

Qing Feng, Duke Xian of Wey  
and the *Shijing* in the Sixth Century B.C.:  
Some Preliminary Remarks on the *Shi* in the *Zuo zhuan*<sup>1</sup>

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The poem-bearing narration [...] subordinates the poem to the narrative, relegating the production [...] of the poem to the status of an event in the story [...]. Such a narrative holds out the hope of recovering, to some degree, the multivalent contexts of a poetic utterance.

Graham Sanders, *Words Well Put*, p. 5

I By Way of an Introduction: the *Poetry* in the *Shishuo xinyu*

My interest in the citation of the *Shijing* 詩經 (*Classic of Poetry*; hereafter *Poetry*) in the Spring and Autumn era began years ago but was rekindled in the summer of 2010 when I was reading the newly published *Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*. In the first volume of that history, Martin Kern, the scholar who has provided some of the most innovative studies of the *Shijing* in recent years, in discussing the citation of the *Poetry* in the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 (*Zuo Traditions*), notes:

It is not always clear what a particular song conveyed in a specific situation, as is the case of “Zhongzi, Please!” (Qiang Zhongzi 將仲子, *Mao* 76), which in the *Zuo Traditions* (Duke Xiang, 26th year [547 BC]) is recited in order to achieve the release of the marquis of Wey from imprisonment in Qin [*sic*; Jin]. [...]. Nothing in this song relates to an imprisoned ruler, nor did subsequent readers dwell on this interpretation.<sup>2</sup>

These comments led me to believe that there could be a context which would reveal the connection between confining the Marquis of Wey and “Zhong Zi, Please!” As I began to explore

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1 Although the examples examined in this paper are all dated from the sixth century B.C. (indeed, most of the citations of the *Shi* in the *Zuo zhuan* are from this century), the late date of composition (ca. 330 B.C.) and the murky textual history of the *Zuo* may call any precise dating to question. Moreover, the *Zuo zhuan* often depicts ideal, rather than real, situations. Sanders (2006, 6) suggests that citations of the poems in the *Zuo* “provide [only] ideal examples of the operation of poetry,” but that in itself is a strong clue as to how texts were read. Van Zoeren (1991, 39), while acknowledging “that they cannot be taken (as they often are) as completely accurate depictions of the reality of the seventh through fifth centuries B.C.E., still there are reasons to believe that the stories do reflect in some oblique way the uses made of the Odes during the Spring and Autumn period.” Thus in this paper it will be assumed that although the *Zuo* accounts of poetry citation are later, idealized records of sixth-century events, they represent that earlier era with some degree of accuracy. My thanks to Lu Zongli 呂宗力, Sun Changwu 孫昌武, the members of the Madison Sinological Circle for sharing their ideas regarding a draft of this paper and to the editor of this journal for his suggestions.

2 See Kern 2010a, 29.

this context, the opportunity to contribute to a volume honoring Professor Hans Stumpfeldt and his research into “texts behind texts” presented itself. I hope the follow study will express the respect I share with many for Professor Stumpfeldt’s meticulous scholarship while it also attempts to examine the elusive nature of how early songs were actually performed.

Before addressing the passage Martin Kern has pointed out, a review of early comments on the *Poetry* seems in order. Among the earliest pronouncements on reading the *Shijing* (Classic of Poetry) are those of Confucius.<sup>3</sup>

The Master said, “It is by the [*Classic of Poetry*] that the mind is aroused, [...]”<sup>4</sup>

Chen Kang asked of Bo Yu [Confucius’ son], “Have you indeed heard anything unusual [from your father]?” Bo Yu replied, “Not yet. Once when he was standing by himself I hurried quickly and quietly past the hall, and he said, ‘Have you studied the *Poetry*?’ I replied, ‘Not yet.’ ‘If you do not study the *Poetry*, you will have no means to express your opinions.”<sup>5</sup>

It is this second passage that is suggestive to those wanting to understand how the *Poetry* was used in conversation during Confucius’ time (or at least how it ideally would be employed). The key word is *yan* 言, translated here as “to express opinions.” It might also mean “to make clear one’s ideas” in this context. Indeed, there are dozens of citations of the *Poetry* in the *Zuo zhuan* and *Guo yu* 國語 (Discourses of the States) which might help to clarify what Confucius was trying to convey to his son. But the records of these “conversations” are laconic and tend to report that the *Poetry* effectively “expressed opinions” without explaining how it did this.

There are, however, more detailed records of how opinions were expressed via the *Poetry* in a collection which was compiled some seven centuries after the *Zuo zhuan*, namely the *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語 of Liu Yiqing 劉義慶 (403–444).<sup>6</sup> It may be instructive to look at a few passages from the *Shishuo* before returning to the *Zuo zhuan*.

For example, in the section on “Speech and Conversation” (“Yuyan” 語言) there is the following narrative:

When Sun Sheng 孫盛 [ca. 302–373] was secretarial aide to Lord Yu [Yu Liang 庾亮] he went along with Yu to go hunting, and his two sons traveled together with him. Lord Yu was not aware of this and suddenly, on the hunting grounds, he caught sight of Qizhuang<sup>7</sup> [the younger son], who at the time was about six or seven years old. Yu said to him: “Did you also come along then?” The boy quickly responded, “As it is said [in the *Poetry*], ‘Without distinction between small and great, we follow the prince in his progress.’”<sup>8</sup>

3 In *Lunyu* 論語 17.9 there is also a list of purposes for studying the *Poetry*, but this section of the text may be rather late and is not directly related to the theme of this paper.

4 *Lunyu* 8.8: 子曰：「興於詩， [...]。」 Tr. Legge I, 211.

5 *Lunyu* 16.13: 陳亢問於伯魚曰：「子亦有異聞乎？」對曰：「未也。嘗獨立，鯉趨而過庭。曰：『學詩乎？』對曰：『未也。』『不學詩，無以言！』」 Tr. revised considerably from Legge I, 315.

6 The compilation was completed about 430; the *Zuo zhuan* dates from around 330 B.C.

7 Qizhuang 齊莊 was his style name; his given name was Fang 放. The boy’s wit is further revealed in the anecdote that follows this (2.50) in which he cleverly explains the logic behind his name (Equal with Zhuang [Zhou]).

The boy Sun Qizhuang cites the last two lines in the first stanza of “Pan Shui” 泮水 (Halfmoon Waters, Mao 299). He expects his listener(s) to recognize the entire panegyric, singing the virtues of the Duke Xi 僖 of Lu (r. 659–627) as he is *en route* to repair the royal college.<sup>9</sup> Though he cites merely two lines of the poem, he expects Yu Liang to know the rest of the piece.

In stanza five are the lines

Duke Xi having made the Halfmoon Hall, the Huai and Yi barbarians will then submit. <sup>10</sup>	既作泮宮， 淮夷攸服。
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Stanza seven then praises the Duke’s officers who

have subdued the Huai and Yi, now greatly good and not rebellious”. <sup>11</sup>	既克淮夷， 孔淑不逆。
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By alluding to the paragon Duke Xi, who was able to quell the Huai-Yi barbarians, Sun Qizhuang implied that Yu Liang, the General who Pacifies the West 平西將軍, was similarly successful in dealing with the barbarians of Jin time (Yu Liang had hoped late in life to be able to clear the Central Plains of the the Jie 羯 people under Shi Qin’s 石勒 [274–333] Later Zhao regime).<sup>12</sup> Aside from heaping praise on Yu, the citation also gives the young boy a political competence and knowledge that both flatters the general and makes him realize that the boy’s presence is justified.<sup>13</sup>

In a second example from the “Shang shi” 傷逝 (Grieving for the Departed) section Huan Xuan 桓玄 (369–404)<sup>14</sup> expresses his intent by alluding to two songs from the *Poetry*:

When Huan Xuan was on the point of usurping the throne [404], he explained to Bian Ju [Fanzhi 苻之, d. 404],<sup>15</sup> “Formerly Yang Fu consistently resisted this ambition of mine, but now having lost Yang Fu as ‘heart and soul’<sup>16</sup> and missing SuoYuan as ‘talons and teeth’ I am taking this reckless plunge pell-mell. How could this satisfy the mind of Heaven?”<sup>17</sup>

8 *Shishuo xinyu* 2.49: 孫盛為庾公記室參軍，從獵，將其二兒俱行。庾公不知，忽於獵場見齊莊，時年七八歲。庾謂曰：「君亦復來邪？」應聲答曰：「所謂『無小無大，從公于邁』。」 This translation and those which follow are all revised by the author from renditions by Richard B. Mather. Cf. Mather, 56.

9 The Pan Shui was the pond in front of the entrance to the Lu college which crescent-like touched the southern, eastern and western edges of the property, but not the north; it is used here, as often, metonymically to refer to the entire school.

10 *You* 攸 could also be read as *suo* 所 yielding “Duke Xi having made the Halfmoon Hall, / it is the means by which the Huai and Yi barbarians will submit”. Cf. Xiang Xi 1997, 820.

11 Legge IV, 616–620.

12 See the end of Yu Liang’s biography in the *Jin shu* 73.1923.

13 For a discussion of this passage see also Sanders 2006, 121–123.

14 Huan Wen’s 桓溫 (312–373) son and successor who tried to overthrow the Jin in 404 but was defeated and killed by Liu Yu 劉裕 (356–422) who sixteen years later founded the Liu Song dynasty.

15 Huan Xuan’s chief administrator and the man who composed the rescript making Xuan emperor of the short-lived Chu 楚 dynasty in 404.

16 Literally “belly and heart” as Mather has it. Cf. Mather, 353.

17 *Shishuo xinyu* 17.19: 桓玄當篡位，語卞鞠云：「昔羊子道恆禁吾此意。今腹心喪羊孚，爪牙失索

Huan refers first to “Tu zhi” 兔置 (Mao 7), a poem that praises the qualities of a low-ranking man who is deemed fit to advise a ruler. Although all modern translators render *tu* 兔 as “rabbit,” Wen Yiduo’s 聞一多 (1899–1946) argument that *tu* is a loan word for *tu* 菟, a Chu-dialect term for “tiger,” and an abbreviation for *yu tu* 於兔 “tiger,” is convincing.<sup>18</sup> The poem opens:

Tightly strung are the tiger nets,	肅肅兔置，
We pound them in, <i>bong bong</i> ;	椽之丁丁。
This robust, mighty warrior	赳赳武夫，
Is shield and wall for his honorable lord.	公侯干城。

This stanza and the following two suggest that the prey is much more than a rabbit. The phrase in question concludes the final couplet of the poem:

This robust, mighty warrior,	赳赳武夫，
is heart and soul to his prince.	公侯腹心。

Yang Fu joined Huan as a secretarial aide and the depiction of him as a warrior is hyperbole. The second reference is to the first two lines of “Qi fu” 祈父 (Minister of War, Mao 185):

Minister of War,	祈父！
I am the talons and teeth of the king	予，王之爪牙。

The poem as a whole, however, is usually read as a complaint of the troops against the sorrows and hardship imposed on them by the Minister of War—and by extension imposed on them by their ruler. Suo Yuan 索元, whose family had come from Iran to Dunhuang several generations earlier, was serving the Jin as Governor of Liyang 歷陽太守 (in modern Anhui),<sup>19</sup> but his role in the attempted usurpation is not known. He had earlier fought under Huan Xuan in an attack on Prince Qiao 譙王 (Sima Shangzhi 司馬尚之 [fl. 400]).<sup>20</sup> It seems likely that Suo Yuan died ca. 403.<sup>21</sup> In any case, the allusion works somewhat ironically to suggest the errors of a ruler – in this case Huan Xuan himself.

A third example comes from those anecdotes classified as “Pai tiao” 排調 (Taunting and Teasing):

Xi Zaochi 習鑿齒 [d. 384, a native of Xiangyang in what was then considered the South], and Sun Chuo 孫綽 [fl. 330–365, one of the most famous literary men of the day whose family hailed from Taiyuan in the North] had not previously known each other. Both were presented at a gathering of Huan Wen’s staff [in Xiangyang, ca. 345].

Huan said to Sun, “You may converse with my aide, Xi Zaochi.”

元，而忽忽作此詆突，詎允天心？」Tr. Mather, 353.

18 Wen Yiduo 1948, 116–117. Translation is the author’s having consulted Legge IV, 14, and Karlgren, 5.

19 See *Jin shu jiaozhu* 99.1696.

20 Cf. *Jin shu* 99.2590 and Mather, 598.

21 Liu Xiaobiao’s 劉孝標 (462–521) note to *Shishuo xinyu* 17.19 (761) cites an uncanny tale from the *Youming lu* 幽明錄 which attributes Suo Yuan’s death to an illness caused by his mistreatment of a young girl from the Western Regions who tried to nurse him back to health, but was put to death for her efforts; before she died, she predicted Suo’s imminent death which occurred exactly as she had foretold.

Sun began:

“Wriggle, you southern barbarian of Jing!  
Do you dare to make an enemy of a mighty state?”<sup>22</sup>

『蠢爾蠻荊』，  
敢與大邦為讐？

Xi countered:

“We campaigned against the northern Xianyun,  
And reached all the way to Taiyuan.”<sup>23</sup>

『薄伐獫狁，  
至于太原。』

Sun Chuo cites the first lines of the fourth stanza of “Cai qi” 采芑 (Gathering the White Millet, Mao 178), a song praising the successes of a military leader named Fangshu 方叔. Although the poem depicts campaigns against both northern (Xianyun) and southern (Man Jing) tribes, Sun naturally selected a line designed to deride Xi who was from Xiangyang. But Sun modified the second line from “Who have made a mighty state into an enemy!” 大邦為讐!, creating a stronger challenge to Xi. Xi counters with lines unchanged from “Liu yue” 六月 (In the Sixth Month, Mao 177), the poem just preceding “Cai qi” in the Poetry. “Liu yue” is also a poem about another successful military venture under King Xuan 宣王, this led by Jifu 吉甫 against the northern Xianyun tribes. Xi’s gibe reveals that his mastery of the *Poetry* matches (or even exceeds) that of Sun. It revolves around (1) the exact match of Taiyuan as the point to which the troops marched successfully and (2) the hometown of his opponent.

A fourth and final illustration of citations of the *Poetry* in the *Shishuo xinyu* can be found in the same “Taunting and Teasing” chapter:

Yuan Yang [baby name of Yuan Qiao 袁喬 (312–347)] once went to see Liu Hui. At the time Hui was in the inner part [of his house, i. e. the women’s quarters] sleeping and had not yet got up.

Yuan then wrote a poem to tease him which read:

The horn-inlaid pillow gleams on the tiger-skin cushion,  
The brodered duvet shines on the long mat.

角枕粲文茵，  
錦衾爛長筵。

Liu had married the daughter of Emperor Ming of the Jin. When the princess saw the poem, she resentfully said, “Yuan Yang, that madman from a bygone age!”<sup>24</sup>

First, the *Shishuo xinyu* original text needs to be corrected—the target of this poem and the husband of Emperor Ming’s 明帝 (Sima Shao 司馬紹, 299–325, r. 323–324) daughter (Sima Nandi 司馬南弟, the Princess of Luling 廬陵) was Liu Tan 劉惔, not Liu Hui 恢.

Although the text tells us Yuan Qiao “composed a poem” (*zuo shi* 作詩) to tease Liu Tan, Yuan based his two-line “poem” on the opening couplet of the third stanza of “Ge sheng” 葛生 (The Kudzu Grows, Mao 124) which reads:

22 The translations here and elsewhere are that of the author, unless otherwise noted. Legge renders *chun* 蠢 as “foolish” (Foolish were the savage tribes of King); cf. Legge IV, 287. Although *chun* can mean “foolish,” most *Shijing* commentators read it as “to move like a worm” in this poem; see Xiang Xi 1997, 85. Either understanding fits the context of the repartee between Sun and Xi.

23 *Shishuo xinyu* 25.41: 習鑿齒、孫興公未相識，同在桓公坐。桓語孫「可與習參軍共語。」孫云：「『蠢爾蠻荊』，敢與大邦為讐？」習云：「『薄伐獫狁，至于太原。』」Tr. Mather, 450–451.

24 *Shishuo xinyu* 25.36: 袁羊嘗詣劉恢，恢在內眠未起。袁因作詩調之曰：「角枕粲文茵，錦衾爛長筵。」劉尚晉明帝女，主見詩，不平曰：「袁羊，古之遺狂！」Tr. Mather, 448.

The horn-inlaid pillow gleams,  
The brodered duvet shines.”

角枕粲兮，  
錦衾爛兮。

The lines may simply refer to Liu Tan’s laziness in luxury after he married a member of the royal family. Another anecdote recorded in the *Shishuo xinyu* tells us that Huan Wen once visited Liu Tan and was angry to find him still in bed. Yet there seems to be more implied here, since Liu Tan’s wife, the princess, was clearly upset with Yang’s efforts. The complete text of “The Kudzu Vine Grows” may provide a clue. It reads:

The kudzu vine grows, covering the thorns,  
The convolvulus spreads into the wilds;  
My beautiful one has fled from here,  
With whom can I be together? I abide alone.

葛生蒙楚，  
藂蔓于野。  
予美亡此，  
誰與？獨處！

The kudzu vine grows, covering the jujube trees,  
The convolvulus spreads to the border tracts.  
My beautiful one has fled from here,  
With whom can I be together? I rest alone.

葛生蒙棘，  
藂蔓于域。  
予美亡此，  
誰與？獨息！

The horn-inlaid pillow gleams,  
The brodered duvet shines;  
My beautiful one has fled from here,  
With whom can I be together? I wait the morn alone.

角枕粲兮，  
錦衾爛兮。  
予美亡此，  
誰與？獨旦！

Through the days of summer,  
Through the nights of winter,  
After one hundred years,  
I shall return to his abode.

夏之日，  
冬之夜，  
百歲之後，  
歸于其居。

Through the nights of winter,  
Through the days of summer,  
After one hundred years,  
I shall return to his chamber.<sup>25</sup>

冬之夜，  
夏之日。  
百歲之後，  
歸于其室。

“Ge sheng” is about a wife mourning the death of her husband. The kudzu vine which spreads about is suggestive of conjugal love.<sup>26</sup> So, too, the horn-inlaid pillow and bed clothes (the *chang yan* 長筵 was a mat both longer and wider than normal, large enough for two people). Thus Yang Qiao’s poem based on “Ge sheng” may well be an attempt to make fun of the love this couple shared or even an insulting suggestion of the happy conjugal relations between Liu Tan and the princess. Their close relationship can be seen in another anecdote about Liu Tan’s death, this attributed to Pei Qi’s 裴啓 (fl. 370), *Yu lin* 語林:

25 Mao 124. Cf. tr. Legge IV, 186–187, Karlgren, 79–80.

26 See the lengthy discussion by Chow Tse-tsung. Cf. Chow 1978, 48–53.

When Liu Zhenzhang's [i. e. Liu Tan 劉惔] illness worsened, the princess became haggard with sorrow. When he was about to reach his end, they called the princess. Only when she had seen him like this did she raise her hand, point to him, and say "Your condition, sir, being so critical, how could I comb and dress myself?" Liu then pulled the coverlet to cover his face, turned his back to her and could not bear to look at her.<sup>27</sup>

Whether or not Yang's intent was salacious, his selection of "Ge sheng," a poem depicting the kudzu and the convolvulus as plants which depend on other plants,<sup>28</sup> surely resonates with Liu Tan's marriage to the princess<sup>29</sup>: Liu was from an aristocratic family, but he spent his youth in poverty after his father died,<sup>30</sup> and depended upon his relationship with the princess to gain favor and power.

To summarize, it would seem that in conversations in fifth-century China, selected lines of the *Poetry* were cited, rather than entire poems. The expectation was that the listeners would be able to reflect on the overall poetic text and its connotations (often following the Mao interpretations). It also seems clear that all literati in the fourth century were expected to know the entire corpus of the *Poetry* by heart.<sup>31</sup> With this historical "background" in mind, we can return to examine what is known about citation of the *Poetry* in the sixth-century B.C.

27 *Taiping yulan* 365.8b: 劉真長病積時，公主毀悴，將終，喚主，主既見如此，乃舉手指之，云：「君危篤，何以自脩飾？」劉便牽被覆面，背之不忍視。

28 For a reading of "Ge sheng" 葛生 as a metaphorical depiction of the interdependency of husband and wife, see Chi Naipeng's 遲乃鵬 comments in Zhou Xiaotian 1990, 310–311.

29 Another revealing story about Liu Tan and his wife can be found in a memorial that Emperor Ming of the Song 宋明帝 (Liu Yu 劉彧, 439–472, r. 460–472) ordered to be written. Troubled by the extreme jealousy of the princesses since the start of his dynasty, the emperor has someone draft a memorial on Jiang Xiao's 江敎 behalf rejecting a prospective marriage between Jiang and a daughter of Emperor Wen 文 of the Song (Liu Jun 劉駿, 430–464, r. 454–464). The memorial was intended to send a warning to the royal distaff that they should restrain their jealousies. The memorial, transmitted in the biography of Empress Dowager Wang of Emperor Xiaowu of the Song 孝武文穆王皇后, i. e. Wang Xianyuan 王憲嫄 (428–465) (in *Song shu* 41.1290), read in part: 自晉氏以來，配尚王姬者，雖累經美胃，亟有名才，至如王敦驕氣，桓溫斂威，真長佯愚以求免，〔...〕。"Ever since the Jin Clan [ruled], those who married royal ladies, although they were one after the other descendants of fine families, though they had excellent reputations and talents, things reached the point that Wang Dun (266–324) was be awed by [his wife's, i. e. Sima Yan's 司馬炎 (236–290; Emperor Wu 武帝, r. 265–290) daughter, the Princess of Xiang City 襄城公主] temper, Huan Wen (313–373) was caused to restrain his power [by his wife, Sima Rui's 司馬睿 (Emperor Yuan 元帝, r. 317–322) daughter, the Senior Princess of Nankang 南康], Liu Zhenzhang [i. e. Liu Tan] pretended to be stupid in order to seek forgiveness; [...]." Although narratives limning the details on which these claims are based have been lost, the image of the brilliant Liu Tan feigning stupidity in order to be forgiven by his wife is powerful.

30 See the opening lines of his biography in *Jin shu* 75.1990–1992.

31 Although there are lines from the verses of Guo Pu 郭璞 and Cao Zhi 曹植, as well as a passage from the *Gushi shijiu shi* 古詩十九首, most of the citations in the *Shishuo xinyu* are from the *Poetry*. An anecdote about discord in Zheng Xuan's 鄭玄 (127–200) household, perhaps hyperbolic, reveals that even his female slaves knew and could cite spontaneously lines from the *Poetry*. See *Shishuo xinyu* 4.3; see also the extensive discussion of this passage in Sanders 2006, 127–132.

## II Qing Feng and the *Poetry*

The citation of the *Poetry* in the *Zuo zhuan* is usually referred to in that text as *fu Shi* 賦詩, “chanting the *Poetry*” or perhaps more accurately “offering a poem.”<sup>32</sup> There has been a great deal written in Chinese on this subject.<sup>33</sup> Much earlier scholarship has been rehearsed in Tam Koo-yin’s dissertation titled “The Use of Poetry in *Tso chuan*: An Analysis of the ‘Fu-shih’ Practice”.<sup>34</sup> More recently Graham Sanders has devoted portions of the chapter “Performing the Tradition” of his *Words Well Put* to the subject.<sup>35</sup> Two short sections of David Schaberg’s *A Patterned Past* also center on *fu Shi* instances.<sup>36</sup> Despite these studies, in general Western scholarship has paid scarce attention to this practice.

Our inquiry might best begin by returning to the state of Qi 齊 in the sixth century B.C. There lived a minister, Qing Feng 慶封 (also known as Qing Ji 慶季 “Qing the Youngest”),<sup>37</sup> who although he was a descendant of the royal house, seems to have been unable to understand the point of passages cited to him from the *Poetry*. Qing Feng’s clan, one of the four most powerful in the state of Qi at the time,<sup>38</sup> had a dastardly reputation. Qing Ke 慶克, Feng’s father, had carried on a scandalous affair with Sheng Meng Zi 聲孟子, the mother of Duke Ling 靈 of Qi (r. 581–554 B.C.), in part by dressing as a woman and being carried in a cart into the ruler’s residence.<sup>39</sup> In 574 B.C. Ke was dispatched as an assistant commander to suppress a rebellion, but was put to death by his commander, Cui Zhu 崔杼.<sup>40</sup> The following year Cui Feng was made a Grand Minister (literally, made Daifu 大夫, a position which in Qi approximated that of Qing 卿, in other feudal states, that is to say one of the highest ministers, with some military command as well<sup>41</sup>) and Feng’s brother, Qing Zuo 慶佐, was appointed Minister of Justice (Sikou 司寇).<sup>42</sup> Following the assassination of Duke Zhuang 莊 (r. 553–548 B.C.) by Cui Zhu’s men in 548 B.C.,<sup>43</sup> Cui set

32 As Sanders has rendered the term; cf. Sanders 2006, 17. The terms *ge Shi* 歌詩 and *song Shi* 誦詩 also appear. Tam (1975, 14–15) believes that the poems were crooned or chanted in a rhythmic, singsong fashion.

33 See the appended “Selected further reading.”

34 Tam 1975.

35 Sanders 2006, 15–72.

36 Schaberg 2001, 72–89 (“Artifacts of the Zhou: Citing *Shi* and *Shangshu*”) and 234–240 (“Poetry Recitation”).

37 Qing was the clan name, Feng his given name (*ming* 名) and Jia 家 was his style name (*zi* 字); Zi 子 (in the appellation Zi Jia 子家) was an honorific. See Fang Xuanchen, 583, entry 2014.

38 The other three ministerial clans were the Cui 崔, Gao 高, and Luan 欒. Through the 540s and 530s B.C. there were purges, coups, murders, and open conflict that led to the extermination of all four clans and the rise of the Chen 陳 (i. e. Tian 田) and Bao 鮑 clans.

39 *Zuo zhuan*, Cheng 17.6 (898). Sheng Meng Zi (was from the state of Song and had earlier carried on an affair with Qiao Ru 僑如; cf. *Zuo zhuan*, Cheng 16.10 (894).

40 *Zuo zhuan*, Cheng 17.9 (900). According to *Zuo zhuan*, Cheng 18.2 (907), it was Guo Zuo 國佐 who killed Qing Ke. Perhaps he did so at Cui Zhu’s command.

41 See Lü Zongli 1994, 696, and *Qiguo kao dingbu* 1.53.

42 *Zuo zhuan*, Cheng 18.3 (908).

43 For the complicated background to this assassination, in which Duke Zhuang openly carried on an affair with Cui Zhu’s wife, see *Shiji* 32.1500–1501 and Nienhauser V.1, 98–100.

up the new ruler, Duke Jing 景 (r. 547–490), and had himself appointed Chief Minister with Qing Feng as his Deputy Chief Minister.<sup>44</sup>

Two years later a quarrel developed between Cui Zhu's sons by his first wife, Cui Cheng 崔成 and Cui Jiang 崔強, and the son and brother of his second wife. As a result the Cui brothers planned to kill the second wife's relatives and confided their intentions to Qing Feng. Feng consulted with his friend and associate, Lupu Pie 盧蒲癸,<sup>45</sup> and decided that he should add to the dissension among the Cuis as a means to enhance the power of his own clan. He encouraged Cui Cheng and Cui Jiang to go ahead with their plan and they killed both of their antagonists in the Cui residence. When Cui Zhu learned of this he was enraged and wanted to go to seek Qing Feng's advice. As he made ready to leave his residence, he found that his guards and servants had run away. Thus he went alone to Qing Feng. Feng reassured Cui Zhu of his support and even offered to punish the wrongdoers. He then took some armed men and attacked the Cui residence. Although the Cui's resisted fiercely, Feng eventually enlisted the help of the *guoren* 國人 (people of the capital city) to overcome them, putting Cui Cheng and Cui Jiang to the sword. The attackers sacked the residence, carrying off all the treasures and servants. Only Cui Ming 崔明 was able to flee, making his way to Lu. Cui Zhu's wife hung herself. Lupu Pie then drove Cui Zhu back to his residence where, upon seeing the devastation, he also hung himself. Qing Feng then held all the power in Qi and acted without restraint, as the following passage illustrates<sup>46</sup>

Qing Feng of Qi was fond of hunting and loved wine. He gave over the administration [of Qi] to Qing She [his son] and taking his women and treasures moved to Lupu Pie's residence. They exchanged women and drank wine. After a few days, [the officers of] the state moved court and held it there.<sup>47</sup>

We next see Qing Feng in Lu where he had been sent as an envoy to extend the good wishes of the Qi ruler. He traveled in a splendid carriage which elicited the following exchange between two Lu officials:

Meng Sun said to Shu Sun, "Is not Qing Ji's carriage quite beautiful!" Shu Sun replied, "I have heard it said that 'When the beauty of someone's paraphernalia is out of balance [with the character of the person], he will certainly come to an evil end.' Of what use is a beautiful carriage [to him]?" Shu Sun gave Qing Feng a banquet and Feng was not respectful [i. e. did not know the etiquette of such a banquet]. [Shu Sun] then chanted the "Look at the Rat," but Qing Feng still did not understand.<sup>48</sup>

44 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 25.2 (1099). This is the famous incident where the Grand Historian of Qi recorded that Cui Zhu had killed his sovereign and was then put to death. Two of his younger brothers followed the Grand Historian's example and also died. When the fourth brother came forward to record this event, Cui Zhu finally desisted.

45 Lupu was his clan name and Pie his given name. See Fang Xuanchen, 615, entry 2167.

46 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 28.7 (1136–1138).

47 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 28.9 (1145): 齊慶封好田而嗜酒，與慶舍政，則以其內實，遷于盧蒲癸氏，易內而飲酒數日國遷朝焉。

48 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 27.2 (1127): 齊慶封來聘，其車美。孟孫謂叔孫曰：「慶季之車，不亦美乎！」

“Look at the Rat” (Xiang shu 相鼠, Mao 52) reads:

Look at the rat, it has its skin.	相鼠有皮，
A man without courtesy,	人而無儀。
A man without courtesy,	人而無儀，
Why does he not die?!	不死何為！
Look at the rat, it has its teeth.	相鼠有齒，
A man without limits,	人而無止。
A man without limits,	人而無止。
What is he waiting for, die!	不死何俟！
Look at the rat, it has its limbs.	相鼠有體，
A man with no sense of ritual,	人而無禮。
A man with no sense of ritual,	人而無禮，
Why does he not quickly die!	胡不遄死！

Tam Koo-yin has argued that in many cases only the first stanza of these poems was chanted.<sup>49</sup> Yet the first stanza of this poem is quite explicit. Three explanations as to why Qing Feng did not understand Shu Sun’s meaning suggest themselves. First, Qing Feng was too uneducated or too coarse to comprehend the meaning. Overall the narratives in the *Zuo* involving Qing Feng show him to be despicable, but by no means insensitive. A second possibility is, therefore, that he pretended not to understand Shu Sun’s insult. Thirdly, perhaps Shu Sun chanted only the first line of “Look at the Rat” or he may have – as Yuan Yang did for Liu Tan – modified the poem to pointedly refer to Qing Feng. In all three scenarios, however, Shu Sun’s intent would seem to be unmistakable. Shu Sun must have known of Qing Feng’s earlier behavior and of his reputation. By citing “Look at the Rat” he intended to offer both a characterization of Qing Feng as an uncultured man who has no literary sensibilities and a prediction that he will die a violent death. It would not actually require mastery of the *Shi* to understand that chanting any lines of this poem were designed to give offense. Yet Qing Feng, the *Zuo* tells us, did not understand.

Putting this question aside for the moment, let us return (as Qing Feng did) to Qi. There under Qing She’s regime many of those who fled Qi when the Cui’s were killed now returned, including a certain Lupu Gui 盧蒲癸. Qing She put his trust in Gui, employed him as a bodyguard, and gave him his daughter in marriage.<sup>50</sup> Qing and Lupu were both clans of the same *xing* 姓 (surname), Jiang 姜.<sup>51</sup> Thus some of Qing She’s officers asked Gui about his marriage, saying:

叔孫曰：「豹聞之：『服美不稱，必以惡終。』美車何為？」叔孫與慶封食，不敬。為賦〈相鼠〉，亦不知也。Sanders has a short discussion of this passage; cf. Sanders 2006, 50–51; see also Tam 1975, 89 and 233–234.

49 See the brief discussion of this passage in Tam 1975, 15–16.

50 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 28.9 (1145).

51 Both descended from Duke Huan of Qi 齊桓公 (r. 685–643 B.C.), see Fang Xuanchen, 615, entry 2165, and 582–583, entry 2010.

Men and women should be of different surnames. Why did you not avoid [marrying] someone from the same ancestor?" Gui replied, "As someone from the same ancestor did not avoid me [i. e. Qing She selected Gui to marry his daughter], how could I alone avoid it? Like breaking off one stanza in chanting the *Poetry* I have taken that which I sought from it. Why should I have recognized a common ancestry (or "ancestor")?"<sup>52</sup>

Here Yang Bojun's comments are pertinent. Yang explains *fu Shi duan zhang* 賦詩斷章, "breaking off one stanza in offering a *Poem*," as

[...] metaphorical language. In diplomacy of the Spring and Autumn period intention was often expressed by offering [or "chanting"] a *Poem*. The chanter and the listener each took from it [the broken-off stanza] that which they sought, without caring about the original meaning, they broke off a stanza to seize upon a meaning.<sup>53</sup>

This passage on the one hand advances the story of the Qing Clan, and on the other reveals one important modern scholar's view of how the *Poetry* was used diplomatically.

Qing Feng himself continued to live a life of luxury. In charge of meals for all the royal scions, his overly penurious presentation of one meal led to dissension with Duke Huan's grandsons. This presaged the waning of the power of the Qing Clan. When Qing Feng took Chen Wuyu 陳無宇 off hunting in Lai 萊 in the tenth month (545 B.C.),<sup>54</sup> Chen's father summoned him home on the pretext that his mother was ill. Chen's father seems to have understood that a rebellion against the Qing's was brewing. Qing Feng, also realizing this, consulted the tortoise shell. When Wuyu read the cracks in the shell he saw them as portending death. Qing Feng, believing that this prognostication must refer to Wuyu's mother, allowed him to return home. However, a clansman, Qing Si 慶嗣, warned Qing Feng that this omen portended Feng's own death, urging him to rush back to the capital to try to forestall events. When Qing Feng refused to believe his interpretation, Qing Si suggested they then flee south to Wu or Yue. But Qing Feng rejected the idea.

Back in the capital Lupu Gui and Qing She's other bodyguard, Wang He 王何, took advantage of a day of sacrifices at the ancestral temple that also involved street performances to take over the ruler's residence and assassinate Qing She. Qing Feng returned to the capital and tried to engage the rebels, but they held in defensive positions and would not fight with him.

In the end he came in flight [to us in Lu] and presented a (his) chariot to Ji Wuzi. It was so beautiful and polished that it could be used as a mirror. When Zhan Zhuang Shu saw it he said: "If a chariot is so well polished, the owners must be exhausted. It is fitting that he fled." Shusun Mu Zi feasted him. Qing Feng did not pay proper respect in offering sacrifices. Muzi was not pleased, and had musicians intone 'Reed Owl' ["Mao chi" 茅鴟] for him, but he still did not understand [the implications].<sup>55</sup>

52 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 28.9 (1145): 慶舍之士，謂盧蒲癸曰，男女辨姓，子不辟宗，何也，曰，宗不余辟，余獨焉辟之，賦詩斷章，余取所求焉，惡識宗。Tr. Legge V, 541. See also the comments on two possible antithetical understandings of this passage by Schaberg (2001, 73).

53 Yang Bojun, annotating *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 28.9 (1145–1146): 譬喻語。春秋外交常以賦詩表意，賦者與聽者各取所求，不顧本義，斷章取義也。See related comments by Sanders (2006, 59–60) and Van Zoeren (1991, 42–43).

54 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 28.9 (1147).

Since “The Reed Owl” (“Mao chi” 茅鷗) has been lost, there is no way to speculate about why Qing Feng again missed the point.

Before long, when some men of Qi came to have him given up to them [“cause them to yield (Qing Feng) to them”],<sup>56</sup> he fled to Wu. Gou Yu<sup>57</sup> of Wu gave him Zhufang [as a fief].<sup>58</sup> He gathered his clan there and made it his residence. He became even more rich.<sup>59</sup>

Qing Feng spent several years in Zhufang (543–537 B.C.). During this time the neighboring state of Chu was in turmoil. King Kang 康王 (r. 559–545 B.C.) had died, leaving his son, Yuan 員, to be enthroned. Although he ruled (known as Jia Ao 郟敖) from 544–541 B.C., his uncles (sons of King Kang) actually held power. In 542 B.C., Zi Bi 子比, Noble Scion Wei of Chu 楚公子圍, was made premier. The following year Zi Bi was sent as envoy to Zheng, but returned when he heard the king was ill. Granted audience, he strangled the ailing king and took the throne himself (King Ling 靈王, r. 540–529 B.C.).<sup>60</sup> Five years later King Ling called an assembly of the feudal lords at Shen 申<sup>61</sup> and turned his attention to Wu. With this the *Zuo zhuan* continues the narrative of Qing Feng:

In the fall in the seventh month the seigneur of Chu,<sup>62</sup> with the [troops] of the feudal lords, attacked Wu. The Heir of Song and the Lord of Zheng returned home [from the assembly of the feudal lords] beforehand, but Hua Feisui of Song<sup>63</sup> and the Grand Master of Zheng went along with him. [The Seigneur of Chu] sent Qu Shen<sup>64</sup> to besiege Zhufang and on the *jiashen* 甲申 day of the eighth month he overcame it,<sup>65</sup> taking Qing Feng captive and completely wiping out his clan. When they were about to put Qing Feng to death, [Wu] Ju of Jiao<sup>66</sup> said, “Your subject has heard that only one with no flaws can put someone to death. Qing Feng only acted in oppo-

55 Or “again did not understand the implications,” referring back to Qing Feng’s first visit to Lu as an envoy (see text above). *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 28.9 (1149): 遂來奔，獻車於季武子，美澤可以鑑，展莊叔見之，曰，車甚澤，人必瘁，宜其亡也，叔孫穆子食慶封，慶封汜祭，穆子不說，使工為之誦茅鷗，亦不知。

56 Legge reads *rang* 讓 as “to reproach [Lu for sheltering Qing Feng].” Cf. Legge V, 542.

57 Gou Yu was a scion of Wu named Yimo 夷末, cf. *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 28.9 (1149).

58 Zhufang is located south of modern Dantuzhen 丹徒鎮, east of Suzhenjiang City 蘇鎮江市 in Jiangsu.

59 According to the account in *Shiji* (31.1452, “Wu Taibo shijia” 吳太伯世家), Qing Feng came to Wu in 545 B.C. and was married to the daughter of Yuzhai, the King 王餘祭 (r. 548–531 B.C.). *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 28.9 (1149): 既而齊人來讓，奔吳，吳句餘予之朱方，聚其族焉而居之，富於其舊。

60 *Shiji* 40.1703, Nienhauser V.1, 399–400.

61 *Shiji* 40.1704.

62 This was 537 B.C. *Zi* 子 were used in the *Zuo zhuan* to refer to rulers of the smaller states and those states which followed the social codes differing from those of the Central States (*yi li* 夷禮), i. e. Chu, Wu and Yue.

63 Hua was his clan name, Feisui his given name; cf. Fang Xuanchen, 520, entry 1750.

64 The Qu’s were one of the royal families of Chu. Shen was the son of Qu Dang 屈蕩; cf. Fang Xuanchen, 354, entry 1052. He was put to death in 536 B.C. under suspicion of having colluded with the state of Wu; cf. *Zuo zhuan*, Shao 5.2, 1265.

65 The date is an error, since there was no such day in the eighth month. Perhaps this refers to the *jiashen* day of the ninth month (10 September 539 B.C.; see Xu Xiqi 1997, 608.

66 I. e. Wu Ju 伍舉, the son of Wu Can 伍參; cf. Fang Xuanchen, 270, entry 708. Jiao 椒 was their fief.

sition to [his ruler's] orders. This is the reason he is here. Will he willingly submit to being put to death? To make him known among the feudal lords [whose troops and representatives were still present] – what use would that be? The King did not listen to him. He caused Qing Feng to shoulder a battle axe and a halberd and make the rounds of [the camps of] the feudal lords and ordered him to recite, “Let no one murder his lord [Duke Zhuang] and weaken [the power] of his orphaned son [Duke Jing], to make a covenant with the feudal lords [or his own state], as Qing Feng did.” [But] Qing Feng said, “Let no one murder his lord, Jun [i. e. Jia Ao], the son of his elder brother, and take his place, as Wei the scion by a concubine of King Gong of Chu did.” The King [of Chu then] sent someone to quickly kill him.<sup>67</sup>

This passage brings to an end Qing Feng's life and his *Zuo zhuan* “biography.” It also reveals that Qing Feng had a skill for quick thinking and skillful manipulation of language, giving rise again to the question of how he could not have understood the *Poetry* recited for him in the two passages cited previously. One solution would be that which Yang Bojun has suggested, that both the chanter of poems and the listener “each took from it [the broken-off stanza] that which they sought, without caring about the original meaning.”<sup>68</sup> Thus for those nobles in Lu who looked down on Qi, and all the more disdained the unprincipled Qing Feng, the poems they cited were clear insults, but Qing Feng himself simply “took what he sought” from them, refusing to accept their condemnation by feigning ignorance of their intent.

### III Duke Xian of Wey and the *Poetry*

Having examined Qing Feng and his relationship to the *Poetry*, let us return to examine the key figure in the passage with which this study began: Duke Xian of Wey 衛獻公 (r. 575–559 and 546–544 B.C.). Recall that when the Duke was being held in Jin in 547 B.C., the poem recited at a meeting seeking his release that convinced Jin to free him was “Qiang Zhong Zi.” Before joining that meeting, however, some background on Duke Xian seems in order. Although there are earlier references to the duke in the *Zuo zhuan*, the first mention of him relevant to the *Poetry* occurs in the 14th year of Duke Xiang, that is 559 B.C.:

Duke Xian of Wey invited Sun Wenzhi [Sun Linfu 孫林父] and Ning Huizi to eat with him. They both dressed for court and went to court. The sun set and he [the Duke] had not summoned them, but was instead shooting geese in his park. The two men followed him there, and without taking off his leather cap he spoke with them. The two men were angry. Sun Wenzhi went to Qi [his fief] and sent Sun Kuai [his son] in to court. The Duke had [Kuai] drink wine with him and ordered the Grand Music Master to sing the last stanza of “Artful Words” [“Qiao yan” 巧言, Mao 198]. The Grand Music Master refused. The Music Master Cao requested to do it.

67 *Zuo zhuan*, Zhao 4.3 (1253): 秋七月，楚子以諸侯伐吳，宋大夫鄭伯先歸，宋華費遂鄭大夫從，使屈申圍朱方，八月，甲申，克之，執齊慶封而盡滅其族，將戮慶封，椒舉曰，臣聞無瑕者可以戮人，慶封惟逆命，是以在此，其肯從於戮乎，播於諸侯，焉用之，王弗聽，負之釜鉞，以徇於諸侯，使言曰，無或如齊慶封，弑其君，弱其孤，以盟其大夫，慶封曰，無或如楚共王之庶子圍，弑其君兄之子，麋而代之，以盟諸侯，王使速殺之。

68 Cf. above, page 85.

Earlier the Duke had a favorite concubine. When he had Master Cao teach her to play the zither, Master Cao beat her with a whip. The Duke was angry and had Master Cao beaten three hundred strokes with a whip. For this reason Master Cao wanted to sing it in order to anger Sun Zi and repay the Duke. The Duke had him sing the song but in the end he recited it [without music].<sup>69</sup> Kuai was afraid and reported this to Wenzhi [his father]. Wenzhi said, “My lord hates us (or me). If I do not act first, I am certain to die.”

He brought together all his adherents in Qi and took them into the capital. He went to see Qu Boyu and said, “The cruel oppressiveness of our Lord is that which you know of. I am afraid that our altars of soil and grain will be toppled. What can we do?” [Qu Boyu] replied, “The lord regulates the state, can a minister dare to be disloyal? Even if he is disloyal, how can we know that [his successor] will be better?” In the end, Sun Kuai left, going out [of the state] through the nearest pass.

The Duke sent Zi Jiao, Zi Bo, and Zi Pi to make a covenant with Sun Zi (Sun Wen Zi) at Qiugong. Sun Zi killed them all. On the *jiwei* day of the fourth month, Zi Zhang [the son of Duke Xian], fled to Qi. The Duke went to Juan and sent Zi Xing to entreat with Sun Zi. Sun Zi again killed him. The Duke left the state and fled to Qi. Mr. Sun pursued him, defeating the followers of the Duke at Heze.<sup>70</sup>

This passage reveals to the reader the disposition of the Duke and explains how he came to be in exile where he remained for twelve years. It also gives further clues as to how the *Poetry* was used. The text suggests that Master Cao deliberately ignored the Duke’s intention that he sing the offensive final stanza – which would have allowed the accompanying music to veil the content. Instead, he recited the stanza without music to make clearer the Duke’s challenge to Sun Kuai, hoping thereby to eventually gain his revenge on Duke Xian through the Sun clan’s power.

That final stanza reads:

What kind of men are these!	彼何人斯？
Residing on the banks of the River;	居河之麋。
They have no strength or courage,	無拳無勇，
They are simply promoters of disorder;	職為亂階。
You are small and inflated,	既微且尫，
What is your courage like?	爾勇伊何！
You plan deeds great and many,	為猶將多，
But how many are the followers where you reside? <sup>71</sup>	爾居徒幾何！

69 *Wang Li gu Hanyu zidian*, 1278, defines *song* 誦 in this passage as “to use pleasant words and subtle language to offer criticism.”

70 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 14.4 (1010–1011): 衛獻公戒孫文子，寧惠子食，皆服而朝，日旰不召，而射鴻於圃，二子從之，不釋皮冠而與之言，二子怒，孫文子如戚，孫蒯入使，公飲之酒，使大師歌巧言之卒章，大師辭，師曹請為之。初，公有嬖妾，使師曹誨之琴，師曹鞭之。公怒，鞭師曹三百，故師曹欲歌之，以怒孫子，以報公，公使歌之，遂誦之，蒯懼，告文子，文子曰，君忌我矣，弗先，必死，并幣於戚，而入見蘧伯玉曰，君之暴虐，子所知也，大懼社稷之傾覆，將若之何，對曰，君制其國，臣敢奸之，雖奸之，庸知愈乎，遂行，從近關出。公使子蟠，子伯，子皮，與孫子盟于丘宮，孫子皆殺之，四月，己未，子展奔齊，公如鄆，使子行於孫子，孫子又殺之，公出奔齊，孫氏追之，敗公徒于河澤。Tr. Legge V, 465. There is a parallel passage in *Shiji* 37.1596.

71 Cf. Karlgren, 147–148.

Although “Artful Words” is traditionally read as a lament sung by a slandered minister to criticize his ruler,<sup>72</sup> here it is an arrogant challenge aimed directly at the Sun Clan whose fief was on the banks of the Yellow River a few miles north-northeast of the Wey capital at Diqui 帝丘.<sup>73</sup> As Master Cao had hoped this eventually led the Sun Clan’s to drive Duke Xian into exile. A key term in this passage is *song* 誦: I have translated 公使歌之, 遂誦之 as “[The Duke] had him sing the song and then to declaim his intended meaning.” This is in part based on Legge: “The duke ordered him to sing the words, and further to intimate his meaning in them.”<sup>74</sup> But, Yang Bojun suggests, *song* may mean simply to recite in cadence (*yiyang duncuo* 抑揚頓挫).<sup>75</sup> In either case it shows that Duke Xian was concerned that Sun Kuai would not understand his threat merely from hearing “Artful Words” sung. Obviously communicating by citing or singing the *Poetry* was not always instantly successful.

After Duke Xian was defeated and fled abroad, he was lodged by Qi in Lai 邾.<sup>76</sup> Several of his former subjects visited him (such as Zang He 臧紇),<sup>77</sup> but he gave them no indication of remorse and instead acted all the more arrogant. In the meantime, the people of Wey installed Gongsun Piao 剽 [as Duke Xiang 襄, r. 555?–544] who ruled with Sun Linfu and Ning Zhi as his chief ministers.<sup>78</sup> Wey was greatly weakened and moreover was situated between two larger, powerful states, Jin and Qi. Qi to the east was harboring Duke Xian and thus not on good terms with the new government. On Wey’s western borders, Jin followed events in Diqui with interest. Duke Dao of Jin 晉悼公 (r. 572–558 B.C.) considered attacking it,<sup>79</sup> but was dissuaded by his Prime Minister, Zhonghang Xianzi 中行獻子 (i. e. Xun Yan 荀偃).<sup>80</sup> In late 559 B.C. representatives of the various states met in Sun Linfu’s fief town of Qi 戚 to discuss stabilizing the situation in Wey.<sup>81</sup> The following year the balance of power changed radically with the death of Duke Dao. His successor, Duke Ping of Jin 晉平公 (r. 557–532), took immediate aggressive action, summoning the feudal lords of

72 See Legge IV, Prolegomena (“The Little Preface”), 68.

73 Diqui is located near modern Puyang 濮陽 in northeastern Henan. Tan Qixiang locates Qi (also known as Su 宿) on the east bank of what was then the southern branch of the He 河; cf. Tan Qixiang I, 25. Yang Bojun, annotating *Zuo zhuan*, Wen 1.9 (509), argues that it was on the west bank.

74 Legge V, 465.

75 Yang Bojun, annotating *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 14.4 (1011). Shen Yucheng’s *baihua* translation reads *lang song* 朗誦, “to recite with expression” or “to read with a cadence.” Cf. *Zuo zhuan yiwu*, 288–289.

76 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 14.4 (1014).

77 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 14.4 (1015).

78 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 14.4 (1015). Yang Bojun cites Du Yu that he was the grandson of Duke Mu 穆公 (r. 599–589 B.C.), but *Shiji* 37.1596 says he was the younger brother of Duke Ding 定公 (r. 588–577 B.C.), i. e. Duke Mu’s son.

79 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 14.9 (1019).

80 Xun was a commander of Jin troops as early as 572 B.C.; cf. *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 1.2 (917). He had become commander in chief by the time of his death in 554 B.C.; cf. *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 19.1 (1046). Xun was one of two clan names he held, the other being Zhonghang 中行. Yan 偃 was his given name (also known by his style name, You 遊游, and posthumous title Xianzi 獻子; cf. Fang Xuanchen, 436, entry 1402).

81 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 14.9 (1019): 冬, 會于戚, 謀定衛也。

Lu, Song, Wey, Zheng, and various minor states to Chouliang 溴梁 (Chou Weir)<sup>82</sup> in an attempt to form an alliance against Qi and Chu. During this meeting the Duke

[...] had the grand masters of the various states dance [when they sang the *Poetry*] stating that “When singing the *Poetry* it must match.”<sup>83</sup>

The poem by Gao Hou 高厚 of Qi<sup>84</sup> poem did not match. Xun Yan [the Jin Prime Minister] was angered and said “The feudal lords have differing intentions.” He ordered the feudal lords to make a covenant with Gao Hou and Gao Hou fled back [to Qi].<sup>85</sup>

The question is the verb *lei* 類 – “match” to what? Two modern translators of the *Zuo zhuan*, Li Mengsheng 李夢生 and Shen Yucheng 沈玉成, both argue that what singing the poetry must match was *the dancing*.<sup>86</sup> But this does not fit the context. Why does Xun Yan become angry? More likely, *lei* here means “to be of the same kind” or “to match each other.”<sup>87</sup> That is to say each of the odes presented was to support the idea of an alliance that would be to the detriment of Qi and Chu. Although there is no record of what songs were sung and danced at this meeting, it is obvious that Duke Ping was challenging the creativity of the officials from the various states to evince a unanimity in their selections.

For the rest of the decade of the 550s (during which time Confucius was born), Jin and Qi campaigned against each other. Wey became more stable under Sun Linfu who led armies with Jin against Qi. In 548 B.C. Duke Xian attempted a reconciliation with Ning Xi 甯喜, Ning Zhi’s son, that would eventually enable him to return to Wey.<sup>88</sup> When Taishu Wenzi 大叔文子 heard of this he cited a couplet from “Gu feng” 谷風 (Valley Wind of the East, Mao 35) which reads:

My person has not pleased [the ruler],	我躬不閱，
What leisure have I to think about my posterity	遑恤我後！

82 Annotating *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 16.2 (1025), Yang Bojun locates Chouliang west of modern Jiyuan 濟源 County in northwest Henan. But since the duke is said to have descended the Yellow River, it is possible the meeting took place closer to the confluence of the Ji and Yellow rivers near Meng 孟 County.

83 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 16.1 (1026): 使諸大夫舞，曰：歌詩必類。

84 Gao Hou appeared in the account of an assize held in 563 B.C. (*Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 10.1, 974). There he is depicted in a similarly unflattering manner. Aiding the heir of Qi, Guang 光, in entertaining the feudal lords in a preliminary meeting prior to an assize held in Chu territory, he acted with disrespect leading Shi Ruo 士弱 of Jin to predict that Qi’s altars of soil and grain (i. e. the state of Qi) would be lost.

85 Gao Hou was the sole high official representing Qi at the meeting (thus the *Chunqiu* does not include Qi in the list of states taking part. *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 16.1 (1027): 齊高厚之詩不類。荀偃怒且曰：諸侯有異志矣。使諸大夫盟高厚，高厚逃歸。

86 Li Mengsheng in *Zuo zhuan yi zhu*, 733, and Shen Yucheng in *Zuo zhuan yiwen*, 295.

87 See Zhao Shengqun’s 趙生群 explanation of this passage in his *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan xinzhu*, 578, n. 12. See also Legge V, 472: “[...] made their great officers dance before them, telling them that the odes which they sang must be befitting the occasion.”

88 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 25.15 (1108–1109). Late in life Ning Zhi 寧殖, who together with Sun Linfu overthrew Duke Xian, came to believe that this act had been a grave error; on his deathbed had his son promised to help the Duke return to Wey. Cf. *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 20.7 (1055).

Saying this he is suggesting that Ning Xi's acceptance of Duke Xian would doom the state of Wey,<sup>89</sup> followed by two lines from "Sheng min" (Mao 260):

Day and night not idle,	風夜匪解，
In order to serve a single man.	以事一人。

Herewith he is pointing out that by acceding to Duke Xian's wishes Ning Xi was going against his own ruler, Duke Xiang. Duke Xian promised to only aspire to performing the sacrifices but to leave the government in Ning Xi's hands.<sup>90</sup> Ning Xi had second thoughts about inviting back Duke Xian and had one of his officials visit Duke Xian. He returned with the news that Duke Xian was unrepentant. But the matter had been decided and Ning Xi felt he was keeping the promise he made to his father. Ning Xi then attacked the Sun Clan, defeated them, and killed Duke Xiang and his heir apparent. Sun Linfu went over to Jin. Duke Xian returned to his capital and attacked Sun Linfu's fief at Qi and Sun appealed to his allies in Jin. Early in 547 B.C., Jin called together rulers of several states intending to send a punitive expedition against Wey and Duke Xian was summoned, to no avail.<sup>91</sup> In the sixth month of the same year representatives of Jin, Song, Zheng and Cao met with Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (r. 572–542) at Chanyuan 澶淵<sup>92</sup> to further consider Wey's situation. They decided to expand Qi (Sun Linfu clan's fief) by taking sixty towns from Wey.<sup>93</sup> At this point Duke Xian himself, who had apparently been at the site, but held out of the deliberations by the Jin troops, was allowed to join the assize. Then the Jin representatives had two of Wey's ministers, Ning Xi and Beigong Yi 北宮遺,<sup>94</sup> arrested and taken back to Jin. Duke Xian followed them to Jin where he was arrested and held in the household of Shi Ruo 士弱.<sup>95</sup> The following month, the ruler of Qi (Duke Jing 景 who had just been installed, r. 547–490) and Zheng (Duke Ding 定, r. 564–530), two states that had not been in Jin's alliance, traveled to Jin on behalf of Duke Xian. The following passage rehearses those events that were referred to at the start of this paper – the gathering at which "Qiang Zhong Zi" was read in a fashion that puzzled Martin Kern. The text reads:

The Lord of Jin [Duke Ping 平, r. 557–532] feasted them [the rulers of Qi and Zheng] together. The Lord of Jin chanted "Jia le" 嘉樂 [Admirable and Pleased, Mao 249]. Guo Jing Zi<sup>96</sup> as ritual

89 "Gu feng" is traditionally read as a wife whose husband has taken a new partner; that fits the context here.

90 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 26.2 (1112).

91 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 26.5 (1114).

92 According to Zhao Shengqun, Chanyuan was located on the east bank of the Yellow River northwest of modern Puyang 濮陽 City in Henan, not far from the Wey capital. See *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan xinzhub*, 639–640. Cf. Tan Qixiang I, 25.

93 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 26.7 (1115–1116).

94 The son of the Wey commander Beigong Gua 北宮括 and scion of a powerful clan in that state. Cf. Fang Xuanchen, 229–230, entries 536 and 534. Appears only in this one mention in the *Zuo zhuan*.

95 Also known by his posthumous title Zhuang Zi 莊子, father, Shi Wozhuo 士渚濁 (fl. 573 B.C.) had been Grand Tutor and his grandfather Shi Muzi 士穆子 an excellency in Jin. See Fang Xuanchen, 101, entries 0013 and 0015, and Pines 2002, 326.

96 The Guo clan was one of the most powerful in Qi. Guo Jingzi was the posthumous title of Guo Ruo 國弱 (clan name and given name), younger brother of Guo Sheng 國勝. Cf. Fang Xuanchen, 453–454, entry 1466.

master for [or “presiding over the rites for”<sup>97</sup>] the Lord of Qi chanted the “Lu xiao” 蓼蕭 [Long the Southernwood, Mao 173], Zi Zhan<sup>98</sup> who was acting on behalf of the Lord of Zheng chanted the “Zi yi” 緇衣 [Black Jacket, Mao 75]. Shu Xiang<sup>99</sup> instructed the Lord of Jin to pay his respects to the two rulers, saying, “This lonely ruler dares to pay his respects [or “express his gratitude”] to the Ruler of Qi for keeping safe the ancestral halls of our forefathers and to pay his respects to the Ruler of Zheng for not being duplicitous.<sup>100</sup>

These opening songs are what one might expect. “Admirable and Pleased” is a song in praise of a king – in this case the ruler of Jin is praising two “kings,” the rulers of Qi and Zheng. The poem opens:

Admirable and pleased be the ruler,	嘉樂君子，
illustrious is his charisma;	顯顯令德。
He orders well the people, orders well his men;	宜民宜人，
he receives blessings from Heaven,	受祿于天。
they protect, help and give him the mandate,	保右命之，
from Heaven extended to him.	自天申之。

Guo Jing Zi replied with “Long the Southernwood” which begins:

Long is that southern wood,	蓼彼蕭斯，
the fallen dew is abundant;	零露漙兮。
I have seen the lord,	既見君子，
and my heart is relieved.	我心寫兮。
We laugh and converse,	燕笑語兮，
in this way there is joy and tranquility”	是以有譽處兮。

Again the meaning is clear and fits to the situation, the dew referring to the favor that the Duke of Jin has extended to the other feudal lords. Zi Zhan presents the third poem, “Zi yi” 緇衣 (Black Jacket, Mao 75), a repetitious little verse that seems a poor third in this competition:

How well your black coat fits,	緇衣之宜兮，
when it is worn out, I will make another for you.	敝、予又改為兮。
I will go to your office,	適子之館兮，
when we return I will serve you food.	還、予授子之粢兮。

97 Reading *xiang* 相 as *zan li* 贊禮.

98 Zi Zhan (his style name), also known as Gongsun Shezhi 公孫舍之 (clan name / given name), was in charge of the government of Zheng from 554–544. He was actually the grandson of Duke Mu 穆 (r. 627–602), as his appellation suggests. Cf. Fang Xuanchen, 184–185, entry 351, and 158, entry 214; also Pines 2002, 313.

99 Referred to here by his style name, Shu Xiang, he was a member of a collateral royal lineage in Jin; also known as Yangshe Xi 羊舍肸 (clan name / given name, d. ca. 520), he had been Grand Tutor in Jin for a decade before this meeting. Cf. Fang Xuanchen, 290–291, entry 780; Pines 2002, 330.

100 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 26.5 (1116–1117): 晉侯兼享之，晉侯賦嘉樂，國景子相齊侯，賦蓼蕭，子展相鄭伯，賦緇衣，叔向命晉侯拜二君，曰，寡君敢拜齊君之安我先君之宗祧也，敢拜鄭君之不貳也。

Whith this Zi Zhan is apparently expressing his ruler's intent to wait on the Lord of Jin. Thereafter, the *Zuo zhuan* continues:

Guo Zi had Yan Ping Zhong<sup>101</sup> meet privately with Shu Xiang and say: "The Ruler of Jin has manifested his bright virtue among the feudal lords, sympathizing with them in their troubles and supplying them in their needs. He has corrected their transgressions and put in order their turmoil. This is the means by which he has become the master of the covenant [i. e. the hegemon]. Now, on behalf of a subject, his lord has been arrested. How could this happen?" Shu Xiang reported this to Zhao Wen Zi<sup>102</sup> and Wen Zi reported to the Lord of Jin with this. The Lord of Jin outlined the crimes of the Lord of Wey and had Shu Xiang report them to the two lords. Guo [Jing] Zi chanted the "Pei zhi rou yi" 轡之柔矣 [Gentle the Bridle, a lost poem] and Zi Zhan chanted "Qiang Zhong Zi xi" 將仲子兮 [I Beg You, Zhong Zi (Younger Brother?)]. Only then did the Lord of Jin agree to allow the Ruler of Wey to return.<sup>103</sup>

Martin Kern's puzzlement has a good basis, for "I Beg You, Younger Brother" begins in a fashion that apparently has nothing to do with the confinement of Duke Xian:

I beg you, Zhong Zi, don't cross into my hamlet, don't break my planted willows, Could I care so much for them?	將仲子兮， 無踰我里， 無折我樹杞。 豈敢愛之？
It's father and mother I dread. Zhong, you're embraceable, but the talk of father and mother is indeed something dreadful.	畏我父母。 仲可懷也 父母之言， 亦可畏也。

So what is it – in what is normally read as a love poem – that could have convinced the Lord of Jin to release Duke Xian?<sup>104</sup> Recall Kern's comment: "Nothing in this song relates to an imprisoned ruler, nor did subsequent readers dwell on this interpretation." If the point in presenting poems in the *Zuo zhuan* is that the selection has to be relevant to the overall context, or to put it in the words of Duke Ping when he gathered the feudal lords and had their

101 Yan Zhong Ping is Yan Ying 晏嬰 (clan name / given name, ca. 580–510) whom Yuri Pines (2002, 330) calls "by far the most creative Chunqiu thinker." Zhong refers to the order of his birth, Ping was his posthumous title (Fang Xuanchen, 425, entry 1352). He was an extremely influential official in Qin for much of his adult life. A collection of anecdotes about his life became the *Yan Zi chungqiu* 晏子春秋.

102 Zhao Wu 趙武 (class name / given name) was the head of the powerful Zhao clan in Jin. He headed the administration of Jin from 548 until his death in 541 B.C. when he was given the title Wen 文 (or Xianwen 獻文); cf. Fang Xuanchen, 566, entry 1953, Pines 2002, 332.

103 *Zuo zhuan*, Xiang 26.7 (1117): 國子使晏平仲私於叔向，曰，晉君宣其明德於諸侯，恤其患而補其闕，正其違而治其煩，所以為盟主也，今為臣執君，若之何，叔向告趙文子，文子以告晉侯，晉侯言衛侯之罪，使叔向告二君，國子賦轡之柔矣，子展賦將仲子兮，晉侯乃許歸衛侯。

104 David Schaberg, in a discussion of "Ye you si jun" 野有死麋 (Mao #23), has argued that "even wooing poems and the words of a maiden could be made to speak about the relations among the great states." Cf. Schaberg 2001, 239–240.

ministers dance to a *Poem*, “In singing a *Poem* one must match [the subject at hand]” 歌詩必類. The rulers of Qi and Zheng had just praised the Lord of Jin for his role as the leader of the feudal lords, and a man whose power was based on his reputation, when “Qiang Zhong Zi” was presented. How does “Qiang Zhong Zi” match the subject at hand? The answer can be induced from the examples of other presentations of poems discussed above, examples in which it was clear that the meanings of verses were shaped by the selection of stanzas or lines as well as the presentation of the person who sings or chants them. It was often a case of “breaking off one stanza in offering a *Poem*” (*fu Shi duan zhang* 賦詩斷章). Thus let us turn to the final couplet of “Qiang Zhong Zi” which reads:

But other's talking too much is	人之多言，
indeed something dreadful.	亦可畏也。

With these words we have a probable explanation for how Zi Zhan capped the several days of feasts and conferences by reminding the Lord of Jin that failure to release Duke Xian would set “other feudal lords talking too much” which would be “indeed something dreadful.”<sup>105</sup>

#### IV Concluding Remarks

Perhaps three tentative conclusions can be tendered based on the texts examined here. First, it is obvious that educated men in the Chunqiu era had, as Confucius suggested, “their minds aroused” by the *Poetry*. They knew the poems so well that it was, again as Confucius is reported to have said, “the means by which they expressed their opinions.” This is especially evident in the *Zuo zhuan* accounts of officials engaged in interstate diplomacy. Second, it seems that the opinions expressed via lines from the *Poetry* were not always easy to understand. Not only did Qing Feng seem to struggle with interpretations, but Duke Xian, worried that Sun Kuai would not understand his meaning, had a poem which had been sung presented a second time in a manner that he felt it would be more easily understood. Third, in the world of the *Zuo zhuan* the compositions in the *Poetry* were not restricted to one interpretation, as they came to be in the Han dynasty, but open to countless reinterpretations depending on the context in which they were presented. The person chanting the poem often broke off a stanza or a line to give expression to his intent with the listener taking from that fragment that which he sought. This tendency can be seen continuing in the adaptations of lines from the *Poetry* in the pure talk as recorded in the *Shishuo xinyu* and even in the somewhat less pure table talk that is recorded in disparate works and genres throughout Chinese history<sup>106</sup> or heard around scholarly dinner tables in China today.

105 Du Yu 杜預 (223–284) points to the idea of *zhong yan ke wei* 衆言可畏, “the words of the crowd are to be feared,” as the meaning intended to be conveyed. Cf. *Chunqiu jingzhuan jiji*, 1057, n. 19.

106 As, for example, the Ninth Princess's harangue in “Lingying zhuan” 靈應傳 (*Taiping guangji* 太平廣記, *juan* 492), the dialogue in chapter 34 of *Rulin waishi* 儒林外史, or the seventh scene of “Mudan ting” 牡丹亭 (“Gui shu” 閨塾).

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