongxin, 2012), 433.

developments in the rules of letter writing did not disrupt the ritual order, they could be accepted.

Sima Guang's ambitious set of etiquette rules for letter writing must have maintained their influence for a period of time since his *Shuyi* was highly regarded by Neo-Confucian philosopher Zhu Xi, especially as seen in Zhu Xi's compilation *Family Rituals*.⁸⁴ However, the mainstay of the *Shuyi* even during Sima Guang's time was no longer the letter templates, but rules for rituals, unlike in earlier texts before the Song period.⁸⁵ More importantly, *shuyi* letter writing manuals (such as Sima Guang's *Shuyi*) as a subcategory of etiquette manuals went out of fashion as the primary source for epistolary models. After all, Sima Guang's work was the last known *shuyi* text of the period and from the twelfth century onwards encyclopedias took over its functions, containing a greater number of letter templates that are much more specific, as I will discuss below.

One can argue that Sima Guang's *Shuyi* has a strong bureaucratic logic to it, as most of the letter templates concern the hierarchy in officialdom. I will now shift my focus to letter templates in encyclopedias, which continued to share this bureaucratic flair. At the same time, these templates are also geared towards various socializing occasions within the bureaucratic system.

Compared to some encyclopedias containing templates that have already been studied in some detail, such as Liu Yingli's 劉應李 *Xinbian shiwen leiju hanmo quanshu* 新編事文類聚翰墨全書 [A Complete Book of the Art of the Writing with

84 See Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China*, 104-105.

85 Zhang Wenchang, *Zhi li yi jiao tianxia*, 432-35. On *shuyi* as ritual texts in earlier periods, see Wu Liyu, *Tang li zhiyi*.

Classified Allusions and Compositions],⁸⁶ I would like to focus on the congratulatory letter templates in the much overlooked *Qizha yunjin shang* 啟笱雲錦裳 [The Cloud Brocade of Correspondence]. Even though the collection is no longer extant in its entirety, the templates in the extant volumes are already very extensive and deserve investigating here.⁸⁷ Two of the eight chapters of this title are preserved in the *Yongle dadian*, allowing us to compile the following table of their extant content:

<u>Sections</u>	<u>No. of Templates for Different Occasions</u>	<u>With Templates of Main Body for Reply</u>	<u>With Templates of Main Body for Replying Negatively</u>
A. 仕宦慶賀笱子 Congratulatory <i>Zhazi</i> Letters for Officialdom ⁸⁸	78		
	36	✓	
B. 饋贐簡笱 Letters about Farewell Banquets	15	✓	
C. 宴召簡笱 Letters about Invitations to Banquets	14	✓	✓
D. 賀問笱子 Letters to Greet	27	✓	
E. 饋贐簡笱 Letters about Farewell Banquets ⁸⁹	15	✓	✓

86 Liu Yingli, *Xinbian shiwen leiju hanmo quanshu*. See Tong Jianping, “*Xinbian shiwen leiju hanmo quanshu*” *yanjiu*; de Pee, *The Writing of Weddings in Middle-Period China*, 114-36. I have also briefly discussed a quote from this title in Chapter 2.

87 *Qizha yunjin shang* 啟笱雲錦裳, in *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), vol. 8, 22749-50/[7930-48]. This should not be confused with the Yuan encyclopedia 新編事文類聚啟笱雲錦 [Newly Compiled and Classified Compendium of Past and Present Allusions and Compositions in a Cloud Brocade of Correspondence]. On the latter see Tong Jianping, “*Xinbian shiwen leiju hanmo quanshu*” *yanjiu*, 180-84.

88 There are 114 letter templates in total in this section. I have divided it into two parts because some do not include a reply letter template but others do.

89 This section has the same title as Section B but the letter templates in it are for those

F. 宴餞簡筭 Letters about Invitations to Banquets ⁹⁰	9	✓	✓
--	---	---	---

This collection was probably completed after the 1220s.⁹¹ Letters for celebrating promotions in the imperial bureaucracy figure prominently, with coverage of letters for various official posts. Especially in Section A, as can be seen in the figure, 78 different kinds of official posts are listed, so that the users of the templates can write accordingly to congratulate their new appointments. This further shows the elaborate set of practices associated with writing personal letters to people in specific official posts within the imperial bureaucracy. I have discussed a number of examples of scholar officials corresponding, such as Zhao Ding, Lu You, and Sun Di, in sections 2.3 and 3.5 of this thesis.

Many templates in the *Qizha yunjin shang* allow for a degree of flexibility by including models for positive as well as negative replies in the main body of a letter. For example, when the occasion was a person arriving in his new official position, a congratulatory greeting to accompany a gift for him is included, as well as thank-you greetings to either accept or refuse such a gift.⁹² And for every one of these templates, the opening, main body, and closing of a letter are all separate components in the text. For both the opening and closing of letters, multiple passages are offered on every page for the user to choose from. The main body differs according to the occasion, so they are listed under headings of different social occasions, such as “thanking acquaintances

who do not hold official positions, whereas those in Section B are all for imperial officials.

⁹⁰ Again, this section was mostly for those without official positions, while Section C was all for post holders.

⁹¹ Li Yumin 李裕民, *Siku tiyao dingwu* 四库提要订误, revised ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005), 304-305.

⁹² *Qizha yunjin shang*, 22749/18 [7938].

after obtaining degree 登第請人” or so on.⁹³ The main body of the letter can be paired up with the opening and closing passages, and after filling in the required information in the places usually indicated by “so-and-so 某”, “salutation 稱呼”, “season 時令”, a complete and usable letter is assembled.

Although a format like this guarantees a certain degree of flexibility for writing letters, it is equally important that adequate guidance on the format of letters is provided. As de Pee suggests, such manuals “mimic for the benefit of the reader the format of the handwritten letter, including the additional formal notes, the standard introductory and concluding phrases, and the honorific elevations omitted from anthologies and collected works.”⁹⁴ The format of various kinds of letters in particular is recreated in the letter templates with suggestions throughout for line breaks and ritual spacing so that the users could simply follow the appropriate format.

Although the *shuyi* tradition did not carry on towards the end of the Song, the coverage of bureaucratic social occasions in templates in encyclopedias from the late twelfth century onwards shows that such templates did make their way into another kind of manual. Incorporating detailed letter templates in encyclopedias was a development that continued in publications produced during the Yuan.⁹⁵ Letter templates that could be used for many corresponding purposes are also included in *Xinbian tongyong qizha jiejiang wang* 新編通用啟笱截江網 [Newly Compiled and All-Inclusive Collection of Official Letters and Notes for General Use] (which has a preface dated 1313), as well as *Xinbian shiwen leiju qizha qingqian* 新編事文類聚啟

93 *Qizha yunjin shang*, 22750/16 [7947].

94 de Pee, *The Writing of Weddings in Middle-Period China*, 100.

95 And for that matter, they incorporated not just letter templates but other textual material as well. For example, West, “Time Management and Self-control,” 117-18.

箭青錢 [Newly Compiled and Classified Allusions and Compositions for Correspondence as Good as Ready Cash].⁹⁶ Both the latter and Liu Yingli's *Xinbian shiwen leiju hanmo quanshu* have drawn extensive material from Sima Guang's *Shuyi*.⁹⁷

Reorganizing Epistolary Material (3): Complete Letters by Song Writers

This section deals with complete texts of letters in collections and encyclopedias as epistolary models. Since I discuss letter templates and complete letters in two separate sections, I should explain their differences here. By “complete letters” I mean anthologized texts that remain in full or near-full original form and that are not customized,⁹⁸ even if they are classified in a way so that their uses are specified. This contrasts with letter templates where certain information is left out for the user to supply, as I have just argued. In the following I first examine an annotated collection of letters by Sun Di, *Neijian chidu* 內簡尺牘 [Inner Letters]. Then I discuss how complete texts of letters by Song authors were reorganized and marketed in various encyclopedias.

I have already made use of some letters in this collection in Chapter 3, and both David Pattinson and Ma Qiangcai have already made some useful points about the

96 Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 137. *Xinbian shiwen leiju qizha qingqian* had its earliest extant edition printed in 1324 but probably had an earlier print run in the late thirteenth century.

97 *Xinbian shiwen leiju qizha qingqian*, 361-72. Also see Zhou and Zhao, 97; Niida Noboru 仁井田陸, “Xinbian shiwen leiyao qizha qingqian: jieti 新編事文類要啟箭青錢 解題,” in *Xinbian shiwen leiyao qizha qingqian* 新編事文類要啟箭青錢 (Tokyo: Koten Kenkyūkai, 1963), separate booklet. *Xinbian shiwen leiju hanmo quanshu*, 3/[399-400].

98 It should be noted that they were not “complete” in the absolute sense since often they were still abridged forms of the original letters that Song writers sent to each other. See below for further discussion on abridged letters in collections.

exegesis of Sun Di's *chidu* letters in this collection. But in seeing it as an epistolary manual rather than a collection of epistolary writings, I will reinterpret its epistolary sources.⁹⁹

The first edition of *Neijian chidu* was printed in or shortly after 1197. In this 16-chapter edition there are 449 letters written to 91 recipients in total.¹⁰⁰ The letters in it were collected, edited and annotated by his disciple Li Zuyao 李祖堯. We do not know much else about Li, but it is obvious that he had access to a corpus of his teacher's writings that has since been lost.¹⁰¹ The writings Li Zuyao edited are informal letters (*chidu*) to acquaintances, often quite short, although written in polite and resplendent style. As a skilful parallel prose writer, Sun Di's letters are full of allusions, for which Li Zuyao provided explanation in annotations.

These epistolary texts are only abridged versions of the original letters. When these letters were collected into *Neijian chidu*, they were stripped of some of the original content and epistolary formalities. Differences between the content of the original letters and those in the collection can be shown most clearly if we briefly examine Sun Di's extant epistolary manuscripts.¹⁰² One of these was written to the official Fang Zi 方滋 (1102-1172). It begins with "Di prostrates once again 覲頓首再拜", and ends with the same expression and honorific title of the letter recipient: "To the respectful

99 Pattinson, "The Chidu in Late Ming and Early Qing China," 39-42; Ma Qiangcai 马强才, "Gudai shiwen zhushi lingyu de yi ci kaituo: Li Zuyao bianzhu 'Neijian chidu' lun lue 古代诗文注释领域的一次开拓——李祖堯编注《内简尺牋》论略," *Huaxi yuwen xuekan* 华西语文学刊, no. 2 (2012): 158-68.

100 Sun Di 孫覲, NJCD. Later editions contained a smaller amount of letters. See the edition in Sun Di, *Song Sun Zhongyi neijian chidu* 宋孫仲益内簡尺牋, ed. Li Zuyao, in *Congshu jicheng xubian* 叢書集成續編, vol. 217 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1991), 361-440.

101 Chen Xiaolan, "Sun Di shengping ji qi wenji xiang kao," 91. Chen thinks the collection that Li Zuyao had access to might have been a print from Sichuan.

102 Several informal letters by Sun Di are still extant in manuscript form. See Xu Bangda, *Gu shuhua guoyan yaolu*, 404-407.

Prefect, Academician, and old friend Wude 務德知府學士老友台主”.¹⁰³ *Neijian chidu* contains three letters to Fang Zi, but none of them include such salutations and titles seen in the originals.¹⁰⁴ The same applies to letters addressed to other people; in *Neijian chidu* mention of these are usually omitted.

Neijian chidu is unique in the sense that it was the first and only collection of annotated letters by an individual author in Song China. Other letter collections from the period do not contain such annotations and are only anthologies of texts edited and put together. In *Neijian chidu*, however, Li Zuyao made detailed annotations of the expressions and allusions used in the letters. The most commonly explained elements are literary expressions and phrases borrowed from earlier works. Those who read the text could learn about the usages in the context of the whole passage, and also find out where such expressions originated from. The exegetical work by Li Zuyao is quite extensive and the *locus classicus* of many phrases in the letters are given in detail. The exegesis noted cultural references and expressions adapted from other famous literary works, and at times even longer than the letters themselves. Sound glosses and *fanqie* 反切 spellings for many of the difficult words used by Sun Di in his writings are also given. Some of these are taken from reference works circulating at the time, including the word dictionary *Guangya* 廣雅 [The Broad Ready Guide] and the character dictionary *Yupian* 玉篇 [The Jade Chapters].¹⁰⁵

Also, supplementary texts by Sun Di were supplied by Li Zuyao in the annotations. The inclusion of Sun’s relevant poems, essays, and epitaphs enabled readers to discover

103 Wude is Fang Zi’s style name.

104 Sun Di, NJCD, 10/2b-3b.

105 On these see Heming Yong and Jing Peng, *Chinese Lexicography: A History from 1046 BC to AD 1911* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 192-94 & 215-17.

about Sun Di's social relationships with friends and colleagues, such as his interactions with Meng Zhonghou, as already analyzed earlier. What the letter collection reveals about a writer's social life and about cultured society was often considered to be an attraction to readers who fueled the demand for letter collections.¹⁰⁶ With the annotated text provided by Li Zuyao, Sun Di's letters could be contextualized in his social network; they were not only fragmentary texts that readers have no idea what their original context was. Given the turbulent political conditions of the Southern Song, especially in a time of foreign threats and tense international relations as well as restless factional struggles at court, acquiring support and political information from imperial officials was very necessary for securing the patronage of powerful people and keeping good relations with them, as I have already shown in chapters 2 and 4.¹⁰⁷ This was carried out partly by maintaining epistolary contact with these individuals, and hence the letters and their annotations in *Neijian chidu* can be read as an aid to writing for political networking.

The first edition of *Neijian chidu* was specifically organized to facilitate easy usage. Apart from the customary table of contents arranged in the order of letter recipients, there is an additional index at the front, the "List of Categories 分類之目". It lists the 48 official titles of the individuals whom Sun Di has written to, from the rank of Junior Mentor (*shaofu* 少傅) to Temple Guardian (*zhiguan* 知觀). This indexing

106 This was even more evident in some letter collections from Ming-Qing periods. See David Pattinson, "The Market for Letter Collections in Seventeenth-Century China," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 28 (2006): 151-55.

107 Letters have been used for these purposes long before the Song. For example, during the Tang, civil service examination takers who were aspiring to launch their official careers wrote letters to prominent officials to make themselves known. See Victor H. Mair, "Scroll Presentation in the T'ang Dynasty," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 38, no. 1 (1978): 35-60; Mair, "Li Po's Letters in Pursuit of Political Patronage"; Alexei Ditter, "Civil Examinations and Cover Letters in the Mid-Tang."

system facilitates browsing, especially for those who have to identify the style and expressions in a letter when writing to government officials. The recipients ranged from high level court officials to middle level administrators in localities, so there is variation in the tones and attitudes in different letters.

The publication information we have about this book also provides further clues on how it acted as a letter writing guide. The first edition of *Neijian chidu* was printed by the Cai family school (*jiashu* 家塾). While the local elite community broadened their scope of activity especially during the Southern Song, family schools they helped to set up engaged in publishing and printing books.¹⁰⁸ According to Chia's research, family schools like the ones in the Jianyang 建陽 area in Northern Fujian actively participated in book printing during the Song.¹⁰⁹ In the very year that *Neijian chidu* was printed, the same family school printer also published an annotated and abridged version of the *Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government* [*Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑒] in 120 volumes.¹¹⁰ Like *Neijian chidu*, it annotated and reorganized material for novice readers.¹¹¹ Although no account directly mentions it, but evidence like this it shows that it is likely that students from such family schools adopted *Neijian chidu* as a reference work in learning how to write letters. As people aspiring to enter officialdom,

108 On family schools and their publishing activities in the Southern Song, see Linda A. Walton, *Academies and Society in Southern Sung China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), 126-49.

109 See Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 74-78.

110 The full title is *Lu zhuangyuan ji bai jia zhu zizhi tongjian xiangjie* 陸狀元集百家注資治通鑒詳節 [An Abridged Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government with Detailed Annotations Collected by Scholar Lu]. Scholar Lu refers to Lu Tanglao 陸唐老. For information see Chen Jian 陈坚 and Ma Wenda 马文大, *Song-Yuan banke tushi* 宋元版刻图释 (Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 2000), 1: 244.

111 Lin Song 林嵩, "Nan-Song Tongjian zhu kao lun 南宋通鑒注考论," *Gudai wenming* 古代文明, no. 1 (2007): 76. On the historical context see Walton, *Academies and Society in Southern Sung China*, 203-204.

this title with its well-organized index would have been useful for improving the writing skills required to obtain office and rise within the imperial bureaucracy.

Full texts of letters are also included in some of these Song and later encyclopedias. I count them as sample letters if they appear to be full texts, as one would expect to see in collected works of Song authors. Although they are not just letter templates, they are not included solely to be read. These full texts are classified according to the various occasions for writing. Furthermore, the practical applicability of these texts as model writings is often stressed in these encyclopedias, usually in their prefaces. Bearing in mind the commercial nature of these printed works, such statements of course should be read partially as promotional, or even as what we would call blurbs today. However, how these statements communicate the appeal of such works should reflect the editors' and preface authors' understanding of the value of such published material. In order to discover this I examine such promotional statements in several encyclopedias.

My first example is from *Sheng Song mingxian wubai jia bofang daquan wencui*, edited by Wei Qixian 魏齊賢 and Ye Fen 葉棻 with a preface dated 1190. The preface clearly states that the editors Wei and Ye anthologized and classified works that could be socially used:

The literary works of our sagely dynasty surpass the ancients; with them, these two nimble editors are broad-minded in collecting extensively and inheriting past [works], and classifying them for these volumes. There are no socially used writings that are not included [in this collection]. 以我聖朝之文章卓冠前古，而二君八窗玲瓏，旁搜遠紹，類以成帙，凡世用之文靡所不備。¹¹²

112 QSW vol. 282, 6394/122.

A similar example is the preface in *Sheng Song mingxian siliu congzhu* 聖宋名賢四六叢珠 [Collection of Pearls of Parallel Prose Famous Worthies of the Sagely Song Dynasty]:

... If one is writing to express, then Ancient Prose is preferable; but if the goal is suitability, then parallel prose must be used.... The uses are [exemplified in letter writing], as in showing more competence than ten associates,¹¹³ in its calligraphy being designated as “five clouds”,¹¹⁴ in being hidden away by the letter recipient,¹¹⁵ and in the “two carp” letters.¹¹⁶ These are the uses [of parallel prose].... When the *Collection of Pearls of Parallel Prose* was completed by the book publisher, I have seen how fine the collecting [of material] and how clear the categorization were. From the reports to the throne to the letters sent back and forth... they are all included. If a gentleman puts effort on this, and uses these works that are as precious as gold and axes with jade handles to trim and edit [his writing], then he can easily write [parallel prose] that is quick-witted, practically useful, and popular with everyone without resorting to other means. Oh, and why is this titled “collection of pearls”? Round, bright and lavish—pearls are dazzling and marvelously rare. This

113 This alludes to the remark about letters by Liu Hong 劉弘 (236-206): “One letter by Mr. Liu shows more competence than ten associates! 得劉公一紙書，賢於十部從事” See Fang Xuanling, *Jin shu*, 66/1767.

114 The way Tang official Wei Zhi 韋陟 (697-761) signed the “zhi 陟” character on letters with his brush strokes was known to admirers as the “five clouds 五雲” calligraphic style. See Duan Chengshi 段成式, *Youyang zazhu* 酉陽雜俎, in CSJC, vol. 278, xu 3/197.

115 Letters by Chen Zun 陳遵 were so precious that they were hidden away by their recipients, according to Ban Gu 班固, *Han shu* 漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), 92/3711. See Pattinson, “The Chidu in Late Ming and Early Qing China,” 4-5.

116 “*Shuangyu* 雙魚 (pair of carp)” was the container for letters. It became a metaphor for letters since the ballad “Watering my Horse at a Gap in the Great Wall 飲馬長城窟行”:

“A sojourner came from a far-off land,	客從遠方來
And gave me a pair of carp.	遺我雙鯉魚
I called for a boy to boil the carp;	呼兒烹鯉魚
And in it I found a letter of a foot of plain silk.”	中有尺素書

This translation is adapted from Stephen Owen ed., *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), 258.

is how they surprise one's minds and eyes, as if a group of pearls that one can carry [in his hands].施之著述則古文可尚，求諸適用非駢儷不可也。.....有十部之賢，五雲之號，尺牘藏去，雙魚跪讀者，是其用也....《四六叢珠》告成於書局，予觀其繙緝之工、科別之明，蓋自鼈扉之騰奏、鱗幅之往來.....莫不班班具在。君子黨言意乎此，刮以金，修以玉斧，昔人之敏、之用與夫膾炙於人者，端可徑造而不俟他求矣。嘻，夫又奚以“叢珠”名也？圓明富溢，輝煥精奇，所以洞心駭目，如珠之叢聚而可掬也。¹¹⁷

Both of these prefaces point to the usability of the texts in these volumes. They stress the merits of anthologizing these exemplary writings that can also be practically adapted to one's own use. For the latter preface, letter writing was especially important among these writings.

Wu Huanran's 吳奐然 preface to *Sheng Song qianjia mingxian biaoqi hanmo daquan* made an even stronger point about the need to imitate the writings offered in the encyclopedias:

The carving of wooden blocks for *A Grand Compendium for the Purpose of Brushes and Ink* has been completed. It shows the world the full range of writings; memorials and greetings for officialdom are especially detailed in it.... If a gentleman pays attention to this book, then he can fill up his mind and it is more than sufficient [for that purpose]. If he does not do so by neglecting and shelving it, then when he writes with his brush he has to ask for other people to help him with the craft. This is an act of giving up and it will truly be a mistake. 《翰墨大全》之書剔梓告成，蓋示天下以文章全體，而表啓職制尤加詳焉。.....君子黨留意是書，則其中充然，綽綽有裕；不然平時忽視姑置，至一旦下筆，則曰將求它工，是亦自棄也已，奚尤

117 QSW vol. 292, 6649/226-27 (with modifications in punctuation).

The final sentence can almost be seen as a call for users of this encyclopedia to work hard on their writing skills by making use of this title. These obviously would have included examination candidates who needed to brush up their writing skills, but also people who would continue to have many occasions to write to and for their peers within the imperial bureaucracy after entering officialdom.

Other than the *Neijian chidu*, there were some titles in around the same era that were not fully recognized as writing models. For example, there was the topical anthology of Li Liu's 李劉 greetings, *Meiting xiansheng siliu biao zhun* 梅亭先生四六標準 [Parallel Prose Standards by Master Plum Pavilion]. The *Siku quanshu* editors interpreted the title of this work as the outcome of the revering disciple of Li Liu, the editor Luo Fengji 羅逢吉, praising his master: "It was titled as 'Standard' because the disciple was showing respect to his master. 題曰「標準」，蓋門弟子尊師之詞也。"¹¹⁹ But it really meant more than just trying to elevate one's master. It also conveys the message that these works by Li Liu had set a benchmark in parallel prose writing, and should be taken by writers as the standard to which they should aspire when writing parallel prose. As for the content of Li Liu's works, the collection contains as many as 66 topical categories. Again, they are types of imperial officials and social occasions in which a scholar official would have to write letters to someone.¹²⁰

The actual organization of material in encyclopedias also directs attention to the practical uses of the letters included. One of the parts in the compilation *Hanyuan*

118 *Sheng Song qianjia mingxian biaoqi hanmo daquan*, 6-9.

119 SKTY, 163/2165.

120 Shi Yichao, *Song siliu yanjiu*, 179-80. The SKQS edition, which was reproduced from a Ming annotated edition, contains 1096 pieces in parallel prose under 71 topical headings. (SKTY, 163/2165.)

xinshu 翰苑新書, the “sequel (*xuji* 續集)”, showed a similar arrangement. It not only included a category of official titles in which the anthologized letters are addressed to, ones similar to the “List of Categories” in *Neijian chidu*, but following those categories it also arranged the anthologized letters of greeting are also arranged under the categories of the various occasions for which they had been written. For instance, seven letters are included for the purpose of thanking poems and essays received (*xie hui shiwen* 謝惠詩文).¹²¹ For users who needed to write for the same occasion, they could easily find good examples from these works, thanks to such detailed lists of contents.

Even when the contents of a collection are arranged according to genre, which is very commonly seen in collected works of the period, there are ways to indicate the functions of its letters. To go back to the example of *Sheng Song mingxian wubai jia bofang daquan wencui*, its “Multi-sheet Notes 疊幅小簡”¹²² section includes the following annotations after the titles of many letters:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| ■ Celebrating birthday | 賀生日/賀生辰 |
| ■ Celebrating new year | 賀正 |
| ■ Celebrating the winter season | 賀冬 |
| ■ Request for a sinecure post | 宮祠 |
| ■ Celebrating a promotion | 賀進秩 |
| ■ Handing over official duties | 交代 |

Other than the situations for which these full letters was originally used, since all letters in this section involve using more than one sheet of paper, the actual numbers of

121 *Hanyuan xinshu*, SKQS, vol. 950, 40/19-23 [544-545].

122 This is according to the table of contents in *Sheng Song mingxian wubai jia bofang daquan wencui* 聖宋名賢五百家播芳大全文粹, SJZB, vol. 94, 723. In the main text it is referred to as “*diefu* 疊幅” only. SJZB, vol. 98, 95-101/244-342.

sheets of paper used in the original letter are often mentioned. In presenting exemplary epistolary writings by Song writers, the producers of the encyclopedias paid attention to preserving their format. Similar to what I have noted earlier, line breaks are also indicated in the printed text. Users could get a sense of how the letter was originally written on multiple sheets of paper, as I have discussed in Chapter 2, since the number of the sheets of letter paper are indicated for many of the letters, and line breaks are used to indicate where the text ends on one of the sheets.

Some of the encyclopedias also have their own literary agendas, but when they were marketed and republished in the book market they were often tailored to the users' practical needs. Let me cite Liu Yingli's *Xinbian shiwen leiju hanmo quanshu* as an example here. As Lucille Chia suggests,

Xiong He's 1307 preface to this work begins with a similar complaint about the abuse of *qi* 啟 and *zha* 笱, which were originally official forms of communication, but by Xiong's time were utilized by the literati in their communications with each other,¹²³ a trend abetted by the commercial publishers. Ironically, Xiong He's attempts to rectify what he considered incorrect writing and cultural practices were undermined by commercial editions of his own work, which incorporated materials that would perhaps not have met with Xiong's approval.¹²⁴

She also comments further elsewhere on what this shows about commercial printing of the early Yuan. Ironically, this encyclopedia

became a favorite among commercial publishers—there are at least three Jianyang reprints from the Yuan.... This example provides a striking illustration of how commercial publishers in the Yuan, and most likely already in the Southern Song, rapidly and effectively appropriated any work that they thought would sell, even one

123 I have examined this trend in detail in Chapter 2.

124 Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 137.

meant to counter the abuses of commercial printing.¹²⁵

Apart from packaging their material to tailor the user's needs, serialization was also one of the commercial strategies that printing presses had adopted to market their encyclopedias.¹²⁶ The range of classified material included in the encyclopedias was quite flexible, so the anthologies of complete letters sometimes had sequels. One example is the works that contain *Siliu gaofu* 四六膏馥 [The Dispersing Fragrance of Parallel Prose] in their titles.¹²⁷ Such titles reorganize the phrases, parallel sentences and complete letters by twelfth-century writers such as Yang Wanli and Li Liu.¹²⁸ One of these, entitled *Siliu faqian gaofu ji* 四六發遣膏馥集 [Collection of the Dispersing Fragrance of Parallel Prose] and dated 1248, in fact is a bundle comprised of four parts. The editors of the first two parts are different from those of the remaining two; in the first part only Yang Wanli's works were included, but presumably due to commercial success in the book market, three more parts were published and Li Liu's writings were also incorporated alongside Yang's.¹²⁹ In the second part, the commercial notice following the table of contents explains the rationale for publishing:

The words and wondrous parallels of the two masters are surely marvelous to everyone in the world. They are as attractive as mouth-watering food—no one would not compete to take a look at it.... Now the [writings] that meet burning needs are taken from the surviving manuscripts of the two masters to carve on new wooden blocks for our peers to peruse, as a sequel to *Dispersing Fragrance* to be sold. Thank you for your attention. 二公語奇對的妙天下，膾眾口，孰不爭先睹之。.....今

125 Chia, "*Mashaben*," 300.

126 See De Weerd, "The Encyclopedia as Textbook," 85-87.

127 Shi Yichao, *Song siliu lungao*, 219-22.

128 On Yang Wanli's epistolary practices, see Wang Ruilai, "'Neiju bu bi qin'."

129 Yang Zhong 杨忠, "'Siliu gaofu' yu Nan-Song siliu wen de shehui riyong quxiang 《四六膏馥》与南宋四六文的社会日用趋向," *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大学学报, no. 5 (2005): 140-41.

採二先生遺稿灼於急用者，綉木一新，便於同志披覽，以續《膏馥》出售，幸鑒。

These remarks reflect the flexibility in the commercial book market in reorganizing and packaging epistolary material into encyclopedias that were appealing in the texts that they incorporated and also for their ease of consultation, as some other encyclopedias have also stressed.¹³⁰ It seems very likely that one successful publication led to other ones that contained content of a similar nature, but in a slightly adapted form.

It is also remarkable that all the collections that anthologized complete epistolary texts by Song authors did not pay any real attention to earlier authors. Compared to phrasebooks including allusions to historical references, and Sima Guang's *Shuyi* which adapted templates from earlier etiquette manuals, these anthologies clearly show a much bigger interest in contemporary works. Considering that letter writing practices regularly changed and that the relevant conventions go out of fashion after some time, as I have shown in Chapter 2, it was more practical to publish writings by recent authors, that is, the letters and other works by “worthies” of the current “sagely” dynasty. They certainly are precursors to some of the utilitarian *chidu* (notes) collections in later periods that served as aids to letter writing.¹³¹

Conclusion

I have shown in this chapter that with the three types of epistolary material that the encyclopedias have incorporated, they were the syntheses of Song epistolary culture.

130 Compare with those studied in De Weerdt, “The Encyclopedia as Textbook,” 87-90.

131 See Pattinson, “The Market for Letter Collections in Seventeenth-Century China,” 133-34.

They conveyed the experience of producing epistolary texts for many social occasions.

As I have shown, a good number of encyclopedias from the Southern and the first half of the Yuan had multi-faceted ways in reorganizing epistolary material. To recap, the three types that I introduced were: phraseology, letter templates, and complete letters. In order to summarize the encyclopedias' coverage of these three, from the extant material that I have surveyed we can deduce which of the three types the following mentioned titles contain:

<u>Title of Encyclopedia</u>	<u>Date of Preface</u>	<u>Phraseology</u>	<u>Letter Templates</u>	<u>Complete Letters</u>
<i>Sheng Song mingxian wubai jia bofang daquan wencui</i> 聖宋名賢五百家播芳大全文粹	1190			✓
<i>Sheng Song mingxian siliu congzhu</i> 聖宋名賢四六叢珠	1196	✓		✓
<i>Sheng Song qianjia mingxian biaoqi hanmo daquan</i> 聖宋千家名賢表啟翰墨大全	1200	✓	✓	✓
<i>Siliu faqian gaofu ji</i> 四六發遣膏馥集	1248			✓
<i>Hanyuan xinshu</i> 翰苑新書	N/A (Song)	✓		✓
<i>Xinbian tongyong qizha jiejiang wang</i> 新編通用啟笱截江網	1313	✓	✓	
<i>Xinbian shiwen leiju qizha qingqian</i> 新編事文類聚啟笱青	1324		✓	

錢				
<i>Qizha yunjin shang</i> 啟筭雲錦裳	N/A (Yuan)		✓	

Although this is by no means an exhaustive list, it covers considerable ground. This figure shows that the encyclopedias from the late twelfth century to the early fourteenth century clearly covered all the three ways of reorganizing and presenting epistolary material discussed in this chapter.

The commercial publishing business was very important to this reorganization of epistolary material in printed encyclopedias. As the information about how scholar officials ought to have corresponded with each other was made available in these encyclopedic titles, the prescriptive know-how of the social world formed by individuals from the imperial bureaucracy became much more accessible than earlier periods. Not only did scholarly classes have access to them, but anyone with the means to acquire such books could own the manuals for their use. With multiple ways of reorganizing these kinds of epistolary material, it was also true that writing certain types of letters became more tedious. Adhering to models was the safest way to be appropriate, which explains the ascent of such titles. In earlier times only people who had access to etiquette rules in *shuyi* texts and ritual codes had exposure to epistolary models. The rise of a commercial printing business that engaged in the production of these titles helped to disseminate more diverse kinds of this material, predominantly in parallel prose, to more letter writers towards the end of the Song. These titles encapsulated the epistolary practices that I have studied in this thesis.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

A Review of my Findings

The literati community in Song China saw numerous epistolary exchanges such as Su Shi's letter to Qin Guan, the first quoted letter in the Introduction. It was an important way of conducting relationships for Song literati officials. As I have shown in this thesis, the various types of letters exchanged among Song literati officials offer a fascinating window on interpersonal relationships in this period. Letters were not just written messages, but an integral part of developing networks that involved exchanges of gifts as well as poems or calligraphy, and could encompass negotiations about the cost of having an epitaph composed, personal requests for information and assistance, or even just casual jottings. Letters made it possible to build the kind of intra-bureaucratic networks that bound the elites of Song China as a whole together with an intensity that had not yet been seen before.

Thus, there was a profound influence of bureaucratic correspondence on the epistolary genre. Since the literati were also members of the hierarchical structure of officialdom, the writing conventions of some epistolary sub-genres such as *zhazi* were constantly changing as a reflection of the political dynamics of the time. From various accounts by literati writers we see that they themselves were aware of these phenomena. Accordingly, the line between personal letters and bureaucratic

correspondence in Song China was in fact quite blurry, at least with respect to the writings by literati officials about whom we have information.

Interactions of literati officials must thus always be viewed in this larger context of their official status. Even when making personal requests to one another—as when commissioning an epitaph for a family member—their interactions reflected their position and respective social status. When they negotiated and conducted by letter writing, the tone adopted was unvaryingly polite, even oblique, as exemplified in Sun Di's letters containing requests and replies to others' requests, to avoid creating any bad feelings. It was a crucial part of literati life to take care of mundane affairs eloquently and elegantly in their epistolary communication.

Conducting government business was also a big part of the lives of these literati, taking the form of formal audiences, meetings and official memorials. Such interaction was highly ritualized and slow, especially when it had to pass through a series of official channels in the imperial government. Personal correspondence as a kind of back-channel negotiation was likewise inevitable. The example of Li Gang's correspondence with the Grand Councilors while he was regional commander in the 1130s provides insights into the role of epistolary exchanges in political communication within officialdom. Ministers were able to engage with their colleagues to negotiate informally before policy positions were formalized, exchange sensitive political information at an early stage, and reflect on communication channels in letters. Letter writing was crucial to how Li Gang navigated the challenging political circumstances that he faced in the 1130s, both as a former Grand Councilor and in dealing with an imperial state in severe crisis.

Letter writing in traditional China was not just a practical exercise, however. The unique appreciation of calligraphy in letters resulted in a culture of collecting,

exchanging, and reproducing calligraphic letters. The fact that the letters of Mi Fu were known for his calligraphy more than their content is the best testimony to this aspect of Song letter writing. Whenever he was writing a letter with his brush, he was well aware that such letters were to become collectible art. With the interest in his calligraphy in the Southern Song, many of his epistolary manuscripts ended up being reproduced in official and private compendia of model letters.

The epistolary practices of Song letter writers were summarized and anthologized in collections and encyclopedias containing epistolary models. These references for letter writing took three main forms: phraseology, letter templates, and complete texts of letters by Song authors. By reorganizing these epistolary models into material that were circulated in commercial prints, contemporary letter writing practices were condensed into prescriptive texts by the end of the Song dynasty.

Investigating the uses of letter writing foregrounds the main elements of letter writing in Song China: format, rhetoric, content, and handwriting. Examination of these elements serves to advance our knowledge of the particularities of epistolary culture in Song China. Below I assess the contributions of this research and inevitably, the limitations that come with them.

Scholarly Contributions and Limitations of this Thesis

This thesis underlines the significance of letter writing by literati elites as a notable part of the traditional high culture of China. Given its significance to the cultural history of Song China, a study of the medium's various uses is crucial. By investigating the complex and understudied practices of letter writing, this thesis conveys what it meant to literati scholars to communicate during the Song period in

China. Its systematic view of the multiple functions of Song letter writing in the political, social, and cultural realms shows the epistolary culture of the literati transformed during one of the key periods for Chinese civilization. Song elites inherited a tradition of epistolary writing of the previous era and further shaped that tradition under the auspices of a dynasty where literati scholars were gaining more political power, print culture was on the rise, and civil service examinations were becoming the predominant way for political elites to gain high office. Compared to epistolary culture in the early medieval period studied in Antje Richter's monograph,¹ we find in the Song a much more sophisticated set of practices backed up by a larger social base of writers with far more advanced technology at their disposal, enabling broader dissemination and reception of a much larger corpus of epistolary writings. I think this shows that the Song was a period when Chinese epistolary culture matured.

Given the cultural continuity observed during the Song-Yuan transition—as seen, for example, in the similarities and linkages between encyclopedias produced toward the end of the Song period and during the Yuan—confirm that, even when the access to officialdom by means of civil service examinations was drastically reduced, an expanded reading public was fueling the demand for such titles.² Later writers inherited and often referenced practices that characterize Song epistolary culture. Epistolary works by Su Shi, Mi Fu (enhanced by his calligraphy), Sun Di, and other prominent literati scholars were often read, alluded to, and republished especially during the Ming-Qing periods.³

1 Richter, *Letters and Epistolary Culture in Early Medieval China*.

2 Smith, "Introduction," 13-14.

3 For example, Pattinson, "The Market for Letter Collections in Seventeenth-Century China," 130-31 & 149; idem., "Epistolary Networks and Practice in the Early Qing: The Letters Written to Yan Guangmin," in *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 823-24.

This thesis contributes to the increasing corpus of studies on literati interactions and networks in Song China. Letters were a crucial medium for communication among scholar officials, especially over longer distances. Aided by these epistolary sources, researchers can map out direct interpersonal interactions in history, thus gaining a clearer understanding of these networks. Letter writing was the essential means for keeping these networks alive and therefore an important part of the social life of literati officials, alongside other forms of text production, such as *shi* poetry, *ci* lyrics, prose, and so forth, that literary scholars and historians have already used to look at Song elite's social life.⁴ As Richter argues in her study, restoring the genre affiliation of texts as letters benefits our interpretation of epistolary writings that were “de-epistolarized” as source of empirical data or literary appreciation. For example, Li Gang's letters to the Grand Councilors in the early 1130s have been used here to chart his activities as a commander and regional governor, as his biographers interested in his life and political historians of Song China would do, but their content as exchanges between Li Gang and his superiors have also illuminated their collaboration on campaigns to suppress local bandits. Restoring the epistolary identity of calligraphic manuscripts and compendia of model letters produced by Mi Fu and others also helps us to focus on the primary nature of some of our epistolary sources.

By investigating the use of rhetoric in epistolary texts, this study has attempted not only to decipher the concrete messages of letters, but also to identify the linguistic and other means used by Song elite authors to convey their meaning. Linguistic means would be the use of language, including statements, omissions, and circumlocutions. As an example we may recall Sun Di's refusal to write an epitaph,

4 For example in Yang, *Metamorphosis of the Private Sphere*; Hawes, *The Social Circulation of Poetry in the Mid-Northern Song*.

which was probably a ploy to secure a higher remuneration for the job. Non-linguistic means would be the conveyance of various gifts, which could include local produce or poems.

For most of the Song letters and accounts of letter writing mentioned herein, this thesis represents the first time that they have been studied and translated into English. Furthermore, my combined analysis of several major sub-genres, including *shu* (formal letters), *chidu* (notes), *qi* (greetings), and *zhazi* (memorandum) allowed me to unpack specific changes in the writing conventions of some of these sub-genres, and what they tell us about social relations between literati figures.

Song writers themselves were very much aware of the importance of writing letters and therefore also expressed themselves about the practice on a more general level.⁵ This thesis has shed light on their discussions of the compositional conventions of letter writing and shown the influence of official documents on some of the sub-genres that emerged in the Song as well as the influence of court politics on the manner in which scholar officials addressed one another in their letters. Studying letters affords us a much more in-depth understanding of the dynamics of the political and intellectual scene of that time than is possible by referring exclusively to official documents and theoretical writings. Given the literati's versatility and openness about decision making processes, the letters help us to identify the active agency of Chinese elites in building and reshaping their social world.

Examining epistolary practices in close detail has yielded two main benefits. First of all, it reorients our usual impression of letters. A number of studies of Chinese letters have tended to treat letter writing as a form of self-expression, likening their study to the appreciation of essays by great writers. However, as we have seen, as

⁵ See Pattinson, "The Chidu in Late Ming and Early Qing China," 43-45.

devices for communication in everyday social settings, most letters were written to fulfill practical quotidian functions—for example, to thank someone for a favor or a gift. This research has expanded from our customary focus on canonical letters of high literary value to include other, less beautifully written letters. They reveal a lot about epistolary communication as well as many other aspects of the lives of Song literati that is unavailable elsewhere.⁶

At the same time, the analysis conducted here has paid serious attention to letters that were “beautiful,” if not for their literary content, for their calligraphy. The value that these possessed—as concrete objects that could be bartered, reproduced, and collected by connoisseurs—redefines how we understand letters as objects, and even how theorists have understood epistolary exchanges in gift relationships.⁷

The study has also helped us to view the important historical actors of the Song period in a more detailed and nuanced way. For example, the reputation of Sun Di as an epitaph writer who insists on a handsome remuneration is understood far better when we are able to look at the actual interactions between him and those commissioning his writing.

Similarly, famous statesman Li Gang is revealed not only as a skillful communicator, but as a politician who did not shy away from asking for resources from the Grand Councilors (and even personal favors from Qin Gui, a proponent of appeasement with the Jin). This reminds us to revisit the lives of figures whose political allegiances and ideological leanings have cast a shadow on the reconstruction of their biographies. As shown herein, letters may reveal the everyday interactions of

⁶ The Chinese case is worth comparing with Mary Garrison, “‘Send More Socks’: On Mentality and the Preservation Context of Medieval Letters,” in *New Approaches to Medieval Communication*, ed. Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 69–99.

⁷ For example, Liz Stanley, “The Epistolary Gift, the Editorial Third-Party, Counter-Epistolaria: Rethinking the Epistolarium,” *Life Writing* 8, no. 2 (2011): 135–52.

these statesmen, enabling us to revise preconceptions about them. Communication—both weighty and superficial—intersected across political factions and fundamental differences of opinion over the future of the Song empire.

Methodologically speaking, a multidimensional study of Chinese epistolary sources is an innovative research strategy in the field of Chinese history. This thesis has suggested new ways of looking at epistolary material. First of all, instead of treating letters as historical sources themselves, I have put different letters back into their original social contexts. This has enabled us to explore many crucial elements in the epistolary practices of Song writers, such as the influences from bureaucratic documents, preferred formats and phrasing for letters addressed to certain types of people, the use of rhetorical strategies, the role of calligraphy, and so on. I have proven the usefulness of utilizing other types of historical texts in contextualizing epistolary practices, which has helped us make sense of obscure letters. Throughout this thesis, I made use of a greater variety of sources than what has been utilized in earlier studies of Chinese letter writing, such as notebooks and encyclopedias, travel records and epitaphs, memorials, and model letters compendia.⁸ It is hoped that the value of this contextual approach will be recognized and accordingly, that it will be adopted henceforth more generally in the study of letter writing.

Secondly, making use of extant manuscripts has proved to be extremely useful, since it enables a far better understanding of the paralinguistic information they contain, such as empty spaces, quantity and quality of paper, folding practices and so forth. Although historians typically strive to consult the most original documents for

⁸ For the study of other works of this era such as poetry, however, scholars usually read across genres in analyzing relevant sources. For example, Ronald Egan, “When There is a Parallel Text in Prose: Reading Lu You’s 1170 Yangzi River Journey in Poetry and Prose,” in *Reading Medieval Chinese Poetry: Text, Context, and Culture*, ed. Paul W. Kroll (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 221-50.

their inquiries, the study of Chinese letters is the exception; they have not done enough to utilize extant epistolary manuscripts. In particular, calligraphic manuscripts that were penned as letters have been studied primarily as objects of art. This thesis, however, has sought to restore the original epistolary context of such manuscripts and in so doing has revealed much about epistolary practices in Song China that could not be known otherwise.

The third methodological contribution has been the recognition of letters as an important textual genre in their own right. Cognizant of the dynamic nature of the various subgenres, this thesis has shied away from relying too much on post-facto analysis by later literary theorists, choosing instead to focus on actual letters and contemporary viewpoints on letter writing. Of particular note is its approach to rhetoric. Most of the epistolary writings examined herein abound in elegant and ceremonial expressions; in my close reading and interpretation of these difficult texts I have interpolated the intended meanings of the Song writers, especially the unstated messages and opinions that inspired them to write letters in such a manner. I have considered such set expressions in letters to be communicative acts; the language of the bulk of these letters is flowery but empty, information about their larger context is almost non-existent, and often full of allusions that require solid classical learning to decipher. Granted, there may be hidden references in these epistolary writings that I have missed; there is much to be discovered about the messages that the letter writers wanted to convey, and about the use of formulaic expressions. The proliferation of epistolary models marked the process by which these allusions were standardized, and close scrutiny of the formulaic language promulgated in epistolary manuals reveals how notions about appropriate epistolary practices were distilled from actual letters and summarized by editors. This thesis has suggested new ways to approach the

epistolary genre.

Having demonstrated that letter writing involves a broad range of questions and serves a broad range of functions, it seems clear that the study of epistolary culture will benefit from a highly interdisciplinary study such I have undertaken in this thesis, which bridges political history, social history, Chinese literature, art history, manuscript studies, and the history of communication. Only by taking such an approach can our discussion hope to do justice to imperial Chinese epistolary culture.

The fact that Chinese epistolary culture is a field of study that has only recently begun to attract scholarly attention enhances the importance of this thesis as a piece of pioneering research. On the other hand, this newness is likewise the source of its limitations, outlined below. First and foremost, there is of course the question of representativeness of my historical examples. The focus on particular individuals and corpuses of texts in my thesis has provided the insights discussed above, but can we extrapolate from them to Song epistolary culture as a whole? I believe that we can, because the literati class—particularly the literati scholars—comprised a very narrow and cohesive coterie. In China's complex literate civilization, they were the primary social group who possessed the capacity for sophisticated written communication and dominated epistolary culture during this era. The letter writers discussed herein, including Ouyang Xiu, Mi Fu, Li Gang, Sun Di, and Lu You, were all leading cultural figures who left lasting marks on Song literati culture. Their careers, actions, and works were discussed by contemporaries in historical works, memoirs, and notebooks. Therefore, concentrating on the epistolary practices of these elite literati scholars may be the most direct way of researching Song epistolary culture (as opposed to making broad generalizations on the basis of a larger sample, but with less in-depth analysis). Investigating the role of letter writing in the lives of other social groups in Song

society (such as women, merchants, illiterate commoners, etc.) is likely to be much more difficult and less fruitful given the dearth of sources.⁹ Even though its literacy rates were not low compared to many other civilizations, traditional China was still a society where few could directly engage in reading and writing.

The list of applications of letter writing covered by this thesis is by no means exhaustive. There are certainly others that bear explanation. One example is letters written to family members (*jiashu* 家書)—there has already been a number of case studies of family letters in the Chinese tradition.¹⁰ Family letters tended to have fewer literary pretensions than the letters written to individuals outside the family. Letters that discuss scholarly issues such as philosophy and letters that serve pedagogical purposes, such as those by Neo-Confucian or Buddhist thinkers, are another example.

9 I touch upon the issue of letters by women in this period in Xu Liheng and Xiong Yong, “Shi er shiji de Zhongguo he Xi Ou de shuxin wenhua.” But even this discussion is based on fragmentary evidence by famous female writers. As for the illiterate, they probably relied on the commercial services of specialists to read and write their letters. According to the family precepts by Yuan Cai, becoming a letter writer was one of the respectable alternative career options other than taking the civil service examinations for local, educated families:

“Of those without the ability to pursue the *jinshi*, the best can become clerks and work with documents and write letters on behalf of others; the next best can practice punctuating reading for children and become their tutors. 其不能習進士業者，上可以事筆札，代牋簡之役，次可以習點讀，為童蒙之師。”

Yuan Cai, *Yuanshi shi fan*, 2/40. My translation is a refined version of Ebrey trans., *Family and Property in Sung China*, 267 (2.58). On the social background of this, see Joseph P. McDermott, “Family Financial Plans of the Southern Sung,” *Asia Major*, 3d Ser., 4, no. 2 (1991): 36-40; Morihiro Furubayashi 古林森廣, *Chūgoku Sōdai no shakai to keizai* 中国宋代の社会と経済 (Tōkyō: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1995), 66-74.

10 For a selection of family letters from traditional China, see Feng Peilan 冯培兰 and Li Ying 李英 ed., *Lidai jiashu mingpian xuanyi* 历代家书名篇选译 (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 2007). Relevant studies include Endo Takatoshi, “To My Dear Elder Brother”; Gail King, “The Family Letters of Xu Guangqi,” *Ming Studies* 31 (1991): 1-41; Kádár, *Historical Chinese Letter Writing*, Ch. 1; Richter, “Between Letter and Testament: Letters of Familial Admonition in Han and Six Dynasties China,” in *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 239-75. Letters within modern Chinese families have also attracted attention recently. See, for example, Haiming Liu, *The Transnational History of a Chinese Family: Immigrant Letters, Family Business, and Reverse Migration* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005); Sherman Cochran and Andrew Hsieh, *The Lius of Shanghai* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

Historians have long been exploring those sources, so there is less urgency to focus on them. Furthermore, such texts were often de-epistolarized in the editing process, making it more difficult to investigate epistolary practices in those letters.

Letters as epistolary sources are not without their problems. Even though much effort has been made to contextualize them, historians remain unable to figure out what many of these letters were trying to address, since their original context has been lost. It is also extremely difficult to date most epistolary sources.

The problem of reciprocity is another issue that we cannot ignore when we reconstruct epistolary exchanges from the extant material. People did not only *send* letters; they also *received*, read and kept them. However, the fact that sources, mostly compiled by individual authors, tend often to preserve only the sender's portion of the correspondence prevents us from reconstructing a more complete picture of epistolary connections in Song China.

Also, epistolary exchanges should not be taken as the entirety of written connections among Song literati officials. They also communicated by writing poetry and prefaces addressed to one another—to name but a small fraction of the range of textual exchanges that existed in the social world of the literati. Even more importantly, these literati officials continually encountered each other and conversed in person as well, with their constant travels and postings.¹¹ Recall the letter by Mi Fu that reads, “Let us wait until I see you face-to-face.” We may never know what he intended to say to his correspondent face-to-face. This illustrates why contextualizing letters and letter writing practices is very challenging. In addition, we must remember that letters were but one type of item that Song literati figures exchanged; they also sent gifts and cash and various other things to their acquaintances. Some but not all of

11 On their travels see Zhang, *Transformative Journeys*.

these were mentioned in letters, even when the items were enclosed.

Future Directions for Study

The study of Song epistolary culture raises much that cannot be included due to constraints of space and time, so there is obviously much scope for further research. With networks among the literati expanding and gaining more profound roots in local society, communication among the literati is likely to reflect these changes, as some researchers have suggested.¹² Relative to the era that preceded the move to the south, did literati officials under the Southern Song write more eagerly and frequently to acquaintances from their natal places? Can we see a growing consciousness to engage in conversations with other individuals within the locality rather than with those at the central court, as a consequence of the elites' strategies proposed in the "localist (or localization) paradigm" in historical research on middle period China? Or was there a more urgent need to write across regions to keep in touch and foster horizontal connections with colleagues far away, especially in order to stay abreast of political developments throughout the much reduced Chinese empire? How do we make sense of the growing bureaucratic logic and proliferation of epistolary models for the various socializing occasions among officials in the Southern Song? These are interesting questions that will require more case studies of social history to answer, and could prove to call for further innovations in research methodology than what I have used here.

During this project, I have explored prosopographical methods, social network analysis (SNA), and geographic information system (GIS) research for the study of

¹² See, among many others, Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen*.

China's past. There has been some experimentation with the application of these methods to Song letters and networks,¹³ and the results suggest that there is much more worth exploring in future research. With more digital datasets on epistolary material becoming available (due to large digitization projects, such as the China Biographical Database), digital methods are becoming ever more effective in handling large amounts of historical information from disparate sources. This thesis is mostly based on close readings of letters taken from a series of interlinked historical examples. Nonetheless I anticipate that digital methods will complement this and allow a more extensive analysis of letters in the future.

By focusing on epistolary culture, this thesis has shown that many other writings by Song literati scholars can be seen in a new light. A more comprehensive study of model letter compendia can benefit from my work in recognizing how they were based on epistolary practices. For example, based on the models that emerge from the reorganization of Song epistolary material—which are in parallel prose—an appraisal of letters written in this overlooked style is needed. To that end, a full study of letter model compendia in the Song period will be useful. Given the volume of encyclopedic works from the late twelfth and late fourteenth centuries that contain epistolary material, this thesis was able only to outline the ways in which the models were presented, but a complete survey of these materials will give us a better grasp of the phraseology of letters, and hence a better comprehension of the meanings of more of these works.

13 Hilde De Weerd, "Mapping Communication from Mingzhou: Networks of Correspondence," paper presented at "Prosopography of Middle Period China: Using the Chinese Biographical Database" Workshop, Warwick, Dec. 2007; Michael Fuller, "Prosopographical Perspectives on Letter Writing During the Song: The View from the China Biographical Database (CBDB)," paper presented at "Letters and Notebooks as Sources for Elite Communication in Chinese History, 900–1300" conference, Oxford, Jan. 2014.

It is also hoped that the findings in this thesis will prove useful in the comparative study of China's epistolary culture relative to others in the world. During the Song period the scale of the epistolary community in China far surpassed that of other cultures; nonetheless, the study of Chinese epistolary culture is far less developed than what is found in Western European and other traditions. Providing a clearer picture of premodern Chinese epistolary culture is bound to aid future attempts to place it in the context of world epistolary cultures—a clearly worthwhile undertaking in order to better understand letter writing as a form of human expression and, in particular, the uniqueness of its practice in Chinese history.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Primary Sources

Bai-Kong liu tie 白孔六帖. Taipei: Xinxing shuju, 1971.

Ban Gu 班固. *Han shu* 漢書. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962.

Cao Baolin 曹寶麟, ed. *Zhongguo shufa quanji (di 37-38 juan): Song, Liao, Jin bian:*

Mi Fu juan 中國書法全集(第37-38卷)宋遼金編:米芾卷. Beijing: Rongbao zhai, 1992.

Changze Guijuyue 長澤規矩也 [Nagasawa Kikuya], ed. *He keben leishu jicheng* 和刻本類書集成. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990.

Chen Zhensun 陳振孫. *Zhi zhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解題. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987.

Chunqiu Zuo zhuan zhu 春秋左傳注, edited by Yang Bojun 楊伯峻. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981.

CSJC = *Congshu jicheng chubian* 叢書集成初編. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1936.

Dong Qichang 董其昌. *Hua chanshi suibi* 畫禪室隨筆. In *Biji xiaoshuo daguan* 筆記小說大觀, vol. 12. Yangzhou: Jiangsu guangling guji keyin she, 1983.

Duan Chengshi 段成式. *Youyang zazu* 酉陽雜俎. In CSJC, vol. 276-78.

- Fang Xuanling 房玄齡. *Jin shu* 晉書. Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1974.
- Ge Lifang 葛立方. *Yun yu yangqiu* 韻語陽秋. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984.
- Gugong bowuyuan 故宮博物院 and Jiangsu Zhenjiang shi Dantu qu renmin zhengfu 江蘇鎮江市丹徒區人民政府, ed. *Mi Fu shufa quanji* 米芾書法全集, 31 vols. Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 2010.
- Hanyuan xinshu* 翰苑新書. In SKQS, vol. 949-50.
- Hong Benjian 洪本健, ed. *Xinjian Ouyang Xiu jiu shi liu pian shujian jianzhu* 新見歐陽修九十六篇書簡箋注. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2014.
- Hong Mai 洪邁. *Rongzhai suibi* 容齋隨筆. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1978.
- LGQJ = Li Gang 李綱. *Li Gang quanji* 李綱全集. Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2004.
- Li Xinchuan 李心傳. *Jiyan yilai xinian yaolu* 建炎以來繫年要錄. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2013.
- Lin Yejiang 林業強 and Cao Baolin 曹寶麟, ed. *Song ta "Yingguang tang tie" di san juan* 宋拓《英光堂帖》第三卷. Hong Kong: Xianggang Zhongwen daxue wenwu guan, 2003.
- Liu Xun 劉壘. *Yinju tongyi* 隱居通議. In CSJC, vol. 212-15.
- Liu Yingli 劉應李. *Xinbian shiwen leiju hanmo quanshu* 新編事文類聚翰墨全書. In XXSK, vol. 1219-21.
- Liu Zhen 劉真. "Songdai de xuegui he xiangyue 宋代的學規和鄉約." In *Songshi yanjiu ji* 宋史研究集, vol. 1, edited by Songshi yanjiu hui 宋史研究會, 367-91. Taipei: Zhonghua congshu weiyuanhui, 1958.

- Lü Yihao 呂頤浩. *Lü Yihao ji* 呂頤浩集. Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2012.
- Lu You 陸游. *Lao xue'an biji* 老學庵筆記. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979.
- Lu You 陸游. *Lu You ji* 陸游集. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976.
- Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙. *Lü Zuqian quanji* 呂祖謙全集. Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2008.
- Ma Duanlin 馬端臨. *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011.
- Mi Fu 米芾. *Bao Jin Yingguang ji* 寶晉英光集. In SKQS, vol. 1116.
- _____. *Bao Jin shanlin ji shiyi* 寶晉山林集拾遺. In *Beijing tushuguan guji zhenben congkan* 北京圖書館古籍珍本叢刊, vol. 89. Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1998.
- NJCD = Sun Di 孫覲. *Li xueshi xinzhu Sun shangshu neijian chidu* 李學士新注孫尚書內簡尺牘, edited by Li Zuyao 李祖堯, Cai shi jiashu 蔡氏家塾 ed., in *Zhonghua zaizao shanben* 中華再造善本. Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2005.
- Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修. *Guitian lu* 歸田錄. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981.
- _____. *Ouyang Xiu quanji* 歐陽修全集. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2001.
- Qizha yunjin shang* 啟筭雲錦裳. In *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典, vol. 8. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986.
- QSBJ = *Quan Song biji* 全宋筆記, edited by Shanghai shifan daxue guji zhengli yanjiusuo 上海師範大學古籍整理研究所. Zhengzhou: Daxiang, 2003-)
- QSW = *Quan Song wen* 全宋文, eds. Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊 and Liu Lin 劉琳. Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2006.

- Ren Guang 任廣. *Shuxu zhinan* 書敘指南. In CSJC, vol. 2979-2981.
- Shanghai shi wenwu guanli weiyuanhui 上海市文物管理委員會 and Shanghai bowuguan 上海博物館, ed. *Songren yijian* 宋人佚簡. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990.
- Shanghai shudian chubanshe 上海書店出版社. *Song-Yuan chidu* 宋元尺牘. Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2000.
- Sheng Song mingxian wubai jia bofang daquan wencui* 聖宋名賢五百家播芳大全文粹. In SJZB, vol. 94-96.
- Sheng Song qianjia mingxian biaoqi hanmo daquan, Hanlin zhuyi* 聖宋千家名賢表啟翰墨大全 翰林珠玉. Naragen Tenri-shi: Tenri Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1981.
- Shui Laiyou 水賚佑. *Chunhua ge tie jishi* 淳化閣帖集釋. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2009.
- Sima Guang 司馬光. *Sima shi shuyi* 司馬氏書儀. In CSJC, vol. 1040.
- SJZB = *Songji zhenben congkan* 宋集珍本叢刊. Beijing: Xianzhuang shuju, 2004.
- SKQS = *Jingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1983-86.
- SKTY = Ji Yun 紀昀 et al., eds. *Qinding siku quanshu zongmu* 欽定四庫全書總目. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997.
- Su Shi 蘇軾. *Su Shi wenji* 蘇軾文集, edited by Kong Fanli 孔凡禮. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986.
- Sun Chengze 孫承澤. *Xianzhe xuan tie kao* 閑者軒帖考. In CSJC, vol. 1608.
- Sun Di 孫覿. *Hongqing jushi ji* 鴻慶居士集. In SKQS, vol. 1135.
- _____. *Song Sun Zhongyi neijian chidu* 宋孫仲益內簡尺牘, edited by Li

- Zuyao 李祖堯. In *Congshu jicheng xubian* 叢書集成續編, vol. 217. (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1991.
- _____ . *Hongqing jushi ji buyi* 鴻慶居士集補遺. In *Congshu jicheng xinbian* 叢書集成新編, vol. 103. Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1994.
- Sun Guangxian 孫光憲. *Beimeng suoyan* 北夢瑣言. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981.
- Tuotou 脫脫. *Songshi* 宋史. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977.
- Wang Mingqing 王明清. *Huizhu lu* 揮麈錄. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961.
- Wu Ne 吳訥. Xu Shizeng 徐師曾 and Chen Maoren 陳懋仁. *Wenti xushuo* 文體序說. Taipei: Da'an chubanshe, 1998.
- Wang Zhi 王銍. *Siliu hua* 四六話. In CSJC, vol. 2615.
- Xia Wenyan 夏文彥. *Tuhui baojian* 圖繪寶鑒. In “*Tuhui baojian*” *xiaokan yu yanjiu* 《圖繪寶鑒》校勘與研究, edited by Jinteng Xiushi 近藤秀實 [Kondo Hidemi] and He Qingxian 何慶先, 3-134. Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1997.
- XNYL = Li Xinchuan 李心傳. *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu* 建炎以來繫年要錄. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2013.
- Xu Ziming 徐自明. *Song zaifu biannian lu jiaobu* 宋宰輔編年錄校補. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986.
- Xuanhe shupu* 宣和書譜, edited by Gui Dizi 桂第子. Changsha: Hunan meishu chubanshe, 1999.
- XXSK = *Xuxiu siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995.

- Yang Boyan 楊伯崑. *Liu tie bu* 六帖補. In SKQS, vol. 948.
- Yang Wanli 楊萬里. *Chengzhai shihua* 誠齋詩話. In *Lidai shihua xubian* 歷代詩話續編, edited by Ding Fubao 丁福保, 1: 135-59. Taipei: Muduo chubanshe, 1983.
- Ye Mengde 葉夢得. *Bishu luhua* 避暑錄話. In QSBJ, vol. 2.
- Yuan Cai 袁采. *Yuanshi shifan* 袁氏世範. In CSJC, vol. 974.
- Yue Ke 岳珂. *Baozhen zhai fashu zan* 寶真齋法書贊. In CSJC, vol. 1629.
- _____. *Ting shi* 程史. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981.
- Zhang Shinan 張世南. *Youhuan jiwen* 游宦紀聞. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981.
- Zhao Lingzhi 趙令時. *Houqing lu* 侯鯖錄. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002.
- Zhao Sheng 趙昇. *Chaoye leiyao* 朝野類要. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007.
- Zhao Yanwei 趙彥衛. *Yunlu manchao* 雲麓漫鈔. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996.
- Zheng Qiao 鄭樵. *Tongzhi ershi lue* 通志二十略. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995.
- Zhongguo fatie quanji* 中國法帖全集, vol. 8, *Song Fengshu tie* 宋 鳳墅帖. Wuhan: Hubei meishu chubanshe, 2002.
- Zhongguo fatie quanji* 中國法帖全集, vol. 11, *Song Bao Jin zhai fatie* 宋 寶晉齋法帖. Wuhan: Hubei meishu chubanshe, 2002.
- Zhongguo fatie quanji* 中國法帖全集, vol. 10, *Song Yingguangtang tie* 宋 英光堂帖. Wuhan: Hubei meishu chubanshe, 2002.
- Zhou Hui 周輝. *Qingbo zazhi jiaozhu* 清波雜誌校注. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994.
- Zhou Mi 周密. *Qidong yeyu* 齊東野語. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983.
- Zhu Yi 朱翌. *Yijueliao zaji* 猗覺寮雜記. In QSBJ, vol. 3: 10.

Zhuangzi 莊子. <http://ctext.org/zhuangzi/zh>. Accessed October 5, 2014.

II. Secondary Sources

Altman, Janet G. *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982.

Bai, Qianshen. "Calligraphy for Negotiating Everyday Life: The Case of Fu Shan (1607-1684)." *Asia Major 3rd Series* 12, no. 1 (1999): 67-125.

_____. "Chinese Letters: Private Words Made Public." In *The Embodied Image: Chinese Calligraphy from the John B. Elliott Collection at Princeton*, edited by Robert Harrist Jr. et al., 381-99. Princeton, NJ: The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1999.

Bauer, Wolfgang. "The Encyclopaedia in China." *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale* 9, no. 3 (1966): 665-91.

Bai Xiaoxia 白晓霞. *Nan-Song chunian mingxiang yanjiu* 南宋初年名相研究. Guangzhou: Ji'nan daxue chubanshe, 2012.

Bazerman, Charles. "Letters and the Social Grounding of Differentiated Genres: Letter Writing as a Social Practice." In *Letter Writing as a Social Practice*, edited by David Barton and Nigel Hall, 15-29. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000.

Birch, Cyril, ed. *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

Blitstein, Pablo Ariel. "Liu Xie's Institutional Mind: Letters, Administrative Documents, and Political Imagination in Fifth- and Sixth-Century China." In *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, edited by Antje Richter,

- 330-62. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Bossler, Beverly J. *Powerful Relations: Kinship, Status & the State in Sung China (960-1279)*. Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1998.
- Briggs, Asa and Peter Burke. *A Social History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet*. London: Polity, 2002.
- Cai Zongyang 蔡宗陽. *Chen Kui “Wenze” xin lun* 陳騏《文則》新論. Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1993.
- Cao Baolin 曹寶麟. *Bao weng ji* 抱甕集. Taipei: Huifeng bimo youxian gongsi, 1991.
- _____. “Mi Fu ‘Qiezhong tie’ kao 米芾《篋中帖》考.” *Shu pu* 書譜, no. 61 (1984): 50-53.
- Cao Jiaqi 曹家齊. *Songdai jiaotong guanli zhidu yanjiu* 宋代交通管理制度研究. Kaifeng: Henan daxue chubanshe, 2002.
- _____. *Songshi yanjiu conggao* 宋史研究叢稿. Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 2006.
- _____. “Weiquan, sudu yu junzheng jixiao: Songdai jinzi paidi xintan 威權、速度與軍政績效——宋代金字牌遞新探.” *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究, no. 2 (2009): 67-100.
- Chafee, John. “Huizong, Cai Jing, and the Politics of Reform.” In *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics*, edited by Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford, 31-78. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006.
- Chang, Kang-i Sun. *The Evolution of Chinese Tz’u Poetry from Late T’ang to Northern Sung*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980.

- Chen, Jack W. and David Schaberg, ed. *Idle Talk: Gossip and Anecdote in Traditional China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014.
- Chen Jian 陈坚 and Ma Wenda 马文大. *Song-Yuan banke tushi* 宋元版刻图释. Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 2000.
- Chen Lai 陈来. *Zhuzi shuxin biannian kaozheng* 朱子书信编年考证, revised ed. Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, xinzhi, sanlian shudian, 2007.
- Chen Lesu 陈乐素. *Qiushi ji* 求是集, vol. 2. Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1984.
- Chen Wenyi 陳雯怡. *You guanxue dao xueyuan: Cong zhidu yu linian hudong kan Songdai jiaoyu de yanbian* 由官學到書院：從制度與理念的互動看宋代教育的演變. Taipei: Lianjing chuban, 2004.
- Chen Xianglin 陈湘琳. *Ouyang Xiu de wenxue yu qinggan shijie* 欧阳修的文学与情感世界. Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2012.
- Chen Xiaolan 陈晓兰. “Sun Di shengping ji qi wenji xiang kao 孙覲生平及其文集详考.” In *Sun Di yanjiu wenji* 孙覲研究文集, edited by Sun Di jinian guan 孙覲纪念馆, 52-91. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2006.
- Chen Yunru 陈韵如. “Cong shuxin kan Bei-Song shiren de shehui wangluo yu yiliao ziyuan jiaoliu: yi Su Shi wei ge’an de chubu kaocha 从书信看北宋士人的社会网络与医疗资源交流——以苏轼为个案的初步考察.” Paper presented at “The 15th Congress of the Chinese Society of Song History,” Henan University, Kaifeng, 20 Aug. 2012.
- Chia, Lucille. “*Mashaben*: Commercial Publishing in Jianyang from the Song to the Ming.” In *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History*, edited by Paul

- Smith and Richard von Glahn, 284-328. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003.
- _____. *Printing for Profit: The Commercial Publishers of Jianyang, Fujian (11th-17th Centuries)*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002.
- Ching, Julia. "Ch'in Kuan." In *Sung Biographies*, edited by Herbert Franke, 235-41. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1976.
- Ching-Chung, Priscilla. "Meng, Empress of Emperor Zhezong of Northern Song." In *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women: Tang Through Ming, 618-1644*, edited by Lily Xiao Hong Lee and Sue Wiles, 288-90. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2014.
- _____. *Palace Women in the Northern Song, 960-1126*. Leiden: Brill, 1981.
- Chu, Ming-kin. "Writing Letters to Qin Gui's Clique: A Study of Zheng Gangzhong's Epistolary Network." Paper presented at "Conference on Middle Period China, 800-1400," Harvard University, June 5-7 2014.
- Clart, Philip. "The Concept of Ritual in the Thought of Sima Guang (1019-1086)." In *Perceptions of Antiquity in Chinese Civilization*, edited by Dieter Kuhn and Helga Stahl, 237-52. Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 2008.
- Cleary, J. C., trans. *Swampland Flowers: The Letters and Lectures of Zen Master Ta Hui*. Boston: Shambhala, 2006.
- Cochran, Sherman and Andrew Hsieh. *The Lius of Shanghai*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013.
- Connery, Christopher Leigh. "Sao, Fu, Parallel Prose, and Related Genres." In *The Columbia History of Chinese Literature*, edited by Victor H. Mair, 223-47. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.
- Dai Jinghua 戴静华. "Songdai ganren qianlun 宋代干人浅论." *Zhongguo shi yanjiu*

中国史研究, no. 4 (1982): 53-61.

Dardess, John W. *A Political Life in Ming China: A Grand Secretary and His Times*.
Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013.

de Crespigny, Rafe. *A Biographical Dictionary of Later Han to the Three Kingdoms
(23– 220 AD)*. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

de Pee, Christian. *The Writing of Weddings in Middle-Period China: Text and Ritual
Practice in the Eighth through Fourteenth Centuries*. Albany: State University of
New York Press, 2007.

De Weerd, Hilde. *Competition over Content: Negotiating Standards for the Civil
Service Examinations in Imperial China (1127-1279)*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard
University Asia Center, 2007.

_____. “Court Gazettes’ and ‘Short Reports’: Official Views and Unofficial
Readings of Court News.” *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 27, no. 2 (2009): 167-200.

_____. *Information, Territory, and Networks The Crisis and Maintenance of
Empire in Song China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center,
forthcoming in 2016.

_____. “Mapping Communication from Mingzhou: Networks of
Correspondence.” Paper presented at “Prosopography of Middle Period China:
Using the Chinese Biographical Database” Workshop, Warwick, Dec. 2007.

_____. “The Encyclopedia as Textbook: Selling Private Chinese
Encyclopedias in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries.” *Extrême-Orient,
Extrême-Occident* 1 (2007): 77-102.

Deng Guangming 鄧廣銘 and Zhang Xiqings 張希清, eds. *Song ren wenji pianmu
suoyin* 宋人文集篇目分類索引. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2013.

- Deng Xiaonan 邓小南. "Shuhua cailiao yu Songdai zhengzhi shi yanjiu 书画材料与宋代政治史研究." *Meishu yanjiu* 美术研究, no. 3 (2012): 12-21.
- _____, ed. *Zhengji kaocha yu xinxi qudao: yi Songdai wei zhongxin* 政绩考察与信息渠道——以宋代为中心. Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2008.
- _____, Cao Jiaqi 曹家齐, and Pingtian Maoshu 平田茂树 [Hirata Shigeki], ed. *Wenshu, zhengling, xinxi goutong: yi Tang-Song shiqi weizhu* 文书·政令·信息沟通——以唐宋时期为主. Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2011.
- _____ and Zhang Yi 張禕. "Shufa zuopin yu zhengling wenshu: Song ren chuanshi moji juli 书法作品與政令文書：宋人傳世墨蹟舉例." *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 29, no. 1 (2011): 81-100.
- Devitt, Amy J. *Writing Genres*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004.
- Dewoskin, Kenneth. "Lei-shu." In *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*, edited by William H. Nienhauser, Jr., 526-29. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.
- Ditter, Alexei. "Civil Examinations and Cover Letters in the Mid-Tang." In *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, edited by Antje Richter, 643-74. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- _____. "The Commerce of Commemoration: Commissioned Muzhiming in the Mid- to Late Tang." *Tang Studies* 32, no. 1 (2014): 21-46.
- Dong Yingshou 東英壽 [Higashi Hidetoshi]. "Xinjian jiu shi liu pian Ouyang Xiu sanyi shujian ji cun gao 新見九十六篇歐陽修散佚書簡輯存稿." *Zhonghua wenshi luncong* 中華文史論叢, no. 3 (2012): 1-28.
- _____. "Xinjian Ouyang Xiu shujian kao 新見歐陽修書簡考." *Donghua*

hanxue 東華漢學, no. 15 (2012): 275-288.

Duff, David, ed. *Modern Genre Theory*. London: Longman, 2000.

Ebrey, Patricia B. *Accumulating Culture: The Collections of Emperor Huizong*.

Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008.

_____, trans. *Chu Hsi's Family Rituals: A Twelfth-Century Chinese Manual for the Performance of Cappings, Weddings, Funerals, and Ancestral Rites*.

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991.

_____. *Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China: A Social History*.

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991.

_____. "Education Through Ritual: Efforts to Formulate Family Rituals During the Sung Period." In *Neo-Confucian Education: The Formative Stage*, edited by Wm. Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee, 277-306. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

_____. *Emperor Huizong*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014.

_____, trans. *Family and Property in Sung China: Yüan Ts'ai's Precepts for Social Life*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984.

_____. "T'ang Guides to Verbal Etiquette." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 45 (1985): 581-613.

_____. "Taoism and Art at the Court of Song Huizong." In *Taoism and the Arts of China*, edited by Stephen Little, with Shawn Eichman, 94-111. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

E. D. Edwards. "A Classified Guide to the Thirteen Classes of Chinese Prose."

Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 12, no. 3/4 (1948): 770-88.

Egan, Ronald. "The Northern Song (1020-1126)." In *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, vol. 1, edited by Kang-I Sun Chang and Stephen Owen,

- 381-464. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- _____. *The Problem of Beauty: Aesthetic Thought and Pursuits in Northern Song Dynasty China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006.
- _____. "Su Shi's Informal Letters in Literature and Life." In *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, edited by Antje Richter, 475-507. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- _____. "Su Shih's 'Notes' as a Historical and Literary Source." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 50, no. 2 (1990): 561-88.
- _____. "When There is a Parallel Text in Prose: Reading Lu You's 1170 Yangzi River Journey in Poetry and Prose." In *Reading Medieval Chinese Poetry: Text, Context, and Culture*, edited by Paul W. Kroll, 221-50. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Endo Takatoshi. "To My Dear Elder Brother: Fan Zhongyan's Letters." In *The Study of Song History from the Perspective of Historical Materials*, edited by Research Group of Historical Materials in Song China, 3-24. Tokyo: Ando Insatsu Kogyosha, 2000.
- Fan Chengda. *Treatises of the Supervisor and Guardian of the Cinnamon Sea*, translated by James M. Hargett. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2010.
- Fan Lulu 樊露露. "Wang Xizhi 'zatie' lunlue 王羲之《杂帖》论略." *Changjiang daxue xuebao* 长江大学学报, no. 5 (2008): 37-41.
- Fang Ailong 方爱龙. *Nan-Song shufa shi* 南宋书法史. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008.
- Fang Jian 方健. *Bei-Song shiren jiaoyou lu* 北宋士人交游录. Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2013.

- Feng Peilan 冯培兰 and Li Ying 李英, ed. *Lidai jiashu mingpian xuanyi* 历代家书名篇选译. Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 2007.
- Frow, John. *Genre*. London: Routledge, 2005.
- Fu Hongzhan 傅红展. "Cong Xue Shaopeng 'Danian tie' kan chidu de wenti yu shufa 从薛绍彭〈大年帖〉看尺牍的文体与书法." *Zijin cheng* 紫禁城 (2005 supplement vol.): 126-127.
- Fuller, Michael A. "Prosopographical Perspectives on Letter Writing During the Song: The View from the China Biographical Database (CBDB)." Paper presented at "Letters and Notebooks as Sources for Elite Communication in Chinese History, 900-1300" conference, Oxford, Jan. 2014.
- _____. *The Road to East Slope: The Development of Su Shi's Poetic Voice*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990.
- Gao Shentao 高慎涛. "Seng shi zhi 'shushunqi' yu 'suanxianqi' 僧诗之“蔬笋气”与“酸馅气.” *Gudian wenxue zhishi* 古典文学知识, no. 1 (2008): 50-57.
- Garfield, Simon. *To the Letter: A Journey through a Vanishing World*. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2013.
- Garrison, Mary. "'Send More Socks': On Mentality and the Preservation Context of Medieval Letters." In *New Approaches to Medieval Communication*, edited by Marco Mostert, 69-99. Turnhout: Brepols, 1999.
- Giele, Enno. *Imperial Decision-Making and Communication in Early China: A Study of Cai Yong's Duduan*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006.
- Golas, Peter J. "The Courier-Transport System of the Northern Sung." *Papers on China* 20 (1966), 1-22.
- Gong Yanming 龚延明. *Songdai guanzhi cidian* 宋代官制辞典. Beijing: Zhonghua

shuju, 1997.

Gong Yunwei 宫云维. "Sima Guang 'Shuyi' banben kaolüe 司马光《书仪》版本考略." *Zhejiang Gongye Daxue Xuebao* 浙江工业大学学报, no. 6 (2002): 639-43.

Haboush, JaHyun Kim. *Epistolary Korea: Letters from the Communicative Space of the Chosŏn, 1392-1910* New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

Haeger, John W. "Between North and South: The Lake Rebellion in Hunan 1130-1135." *Journal of Asian Studies* 28 (1969): 469-88.

_____. "Li Kang and the Loss of K'ai-feng: The Concept and Practice of Political Dissent in Mid-Sung." *Journal of Asian History* 12 (1978): 58-67.

_____. "Sung Government at Mid-Season: Translation of and Commentary on the Ching-k'ang ch'uan-hsin lu." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1971.

_____. "Sung Li Chung-ting kung chi-hsüan 宋李忠定公集選." *A Sung Bibliography*, edited by Etienne Balazs and Yves Hervouet, 409. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1978.

Halperin, Mark. "Domesticity and the Dharma: Portraits of Buddhist Laywomen in Sung China." *T'oung Pao* 92, Nos. 1-3 (2006): 50-100.

_____. "Heroes, Rogues, and Religion in a Tenth-Century Chinese Miscellany." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 129 (2009): 413-30.

Han Tianyong 韓天雍. *Zhong Ri Chanzong moji yanjiu: jiqi xiangguan wenhua zhi kaocha* 中日禅宗墨迹研究——及其相关文化之考察. Beijing: Zhongguo meishu xueyuan chubanshe, 2008.

Han Youshan 韩酉山. *Qin Hui yanjiu* 秦桧研究. Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2008.

Hartman, Charles. "The Making of a Villain: Ch'in Kuei and Tao-hsüeh." *Harvard*

Journal of Asiatic Studies 58, no. 1 (1998): 59-146.

_____. “The Misfortunes of Poetry Literary Inquisitions under Ch'in Kuei (1090-1155).” *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 25, (2003): 25-57.

_____. “The Reluctant Historian: Sun Ti, Chu Hsi, and the Fall of the Northern Sung.” *T'oung Pao* 89 (2003): 100-148.

Hartwell, Robert M. “A Guide to Documentary Sources of Middle Period Chinese History: Documentary Forms Contained in the Collected Papers (wen-chi) of Twenty- One T'ang and Sung Writers.” *Bulletin of Sung-Yuan Studies* 18 (1986): 133-82.

_____. “Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations of China, 750-1550.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 42, no. 2 (1982): 365-442.

Hawes, Colin S. C. *The Social Circulation of Poetry in the Mid-Northern Song: Emotional Energy and Literati Self-Cultivation*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006.

Hayes, James. “Specialists and Written Materials in the Village World.” In *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, edited by David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, Evelyn S. Rawski, 75-111. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.

He Chuanxing 何傳馨, ed. *Nan-Song yishu yu wenhua: shuhua juan* 南宋藝術與文化·書畫卷. Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 2010.

He, Yanchuan. “The Materiality, Style, and Culture of Calligraphy in the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127).” Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 2013.

He Zhongli 何忠礼. *Nan-Song zhengzhi shi* 南宋政治史. Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2008.

- _____. “Songdai guanli de fenglu 宋代官吏的俸禄.” *Lishi yanjiu* 历史研究, no. 3 (1994): 102-115.
- Heller, Natasha “Between Zhongfeng Mingben and Zhao Mengfu: Chan Letters in their Manuscript Context.” In *Buddhist Manuscript Cultures: Knowledge, Ritual, and Art*, eds. Stephen C. Berkwitz, Juliane Schober and Claudia Brown, 109-123. Abingdon: Routledge, 2009.
- Higashi Hidetoshi 東英寿. *Ōyō shū shinhakken shokan kyūjūroppen: ōyō shū zenshū no kenkyū* 歐陽脩新見書簡九十六篇：歐陽脩全集の研究. Tōkyō: Kenbunshuppan, 2013.
- Hightower, James R. “The *Wen Hsüan* and Genre Theory.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 20 (1957): 512-33.
- _____. *Topics in Chinese Literature: Outlines and Bibliographies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950.
- Hou Yili 侯怡利. “Cheng tiju langzhong qizhang zhazi 呈提舉郎中契丈箚子.” In *Wenyi Shaoxing: Nan-Song yishu yu wenhua, shuhua juan* 文藝紹興：南宋藝術與文化·書畫卷, edited by He Chuanxing 何傳馨, 355. Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 2010.
- Hu Daojing 胡道靜. *Zhongguo gu dai de leishu* 中国古代的类书. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982.
- Hu Jianming 胡建明. *Songdai gaoseng moji yanjiu* 宋代高僧墨蹟研究. Hangzhou: Xileng Yinshe chubanshe, 2011.
- Hu Ke 胡珂. “Di shui cang hai: Fan Zhongyan ‘Shi lu tie’ suojian Bei-Song shidafu tongxin xingwei 滴水藏海：范仲淹《师鲁帖》所见北宋士大夫通信行为.”

Zhongguo shehui lishi pinglun 中国社会历史评论 13 (2012): 81-94.

Hu Yuande 胡元德. *Gudai gongwen wenti liubian* 古代公文文体流变. Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2012.

Huang Kuanchong 黄宽重. “Cong huo de zhidushi maixiang xin de zhengzhishi: zonglun Songdai zhengzhi shi yanjiu quxiang 从活的制度史迈向新的政治史——综论宋代政治史研究趋向.” *Zhongguo shi yanjiu* 中国史研究, no. 4 (2009): 5-16.

_____. *Nan-Song difang wuli: difangjun yu minjian ziwei wuli de tantao* 南宋地方武力——地方軍與民間自衛武力的探討. Taipei: Dongda tushu gongsi, 2002.

_____. “Songdai Siming shizu renji wangluo yu shehui wenhua huodong: yi Lou shi jiazhu wei zhongxin de guancha 宋代四明士族人際網絡與社會文化活動——以樓氏家族為中心的觀察.” *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 70, no. 3 (1999): 627-669.

_____. “Wan-Song junqing souji yu chuandi: yi ‘Kezhai zagao’ suojian Song, Meng Guangxi zhanyi wei li 晚宋軍情蒐集與傳遞——以《可齋雜藁》所見宋、蒙廣西戰役為例.” *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 27, no. 2 (2009): 133-66.

Huang Qifang 黃啟方. *Dongpo de xinling shijie* 東坡的心靈世界. Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 2002.

Huang Qijiang 黃啟江. *Sizhou dasheng yu songxue daoren: Song-Yuan shehui jingying de fojiao xinyang yu fojiao wenhua* 泗州大聖與松雪道人——宋元社會菁英的佛教信仰與佛教文化. Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 2009.

Huang Shishan 黃士珊. “Tang-Song shiqi fojiao banhua zhong suo jian de meijie

zhuanhua yu zi mo sheji 唐宋時期佛教版畫中所見的媒介轉化與子模設計。”

In *Yishu shi zhong de Han-Jin yu Tang-Song zhi bian* 藝術史中的漢晉與唐宋之變, edited by Yan Juanying 顏娟英 and Shi Shouqian 石守謙, 385-435. Taipei: Shitou chuban gufen youxian gongsi, 2014.

Huang, Shih-Shan Susan [Huang Shishan]. “Media Transfer and Modular Construction: the Printing of Lotus Sutra Frontispieces in Song China.” *Ars Orientalis* 41 (2011): 135-63.

Huang Xianfan 黃現璠. *Songdai taixuesheng jiuguo yundong* 宋代太學生救國運動. Taipei: Wenxing shudian, 1956.

Hsu, Ya-hwei. “Reshaping Chinese Material Culture: The Revival of Antiquity in the Era of Print, 960-1279.” Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2010.

Hsu, Yeong-huei. “Song Gaozong (r. 1127-1162) and his Chief Councilors: A Study of the Formative State of the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279).” Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 2000.

Hymes, Robert. *Statesmen and Gentlemen: The Elite of Fu-Chou Chiang-Hsi, in Northern and Southern Sung*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Ichiki Tsuyuhiko. “The Value of Zhu Xi's Letters as Historical Material: A Viewpoint from Research into the History of Thought.” In *The Study of Song History from the Perspective of Historical Materials*, edited by Research Group of Historical Materials in Song China, 129-53. Tokyo: Ando Insatsu Kogyosha, 2000.

Ihara Hiroshi. “Numerical Indices that can Reveal the Life of Song Commoners.” In *Trading Networks in Early Modern East Asia*, edited by Angela Schottenhammer, 5-26. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2010.

Inglis, Alister D. *Hong Mai's Record of the Listener and Its Song Dynasty Context*.

- Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006.
- Jauss, Hans Robert. *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, translated by Timothy Bahti. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982.
- Ji Ruoxin 嵇若昕. "Songdai shu'an shang de wenfang yongju 宋代書案上的文房用具." *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 29, no. 1 (2011): 49-80.
- Ji, Xiao-bin. "Mirror for Government: Ssu-ma Kuang's Thought on Politics and Government in *Tzu-chih t'ung-chien*." In *The New and the Multiple: Sung Senses of the Past*, 1-32. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2004.
- _____. *Politics and Conservatism in Northern Song China: The Career and Thought of Sima Guang (1019-1086)*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2005.
- Jin Chuandao 金传道. "Bei-Song shuxin yanjiu 北宋书信研究." Ph. D. diss., Fudan University, 2008.
- _____ and Wang Ning 王宁. "'Shuyi' neirong bianzheng '书仪' 内容辨正." *Nei Menggu daxue xuebao* 內蒙古大学学报, no. 5 (2010): 127-30.
- Jolly, Margaretta and Liz Stanley. "Letters As / Not a Genre." *Life Writing* 1, no. 2 (2005): 1-18.
- Jonker, D. R. "Lu Yu." In *Sung Biographies*, edited by Herbert Franke, 691-704. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1976.
- Kádár, Dániel Z. *Historical Chinese Letter Writing*. London: Continuum, 2010.
- _____. "Historical Chinese Politeness and Rhetoric: A Case Study of Epistolary Refusals." *Journal of Politeness Research* 8, no. 1 (2012): 93-110.
- _____. *Terms of (Im)Politeness: A Study of the Communicational Properties of Traditional Chinese (Im)Polite Terms of Address*. Budapest: University of

- Budapest Press, 2007.
- Kaplan, Edward H. "Chao Ting." In *Sung Biographies*, edited by Herbert Franke, 72-82. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1976.
- King, Gail. "The Family Letters of Xu Guangqi." *Ming Studies* 31 (1991): 1-41.
- Kirkpatrick, Andy. "China's First Systematic Account of Rhetoric: An Introduction to Chen Kui's *Wen Ze*." *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 23, no. 2 (2005): 103-52.
- Knechtges, David R. "Letters in the *Wen xuan*." In *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, edited by Antje Richter, 189-238. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Komatsu Shigemi 小松茂美. *Tegami no rekishi* 手紙の歴史. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976.
- Korolkov, Maxim. "'Greeting Tablets' in Early China: Some Traits of the Communicative Etiquette of Officialdom in Light of Newly Excavated Inscriptions." *T'oung Pao* 98 (2012): 295-348.
- Kroll, Paul W. "Aid and Comfort: Lu Zhaolin's Letters." In *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, edited by Antje Richter, 829-52. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Lauer, Uta. *A Master of his Own: The Calligraphy of the Chan Abbot Zhongfeng Mingben (1262-1323)*. Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2002.
- Ledderose, Lothar. *Mi Fu and the Classical Tradition of Chinese Calligraphy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979.
- Lee, Thomas H. C. "History, Erudition and Good Government: Cheng Ch'iao and Encyclopedic Historical Thinking." In *The New and the Multiple: Sung Senses of the Past*, edited by Thomas H. C. Lee, 163-200. Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 2004.

- Legge, James, trans. *The Chinese Classics*. London: N. Trübner & Co., 1869.
- _____, trans. *Chuang tzu*. In *Sacred Books of the East*, edited by Max Müller, vols. 39-40. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1891. <http://ctext.org/zhuangzi/>. Accessed October 5, 2014.
- Levering, Miriam. “Dahui Zonggao (1089-1163): The Image Created by his Stories about Himself and his Teaching Style.” In *Zen Masters*, edited by Dale S. Wright and Steven Heine, 91-116. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Levine, Ari Daniel. *Divided by a Common Language: Factional Conflict in Late Northern Song China*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2008.
- _____. “The Reigns of Hui-Tsung and Ch’in Tsung.” *Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part 1: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907-1279*, edited by Denis Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith, 556-643. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Li Qiang 李强. “Goutong yu rentong: Ouyang Xiu shujian zhong de wenren shijie 沟通与认同：欧阳修书简中的文人世界.” *Shi lin* 史林, no. 1 (2013): 59-68.
- Li Quande 李全德. “Cong tangtie dao shengzha: lue lun Tang-Song shiqi zaixiang chuli zhengwu de wenshu zhi yanbian 从堂帖到省札——略论唐宋时期宰相处理政务的文书之演变.” *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大学学报, no. 2 (2012): 106-16.
- Li Wenlan 李文瀾. “Du Nan-Song keben ‘Kongshi liu tie’ shuhou 讀南宋刻本《孔氏六帖》書後.” *Zaoqi Zhongguoshi yanjiu* 早期中國史研究 5, no. 2 (2013): 139-70.
- Li Yumin 李裕民. *Siku tiyao dingwu* 四库提要订误, revised ed. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005.

- Li Zongjin 李宗瑾. *Xinbian Wang Tingyun nianpu* 新編王庭筠年譜. Taipei: Xiuwei xinxi, 2005.
- Liang Tianxi 梁天錫. “Nan-Song zhi dufu zhidu 南宋之督府制度.” In *Songshi yanjiu ji* 宋史研究集, vol. 10, 229-44. Taipei: Guoli bianyiguan Zhonghua congshu bianshen weiyuanhui, 1978.
- Liang Weiji 梁偉基. “Nan-Song Gaozong chao Lü Yihao zhizheng xia de guanliao qunti gouzao tezhi 南宋高宗朝呂頤浩執政下的官僚群體構造特質.” *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiusuo xuebao* 中國文化研究所學報, no. 46 (2006): 165-97.
- _____. “Zhanzheng yu guojia: Nan-Song Lü Yihao zhizheng shidai yanjiu 戰爭與國家：南宋呂頤浩執政時代研究.” Ph.D. diss., Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2012.
- Lin Shenqing 林申清. *Song-Yuan shuke paiji tulu* 宋元書刻牌記圖錄. Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 1999.
- Lin Song 林嵩. “Nan-Song Tongjian zhu kao lun 南宋通鑑注考論.” *Gudai wenming* 古代文明, no. 1 (2007): 74-81.
- Lin, Yutang. *A History of the Press and Public Opinion in China*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1968.
- Lin Zhengqiu 林正秋. “Nan-Song dingdu Lin’an yuanyin chutan 南宋定都臨安原因初探.” *Hangzhou shifan xueyuan xuebao* 杭州師範學院學報, no. 1 (1982): 29-34.
- Lin Zhijun 林志鈞. *Tie kao* 帖考. Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2000.
- Liu Guangsheng 劉廣生 and Zhao Meizhuang 趙梅莊. *Zhongguo gudai youyi shi*

- 中国古代邮驿史. Beijing: Renmin youdian chubanshe, 1999.
- Liu, Haiming. *The Transnational History of a Chinese Family: Immigrant Letters, Family Business, and Reverse Migration*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005.
- Liu, James T. C. *China Turning Inward: Intellectual-Political Changes in the Early Twelfth Century*. Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1988.
- _____. "Yueh Fei (1103-41) and China's Heritage of Loyalty." *Journal of Asian Studies* 31, no. 2 (1972): 291-97.
- Liu Kan 刘侃. "Lu You 'shang yi' de shufa yishu ji qi chuanshi zuopin 陆游 '尚意' 的书法艺术及其传世作品." *Shaoxing wenli xueyuan xuebao* 绍兴文理学院学报, no. 2 (2009): 32-36.
- Liu Quanbo 刘全波. "Lun leishu de muluxue yanbian 论类书的目录学演变." *Tushuguan qingbao gongzuo* 图书情报工作, no. 23 (2011): 122-25 & 130.
- Liu Xiangguang 劉祥光. "Songdai de shiwen kanben yu kaoshi wenhua 宋代的時文刊本與考試文化." *Taida wenshizhe xuebao* 臺大文史哲學報 75 (2011): 35-86.
- _____. *Songdai richang shenghuo de busuan yu guiguai* 宋代日常生活的卜算與鬼怪. Taipei: Zhengda chubanshe, 2013.
- Liu Yunjun 刘云军. *Lü Yihao nianpu* 吕颐浩年谱. Baoding: Hebei daxue chubanshe, 2011.
- Lo, Winston W. *An Introduction to the Civil Service of Sung China: With Emphasis on its Personnel Administration*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987.

- Loehr, Max. "Chinese Paintings with Sung Dated Inscriptions." *Ars Orientalis* 4 (1961): 219-84.
- Lorge, Peter. "Song Gaozong's Letters to Yue Fei." *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 30 (2000): 169-73.
- Lu, Huitzu. "Women's Ascetic Practices during the Song." *Asia Major, 3rd ser.* 15, no. 1 (2002): 73-108
- Lu Huiwen 盧慧紋. "Xue Daozu shufa fenqi yu xiangguan wenti 薛紹彭書法分期與相關問題." In *Kaichuang dianfan: Bei-Song de yishu yu wenhua yantaohui lunwenji* 開創典範：北宋的藝術與文化研討會論文集, edited by Wang Yaoting 王耀庭, 659-88. Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 2008.
- Lü Shuqing 吕书庆. "Songdai zhazi ji qi shuxin xingzhi kaoxu 宋代札子及其书信形制考叙." *Zhongguo shufa* 中国书法 12 (2006): 21-25.
- Luo Yonglai 罗勇来 and Heng Zheng'an 衡正安. *Mi Fu yanjiu* 米芾研究. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2012.
- Ma Qiangcai 马强才. "Gudai shiwen zhushi lingyu de yi ci kaituo: Li Zuyao bianzhu 'Neijian chidu' lun lue 古代诗文注释领域的一次开拓——李祖尧编注《内简尺牍》论略." *Huaxi yuwen xuekan* 华西语文学刊, no. 2 (2012): 158-68.
- Mair, Victor H. "Li Po's Letters in Pursuit of Political Patronage." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 44 (1984): 123-53.
- _____. "Scroll Presentation in the T'ang Dynasty." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 38, no. 1 (1978): 35-60.
- McDermott, Joseph P. *A Social History of the Chinese Book: Books and Literati Culture in Late Imperial China*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006.

_____. “Family Financial Plans of the Southern Sung.” *Asia Major, 3rd Series* 4, no. 2 (1991): 15-52/.

Mcknight, Brian E. and James T. C. Liu, trans. *The Enlightened Judgments, Ch'ing-ming Chi: The Sung Dynasty Collection*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999.

McMullen David. “Boats Moored and Unmoored: Reflections on the Dunhuang Manuscripts of Gao Shi’s Verse.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 73 (2013): 83-145.

McNair, Amy. “Buddhist Literati and Literary Monks: Social and Religious Elements in the Critical Reception of Zhang Jizhi's Calligraphy.” In *Cultural Intersections in Later Chinese Buddhism*, edited by Marsha Weidner, 73-86. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2001.

_____. “The Engraved Model-Letters Compendia of the Song Dynasty.” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114, no. 2 (1994): 209-213.

_____. *The Upright Brush: Yan Zhenqing’s Calligraphy and Northern Song Literati Politics*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1998.

McQuail, Denis. “Political Communication.” In *Encyclopedia of Government and Politics*, edited by Mary Hawkesworth and Maurice Kogan, vol. 1, 471-85. London: Routledge, 1992.

Milne, Esther. *Letters, Postcards, Email: Technologies of Presence*. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Mitsuyoshi Yamane 山根三芳. *Sōdai reishetsu kenkyū 宋代礼説研究*. Hiroshima-shi: Keisuisha, 1996.

Mo Jialiang 莫家良 [Harold Mok]. “Nan-Song ketie wenhua guankui 南宋刻帖文

- 化管窺。” In *Zhongguo beitie yu shufa guoji yantaohui lunwenji* 中國碑帖與書法國際研討會論文集, edited by You Xuehua 游學華 and Chen Juanan 陳娟安, 69-76. Hong Kong: Xianggang zhongwen daxue wenwu guan, 2001.
- _____. “Nan-Song shufa zhong de Bei-Song qingjie 南宋書法中的北宋情結.” *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 28, no. 4 (2011): 59-94.
- Mok, Harold. “A Cursory Discussion of Song Letters.” In *The Pride of China: Masterpieces of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy of the Jin, Tang, Song and Yuan from the Palace Museum*, edited by Hong Kong Museum of Art, 75-79. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Museum of Art, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, 2007.
- _____. “Zhao Mengjian and Southern Song Calligraphy.” D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 2012.
- Morihiro Furubayashi 古林森廣. *Chūgoku Sōdai no shakai to keizai* 中国宋代の社会と経済. Tōkyō: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1995.
- Mostern, Ruth. “Dividing the Realm in Order to Govern”: *The Spatial Organization of the Song State*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2011.
- Mullaney, Thomas S. “Semiotic Sovereignty: The 1871 Chinese Telegraph Code in Historical Perspective.” In *Science and Technology in Modern China, 1880s-1940s*, edited by Jing Tsu and Benjamin A. Elman, 153-184. Leiden: Brill, 2014.
- Nakata Yujiro, “Calligraphic Style and Poetry Handscrolls: On Mi Fu's Sailing on the Wu River.” In *Words and Images: Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting*, edited by Alfreda Murck and Wen C. Fong, 91-106. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991.

- Ng, Sau Wah. "Challenging the Calligraphy Canon: The Reception of Rubbing Collections in Ming China." D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 2013.
- Nie Chongqi 聶崇歧. *Song shi congkao* 宋史叢考. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980.
- Nie Wenhua 聂文华. "Xin faxian Lou Yue yiwen kaoshi: Guanyu Siming yizhuang tiachan zhengsong an 新发现楼钥佚文考释——关于四明义庄田产争讼案." Unpublished paper, 2014.
- Nienhauser, William H., Jr. trans. "Biography of 'Red' Li." In *Classical Chinese Tales of the Supernatural and the Fantastic: Selections from the Third to the Tenth Century*, edited by Karl S. Y. Kao, 190-92. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.
- _____. "Prose." In *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*, edited by William H. Nienhauser, Jr., 93-120. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.
- Niida Noboru 仁井田陞. "Xinbian shiwen leiyao qizha qingqian: jieti 新編事文類要啟筭青錢 解題." In *Xinbian shiwen leiyao qizha qingqian* 新編事文類要啟筭青錢, separate booklet. Tokyo: Koten Kenkyūkai, 1963.
- Nugent, Christopher M. B. *Manifest in Words, Written on Paper: Producing and Circulating Poetry in Tang Dynasty China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2010.
- _____. "Epistolary Networks and Practice in the Early Qing: The Letters Written to Yan Guangmin." In *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, edited by Antje Richter, 775-826. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Olberding, Garret P. S., ed. *Facing the Monarch: Modes of Advice in the Early Chinese Court*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University East Asia Center, 2013.

- Owen, Stephen, ed. *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1996.
- Pan Fujun 潘富俊. *Zhongguo wenxue zhiwuxue* 中國文學植物學. Taipei: Maotouying, 2012.
- Pan Yungao 潘云告, ed. *Songdai shu lun* 宋代書論. Changsha: Hunan meishu chubanshe, 1999.
- Pattinson, David. "Epistolary Networks and Practice in the Early Qing: The Letters Written to Yan Guangmin." In *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, 775-826. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- _____. "The Chidu in Late Ming and Early Qing China." Ph.D. diss., Australian National University, 1998.
- _____. "The Market for Letter Collections in Seventeenth-Century China." *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 28 (2006): 127-159.
- Pei Shuji 裴淑姬 [Sookhee Bae]. "Meng huanghou yu Liang-Song zhi ji de zhengzhi 孟皇后與兩宋之際的政治." *Zhongguo shiyanjiu* 中國史研究 (Korea) 20 (2002): 99-108.
- Peng Junhui 彭軍輝. *Shehui xinxi chuanbo shiye xia de Tangsh Songci* 社會信息傳播視野下的唐詩宋詞. Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2010.
- Peng Lizhi 彭斫志. "Chidu shufa suojian pingque xingzhi yanjiu 尺牘書法所見平閱形制研究." In *Quanguo di liu jie shu xue taolunhui lunwen ji* 全國第六屆書學討論會論文集, edited by Zhongguo shu xie xueshu weiyuanhui 中國書協學術委員會, 95-112. Zhengzhou: Henan meishu chubanshe, 2004.
- Pingtian Maoshu 平田茂樹 [Hirata Shigeki]. *Songdai zhengzhi jiegou yanjiu* 宋代

- 政治結構研究. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010.
- Pollard, David E. and Eva Hung. "Editor's Page." *Renditions* 41-42 (1994): vi-viii.
- Poon, Ming-sun. "Books and Printing in Sung China." Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1979.
- Qian Xisheng 钱锡生. *Tang-Song ci chuanbo fangshi yanjiu* 唐宋词传播方式研究. Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2009.
- Qiu Jiahui 邱佳慧. "Cong 'qingming' yu 'zhuanming' tanjiu Songdai shehui de lunchang guanxi 從「請銘」與「撰銘」探究宋代社會的倫常關係." *Donghua renwen xuebao* 東華人文學報 12 (2008): 1-56.
- Raft, Zeb. "The Space of Separation: The Early Medieval Tradition of Four-Syllable 'Presentation and Response' Poetry." In *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, edited by Antje Richter, 276-306. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Ren Jingze 任竞泽. *Songdai wenti xue yanjiu lungao* 宋代文体学研究论稿. Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2011.
- Richter, Antje. "Between Letter and Testament: Letters of Familial Admonition in Han and Six Dynasties China." In *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, edited by Antje Richter, 239-75. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- _____. "Introduction: The Study of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture." In *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, edited by Antje Richter, 1-14. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- _____. *Letter and Epistolary Culture in Early Medieval China*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013.
- Ridgway, Benjamin. "From the Banquet to the Border: The Transformation of Su Shi's Song Lyrics into a Poetry of National Loss in the Restoration Era." *Chinese*

- Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 34 (2012): 57-103.
- Rüttermann, Markus “‘So That We Can Study Letter-Writing’: The Concept of Epistolary Etiquette in Premodern Japan.” *Japan Review* 18 (2006): 57-128.
- Rydholm, Lena. “Genre Theory in China: The Concept of Genre and the Influence of Ancient Literary Theory and Politics on the Development of Genres and Genre Theory.” In *Genrer och genreproblem: teoretiska och historiska perspektiv/Genres and their Problems: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives*, edited by Beata Agrell and Ingela Nilsson, 95-104. Göteborg: Bokförlaget Daidalos, 2003.
- Saeki Tomi 佐伯富. “Shitaiifu to jumpitsu 士大夫と潤筆.” In *Tōyō shi ronshū: Uchida Ginpū Hakushi shōju kinen 東洋史論集: 内田吟風博士頌壽記念*, edited by Uchida Ginpū hakushi shōju kinenkai 内田吟風博士頌壽記念会, 193-221. Kyoto: Dohosha, 1978.
- Sanft, Charles. *Communication and Cooperation in Early Imperial China: Publicizing the Qin Dynasty*. Alban: State University of New York Press, 2014.
- Sargent, Stuart H. “Contexts of the Song Lyric in Sung Times: Communication Technology, Social Change, Morality.” In *Voices of the Song Lyric in China*, edited by Pauline Yu, 226-56. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- Schottenhammer, Angela. “Characteristics of Song Epitaphs.” In *Burial in Song China*, edited by Dieter Kuhn, 253-306. Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 1994.
- Shen Songqin 沈松勤. “Lun Song ti siliu de gongneng yu jiazhi 论宋体四六的功能与价值.” *Wenxue yichan 文学遗产*, no. 5 (2009): 25-33.
- _____. *Nan-Song wenren yu dangzheng 南宋文人与党争*. Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005.

- Shi Man 石慢 [Peter Charles Sturman]. “Ke jin xiaodao de Mi Youren: lun qi dui fuqin Mi Fu shuji de souji ji Mi Fu shuji dui Gaozong chaoting de yingxiang 克盡孝道的米友仁—論其對父親米芾書跡的搜集及米芾書跡對高宗朝廷的影響.” *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 9, no. 4 (1992): 89-126.
- Shi Yichao 施懿超. *Song siliu lungao* 宋四六论稿. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2005.
- Shiba Yoshinobu. *Commerce and Society in Sung China*, translated by Mark Elvin. Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1970.
- Shields, Anna M. *One Who Knows Me: Friendship and Literary Culture in Mid-Tang China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2015.
- Shui Laiyou 水賚佑. *Mi Fu shufa shiliao ji* 米芾书法史料集. Shanghai: Shanghai shuhua chubanshe, 2009.
- Sidi Zun 寺地遵 [Teraji Jun]. *Nan-Song chuqi zhengzhi shi yanjiu* 南宋初期政治史研究, translated by Liu Jingzhen 劉靜貞 and Li Jinyun 李今芸. Taipei: Daohe chubanshe, 1995.
- Smith, Peter Jakov. “Introduction: Problematizing the Song-Yuan-Ming Transition.” In *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History*, edited by Paul Smith and Richard von Glahn, 1-34. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003.
- Stanley, Liz. “The Epistolary Gift, the Editorial Third-Party, Counter-Epistolaria: Rethinking the Epistolarium.” *Life Writing* 8, no. 2 (2011): 135-52.
- Starr, Kenneth. *Black Tigers: A Grammar of Chinese Rubbings*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2008.
- Sturman, Peter Charles. *Mi Fu: Style and the Art of Calligraphy in Northern Song*

- China*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.
- Sun Jimin 孙继民 and Wei Lin 魏琳. *Nan-Song Shuzhou gongdu yijian zhengli yu yanjiu* 南宋舒州公牍佚简整理与研究. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2011.
- Sutō Yoshiyuki 周藤吉之. *Chūgoku tochi seido shi* 中国土地制度史. Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 1954.
- Takamichi Kobayashi 小林隆道. *Sōdai Chūgoku no tōchi to bunsho* 宋代中国の統治と文書. Tōkyō: Kyūko Shoin, 2013.
- Tan Quanji 谭全基. *Gu hanyu xiuci xue lunwenji* 古汉语修辞学论文集. Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2008.
- Tan Xinhong 谭新红. *Songci chuanbo fangshi yanjiu* 宋词传播方式研究. Wuhan: Wuhan daxue chubanshe, 2010.
- Tao, Jing-shen. “The Move to the South and the Reign of Kao-tsung (1127-1162).” In *Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part 1: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907-1279*, edited by Denis Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith, 644-709. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- ter Haar, Barend J. “Buddhist-Inspired Options: Aspects of Lay Religious Life in the Lower Yangzi From 1100 to 1340.” *T'oung Pao* 87 (2001): 92-152.
- Tillman, Hoyt Cleveland. “Either Self-Realization or Transmission of Received Wisdom in Confucian Education? An Inquiry into Lü Zuqian's and Zhu Xi's Constructions for Student Learning.” In *Educations and Their Purposes: A Conversation among Cultures*, edited by Roger T. Ames and Peter D. Hershock, 270-88. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008.
- Ting Ch'uan-ching. *A Compilation of Anecdotes of Sung Personalities*, translated by

- Chu Djang and Jane C. Djang. Taipei: St. John's University Press, 1989.
- Tong Jianping 仝建平. "Xinbian shiwen leiju hanmo quanshu" yanjiu 《新编事文类聚翰墨全书》研究. Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2011.
- Tsien, Tsuen-hsuei. *Collected Writings on Chinese Culture*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2011.
- Tsui, Lik Hang. "Bureaucratic Influence on Letters in Middle Period China: Observations from Manuscript Letters and Literati Discourse." In *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, edited by Antje Richter, 363-97. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- _____. "For the Love of Calligraphy: A Letter by a Chinese Calligrapher." *Manuscript of the Month*, Manuskriptkulturen in Asien, Afrika und Europa, http://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/mom/2014_10_mom_e.html. Accessed Dec. 28, 2014.
- _____. "Ruins, Reconstruction, and Ruminations: Personal Accounts in Literati Letters during the Song-Jin Wars." Paper presented at Association of Asian Studies Annual Conference, Chicago, March 2015.
- van Gulik, R. H. *Chinese Pictorial Art as Viewed by the Connoisseur: Notes on the Means and Methods of Traditional Chinese Connoisseurship of Pictorial Art, based upon a Study of the Art of Mounting Scrolls in China and Japan*. Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1958.
- _____. *Mi Fu on Ink-stones*. Peking: Henri Vetch, 1938.
- Walton, Linda A. *Academies and Society in Southern Sung China*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999.
- Wang Quan 王隽. *Tangdai ganye yu wenxue* 唐代干谒与文学. Beijing: Zhonghua

shuju, 2011.

Wang Ruilai 王瑞來. “‘Neiju bu bi qin’: yi Yang Wanli wei ge’an de Song-Yuan biange lun shizheng yanjiu ‘内举不避亲’——以杨万里为个案的宋元变革论实证研究.” *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大学学报, no. 2 (2012): 117-28.

_____. “Yue Ke shengping shiji kaoshu 岳珂生平事迹考述.” *Wenshi* 文史 23 (1984): 111-25.

Wang Shengduo 汪圣铎. *Songdai shehui shenghuo yanjiu* 宋代社会生活研究. Beijing: Remin chubanshe, 2007.

Wang Shizhen 王使臻 and Wang Shizhang 王使璋. “Gudai shuxin fengzhen fangshi de yanbian 古代书信封缄方法的演变.” *Xungen* 寻根, no. 5 (2010): 41-49.

Wang Shizong 王世宗. *Nan-Song Gaozong bianluan zhi yanjiu* 南宋高宗朝變亂之研究. Taipei: Guoli Taiwan daxue chuban weiyuanhui, 1989.

Wang Weiting 王卫婷. “‘Li Gang ji’ banben zonghui 《李纲集》版本综汇.” *Keji xinxi* 科技信息, no. 15 (2008): 202-203.

Wang, Yugen. *Ten Thousand Scrolls: Reading and Writing in the Poetics of Huang Tingjian and the Late Northern Song*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2011.

Wang Zengyu 王曾瑜. *Yue Fei he Nan-Song qianqi zhengzhi yu junshi yanjiu* 岳飞和南宋前期政治与军事研究. Kaifeng: Henan daxue chubanshe, 2002.

Wang Zhaopeng 王兆鹏. “Songdai de ‘hulian wang’: cong tibi shici kan Songdai tibi chuanbo de tedian 宋代的“互联网”——从题壁诗词看宋代题壁传播的特点.” *Wenxue yichan* 文学遗产, no. 1 (2010): 56-67.

- _____. *Songdai wenxue chuanbo tanyuan* 宋代文学传播探原. Wuhan: Wuhan daxue chubanshe, 2013.
- Werner, Sabine. *Die Belagerung von K'ai-feng im Winter 1126/27: Nach Kapitel 64-69 des San-ch'ao pei-meng hui-pien, kompiliert von Hsü Meng-hsin*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1992.
- West, Stephen H. "Time Management and Self-control: Self-help Guides in Yuan." In *Text, Performance, and Gender in Chinese Literature and Music: Essays in Honor of Wilt Idema*, edited by Maghiel van Crevel, Tian Yuan Tan, Michel Hockx, 113-38. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
- Wilkinson, Endymion. *Chinese History: A New Manual*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2013.
- Wu Hung. "On Rubbings - Their Materiality and Historicity." In *Writing and Materiality in China: Essays in Honor of Patrick Hanan*, edited by Judith Zeitlin and Lydia Liu, 29-72. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003.
- Wu, Silas H. L. *Communication and Imperial Control in China: Evolution of the Palace Memorial System, 1693-1735*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- _____. "Transmission of Ming Memorials, and the Evolution of the Transmission Network, 1368-1627." *T'oung Pao* 54, no. 4/5 (1968): 275-287.
- Wu Liyu 吴丽娱. "Xia qing shang da: liang zhong 'zhuang' de yingyong yu Tangchao de xinxi chuandi 下情上达 : 两种“状”的应用与唐朝的信息传递." *Tangshi luncong* 唐史论丛 11 (2008): 65-70.
- _____. "Zai lun fushu yu biezhi 再論複書與別紙." *Yanjing xuebao* 燕京學報 13 (2002): 107-22.

- _____. *Tang li zhiyi: Zhonggu shuyi yanjiu* 唐礼摭遗：中古书仪研究. Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2002.
- Wyatt, Don J. “The Invention of the Northern Song.” In *Political Boundaries, Ethnic Boundaries, and Human Geographies in Chinese History*, edited by Nicola Di Cosmo and Don J. Wyatt, 220-44. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Xia Yuchen 夏玉琛. “Shi xi Nan-Song de ji zhong shuxin chengshi ji qita 试析南宋的几种书信程式及其它.” *Shanghai bowuguan jikan* 上海博物馆集刊 5 (1990): 25-28.
- Xinglin 杏林. *Zhongguo fatie shi* 中国法帖史. Jinan: Shandong meishu chubanshe, 2010.
- Xu Bangda 徐邦达. “Chidu xiaokao 尺牍小考.” *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宫博物院院刊 3 (2005): 32-35.
- _____. *Gu shuhua guoyan yaolu (Jin, Sui, Tang, Wudai, Song shufa)* 古书画过眼要录 (晋、隋、唐、五代、宋书法). Changsha: Hunan meishu chubanshe, 1987.
- Xu, Jay. “Opposite Paths to Originality: Huang T'ing-chien and Mi Fu.” In *The Embodied Image: Chinese Calligraphy from the John B. Elliott Collection at Princeton*, edited by Robert Harrist Jr. et al., 260-79. Princeton, NJ: The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1999.
- Xu Liheng 徐力恒 [Lik Hang Tsui]. “Liang-Song zhiji de Suzhou yu defang zhixude huifu: yi zhanluan hou defang jianshe wei zhongxin de kaocha 两宋之际的苏州与地方秩序的恢复——以战乱后地方建设为中心的考察.” *Henan daxue xuebao* 河南大学学报, no. 2 (2011): 81-91.
- _____. “Mi Fu shuzha guankui: yi shuxin wenhua he shufa wei zhu de kaocha

- 米芾书札管窥——以书信文化和书法为主的考察。” *Beida shixue* 北大史学 20, forthcoming.
- _____ and Xiong Yong 熊雍 [Bernard Gowers]. “Shi er shiji de Zhongguo he Xi-Ou de shuxin wenhua 十二世纪的中国和西欧的书信文化：一个比较。” *Beida shixue* 北大史学 20, forthcoming.
- Xu Senyu 徐森玉. “Bao Jin zhai tie kao 宝晋斋帖考.” *Wenwu* 文物, no. 12 (1962): 9-19.
- Xu Yonghui 徐永輝 [Hsu, Yeong-huei]. “Jianchen? zhongchen? Pingxi Nan-Song chunian de Huang qianshan, Wang Boyan he Li Gang sanwei zaixiang 姦臣？忠臣？評析南宋初年的黃潛善、汪伯彥和李綱三位宰相.” *Tongshi yanjiu jikan* 通識研究集刊, no. 9 (2006): 123-36.
- Xu Yuefang 徐月芳. *Su Shi zouyi shudu yanjiu* 蘇軾奏議書牘研究. Banqiao, Taipei: Tiangong shuju, 2002.
- Violi, Patrizia. “Letters.” In *Discourse and Literature: New Approaches to the Analysis of Literary Genres*, edited by Teun A. van Dijk, 149-67. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1985.
- Yang, Xiaoshan. *Metamorphosis of the Private Sphere: Gardens and Objects in Tang-Song Poetry*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003.
- Yang Zhishui 揚之水. *Songdai de heaping* 宋代的花瓶. Hong Kong: Xianggang Zhonghe chuban, 2014.
- Yang Zhong 杨忠. “‘Siliu gaofu’ yu Nan-Song siliu wen de shehui riyong quxiang 《四六膏馥》与南宋四六文的社会日用趋向.” *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大学学报, no. 5 (2005): 139-43.

- Ye Ye 叶焯. *Bei-Song wenren de jingji shenghuo* 北宋文人的经济生活. Nanchang: Baihuazhou wenyi chubanshe, 2008.
- Yichuan Qiang 衣川強 [Kinugawa Tsuyoshi]. *Songdai wenguan fengji zhidu* 宋代文官俸給制度, translated by Zheng Liangsheng 鄭樑生. Taipei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1977.
- Yong, Heming and Jing Peng. *Chinese Lexicography: A History from 1046 BC to AD 1911*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Yoon, Wook. "Dashed Expectations: Limitations of the Telegraphic Service in the Late Qing." *Modern Asian Studies* 49, no. 3 (2013): 832-57.
- Yoshida, T. "Li Kang." In *Sung Biographies*, edited by Herbert Franke, 569-72. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1976.
- You Biao 游彪. "Songdai liuzhuan wanglai de guanfang 'wenzi' 宋代流转往来的官方‘文字’". In *Zhengji kaocha yu xinxi qudao: yi Songdai wei zhongxin* 政绩考察与信息管道——以宋代为中心, edited by Deng Xiaonan 邓小南, 379-410. Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2008.
- Yu Beishan 于北山. *Lu You nianpu* 陸游年譜. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985.
- Yü, Stephen Hsing-tao. *An Index to the Ch'ao-yeh lei-yao: A Thirteenth-Century Glossary of Bureaucratic Terminology Compiled by Chao Sheng*. San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, 1974.
- Yu Wei 余蔚. "Lun Nan-Song xuanfushi he zhizhishi zhidu 論南宋宣撫使和制置使制度." *Zhonghua wenshi luncong* 中華文史論叢, no. 1 (2007): 129-79.
- Zeng Zaozhuang 曾枣庄. *Song wen tonglun* 宋文通論. Shanghai: Shanghai renmin

- chubanshe, 2008.
- Zhang Dihua 張滌華. *Leishu liu bie* 類書流別, revised ed. Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1985.
- Zhang Dianyou 張典友. *Songdai shu zhi lunlue* 宋代書制論略. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2012.
- Zhang Gaoping 張高評. *Yinshua chuanmei yu Songshi tese: jianlun tushu chuanbo yu shi fen Tang-Song* 印刷傳媒與宋詩特色——兼論圖書傳播與詩分唐宋. Taibei: Liren shuju, 2008.
- Zhang Jinpeng 張錦鵬. *Nan-Song jiaotong shi* 南宋交通史. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008.
- Zhang Yi 張祎. “Zhongshu, Shangshu sheng zhazi yu Songdai huangquan yunzuo 中書、尚書省札子與宋代皇權運作.” *Lishi yanjiu* 歷史研究 5 (2013): 50-66.
- Zhao Shugong 趙樹功. *Zhongguo chidu wenxue shi* 中國尺牘文學史. Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1999.
- Zhao Xiaoxuan 趙效宣. *Li Gang nianpu changbian* 李綱年譜長編. Hong Kong: Xinya yanjiusu, 1968.
- _____. *Songdai yizhan zhidu* 宋代驛站制度. Taibei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1983.
- Zhao Yanlong 趙彥龍. *Xi Xia wenshu dang'an yanjiu* 西夏文書檔案研究. Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2010.
- Zhang, Cong Ellen. “To Be ‘Erudite in Miscellaneous Knowledge’: A Study of Song (960-1279) *Biji* Writing.” *Asia Major*, 3rd series 25, no. 2 (2012): 43-77.
- _____. *Transformative Journeys: Travel and Culture in Song China*. Honolulu:

- University of Hawai'i Press, 2011.
- _____. "Writing Fan Zhongyan's Epitaphs." Paper presented at "Conference on Middle Period China, 800-1400," Harvard University, June 5-7 2014.
- Zhang, Juwen. *A Translation of the Ancient Chinese "The Book of Burial (Zang Shu)" by Guo Pu (276-324)*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004.
- Zhang, Meng. "Accounting, Pricing and Profit Distribution: Evidence from the Account Books and Regulations of a State-owned Wine Enterprise in Southern Song China." Paper presented at "22nd Annual Columbia Graduate Student Conference on East Asia," Columbia University, New York, Feb. 2011.
- Zhang Quanming 张全明. "Ye tan Songdai guanyuan de fenglu 也谈宋代官员的俸禄." *Lishi yanjiu 历史研究*, no. 2 (1997): 134-54.
- Zhang Renqing 張仁青. *Pianwen xue 駢文學*. Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1984.
- Zhang Wenchang 張文昌. *Zhi li yi jiao tianxia: Tang-Song lishu yu guojia shehui 制禮以教天下——唐宋禮書與國家社會*. Taipei: Taiwan daxue chuban zhongxin, 2012.
- Zheng Liping 郑丽萍. "Songchao xuanfushi zhidu yanjiu 宋朝宣抚使制度研究." Ph.D. diss., Hebei University, 2009.
- Zheng Yimei 郑逸梅. *Chidu conghua 尺牋丛话*. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2004.
- Zhou Jia 周佳. "Bei-Song shangdian zhazi tanyan 北宋上殿札子探研." *Shixue yuekan 史学月刊* 4 (2012): 34-39.
- Zhou Xinglu 周兴祿. "Mi Fu wenji liuchuan kaobian 米芾文集流传考辨." In *Wei wangsheng ji juexue: Zhongguo renmin daxue guoxue yuan xuesheng youxiu*

- xueshu lunwen ji* 为往圣继绝学：中国人民大学国学院学生优秀学术论文集，
edited by Huang Pumin 黄朴民, 306-316. Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2010.
- Zhou Yiliang 周一良 and Zhao Heping 赵和平. *Tang-Wudai shuyi yanjiu* 唐五代
书仪研究. Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1996.
- Zhou, Yongming. *Historicizing Online Politics Telegraphy, the Internet, and Political
Participation in China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005.
- Zhu Chuanyu 朱傳譽. *Songdai xinwen shi* 宋代新聞史. Taipei: Zhongguo xueshu
zhuzuo jiangzhu weiyuanhui, 1967.
- Zhu Huiliang 朱惠良. “Song dai ceye zhong de chidu shufa 宋代冊頁中的尺牘書
法.” In *Songdai shuhua ceye mingpin tezhan* 宋代書畫冊頁名品特展, edited by
Guoli Gugong bowuyuan 國立故宮博物院, 10-20. Taipei: Guoli gugong
bowuyuan, 1995.
- Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書. *Songren bieji xulu* 宋人別集敘錄. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju,
1999.
- _____. *Songdai keju yu wenxue* 宋代科举与文学. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju,
2008.
- _____. *Songdai keju yu wenxue kao lun* 宋代科举与文学考论. Zhengzhou:
Daxiang chubanshe, 2006.
- Zhu Zhuxian 祝注先. “‘Shuxu zhinan’: yiben Songdai tongyi ciyu shouce 《书叙指
南》——一本宋代同义词语手册.” *Cishu yanjiu* 辞书研究, no. 1 (1986): 68-74.