The Poet in the Scroll: Du Fu's Collected Poems in Manuscript

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Studying manuscript culture in China is very different from the case of Western Europe, where the pre-print canon by and large still survives in manuscript. Generations of printed editions have returned to those surviving manuscripts, and we can clearly see the evolving editorial principles in the construction of the pre-print canon. Apart from Chinese archeological recoveries, which tell us much, but still too little about the circulation of written texts before the age of paper, pre-print manuscripts on paper tend to come from outside the primary routes of textual circulation, notably from Dunhuang and Japan. The vast manuscript legacy of China entered print by and large in the Song Dynasty; we possess only small pieces of that legacy on paper, and even those bear an uncertain relation to the actual manuscripts that Song editors had. Most of the Song printed editions have, in turn, themselves been lost, with surviving Song imprints supplemented by early modern tracings of now lost editions. From the 42-124 known versions of Du Fu's poetry from the Song, only eight survive (depending on how we count variations on the same edition), and those bear a problematic relation to the initial editorial work from earlier manuscripts undertaken in the mid-eleventh century.[1] *It is quite reasonable that Chinese scholars focus on the lineage of printed editions, but our connection to the pre-print Chinese textual legacy depends on what the Song had, how they edited what they had, and the customs that shaped the manuscripts that gave them what they had.*

We work from traces, trying to understand a foundational manuscript base and a manuscript legacy through the medium of later printed versions and later editorial comments. In most cases we are working at best through third-hand evidence. In some cases— prominently in the case I will discuss—some understanding of the manuscript origins of a work could be important in the history of Chinese literature, in ways that have continued through late imperial culture into the present. Du Fu's poetry collection is the earliest fully chronologically arranged collection, a life embodied in poems. The collection is closely tied to the appearance of the first *nianpu*, in which poems are dated so far as possible, and is the ancestor of numerous later chronological "collected poems," and of the recent *biannian* 編年 editions of poets' works.[2] The presumption of this peculiar passion for chronology is that one can best understand a poet's work by following it from year to year, month to month, and if possible, from day to day.[3] This organization of Du

[1] The smaller number is from Zhou Caiquan 周采泉, *Du ji shulu* 杜集書錄 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1986) [Hereafter Shulu]. The larger number is inflated by the various kinds of materials included in Zhang Zhongwang 張忠網 et al., *Du ji xulu* 杜集敘錄 (Ji'nan: Qi Lu shushe, 2008) [hereafter Xulu].

[2] Lü Dafang 呂大防 compiled a *Du Fu nianpu* 杜甫年譜 between 1083 and 1085. Together with Lü's *nianpu* of Han Yu, it is the earliest *nianpu* and done in order to establish the chronology of the poems. See Charles Hartman, "The Tang Poet Du Fu and the Song Dynasty Literati." CLEAR 30 (2008): 59-60 [hereafter Hartman]; Shulu 804-6; Xulu 19-20.

[3] One of the most difficult questions in Tang poetry is the relation between poetry as an institution of poems and as an institution of poets; that is, to what degree did poems circulate without the name of the poet? Certainly, the

Fu's poetry in his collection is closely related to the Song interpretation of Du Fu as *shishi* 詩史, the poet as witness to history, as witnessed through the history of his life.

The question before us is whether the chronological collection is a Song editorial construct, created in tandem with the eleventh century interpretation of Du Fu, or whether it came out of the manuscript tradition and goes back to the original form of Du Fu's collection. In the latter case the Song interpretation of Du Fu followed from Du Fu's own self-representation in his collection as a whole.[4] It is a question of origins. Eva Shan Chou and Charles Hartman have argued that Du Fu was substantially reinvented for the intellectual needs of the eleventh century (indeed for the political arguments of the second half of the eleventh century).[5] Comparing comments on Du Fu from the second half of the eleventh century to earlier comments, there is an undeniable truth to this. Their studies have shown that Du Fu's image was, in large measure, a Song creation. But is it possible that Du Fu himself was an agent in, rather than merely a passive object of his transformation?

Our question is unanswerable with any reasonable certainty, but at the same time it deserves consideration, both drawing on evidence not usually used in the account of Du Fu's rise to canonical status and, from that, using some familiar evidence in different ways. We cannot prove a case, but we can perhaps unsettle an existing account by some of the faint traces of that lost world of preprint manuscripts.

Most scholars studying Du Fu's reception rely on the so-called *Du Fu Volume* 杜甫卷, first published by Zhonghua shuju in 1964, a part of the *Gudian wenxue yanjiu ziliao huibian* 古典文學研究資料匯編. This is remarkably thorough in gathering every mention of Du Fu through the Song, and it is particularly comprehensive through the eleventh century, when scholarship on Du Fu began in earnest. One advantage of thinking not primarily of the poet, but of the manuscript, is that we are compelled to think of Du Fu in the context of other manuscripts of poetry that survived in the Song and formed the basis of Song literary editing of Tang materials.

Thus, the place to begin is the direct and indirect evidence of how Tang poetry collections were usually organized in manuscript. Modern Chinese scholars assume that most Tang poetry collections were organized randomly. This is substantiated by what seems to be a fragment of a Gao Shi collection from Dunhuang, but the best evidence is a partial version of the Xu Hun collection, *Wusilan shi* 烏絲欄詩 from 850, which survived in an autograph copy into the thirteenth century, when it was traced into Yue Ke's 岳珂 *Baozhenzhai fashu zan* 寶真齋法書贊 as an example of Xu Hun's calligraphy. We can probably also take Du Mu's primary poetry collection as retaining the form in which Du Mu himself edited it. Although the arrangement of the Xu Hun collection and the Du Mu collection show no organizational principle, both do open

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Dunhuang manuscripts give us ample evidence of poems copied without the names of their authors (the authors have been supplied in modern editions, an age in which Tang poetry is very much an institution of poets. Clearly *ming* 名, both the name of the poet and his renown accrued through the poem, was an important factor; but there are many anecdotes in which the text is reproduced, orally or in writing, without the name (though such anecdotes usually involve eventually recognizing the name of the poet).

[4] We will discuss Bai Juyi's *Baishi Changqing ji* below, parts of which are clearly chronologically organized and the first version of which maintains a division between "old style" 古調 poems and regulated poems. The question is whether this adumbrated Song editing or was itself, in part, emulating the Du Fu collection.

[5] Chou, E. Shan, *Reconsidering Tu Fu: Literary Greatness and Cultural Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. And Hartman.

with a poem gesturing to seriousness.[6] Many other poetry collections are also randomly organized (though some do have a division between "old-style" and regulated poems).[7]

It is important here to understand that in most cases the Song did not have Tang poetry collections in their original form; they had Tang and tenth- or eleventh-century manuscript copies based on many generations of copying. In a few cases we probably have the collection as the author or his literary executor (friend, son, or disciple) prepared it. However, the evidence we have from Song editorial comments and from the shape of collections as they appeared in the Song suggests that manuscripts were generally *chao* 鈔, selectively copied. The author, editor, and scholar-copyist would leave things out or add things according to his taste. These partial manuscripts, when serially copied (*chao*), allowed for further deletions and additions of favorite pieces that were not in any one particular generation of a manuscript. When Song editorial work began in earnest in the eleventh century, what we often find are different manuscripts, each with a large number of poems that were not found in the other manuscripts of the same literary collection. In most cases one manuscript was taken as a base, with other manuscripts supplying poems for additional *juan*.[8] Let me stress that I am referring not to the few famous poetry collections, whose history is better known, but to the norm from a large number of collections. This, of course, further complicates our inferences about the early manuscript editions of poets.

The rule of *chao* is that the size of poetry collections gradually diminished over generations of copying. The best proof of this can be found in multiple manuscripts with only partially overlapping contents and editors' ability to significantly supplement existing manuscripts with other manuscripts and with generally available early sources such as *Wenyuan yinghua*. Given striking differences in the amount of text contained in one manuscript *juan*, the common practice of comparing the number of *juan* in different versions is useless, except when those numbers differ radically.

As much as selective copying could seriously distort the nature of a collection (for example, the common practice of leaving out all "old-style" verse), if a collection originally had a purposive sequencing of poems, *chao* would preserve the sequence, if not all the particular poems in the sequence.

One other factor needs consideration in ninth and tenth century transmission: this is the passion for regulated verse. There were, indeed, many who had mixed collections or who staunchly upheld old-style verse, but there are a great many poetry collections from the late eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries that are either entirely regulated verse or almost entirely regulated verse. We have a number of cases in which a mix of regulated and old-style poems appear at the end of a collection, clearly supplemented in the Song or later from known anthology or anecdotal sources. This suggests that the base manuscript which survived into the Song contained only regulated verse, but that there were other, more generically balanced versions of the collection whose traces survived only in anthology and anecdote. In their editing, both Su Shunqin and Wang Anshi expressed a delighted surprise in finding, in one manuscript among others, a kind of poetry that is clearly old-style verse (Su Shunqin, implicitly; and Wang Anshi, explicitly in the mention of one title). If they had read Bai Juyi writing on his "New Yuefu," they would have

[6] This would follow from keeping copies of one's poems on single sheets of paper or "note-slips," *jian* 箋. By the time the collection was compiled, posthumously or even by the author, the original chronological order would have been unknown or possibly forgotten.

[7] See Stephen Owen, "The Manuscript Legacy of the Tang: The Case of Literature," *HJAS*.

[8] Stephen Owen, "The Manuscript Legacy of the Tang: The Case of Literature," *HJAS*

expected such poems among Du Fu's works. This suggests that many of the manuscripts of Du Fu's poetry in circulation were entirely or primarily regulated verse.[9]

The one poetry collection surviving partially intact in a Tang period manuscript (in Japan) is that of Bai Juyi, and it also survived in toto into the Song. This collection is, at least, partially chronological, retaining the form that Bai Juyi described: first, there is a series of large topics for old style verse (諷喻, 閒適, and 感傷, with no chronological order in the sections), followed by a section of regulated poems, initially with many poems out of order, but becoming fully chronological from about 814 to 824, when the first form of the collection was completed. This was first version of the *Baishi Changqing ji* 白氏長慶集 edited by Yuan Zhen. The later supplements, some regulated and some mixed genre, have long sections in chronological order, but some poems and sections are out of sequence. Bai Juyi devoted well-documented efforts in preparing and disseminating his collection.[10] Those efforts paid off. Bai Juyi's extensive poetic documentation of his life, widely available in his lifetime, probably played a decisive role in Li Shen's 追昔遊集, which supplements a few poems he actually wrote between 820 and 836 with poems he "should have written" during that interval, to produce a perfectly sequential poetic chronology of his life over a certain interval; this is, however, not the full "Li Shen Collection," but rather a subcollection.[11]

Collections organized by topic (*fenmen* 分門) seem to be products of Song editing, though they have precedents in the thematic division of Bai Juyi's and Yuan Zhen's collections (and in anthologies). A smaller number are organized by formal genre, which became the predominant mode in Ming and Qing editions of poetry.

The other great exception is the Du Fu collection, which, when it first appeared in print in the Song, was arranged in chronological order (two independent chronological sequences divided into old-style and regulated poems)—unlike any other early form of a Tang poetry collection, with the partial exceptions of Bai Juyi and the small subcollection of Li Shen.[12]

There seems little doubt that the chronologically arranged collection, in conjunction with the drama of Du Fu's life, was an important factor in Du Fu's final confirmation in the poetic canon, and in the new Song reading of Du Fu. While the collections of earlier poets such as Tao Yuanming had been read in reference to his life, the Du Fu collection was itself a "life," with a poem read against a life narrative that could be reconstructed in unprecedented detail.

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[9] Despite the often repeated claim that the image of Du Fu as the politically engaged poet was the only image after the Song interpretation, editions confined to Du Fu's regulated verse continued to be produced from the Song on; and especially in the Yuan and Ming Du Fu's regulated verse was often minutely examined as a compositional model for students of regulated verse.

[10] For a fuller discussion of the Bai Juyi collection and the contemporary formation of Tang collections in general, see Christopher Nugent, *Manifest in Words, Written on Paper: Producing and Circulating Poetry in Tang Dynasty China* (Cambridge: Harvard Asia Venter, 2011).The conclusion that Bai Juyi's works after a certain period are largely chronologically organized is more an assumption in modern dating than verified by close examination of texts, as is the case with studies of Du Fu., where seasonal and monthly sequence is essential. The clusters are clear in Bai Juyi, but there are complications that ruin pure chronology, even in the ostensibly chronological sets; for example, the regulated poems of the initial collection end in 824, but the regulated poems of the "Later Collection" 後集 begin in 823.

[11] The "Zhui xiyou ji" has survived intact; other poems from the lost collection were added later to create the current version of the extant works. See Stephen Owen, *Poetry of the Late Tang* (Cambridge: Harvard Asia Center, 2006).

[12] The first version of *Baishi Changqing ji* is essentially divided by "old style" poems and regulated poems. This distinction might have been made in the early versions of the Du Fu collection and perhaps others as well.

Here we have a context in which to revisit the familiar documents on the initial editing of Du Fu's poetry collection around the middle of the eleventh century. Although there are two earlier prefaces, the most significant early sources for the initial editing of Du Fu's collection are three editorial notes that were written in a span of sixteen years, between 1036 and 1052. The earliest is a note to a "bieji" 別集 edited by Su Shunqin 蘇舜欽 dated to 1036. The second is a note to Wang Zhu's 王洙 edition, dated to 1039; Wang Zhu's edition, as revised and printed by Wang Qi 王琪 in 1059, is considered the ancestor of all Song printed editions. The third is Wang Anshi's preface to a "Later Collection" 後集, dated to 1052. There is no evidence that Wang Zhu knew Su Shunqin's material, or that Wang Anshi knew either Su Shunqin's or Wang Zhu's texts. Though we cannot be certain, we have reason to suspect that these are three independent cases of constituting an edition by comparing available manuscripts. There were surely many more manuscripts scattered over China, but Chinese editors—unlike their Renaissance counterparts—were bound to a particular locale and network of associates to discover other manuscripts.

> A "reality check" is useful here. Before there were widely disseminated scholarly editions in print, scholars tended to believe that the bigger edition which they possessed or to which they had access was the "real" edition, which they could supplement and correct by other editions. In the Du Fu poems included in the 1204 Zhou Bida editing of *Wenyuan yinghua* we commonly find the note 集作, "the *Collected Poems* read. . . ." Not only is original the *Wenyuan yinghua* reading often the norm in existing Song editions of Du Fu while Zhou Bida's version of the *Collected Poems* offers a variant reading, in a number of cases the Zhou Bida reading of a line is attested nowhere else in early extant editions. In other words, Zhou Bida seems to have taken his particular Song edition of Du Fu's *Collected Poems* as the norm against which to collate *Wenyuan yinghua* and find possible "errors," even though in many cases the *Wenyuan yinghua* reading is the same as in <u>all</u> surviving Song editions of the *Collected Poems*. The principle here is the same as in the mid-eleventh versions: there is a version in which the editor believes and takes as a standard; the criteria for such belief are unknown, but they are probably subjective. The "standard" text can be corrected and supplemented, but it is the working hypothesis that is necessary for editing.

When Du Fu first became popular in the early ninth century, his collection was the very model of the "big poetry collection." It was the size of Du Fu's collection along with Li Bai's collection that inspired Han Yu's hyperbole in "Teasing Zhang Ji" 調張籍, in which the two existing poetry collections are only the accidental droppings when Heaven's messengers took the impossibly large original poetry collections of Du Fu and Li Bai up to Heaven. The original version of the mortal Du Fu collection was supposed to have been in sixty *juan*, which was a very large collection indeed.[13]

Something of the state of the Tang manuscript legacy can be seen in Su Shunqin's testimony about the edition he prepared. Su Shunqin saw three versions: one in twenty *juan*, one containing five-hundred poems, and another manuscript of unspecified length.[14] Evidently using the twenty *juan* version as his base text, Su Shunqin found three-hundred additional poems from the five-hundred poem version. Then from the third manuscript Su Shunqin found over eighty poems that were in neither of the first two versions.[15]

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[13] Because he did not have a public career, Du Fu's collection probably never had the large volume of public prose that predominates in those collections of prominent officials that have survived more or less intact.

[14] To give the number of poems rather than *juan* suggests that this edition was one or more *ce* 冊 that was not divided by *juan*.

[15] Charles Hartman notes that the characterization of these eighty poems as *haomai aidun* 豪邁哀頓 suggests "social ballads and political allegories" (Hartman 47). Su Shunqin continues to note that "they were not things that those who devoted themselves to poetry in the past could depend on" 非昔之攻詩者所能依倚. The use of *gong* 攻

Twenty *juan* is a large collection, and roughly the size of later printed editions of Du Fu (averaging roughly seventy poems per *juan*). Su Shunqin finds that 60% of another large collection of Du Fu's poems is not contained in his twenty-*juan* edition. The third version collection also yields a substantial number of previously unknown poems. I once was very skeptical that Du Fu's original collection of poems was much larger than the over 1400 poems surviving; evidence like this suggests that there may have been a larger earlier poetry collection and that much of Du Fu's poetry was indeed lost.

Wang Zhu collated his edition from nine manuscripts, ranging from one to twenty *juan*, but he does not specify the numbers of poems in each, only the composite aggregate of 1405 poems in eighteen *juan*. Note that the number of *juan* is not a stable guide to the among to text included. One surviving version of Li Shangyin poetry collection contains over 550 poems in three *juan*.

Both Su Shunqin and Wang Zhu agree, however, on the state of the manuscripts. Su Shunqin comments: "ancient-style and regulated poems are wildly mixed together, the priority is not correct" 古律錯亂，前後不倫, appended to a need for editing: "they have never been through a scholar's editorial organization" 未經學者編輯. Wang Zhu observes of his edition: "they begin in the age of peace and end with what he composed in Hunan; considering the sequence of his periods of residence and travel we can assess what came earlier and what came later by year and season" 起太平時，終湖南所作，視居行之次，與歲時為先後，分十八卷. and he comments on the manuscripts: "what others selected and organized is not the chronological sequence of his time" 人自編摭，非當時第次矣. These comments are generally taken as evidence that the chronological arrangement that appears in the earliest Song printed editions (apart from the *fenmen* edition) was the work of Song editing, initiated by Wang Zhu and revised by a continuous stream of subsequent scholar editors.

At this point we can begin to address the question of how we read the documentary evidence in context. On the surface of things, the conclusion seems obvious and inevitable: poems are out of chronological sequence in the manuscripts, need reorganization according to the chronology of composition, and are so organized. That simple conclusion, however, becomes more problematic in the context of Song editorial scholarship outside of Du Fu's collection. The middle years of the eleventh century saw a great deal of editorial work on Tang poetry, including works by poets whose lives were rather well known; but in none of these editions are the poems arranged in chronological order, and none of the notes and prefaces of those editors ever comment on the violation of chronological sequence in the manuscripts. These comments on Du Fu's poems are, to my knowledge, the earliest hint in the Song of a chronologically arranged manuscript as a desirable possibility. Why then, only in the case of Du Fu, do two independent editors (Wang Zhu almost certainly having had no knowledge of Su Shunqin's edition) comment that the poems are out of chronological sequence? By the end of the eleventh century the correct chronological sequence in Du Fu's poetry and linking it to historical events had become the norm, but there is no support for an argument that this was the case in the 1030s.

The most plausible answer is that at least some of the manuscripts had a basic chronological sequence such that these two independent editors frequently noticed many poems that were "out of sequence." If this is the case, then Song editors repaired what they saw as many gross errors in chronology, rather than establishing a chronological order out of random poems. Editors of Du Fu have been adjusting the chronology of poems ever since.[16]

("devote oneself to") strongly suggests the craft of regulated verse, pervasive through much the ninth and tenth centuries. Perhaps here, as seems to have often been the case elsewhere, someone copying a collection left out the longer old-style verses, finding more to learn from the regulated verse.

[16] The apparent confusion of old-style and regulated poems 古律錯亂 also deserves some comment. The eighth century did not have the same precision of distinction between old-style and regulated poems that we find in the

Here we might note that in every period of Du Fu's life there are many poems that cannot be dated on internal evidence. In this case we must assume either that Wang Zhu assigned such poems their positions by intuition or that they were part of a sequence of, say, "early poems," in at least one of the manuscripts with which Wang Zhu worked.

The so-called "Song edition" 宋本 from the early Southern Song is believed to represent, at least in part, the Wu Ruo 吳若 edition.[17] The present so-called "Song edition," 宋本, is a composite edition with different *juan* coming from different Song sources, but parts of it are as close as we are going to come to the Wang Zhu edition (including variants noted from the different manuscripts mentioned by Wang Zhu). Even in the arrangement of poems in the "Song edition," there is sometimes a historical precision in the knowledge of Tang local history that would have made the chronological sequencing of 1400 randomly organized poems a truly remarkable historical feat.[18] Wang Zhu did have access to the imperial library, but that library had been badly damaged in the fire of 1015 and had not recovered by the 1030s. We should keep in mind that most available imprints were either government publications (which favored history and institutions) or sponsored by religious institutions. Private publication did not take off until the end of the eleventh century, and Wang Zhu would have had to work primarily with manuscripts, which were only then being catalogued (the Chongwen zongmu 崇文總目 was compiled between 1034 and 1042). In short, it is not impossible that Wang Zhu chronologically arranged 1400 poems himself, but the easier explanation is that he worked with a manuscript collection or collections that had an underlying stratum of poems in chronological order, and that he corrected obvious errors.[19] The Song editions that survive represent revisions of the Wang Zhu base; and particularly as we enter the Southern Song, the availability of historical scholarship increases dramatically. Nevertheless, the precisions in offices of local officials, honorary titles, and their sequencing is either pure (but consistent) invention, or it had a basis.

Finally, we have the Wang Anshi preface to a "Houji" 後集, appearing over a decade after the Wang Zhu edition was completed (but before Wang Qi printed it). Wang Anshi's preface contains a troubling emphasis on the claim that "only Du Fu could have written these poems," calling into question the reliability of his sources, but also suggesting doubts about the authenticity of new Du Fu poems being discovered. Wang Anshi speaks of many editions of Du Fu's poetry, and that he has found two hundred poems that were not in other editions. This indicates that he had manuscript editions, but not Wang Zhu's comprehensive edition. If Wang Zhu had 1405 Du Fu poems and Wang Anshi added over 200, then we should have more than 1605 Du Fu poems. But, with the Song additions to Wang Zhu's edition, we only have varying numbers in the 1400's. This suggests that Wang Anshi had, by and large, "discovered" poems that were already in the Wang Zhu edition. Wang Anshi's "Houji," however, suggests the surprise at finding old-style poems; He seems to have received a collection of old-style poems that were not in the manuscripts with which he was familiar: 予之令鄞，客有授予古之詩，世

Song. Du Fu talks about "precision" 細 in regulation, but that is very different from the zero-sum categorization that must decide whether a poem is "regulated" or not. Ironically, Song precisions in dividing the collection into old-style and regulated poems led to later critical praise of Du Fu's precision in regulated verse.

[17] Shulu 6-17; Xulu 52-53.

[18] In the early regulated poems the sequencing of the "Song edition" is quite different from the conclusions of later scholars and makes little sense chronologically. It begins with 2.3, on his visit to the Laozi temple in Luoyang. If Wang Zhu was responsible for the reparation of "old style" and regulated poems, then this has a good chance of having been the first poem in the base manuscript. This would conform to the traces of one Tang organization of poetry collections, beginning with a long, grand poem.

[19] An "obvious" error would be when a place name was mentioned.

所不傳者二百餘篇.[20] This is our only hint that Du Fu's old-style poems may have been circulating separately.

In "Teasing Zhang Ji" 調張籍, Han Yu invents a myth of Heaven causing Du Fu and Li Bai to suffer, and in their suffering, to write vast numbers of poems. These poems are carried up to Heaven, but a few poems slip out, leaving us the current collections.

平生千萬篇， Through their lives tens of thousands of poems,

金薤垂琳琅。 shallot script on gold, lasting with jade-like sound.

仙官敕六丁， The immortal official gave orders to the Six Strongmen

雷電下取將。 to go down and take them in thunder and lightning.

流落人間者， Those that fell into the mortal world

太山一毫芒。 were no more than the thinnest hair compared to Mount Tai.

The apparent assumption here is that, when gathering up original manuscripts, Heaven's agents are gathering sheets of paper (even under their figural transformation into "shallot script on gold"), with individual poems rather than *juan*.[21] As we said earlier, this seems to have been the norm for "literary remains," including Han Yu's own poetry collection. Copying these sheets into *juan* was the task of the literary executor. In the *Baishi Changqing ji* the shift from poems out of chronological order to poems in chronological order in 814 strongly suggests a shift from keeping copies of poems on sheets of paper to immediately copying a new composition in a scroll. When a poetry collection gets very large, this makes sense and saves carrying around excess paper. It increases bulk but decreases weight. If you are keeping copies of poems in *juan*, when you send an occasional poem to someone, you do not make an additional copy on a separate sheet of paper, but simply put it in as the next poem in an ongoing scroll. If one is irritated with the quality of vegetables being sent on the order of the local commandant and you make a public protest in verse (as Du Fu did), this can have consequences. The literary executor, burdened with making a collection out of a pile of papers, might well toss it out.[22] The copyist of a *juan*, however, might have been more likely to include it.

We offer a hypothesis that Du Fu, after some point in his life, was writing down newly composed works in a series of *juan*, rather than keeping copies on separate sheets. Anyone who keeps copies of his occasional poetry is thinking of a "collection," but let me suggest that keeping copies in a *juan* is to think about one's life through a sequential series of poems. No earlier poet and no poet afterward in the Tang has so many notes explaining circumstantial details in poems. These are called the 原注 in some editions, "original notes." Since that designation is clearly added later, some of these notes may have been later, but many exhibit

[20] One might here recall the surprise of Yang Yi on discovering the larger version of the Li Shangyin collection.

[21] The image of whole scrolls in their wrappers falling from the sky make the fantastic scene ludicrous.

[22] In 832 Liu Yuxi was governor of Suzhou. It was probably in this year that a monk named Xiufeng 秀峰 approached him and requested a preface for the collected poems of his master, the celebrated poet-monk Lingche 靈澈 (749-816). Xiufeng had selected three hundred of Lingche's two thousand poems in his later years and another three hundred exchange poems (another contribution to the mania for collections of exchange poems). Literary executors cut collections.

certain peculiarities. For example, when the writer of the note identifies himself as 吾, appropriate only when the author is referring to himself, we can only conclude that this is Du Fu himself writing or someone impersonating Du Fu. The latter is not impossible, but it requires a forger claiming knowledge that only Du Fu could have had (or pretending to such knowledge). In a number of such notes we see the speaker as Fu 甫, acceptable in reference to oneself, but overly familiar in the reverential Du Fu cult that developed from the late 11ith century (though Wang Anshi and Lü Dafang do refer to Du Fu as "Fu").

Insofar as these notes are by Du Fu, they imagine a future readership that is not primarily interested in the fineness of phrasing but in knowing certain circumstantial details that contribute to understanding the poem in a local historical context.

In the first quatrain of the famous "Strolling Alone By the Riverside, Looking for Flowers: seven quatrains" 江畔獨步尋花七絕句, we have a note: "Husi Rong was my drinking buddy." 斛斯融吾酒徒. There is no ambiguity here: the person writing this note claims to be Du Fu. If we want to believe this note is later, then we have to imagine a Tang or Song scholar impersonating Du Fu, using the pronoun *wu* 吾. The fact that Du Fu is looking for a "drinking buddy" is clear from the poem. The information added by the note is the name.

This is trivial as historical information. We hear of Husi Rong later in a very interesting poem on Husi Rong travelling to sell stele inscriptions. The note could have been forged, by why anyone should forge such an entry in the archive would remain a question. In short, the extensive details brought up in many of these notes are gratuitous and elude general purpose.

The most interesting question here is the relationship between such notes and a chronologically organized collection. First, I should point out that the existence of early notes, in many cases probably by the author, was not unknown before Du Fu; but the number of such notes in Du Fu's collection is an order of magnitude greater than such notes in earlier poetry collections. The contemporary local knowledge in such notes is, moreover in many cases, not information that could have been supplied from existing or known sources. For example, in "Respectfully Sent to Counselor Lu Ju (5)" 奉贈盧五丈參謀琚 we are told: "At the time the Counselor had come on a mission from Jiangling; and in Changsha we await imperial grace, while he seeks to be supplied with cash and grain" 時丈人使自江陵，在長沙待恩旨，先支率錢米. This is an occasional poem sent to Counselor Lu Ju himself, who knew exactly why he was in Tanzhou (Changsha). Du Fu's contemporary local community, to whom he might have shown the poem, also knew why Lu Ju was there. We have the poet not simply keeping a copy of his poem, but anticipating future readers for whom this information will be useful to explain some of the lines. In their aggregate in a given period, combined with poem titles, such notes can serve a general explanatory function. If Du Fu were anticipating future readership, he would have known that disaggregating poems in separate sheets of paper would potentially makes those comments far less perspicuous. The poems are themselves thickly biographical to an unprecedented degree; notes, which are probably Du Fu's own, supplement the poems with information that might not be clear in the text. Everything points to the later Du Fu's intense awareness of his poetry as a "biographical" collection on an unprecedented level of detail. This does not prove that Du Fu left his manuscript organized chronologically, but it suggests that as the inevitable consequence.

Although it does not rise even to the level of evidence, the remains of Gu Tao's 顧陶 *Tangshi leixuan* 唐詩類選, dated to 856 by its preface, is at least very suggestive. The Southern Song *Tingzhai shihua* 艇齋詩話 Zeng Jili 曾季貍 (fl. 1147) was struck by the variants in *Tangshi leixuan*'s selection of Du Fu's poetry, when compared with the standard editions of Du Fu's collection circulating in his own day.[23] By this means we have twenty-seven different titles of

[23] *Song shihua quanbian* 宋詩話全編 (Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1998). 2655-56.

poems by Du Fu that were included in *Tangshi leixuan*. These may not have been all the Du Fu poems included in Gu Tao's anthology, but Zeng Jili's phrasing suggests they are the majority.[24] This is the largest anthology selection of Du Fu's poems known in the Tang.

What is interesting here is that Gu Tao was a very unusual Tang poetry anthologist, who wanted to see the entire collection before he would make a selection and was concerned with making a representative selection (even though these were dispersed by topic in his anthology). In the poems selected, Gu Tao is remarkably balanced in representing Du Fu's poems from different periods in his life. Moreover, the dates of these poems are often not obvious from the titles. Given the disproportionate number of poems surviving from certain periods of Du Fu's life, a random selection would be unlikely to produce a relatively balanced representation of periods in the poet's life. It is hard to imagine that this could have happened by accident. It suggests a manuscript collection in which the reader could trace Du Fu's life and represent its phases and changes of place. At the very least it invites the possibility that, almost two centuries before the Song edited collections, Gu Tao saw a chronologically organized manuscript.

I cannot prove the case; the evidence is long gone. I can suggest the case as a possibility, and one that would have stood in the background of the editorial work of one of Du Fu's most ardent admirers and the author of the other "big collection," Bai Juyi. Perhaps it was also in the background of Yuan Zhen's collection, but the original form of that collection has been lost. On a second, and more secure level, Du Fu's poetry involves an engagement in the surrounding social and historical world that begs for the chronological collection.

In Du Fu's collection as it appeared in the Song we read a group of poems on rain, and on continuing rain; then we have a poem on "at last the weather is clearing up"; then we have a poem on "it's raining again." This may well be ingenious Song editing; this may be a poet adding one poem after another in pages of paper pasted together to form a *juan*. We cannot know. Whenever it occurred, it created the representation of contingency that makes Du Fu's collection both alive and credibly embodying a life.[25]

The Beginning Question and Lingering Question

[24] "The Du Fu poems included in the twenty scrolls of Gu Tao's *Tangshi leixuan* are mostly not the same as the current edition" 顧陶唐詩類選二十卷，其間載杜詩，多與今本不同. Of course, Zeng Jili does not cite the cases where there are no variants.

[25] I worked on this paper at the same time I was reading Olivia Holmes's *Assembling the Lyric Self: Authorship from Troubadour Song to Italian Poetry Book*, on how the individual poet's collection took shape in late Occitan and early Italian poetry (Olivia Holmes, *Assembling the Lyric Self: Authorship from Troubadour Song to Italian Poetry Book*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000). There the "life" of the lyric poet takes shape under the guise of contingency (dates of "first seeing," etc.), but the love narrative that dominates such collections is a schematic one—love and death or love and loss. Life narrative, however, shapes the poetry collection and the representation of the poet, even in its later transformations, such as Ronsard's serial beloveds. The comparison to Du Fu's "now it's raining again" is a different level of contingency of constructing the self through a series of moments, in which the outside world has claims equal to those of inner life. This becomes the Chinese model of poetry in a collection. Not all Chinese poetry collections were made this way, but such a collection is the entelechy of any set of surviving poems by a single author that have been taken seriously.

History is always based on the history of documentation. Even archeological materials depend on such a frame of documentation to enter something we recognize as “history.” If documentation is absent or substantially transformed, it is the task of anyone who deals with culture historically to look for the traces of what has been left out or transformed. We will usually not find enough to credibly supplement or change the historical record, but we can often find enough to implant lingering doubt and attention to documentation as such, remembering that documentation is only what gets written down—and survives.