Meaning, Metaphor, and Allusion
in T'ang Poetry

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Our earlier article in the *Journal*, "Syntax, Diction, and Imagery in T'ang Poetry" (SDI)[1] described the characteristics of the main types of imagery in T'ang poetry and the influence of syntax and diction on image making. In the present paper, we will discuss the way in which meaning, especially manifold meaning, functions in T'ang poetry.

1. MEANING AND THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUIVALENCE

1.1 *Definition of equivalence*

Meaning did enter briefly into our purview in the earlier paper. For example, in distinguishing the language of Recent Style poetry into two poles, imagistic and propositional, we used referential meaning as one of the criteria, that is, meaning as percept versus meaning as concept. But we went no further than analyzing nouns and adjectives in terms of their static qualities, verbs and verbal predicates in terms of their dynamic features, and sentences in terms of the propositions they express. In short, our previous discussion was limited for the most part to the simple, literal meaning of various linguistic constituents. As a result, the reader may have gotten the impression that Recent Style poetry is fragmentary and diffuse, monotonous and superficial—the former because as simple images, adjacent items stand in the relation of juxtaposition and not that of interaction; and the latter, because in the absence of the kind of interaction that generates novelty, repetitive elements ("green water," "bright moon," "high mountain," etc.) received

[1] The present paper is a sequel to Kao and Mei, "Syntax, Diction, and Imagery in T'ang Poetry," *HJAS*, 31 (1971), 51–136 (hereafter SDI), and follows the reference system of its predecessor. When an example is followed by a number in parentheses, e.g., 浮雲游子意 (457), the number 457 refers to the page number in the 1959 Chung-hua edition of Kao Pu-ying's 高步瀛 *T'ang Sung shih chü-yao* 唐宋詩舉要 [*Anthology of T'ang and Sung Poetry*]. If an example does not appear in Kao's anthology, then its reference will have the form (*CTS*, 246), where *CTS* stands for *Ch'üan T'ang shih* 全唐詩 [*Complete T'ang Poems*] and the page number refers to the 1960 Peking edition published by Chung-hua. At the end of our article (p. 356), there is a table which converts the page number of Kao's anthology to *CTS*, and provides the names of poets.

undue emphasis. This impression is of course due to the restricted perspective imposed by our analytic procedure, and not inherent in Recent Style poetry itself.

The principle of manifold meaning, on the other hand, has been a reigning doctrine for quite some time. Ogden and Richards's *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923) and Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930) each in its own way redirected critical attention to this principle. More recently, Northrop Frye in his *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) devoted an entire chapter, "Theory of Symbols," to the study of levels of meaning in literature. Recent Style poetry, like any other poetry, operates at more than one level of meaning, and a program like ours, whose overall aim is to characterize the language of this poetry, must somehow take the phenomenon of polysemy into account.

But unlike our predecessors who were either interested in demonstrating the intrinsic ambiguity of poetry or in classifying meaning into levels or types, we will focus instead on the processes through which the basic meaning of words gives rise to higher levels of meaning. The reasons for choosing this approach will become clear, we hope, in the course of our discussion. For the time being, let us simply say that in so doing we found it possible to treat several related topics, including metaphor and allusion, from a unified perspective.

The remainder of this section will be devoted to explaining what the principle of equivalence means, and how this principle generates new meanings in poetry. Since it was Roman Jakobson who first proposed the theory in outline form, we will begin by citing his statement. He said:

In particular, what is the indispensable feature inherent in any piece of poetry? To answer this question we must recall the two basic modes of arrangement used in verbal behavior, *selection* and *combination*. If "child" is the topic of the message, the speaker selects one among the extant, more or less similar, nouns like child, kid, youngster, tot, all of them equivalent in a certain respect, and then, to comment on this topic, he may select one of the semantically cognate verbs—sleeps, dozes, nods, naps. Both chosen words combine in the speech chain. The selection is produced on the base of equivalence, similarity and dissimilarity, synonymity and antonymity, while the combination, the build up of the sequence, is based on contiguity. *The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination.* Equivalence is promoted to the constitutive device of the

sequence. In poetry one syllable is equalized with any other syllable of the same sequence; word stress is assumed to equal word stress, as unstress equals unstress; prosodic long is matched with long, and short with short; word boundary equals word boundary, no boundary equals no boundary; syntactic pause equals syntactic pause, no pause equals no pause. Syllables are converted into units of measure, and so are morae or stresses.[2]

The theory that selection and combination constitute the two basic modes of arrangement of speech signs goes back to Ferdinand de Saussure, the founder of modern linguistics.[3] The structural identity of a sign is defined by its systematic opposition to other signs, that is, by its being partially similar and different from other signs. The simplest example is in phonology. Thus *m-* and *n-* in English are similar in that both are nasals, but also different in that one is labial and the other dental. Nasals are further opposed to stops, fricatives, etc. Basic to de Saussure's theory is his distinction between speech (*parole*) and language (*langue*). Speech is the actual event, what is actually said (or written) at a given time and place. Language is the overall structure, the reservoir from which various speech-events are drawn. In a speech-event, the individual signs serve their communicative function partly through their opposition to other signs in the language, and partly through their interconnection with other signs in the same stretch of speech. To say *m-* is to not say *n-*; to choose *child* and *sleep* is to reject *old man* and *walk*. This is selection. Within the speech-chain, the individual signs are linked together to form larger and larger units on the basis of contiguity. That is, signs immediately adjacent to each other are first combined by grammatical constructions, and more remote signs are brought into the ever enlarging circle.

Jakobson essentially says that poetic language and ordinary language differ in two respects. (1) Whereas the principle of equivalence operates in ordinary language outside the speech-chain (i.e.,

    [2] Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics," in Thomas A. Sebeok, ed., *Style in Language* (Cambridge: Technology Press of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1960), p. 358; also in Seymour Chatman and Samuel R. Levin, ed., *Essays on the Language of Literature* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), pp. 303–4.
    [3] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, 1st ed. 1916, 2nd ed. 1922. For a modern exegesis, see Rulon S. Wells, "De Saussure's System of Linguistics," *Word* 3 (1947), 1–31; also in Martin Joos, ed., *Readings in Linguistics* (New York: American Council of Learned Societies, 1958), pp. 1–18.

at the level of language), it operates in poetic language within the speech-chain. (2) Whereas contiguous elements are linked together by grammatical constructions in ordinary language, the restriction does not apply to poetic language; noncontiguous elements may also be linked together via the principle of equivalence. The above is of course a first approximation; further refinement and clarification will follow.

While Jakobson has chosen to illustrate his theory with prosodic elements, other features could serve the purpose just as well. Thus rhyme and alliteration are phonetic equivalences, parallelism and antithesis are in part grammatical equivalences. There is therefore a natural and simple way to conceive of these phonetic and gram- matical features of poetry in terms of equivalence. If the same principle can also be applied to the study of meaning, then we would have a unified theory in the making. But first, we need to make the meaning of the principle of equivalence clearer.

"Equivalence" in ordinary usage connotes "equality" and "similarity," and the reader may have gotten the impression from Jakobson's example of "child, kid, youngster," etc., that equivalence is the same as similarity. But dissimilarity is also an integral part of the meaning of equivalence in the technical sense. Note that Jakobson continues: "The selection is produced on the base of equivalence, similarity and dissimilarity, synonymity and anto- nymity, . . ." Michael Riffaterre makes the point even clearer, especially in the last part of the passage which reads: "For instance, words are combined into rhythmic, alliterative, and rhymic se- quences because of their equivalence in sound, and this inevitably establishes semantic equations between these words; their respective meanings are consequently perceived as related by similarity (hence a metaphor or simile) or dissimilarity (hence an antithesis)."[4] Equivalence, then, encompasses both similarity and dissimilarity; it is the tension that spans two items of the same class.

What has just been said can also be restated in general terms. Suppose we bring two items A and B together and write an equation between them, $A = B$, where the equal sign stands for the equiva- lence relation. A and B must be partially similar and partially

[4] Michael Riffaterre, "Describing Poetic Structures," in Jacques Ehrmann, ed., *Structuralism* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1970), p. 189.

different; if they were entirely similar we would have A = A, which is identity instead of equivalence. It is also impossible for them to be entirely different. As Chuang-tzu observed long ago, "All things are in one way similar, and in another way different." Thus *m*- and *n*- both belong to the class of consonants; they are similar in that both are nasals, but also different in that one is a labial and the other dental.

Turning now to the subject of meaning, let us note, in a preliminary fashion, the following applications of the principle of equivalence.

1.   New meanings or new dimensions of meanings are generated when two words enter into the relation of equivalence. There are two main forms. If both words are nouns, then their interaction highlights the qualities with respect to which the nouns are similar or different. If one is a noun and the other a verb, then because the meaning of the verb is more stable, the noun changes to conform to the verb. In the stock example "the ship ploughs the sea," "ship" acquires the meaning associated with the verb "to plough." (For detail, see section 2.3.)

2.   In our earlier paper we made a distinction between *structure*, the relatively large-scale relations among the main parts of a work of art, and *texture*, the small-scale relations among the subordinate parts. Within texture, that is, at the level of local organization of words and sentences, a further distinction is necessary: if the relation among words is fully spelled out and constituted by grammar, what we have is *analytic relation*; if words are related implicitly via equivalence, what we have is *metaphoric relation*. The languages respectively informed by these two relations will be called *analytic language* and *metaphoric language*.

In our earlier paper we further stated that Recent Style poetry is replete with simple noun-images and that they play a role far greater than their counterpart in English poetry. We even concocted a term, imagistic language, as the capsule summary of this and other related theses—that imagistic language is discontinuous and objective; it is directed to the senses and embodies absolute space-time, etc. Actually, imagistic language and metaphoric language are the same phenomenon viewed from two different perspectives. To call a type of language imagistic is to imply that the words are uncon-

nected, or only loosely connected, by syntax—hence the impression that Recent Style poetry is fragmentary and diffuse. To call the same type of language metaphoric (in the technical sense) is to say that words, unencumbered by syntax, are related via equivalence. In the former case, we are focusing on the constituent parts, the material, that make up Recent Style poetry; and in the latter, the way the parts come together.

Equivalence, then, is the principle that underlies one kind of local organization in poetry—the kind that links up words and converts them into textural motifs. Since Chinese is a language weak in syntax to begin with, and syntax is further weakened by various conventions in Recent Style poetry, the result is that the metaphoric relation dominates over its complement, the analytic relation. A related consequence is that Jakobson's theory can account for the facts of Recent Style poetry with greater ease than for those of Western poetry—for which the theory was originally intended. In a later section an example will be given to show that the principle of equivalence not only unifies words locally but also serves as the global principle of organization for the entire poem.

3.   Similarity is almost always co-present with contrast when two linguistic units occur side by side. The tension is integral to the equivalence relation; the two units, so to speak, are drawn towards each other by their similarity while simultaneously their difference sets them apart. It seems possible, on the basis of this fact, to arrange poetry along a spectrum. Placed at one end would be genres or styles for which opposition is essential. A defining characteristic of these genres and styles is that they are organized along two or more competing lines. Dramatic poetry, for example, would be hard to imagine without conflict and resolution. Certain common themes in T'ang poetry also call for the use of contrast; the very nature of themes such as bidding farewell, looking into the distance, and meditating on history invites the poet to make comparisons—between the past and the present, the far-away and the near-at-hand, or the imagined and the real. Placed at the other end of the spectrum would be genres characterized by a unified mood. Even if contrast is present, it would be contrast between elements growing out of a single thought or feeling. Purity is the common ideal, and the lyric, especially the short lyric, is the prime example.

Other factors would have to be brought in to refine the classifica-
tion. The presence or absence of certain literary devices is one, and
the levels of meaning present in a poem is another. The use of
historical allusion, for example, cannot but inject a discordant note,
a sense of the separation of the past from the present; it also adds
another dimension of meaning to the poem. Metaphor likewise lifts
the poem above the literal level and creates complication. It is only
when both metaphor and allusion are absent that the poem can focus
on the here and now, the fleeting moment with all its freshness. That
state of affairs, variously called "Thusness" by Zen Buddhists, or
"naturalness" by some critics, is best exemplified in Wang Wei's
five-syllabic quatrains.

If we pursue the subject along the lines suggested above, it seems
possible to develop from the principle of equivalence a typology of
T'ang poetry—thus modernizing the traditional schemes of Chung
Yung 鍾嶸, Ssu-k'ung T'u 司空圖, and others. Such an ambitious
project, however, is beyond the scope of the present paper. Instead,
we will merely explore the subject and, in a later section, attempt
to characterize the lyric in terms of equivalence.

The three topics mentioned above give some indication of how
the principle of equivalence can be applied. As we proceed, concrete
examples will be given to illustrate the theses outlined above.
Jakobson's theory will also be examined and eventually revised. But
there is another application that should be mentioned immediately.
In choosing "Meaning, Metaphor, and Allusion" as the title, we
mean to imply that metaphor and allusion are subcategories of the
general process for generating new meaning, and that these three
topics will be considered from a common perspective, with the prin-
ciple of equivalence as the point of reference. So far, we have tried
to define the principle of equivalence and indicate its general relation
to the creation of new meaning. Now we will turn to metaphor and
allusion.

1.2 *Metaphor and allusion as equivalence relation*

The majority of metaphors are composed of two terms. The same
is true of historical allusion, in which one term refers to a contem-
porary topic and the other to a past event. The fact that the juxta-
position of two terms highlights their similarities and differences

suggests that metaphor and allusion can be analyzed as special instances of the principle of equivalence. This is the purpose of this section. In what follows we will cite some examples that emphasize similarity and others that emphasize contrast. It should be borne in mind that similarity is always co-present with contrast, and vice versa, and that in separating examples into two categories we are actually converting degrees into kinds.

In a poem bidding farewell to a friend, Li Po wrote: 浮雲遊子意 / 落日故人情 "Floating cloud, wanderer's mind; Setting sun, old friend's feeling." (457) It is immediately clear that "floating cloud" and "setting sun" operate at two levels of meaning, literal and metaphoric. Literally they are part of the physical setting, and as metaphors, they describe the emotion involved. It is equally clear that in each line the two juxtaposed nouns interact by virtue of their semantic similarity; the wanderer's ways are rootless and carefree like the floating cloud, and the friend's departure and the sun's setting evoke the same sense of loss. The metaphors are thus constituted by similarity, one of the two relations subsumed under the principle of equivalence. In other words, the principle of equivalence generates new meanings by constituting metaphors.

Let us consider another example, a couplet from Tu Fu's "Yangtze and Han" which we discussed in the earlier paper: 江漢思歸客 / 乾坤一腐儒 "Yangtze and Han, a homesick stranger; Ch'ien and K'un, one withered pedant." (491) Like the previous example, these lines are composed of nouns in juxtaposition. But unlike the previous example, the underlying principle is contrast instead of similarity; the smallness of the human figure is contrasted with the vastness of the universe. Contrast also has the effect of creating new meaning; smallness is not inherent in "homesick stranger" or "withered pedant," but this semantic feature comes to the fore when these items occur in the context of objects of immense size—Yangtze and Han, the two great rivers, and Ch'ien and K'un, symbols for Heaven and Earth.

These two examples have the same linguistic form, and the effect of juxtaposing adjacent nouns is the same in both cases: whether through similarity or contrast, new meanings are generated. It would be convenient to have a term to designate both kinds of examples. Hence the following definition: a *metaphoric relation* holds

when two words or phrases interact by virtue of their similarity or dissimilarity in meaning. As such, metaphoric relation is a special case of the principle of equivalence, namely, the principle restricted to the domain of meaning. Metaphor, in the usual sense, is any comparison of one word to another in terms of similarity; it is therefore a subclass of the metaphoric relation. We should add that the term "metaphoric relation" appeared briefly in 1.1, and that the definition just given will undergo refinement as we proceed.

One qualification is immediately in order. In discussing "Floating cloud, wanderer's mind; Setting sun, old friend's feeling," we gave the impression that similarity is the only underlying relation. But in view of our remark that similarity is always co-present with contrast, this could hardly be the whole truth. The setting sun is a sun that is about to disappear under the horizon. The word "old" in "old friend's feeling" has at least two meanings: being old is the stage preceding death, and the Chinese word *ku* 故, literally "old," does have the connotation of "pass away, deceased"; but "old" also implies "long-standing, persisting" as in "old friendship." Thus within the word "old" itself, there is the tension between passage and persistence. When "setting sun" is juxtaposed to "old friend's feeling," the tension is enhanced.

Metaphoric relation has so far been presented as an extension of metaphor—to include instances where the underlying relation is that of contrast. Here we wish to make a further extension; the metaphoric relation holds not only between terms otherwise unre- lated, as in the previous examples of nouns in juxtapostion, but also between terms embedded in larger grammatical structures. For example, Tu Fu's "Yangtze and Han" contains the following couplet: 落日心猶壯 / 秋風病欲蘇 "Setting sun, heart still hale; Autumn wind, [from] sickness about to revive." (491) In the earlier paper we stated:

The first line implies both similarity and contrast: "Though my heart is like the setting sun (in the state of decline), it is still hale," and "My heart, unlike the set- ting sun, is still hale." The same applies to the second line: "Though my sickness is like the autumn wind (as the harbinger of death), it will soon be cured," and "My sickness, unlike the autumn wind, will soon be cured." (SDI, p. 65)

In terms of our present terminology, we would say that the meta- phoric relation—that is, the relation of similarity *and* contrast— holds between "setting sun" and "heart" (and "autumn wind" and

"sickness"). However, these lines can also be read differently: "In the setting sun, heart is still hale; In the autumn wind, sickness about to revive." If this reading is chosen, then "setting sun" becomes the spatial and temporal condition for "heart is still hale"; the preposition "in" signifies this relation. We shall use the term *analytic relation* to designate those relations pertaining to time, space, causality, etc. Clearly both readings are valid and there is no need to make a choice. Metaphoric and analytic relations thus exist side by side, with the former organizing words into textural motifs by virtue of their semantic similarity or difference, and the latter into nested grammatical units on the basis of their word class.

A word should be said about the adverbs *yu* 猶 ("still") and *yü* 欲 ("about to, will"). "Still" is an adverb of persistence, and "about to," an adverb of change. Now, persistence means things remain similar or identical in time, and change means what comes after will be different. These adverbs therefore indicate equivalence relations along the axis of time. Further, both are double-faced and therefore embody tension. To say "heart is still hale" is to say it is hale contrary to normal expectations, and to say "[from] sickness about to revive" is to say that the patient has not yet recovered but will soon do so. In the above context, these adverbs enhance the tension already present between nouns, and add something new. Thus in "autumn wind, heart still hale," "autumn wind" points to decline and eventual death, but "still" opposes it with persistence; "setting sun" suggests the end, but "about to," the beginning. In general, it is possible to analyze the perennial themes of Chinese poetry into features and then assign these features to three interrelated axes: the logical relation of similarity and difference, the spatial and temporal relation, and the emotional attitudes. Thus nostalgia is the wish that the present would be similar to the past; regret is the desire to make the past different; to lament transience is to feel that things have become different too soon; to be homesick is to wish that home were here, or that one's present condition were different; to bid reluctant farewell is to hope that physical nearness will remain. In all these, the principle of equivalence serves as the basis for the other two.

We will now turn to allusion and show that it too is constituted by the principle of equivalence. But first we should explain that, in our usage, allusion is a shorthand for historical allusion, which, by

definition, requires the comparison of a contemporary topic to a past event. Like metaphor, allusion is composed of two terms, and our immediate task is to show they are related by similarity or contrast.

Wang Wei, "Lady Hsi"

莫以今時寵　　能忘舊日恩　　看花滿眼淚　　不共楚王言

> Do not think present favors,
> Can make one forget past love.
> Looking at flowers with eyes filled with tears,
> She will not speak to the Prince of Ch'u. (756)

The occasion for the poem was said to be as follows. The beauty of a cake vendor's wife caught the attention of Prince Hsien of the T'ang dynasty. Forcibly taken away from her husband, she became the favorite of the Prince. At a party the Prince brought the cake vendor before his former wife, and asked her whether she still remembered him. With tears in her eyes, she kept silent. Wang Wei portrayed this poignant scene through an allusion to the story of Lady Hsi in the *Tso chuan* (Chuang, year 14): after the conquest of the State of Hsi, the Prince of Ch'u took Lady Hsi, who later bore him two sons. As the *Tso chuan* has it, "[All the time] she did not speak. When the Prince asked her, she said, 'A woman like me served two husbands. Even though I escaped death, what is there to say?' " The allusion clearly hinges on the similarity between the lives of these two women. A powerful prince may forcibly take a woman, but he can neither make her forget her past happiness with her husband, nor compel her to be happy. Even though helpless, she still protests by remaining silent.

The next two examples will show that contrast can be just as effective as similarity. The following couplet by Tu Fu occurs in the "Autumn Meditations."

匡衡抗疏功名薄　　劉向傳經心事違

> A disdained K'uang Heng, as a critic of policy:
> As promoter of learning, a Liu Hsiang who failed.[5] (583)

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[5] A. C. Graham's translation in *Poems of the Late T'ang* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1965), p. 53.

What Tu Fu meant was that while he hoped to emulate K'uang Heng and Liu Hsiang of the Han dynasty, he was a failure both as a minister in court and as a scholar seeking to promote Confucian learning. These successful men were alluded to for the very purpose of highlighting his own lack of success. The next example comes from a poem by Wang Ch'ang-ling, written at a time when the T'ang empire was constantly threatened by the nomadic tribes of the North.

但使龍城飛將在　　不敎胡馬度陰山

If Winged General of Dragon City were present,
He would not let the Hunnish cavalry cross Mount Yin. (793)

The allusion is to the famous Han general Li Kuang, who dealt the Huns a crushing defeat at Dragon City, and henceforth their periodic incursions into North China stopped. The Huns nicknamed him "Winged General." The implication is that the present dynasty, lacking a general of Li Kuang's stature, has a border defense that is altogether too porous. The further implication is that although the present is unlike the past in military prowess, it would be comforting if the two were more alike.

To summarize: the main purpose of this introductory section is to explain what the principle of equivalence means, and how we intend to use it to study meaning, metaphor, and allusion. Equivalence, consisting of similarity and contrast, is one of the two basic modes of arrangement in ordinary language. In poetry it assumes an even more important role. For example, rhyme and alliteration, prosody and parallelism, are all constituted at least in part by the principle of equivalence. In the general area of meaning, we noted several promising avenues of analysis. When two terms are related by similarity and contrast, new meaning is generated. Equivalence is also the principle that underlies one kind of local organization of words—the kind based upon the metaphoric relation that converts words into textural motifs. Insofar as equivalence creates tension, and tension is a concept that admits degrees, equivalence can also be used as the basis for a theory of genres. Finally, we showed that metaphor and allusion can be thought of as special instances of the principle of equivalence in action.

It is quite clear that in equivalence we have a principle central to poetry. What is unclear, however, is the limit of its application. Specifically, we need to explain and evaluate Jakobson's cryptic remark, "The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination. Equivalence is promoted to the constitutive device of the sequence." Is it proper to speak of "*the* poetic function" and "*the* constitutive device"? What does the metaphor of projecting from one axis to the other really stand for? The larger issues raised are the role of grammar in poetry, and the relation between ordinary language and "poetic" language. Jakobson also seems to imply that once the principle of equivalence is projected into the axis of combination, it can relate two terms only if both occur in the speech-chain, that is, only if both terms are overt. What happens if one term is implicit? This question, as we shall see, will lead to a consideration of the scope of metaphor and allusion. Involved also is the principle, so dearly cherished by new critics and structural linguists, that the text and only the text is the proper subject of study. All these issues, large and small, will be examined in the next few sections. But first, we will once again take up the question of polysemy and semantic novelty, and see how various linguistic processes contribute to make poetry new.

2. METAPHOR AND METAPHORIC RELATION

2.1 *Categories and qualities*

The phenomenon of polysemy can be approached from two perspectives, one emphasizing process, and the other, the end product. As has been announced, process will be our main emphasis. But in this subsection, we will pay some attention to the end product, that is, the levels of meaning present in Recent Style poetry. Specifically, we will try to show that because the poetic lexicon is conventionally organized into semantic categories, a noun occurring in a poem not only refers to an object but also represents the category to which it belongs. Consequently, a Recent Style poem almost invariably operates at two levels of meaning, particular and universal. As a preliminary step, we will try to provide a theoretical foundation for the concept of semantic categories through an analysis of the structure of meaning.

One obvious way to discover the structure of meaning as it is ordinarily conceived is to take any standard dictionary and examine its definitions. When we do that, we will soon discover that there is a standard formula for the definition of nouns, which consists of two parts: a label for the category to which a noun belongs, and a qualifying phrase which distinguishes that noun from other nouns belonging to the same category. Thus *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* defines "church" as "a building for public esp. Christian worship." Here "building" is the category, and "for public worship" is the qualifying phrase specifying the distinctive property. "Building" is in turn defined as "a usu. roofed and walled structure . . . ," where "structure" is the category, and "roofed and walled" is the distinctive property. Finally "structure" is defined as "something constructed." What we have, then, is a hierarchy of categories with "something" or "somebody" at the apex. As a category, a noun such as "building" is characterized by those properties common to all its members, e.g., "church," "school," "factory," etc. As a member of a category, "building" is characterized by those properties which set it apart from other nouns in the same category.

In ordinary discourse, a noun tends to point directly to its referent, that is, both the category and the distinctive property remain implicit. In poetry however, especially in Recent Style poetry, the polarization of a noun into its category and quality is much more prominent. This is so partly because Recent Style poetry requires antithesis, and antithesis is governed by a highly formalized and strictly defined set of semantic categories. In addition, as we have repeatedly pointed out in SDI, a noun, whether occurring by itself or modified by an adjective, functions primarily as quality. There is thus a basic reason why nouns in Recent Style poetry function on at least two levels of meaning: category, and quality.

Chinese poets and critics have long been aware of semantic categories; in manuals on poetry, one can find lists specifying which nouns belong to which category. But the emphasis is invariably placed upon technique, that is, how to compose an antithetical couplet. However, semantic categories also represent a classification of the objects of the world, and this classification is no less than a world view, an archetypal organization of the world. Furthermore, this classificatory habit of the Chinese mind manifests itself almost

everywhere we turn. The system of radicals directly classifies the characters and also indirectly categorizes the objects these characters represent. From the *Erh Ya* 爾雅, one of the earliest dictionaries, down to the great encyclopedias, the principle of organization is in most instances that of semantic categories. The classificatory mode of thought is also very much in evidence in literary criticism. In the opening chapter of the *Wen-hsin tiao-lung* 文心雕龍 (*Dragon Carvings of a Literary Mind*), the author moves from one category to the next in an effort to demonstrate his general thesis that all things have patterns or designs to deck themselves out: heaven has colors and shapes, earth has rivers and mountains; animals such as leopards and tigers have spots and stripes; plants and trees have flowers. Therefore, the author concludes, it is only natural for man to have literature.

How categories operate concretely in T'ang poetry may be seen in the following examples, all taken from poems by Wang Wei.

1.　明月松間照　　清泉石上流
   Bright moon shines in pines; Clear fountain flows over rocks.
   (422)

2.　泉聲咽危石　　日色冷青松
   Fountain sound gurgles over precipitous rock; Sun color is cold
   in blue pines. (425)

3.　綻衣秋日裏　　沉鉢古松間
   Mend clothes under autumn sun; Dip bowl amidst old pines.
   (*CTS*, 1269)

All three couplets are constituted by the same set of categories:

Category	(1)	(2)	(3)
Heaven	bright moon	sun color	autumn sun
Plant	pines	blue pines	old pines
Earth I	rocks	precipitous rocks	
Earth II	clear fountain	fountain sound	(dip bowl)

While "fountain" is not mentioned explicitly in (3), "dip bowl" clearly implies the presence of water, presumably a fountain. Let us note in passing that (1) can easily be transformed into (2). In skeletal form, example (1) is (moon, pine / fountain, rock) and example (2) is (fountain, rock / sun, pine). Reverse the order of the two lines in (1) and we have (2).

The same set of categories recurs, in abbreviated form, in other poems by Wang Wei as well. Let us take one line each from (1) and (2) and compare them to additional examples.

1.   Bright moon shines in pines.
2.   Sun color is cold in blue pines.
3′.   深林人不知　　明月來相照
      Deep forest unknown to man; Bright moon comes to shine. (754)
4′.   返景入深林　　復照青苔上
      Returning light enters deep forest; Again shines upon green moss. (754)

All four examples share the basic motif of sunlight or moonlight shining into the forest. In addition, (4′) mentions moss, which often grows on rocks, and therefore recalls the configuration of sunlight, trees, and rocks that we saw before.

The above illustrates how individual words function as representatives of categories and thus generate one level of meaning above and beyond their literal meaning. "Bright moon," "sun color," "autumn sun," and "reflected light" are semantically similar, occur in the same kind of environment, and all represent the category "Heaven." The same applies to the members of the category "Plant": "pine," "old ¡pines," "blue pines," and "deep forest." When a set of categories such as "Heaven," "Earth," "Plant," and "Man" occurs, each represented by a member, what we have is the world viewed in its archetypal aspect. We should add in passing that the phenomenon noted above—the recurrence of the same configuration of categories—should have some practical implications for literary theory. For example, it seems likely that sub-genres and sub-styles of Chinese poetry can be characterized through their distinctive configuration of semantic categories and the selection of items within each category. The configuration of rocks, fountain, light, and forest is obviously associated with landscape poetry. It may also turn out that they serve as Wang Wei's signature.

At the same time the recurrence of identical items raises a serious problem. A cliché such as "bright moon" will induce a sense of monotony when used repeatedly. Our patience is more than doubly tried when a cluster of clichés occurs together, often in almost identical configurations. How can the poet repeat himself so often without being tedious? How, to borrow a phrase from Ezra Pound,

can the poet make it new? In what follows, we will survey the major techniques at the poet's disposal to generate novelty. But our purpose is not so much to make a complete catalogue as to indicate the relative weight and importance of each of these techniques in T'ang poetry. If it can be shown that a certain technique is used more frequently or with greater effectiveness, then we will also have learned something important about T'ang poetry.

2.2   *From implication and qualification to metaphor*

In addition to its literal meanings, both primary and secondary, a word has a set of implications and associations. Some authors have insisted upon a distinction between the two: implication is part of the meaning of a word or one of its possible meanings, while association is just something connected in our mind with a word. Thus "contrapuntal" implies "music," but "table" is associated with "dinner." (James J. Y. Liu, *The Art of Chinese Poetry*, p. 9) In a tradition-laden poetry such as we are now examining, the distinction is possible but not very useful. If we wish to keep the distinction, we will soon find ourselves asking questions such as, "Can a Chinese reader come across autumn and falling leaves without feeling sad?" He can, that is, it is logically possible for him to separate falling leaves in autumn and sadness. But he is unlikely to do so. For this reason we shall use the terms implication and association interchangeably.

When a noun such as "moon" occurs by itself, it implies a set of general qualities such as "bright," "round," etc.—qualities which the moon is assumed to have under ordinary circumstances. In T'ang poetry, there are a vast number of expressions consisting of a noun preceded by its epithet, "bright moon," "green water," "high mountain," "yellow sand," etc. The function of the adjective in such compounds is not to restrict the range of objects (i.e., to distinguish one instance of the moon from another), but to emphasize the quality already implied. This constant conjunction of the noun and its epithet also serves to reinforce the bond between the two, so that even when the noun occurs by itself, the adjectival quality is automatically recalled.

The standard device for further specifying the meaning of a noun is qualification or modification. European languages have the relative clause construction, which, in Homeric epic for example,

serves to introduce past episodes,[6] and, in Shakespeare's sonnets, forms the basis of their characteristically involuted syntax. Its role in Western poetry is indispensable. But post-modification is infrequent in Chinese. Pre-modification of a noun by adjectives or adjectival phrases is normal, and a noun can theoretically be preceded by an unlimited number of such modifiers. The brevity of the five- or seven-syllable line, however, places a severe practical limitation upon the actual number of words that can be included. Further, the isolative tendencies inherent in Recent Style poetry run counter to the accumulation of details upon any single substantive. As a result, qualification of a noun by a restrictive adjective does occur— in addition to "green leaf," there are "red leaf," "yellow leaf," and "withered leaf"—but it does little to create new meaning.

Predication is another way to modify the meaning of a noun-subject. Here again we must distinguish several cases. If the action or quality expressed by the predicate is typical, nothing is added: "bright moon shines in the pines," "water is clear," "water flows." If the quality or action is compatible with the literal meaning of the noun, then some factual information is added, but the meaning of the noun is not changed: "water is muddy," "water spills over." In the case of a deviant co-occurrence, however, where the noun-subject and the predicate are incompatible, what we have is meta-phor. For example, 秋水清無力 / 寒山暮多思 "Autumn water is clear and feeble; Cold mountain, in the evening, many thoughts." (*CTS*, 4108) To say water is clear is to use a cliché. But *wu-li* "feeble" (literally "without strength"), coupled here with "autumn water," is a rare and deviant use. The predicate converts the noun into an animate subject, and the entire phrase is an instance of personifica-tion, a type of metaphor. The second line may or may not be a metaphor; it is not clear whether cold mountain has many thoughts or causes many thoughts. Very likely both readings are possible.

Other examples illustrating personification induced by a deviant predicate may now be cited. 山青花欲燃 "The hills are green, and the flowers about to burn" (766); here the metaphor of fire is used to suggest the redness of flower. 春風知別苦 / 不遣柳條青 "Spring wind

[6] Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis*, tr. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1953), p. 7.

knows parting is bitter; Does not cause willow branches to turn green." (766) 羌笛何須怨楊柳 "Why should the Ch'iang flute complain about willows [used in saying farewell]?" (796)

In this brief study of the meaning of nouns, we have traversed a full spectrum. We began with the basic meaning and by gradual extension passed through implication, association, qualification, and finally, at the other extreme, reached metaphor. It is as if the poet forcibly grafts one meaning onto another and thus brings out some deep and new meaning. When deviant co-occurrence first makes its appearance, it is recognized as a metaphor because of its freshness. But if it is constantly used, it then becomes a cliché.

2.3   *The centrality of verb*

So far we have only discussed how to bring out new meanings in nouns. What about verbs? How do they acquire new meaning? The question can be put another way. When two items, a noun and a verb, do not match, what we have is a case of semantic deviance. So far we have suggested that the noun conforms to the verb and thereby acquires new meaning. But why should conformation go in one direction instead of the other? Why, as it has been asked in some quarters, should a married woman take her husband's surname instead of the other way around?

The answer is that there is a built-in asymmetry between nouns and verbs. Take "the chair laughs," for example. "Chair" is an inanimate noun, and "laugh" is a verb that requires an animate subject. There is therefore a discrepancy which we attempt to compensate for. What we do is to interpret "chair" as if it were abnormally animate, as dictated by the verb. We do not interpret "laugh" in an abnormal way, as if it were a different kind of activity, performed by inanimate objects. The clearest statement of this obvious and important fact is by Wallace Chafe, and he calls it the centrality of verb.[7]

What we have just seen is that the meaning of a verb remains stable even when it occurs in a deviant context. The question as to how verbs acquire new meaning therefore does not arise. In Chinese,

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[7] Wallace Chafe, *Meaning and the Structure of Language* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 96–98.

an adjective in predicate position acts like a verb, and is sometimes called "stative verb." These stative verbs possess the same quality of semantic stability as transitive and intransitive verbs. In *yi-tzu hsiao le* "the chair laughed" and *yi-tzu hen kao-hsing* "the chair is very happy," it is *yi-tzu* "the chair" that changes from inanimate to animate in both cases—irrespective of whether the predicate is an intransitive verb or a stative verb.

This fact has some important applications. Beginning with Aristotle, there has been a tradition in Western rhetoric which analyzes the verb metaphor in terms of analogy or proportion. A metaphor, according to this theory, affirms that four things are so related that A is to B as C is to D. Thus to say "the ship ploughs the waves" is to say that the ship does to the waves what the plough does to the ground. Donald Davie argues that the metaphor relates not four things but six: the plough, the ship, the ground, the waves, the action of ploughing, and the action of sailing.[8] While no one has yet proposed such an analysis, it is quite conceivable that two more terms may still be added to the six already present in Davie's theory; one for the relations among the plough, the ground, and the action of ploughing, and another for the relations among the ship, the waves, and the action of sailing. Thus beginning with the intuitive idea that a metaphor relates two terms, vehicle and tenor, the theory of analogy manages to proliferate the terms to four, six, and perhaps eventually to eight and more.

But as we have seen, in a deviant context the meaning of the verb remains stable while the meaning of the noun conforms to it. If we take this as the primary linguistic fact, then the theory of analogy becomes unnecessary. "The chair laughs" is a verb metaphor. How should it be analyzed under the theory of proportion? The four terms are presumably: human, the action of laughing, chair, the action of laughing. The chair laughs as human beings laugh. But then, there are only three terms, not four. The situation conceivably can be improved by inventing a new action, namely, the action on the part of the chair to express its happiness. But it seems the cure is worse than the disease. Looking back, we note that the reason why six terms seem to be present in "the ship ploughs the waves" is because

[8] Donald Davie, *Articulate Energy* (London: Routledge and Paul, 1955), p. 41.

one is supplied by the theorist, namely, the act of sailing. The original statement says nothing about the source of motive power; for all we know, the ship may be rowed or poled or propelled by jet engine. The simplest analysis, then, is to recognize that the verb "plough" maintains its meaning. Further, the two nouns "ship" and "waves" conform to the verb "plough" directly; there is no need to invent an extra verb to serve as the intermediary.

There is another reason why we reject the Aristotelian analysis. The poet wishes to express his unique or novel experience, and metaphor is one of the instruments at his disposal. Therefore, given a metaphor, what the poet and the audience are most interested in is the quality or the action, that is, the aspect under which the vehicle is compared to the tenor. The interest on the part of the theorist, especially the Aristotelian theorist, is quite different. Given the quality and action, he wishes to find out the terms constituting the metaphor. But in so doing, he is barking up the wrong tree.

The fact that a verb retains its meaning also explains the use of verbs in some metaphors. To understand a metaphor, it is essential that we know the quality or action with respect to which two items are being compared. Take "Floating cloud, the wandering son's mind," for example. "Floating cloud" and "wandering son" are both compounds consisting of a noun modified by an adjective; *yu-tzu* 遊子 is usually an unanalyzable compound meaning "wanderer," but here, under the influence of "floating cloud," *yu* "wander" becomes independent.[9] Earlier we pointed out that the presence of a nonrestrictive adjective such as "floating" serves the purpose of emphasizing the quality already implied, and indeed, helps to make "floating cloud" into a simple image. Here we would like to call attention to another function. When the two adjectives "floating" and "wandering" occur together, they serve to bring the point of comparison to a sharp focus. That is, when two bare nouns are juxtaposed, for example "cloud" and "mind", it is not always clear in which respect they are being compared. The modifying adjectives narrow down the range of similarity and make it apparent what

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[9] The word *tzu* ("son") in *yu-tzu* can be independent, as in Meng Chiao's 孟郊 famous couplet 慈母手中線 / 遊子身上衣 "The thread in the hand of the loving mother, Becomes the clothes on the body of the wandering son." This enhances the plausibility of our claim that *yu* can also be independent.

the metaphor is about. Thus it is not quite true that the principle of equivalence alone constitutes a metaphor; markers or pointers, in this case the modifying adjectives, also have a role to play.

What has just been said about adjectives applies with equal or greater force to verbs, for the latter, being fixed in meaning, are ideal as pointers. 雲籠遠岫愁千片 / 雨打歸舟淚萬行 "Clouds *envelop* distant peaks, one thousand flakes of sorrow; Rain *beats* upon homeward boat, ten thousand drops of tears." (*CTS*, 72) The two verbs underline the fact that sorrow is as encompassing as the clouds shrouding the peaks, and the tears are as insistent as the rain beating upon the boat. To take another example: 水流心不競 / 雲在意俱遲 "Water flows, the mind does not strive; Cloud stays, the will is equally tardy." (481) "To flow" is the most natural and effortless movement for water; hence the model for the mind. *Tsai*, literally "exist," here translated as "stay," is the most static and neutral among verbs; its presence in the line counsels nonaction.

Let us review once again the difference between nouns and verbs with respect to metaphor formation. A noun, as a collection of qualities, has a broader range of features than a verb. Consequently, when a noun and a verb co-occur in a deviant context—such as "the chair laughs"—it is the more flexible noun that conforms to the verb but not the other way around. As is often done in comic strips, we can easily imagine a chair laughing and at the same time retaining its basic shape—with four legs, a seat, a back, etc. In technical terms, the word "chair" keeps all its semantic features intact except that the feature inanimate is replaced by animate. However, since the meaning of the verb "to laugh" is more narrowly circumscribed, there is no such latitude for adjustment. The same principle applies when a verb occurs in a metaphor spanned by nouns, such as "Clouds envelop distant peaks, one thousand flakes of sorrow." When two nouns—in this case, "clouds" and "sorrow"—occur side by side, it is not always clear in what respect they are being compared. The presence of a verb ("envelop") dispels this uncertainty, thus making the metaphor operative.

2.4   *Covert and overt metaphor*

In this and the next section, we will attempt to construct a typology of metaphor, and along the way, answer two questions.

The first is, what functions do words belonging to various parts of speech serve in metaphor formation? This question has already been touched upon in our previous discussion. For example, in our attempt to differentiate the respective roles played by nouns and verbs, we have in effect classified metaphors into two major classes, noun-centered and verb-centered. But metaphors also contain other parts of speech and special words such as "to be," "to make," "to become," etc. We would like to comment on their function in metaphor-making as well.

The second question, which we will take up in this section, has to do with the degree of explicitness. The comparison of two terms can be explicitly marked, as in simile, or implied, as in metaphor. Within the domain of metaphor, the degree of explicitness also varies. I. A. Richards has called the two ideas in a metaphor "vehicle" and "tenor." In terms of this terminology, there are three possibilities: tenor and vehicle are both present and their connection is explicitly marked; both present, but the connection is merely implied; and in the limiting case, the tenor disappears and only the vehicle remains. The question is, in the last instance, do we still have a metaphor?

Our answer is yes, and before explaining the reasons, let us consider a few examples. The following well-known poem is by Han Hung.

春城無處不飛花　　寒食東風御柳斜
日暮漢宮傳蠟燭　　輕煙散入五侯家

In the spring city everywhere flowers fly;
On Cold Meal Festival, east wind tilts imperial willows.
At dusk, Han palace hands out candles;
Light smoke wafts into five marquises' mansions. (812)

Line 3 alludes to the custom, recorded in the *Hsi-ching tsa-chi* 西京雜記, that on Cold Meal Day, the emperor distributes candle-sticks to his favorites in court. The "five marquises" of line 4 is a direct reference to the five eunuchs of the Han dynasty who had the unusual distinction of being granted the title of marquis on the same day; it also refers obliquely to the T'ang eunuchs who enjoyed comparable favors. Moreover, and this is the point of this illustration, "light smoke" here stands for "imperial favor." Thus "light smoke" is the vehicle, "imperial favor" the implicit tenor, and the two to-

gether constitute a metaphor. The poem is a thinly veiled criticism of the excessive favor enjoyed by the eunuchs of the T'ang court.

The thesis that a metaphor may consist of a single explicit term has an analogue in historical allusion, which, let us recall, requires the comparison of a contemporary topic to a past event. It is our view that when the context makes the comparison clear, a single term—either the present topic or the past event—would be sufficient. "Light smoke wafts into five marquises' mansions" is a perfect example; "five marquises' mansions" is specific enough to make the reference to the Han dynasty clear, and to readers with any familiarity with T'ang history, it also alludes to the contemporary scene. In this case, only the past event is mentioned. Let us consider another example in which only a contemporary topic is mentioned, one of the "Frontier Songs" by Lu Lun 盧綸.

林暗草驚風　　將軍夜引弓　　　平明尋白羽　　沒在石稜中

The woods are dark, the grass startled by the wind,
The general draws his bow at night.
Next morning he looks for his white plumed arrow,
And finds it sunken in the edge of a rock. (771)

Nothing in the title or the poem itself suggests the use of allusion— at first sight anyway. Nevertheless the poem makes a clear reference to a historical figure, specifically, General Li Kuang of the Han dynasty, whose biography in the Shih chi says: "Kuang went hunting and saw a rock in the grass. Mistaking it for a tiger, he shot at it. The arrowhead sunk into the rock." The passage just cited is so familiar that Chinese readers will immediately recognize the reference.

What are the reasons for asserting that a single term, when supported by proper context, is sufficient to make a metaphor? Our primary justification is simply that the Chinese audience— whether the poet's contemporaries or the educated readers that came after—understands the poem that way, and as critics, our first duty is to re-create that understanding. This is the conclusion on which we base our theories. The Chinese readers would probably say that the above poems have "a significance beyond words" 言外之意, which, in our terminology, means that they have a metaphoric or allusive force.

A number of secondary and theoretical justifications can also be given. The fact that a weak signal is sufficient to get the message across means that a great deal of information is shared by the ad- dressor and the addressee. This says something important about Chinese poetry and Chinese civilization, namely, that Chinese poetry operates in a tradition-laden cultural milieu, and that an educated reader can be assumed to be familiar with facts such as the following: Li Kuang, mistaking a rock for a tiger, shot his arrow into it; after the Middle T'ang, the eunuchs so extended their influence and power that they became constant targets of criticism. While this motley collection of facts may strike us as bizzare, there is nothing mysterious about the principle involved: when much information is shared, a few hints are sufficient to convey the message.

In taking the position that there are single-termed varieties of metaphor and allusion, we have of course defined the scope of these concepts as broadly as possible. The reason for doing so is that Recent Style poetry is replete with examples of this kind—relations hinted at, ever so vaguely, but never spelled out. The other reason is that there seems to be a prevalent misconception that metaphor is seldom used in Chinese poetry. For example, Arthur Waley has stated:

The "figures of speech," devices such as metaphor, simile, and play of words, are used by the Chinese with much more restraint than by us. "Metaphorical epithets" are occasionally to be met with; waves, for example, might perhaps be called "angry." But in general the adjective does not bear the heavy burden which our poets have laid upon it. The Chinese would call the sky "blue," "gray," or "cloudy," according to circumstances; but never "triumphant" or "terror-scourged."[10]

The statement is unclear. Sometimes "more restraint" seems to mean that the Chinese are less apt to use very striking metaphors, such as "triumphant sky" or "terror-scourged sky." We agree, and wish to add two comments. First, metaphors in Chinese poetry are by and large distinguished by their subtlety, not their strikingness. Second, in the development of Recent Style poetry during the T'ang dynasty, as time goes on, there is a noticeable increase in the frequency and the degree of deviancy. Thus "white cloud," typical of Early and

[10] Authur Waley, *One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* (New York: Knopf, 1919), p. 21. See Waley's disclaimer in the Preface to the 1962 edition.

Middle T'ang, would be replaced by "yellow cloud" during Late T'ang; "green leaf" by "withered leaf;" "pure light" by "shattered light." Indeed, the frequent occurrence of more striking images and metaphors is one feature that distinguishes the poetry of Late T'ang from that of Early or Middle T'ang.

Waley, however, also seems to use "more restraint" to mean that Chinese poets use figures of speech with less frequency than Western poets; " 'metaphorical epithets' are *occasionally* to be met" encourages this interpretation. Earlier we considered an instance of covert metaphor, in which "light smoke" replaced "imperial favor." The effect is the same as calling smoke "generous," or to use Waley's own example, waves "angry." It is perfectly understandable that Waley as a translator would want to avoid poems of this kind. To try to make such poems intelligible to the English public, which knows next to nothing about China, is not unlike having to explain why a particular joke is funny before telling it. There is nevertheless a lingering suspicion, perhaps unfounded, that Waley failed to notice the metaphoric force in these and other similar poems, and therefore formed the impression that the Chinese poets used metaphors with less frequency. In fairness to Waley, it should be pointed out that he later disowned the piece containing the statement cited above. But since the view expressed is likely to persist, we feel obliged to correct this misconception.

2.5   *Varieties of metaphor*

The purpose of this section is to survey the main types of metaphor in T'ang poetry. In addition we will point out some significant differences between Chinese poetry and English poetry with respect to metaphor-making. Our procedure is to begin by presenting a summary account of the classificatory scheme proposed by Christine Brooke-Rose for English poetry. We will then apply it to T'ang poetry, make modifications in the process, and finally arrive at a scheme more suitable for the latter.

In her book, *A Grammar of Metaphor*, which is perhaps the most thorough study of the subject from a linguistic point of view, Brooke-Rose distinguished five types of noun metaphors, which we paraphrase as follows:

1. *Simple Replacement:* the proper term is replaced altogether by the

metaphor without being mentioned at all, e.g., when Milton calls Satan "the Foe," "the Enmie," "the Tempter," or when Antony says of Cleopatra, "The Witch shall die."

2.   *The Pointing Formulae*: the proper term A is mentioned, then replaced by the metaphor B with some demonstrative expression pointing back to the proper term (A . . . that B . . .).

3.   *The Copula*: a direct statement that A is B, which is authoritative in tone and even didactic. More timid or cautious forms include expressions such as *to seem, to call*, or *be called, to signify, to be worth, to become*.

4.   *The Link with "To Make"*: a direct statement involving a third party: C makes A into B. This is even more explicit than the copula, since the process of change as well as the cause is given.

5.   *The Genitive*: this is the most complex type of all, for the noun metaphor is linked sometimes to its proper term, and sometimes to a third term which gives the provenance of the metaphoric term: B is *part of*, or *derived from*, or *belongs to* or *is attributed to* or *is found in* C, from which relationship we can guess A, the proper term (e.g., the hostel of my heart=body).[11]

Let us divide noun metaphors into two main types, depending upon whether vehicle and tenor both occur, or vehicle alone occurs. This distinction is of some importance, for the two types present different problems. In the latter case, the problem is mainly that of meaning; once we have discovered the absent tenor and noted the way in which its meaning is changed or enriched through contact with the vehicle, we have understood the metaphor. In the former case, however, there is in addition the question as to how tenor and vehicle are related—by what organizing principle and via what words or phrases serving as markers. Sufficient emphasis has already been given to equivalence as an organizing principle. A study of the markers, to be undertaken shortly, will provide part of the criteria for classifying metaphors.

What we called "tenor" and "vehicle" are respectively Brooke-Rose's "proper term" and "metaphor," and her five types can actually be reduced to two. Simple Replacement is clearly the type

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[11] Christine Brooke-Rose, *A Grammar of Metaphor* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1958), pp. 23–24. The main argument of her book is also included in Chatman and Levin, pp. 197–208.

with vehicle alone. The Link with "To Make" and the Copula are types consisting of both tenor and vehicle. The remaining two types fall somewhere in between; in the Pointing Formula, both vehicle and tenor occur but their relation is not always made explicit; the Genitive is mixed—in some cases, both terms occur and the relation is made explicit, while in others, vehicle occurs alone.

Suppose a metaphor consists of both tenor and vehicle, and in addition, a term to connect them. What is the function of the third term? The question is not as paradoxical as it seems. As we have already seen, two nouns in juxtaposition are perfectly capable of constituting a metaphor, without the aid of any additional marker, for example: "floating cloud, wanderer's mind; setting sun, old friend's sentiment." The occurrence of the connecting term is therefore superfluous, and the question naturally arises as to why it is there at all.

Let us take the Copula first, since it is the simplest among connecting terms. The copula *shih* 是 ("to be") does occur in T'ang poetry, but when it occurs, the two terms (tenor and vehicle) connected by it are not only identified but also contrasted. In Li Po's famous line 牀前明月光 / 疑是地上霜 "Bright moonlight before the bed, [I] suspect is frost on the ground," the poet identifies moonlight and frost, but at the same time negates that identification with "suspect." Similar examples were given in section 3.2 "Static Verbs" of SDI, and we need only recall them briefly. "Pity the bones by the Wu-ting River, Which are still the men in their loved ones' boudoir dreams"; here "are" leads directly to "are not." The soldiers are dead, their bones rotting by the Wu-ting River; they are alive only in illusory dreams. "Two three specks of light are Kua-chou," occurs at the end of a poem, written as the poet looks across the Yangtze River towards his home. The two three specks of light may be Kua-chou, his home, but they may also be something entirely different. The same technique continues into the Sung dynasty. For example, Su Shih wrote 孤雲落日是長安 "Lonely cloud and setting sun are Ch'ang-an" (846), and in another poem, 青山一髮是中原 "Blue hills [like] a strand of hair are the central plain." (850) In all these examples, the cherished object—be it one's husband, home, or the capital—is identified with something far away, which, in spite of intense longing, remains beyond reach.

Another type of connecting term is the negative, 不 *bu* ("not")

and 非 *fei* ("to be not"). Their function in ordinary language is to set forth contrast. But again, as we have already seen, two nouns in juxtaposition are quite capable of generating contrast by themselves, for example: "Yangtze and Han, a homesick stranger; Ch'ien and K'un, one withered pedant." Why then are overt markers such as *bu* and *fei* needed at all? The answer is that while ostensibly setting forth contrast, the negative also directs attention to identity. A clear illustration is the following poem by Li Po, written on the occasion of the poet's parting from a friend by the shores of the Yangtze.

水國秋風夜　　殊非遠別時　　　長安如夢裏　　何日是歸期

> Water country, autumn wind night,
> Surely this is not the time for long separation.
> Ch'ang-an is like a dream;
> When is the date for [our] return? (764)

The negative *fei* "is not" occurs in line 2. Literally the first two lines say that here and now should not be the occasion for long separation, but precisely the opposite is true. What the poet did was to use the occasion of bidding farewell to a friend to lament his own condition. Like his friend, the poet is away from Ch'ang-an, and it is uncertain not only when the two will meet again, but also when they will both be able to return to Ch'ang-an.

The use of a connecting verb is thus always ambiguous. Two nouns in juxtaposition are related by equivalence, an uneasy equilibrium between similarity and contrast. The introduction of another term disturbs this equilibrium, setting off a reaction in the opposite direction. Thus the presence of the copula has the effect of calling attention to contrast, while the negative emphasizes identity or similarity.

"To make," Brooke-Rose's fourth type, is a verb which connects tenor and vehicle via an agent-initiated process of change: C makes A into B. Agent is not always stated in Chinese, even in ordinary discourse. Connection, as we have seen, need not be expressed. To indicate change is equally superfluous; the forward momentum of language is sufficient in itself to convey a sense of change. For these reasons, Brooke-Rose's third type rarely occurs in Chinese poetry. There is however, a remote analogue to the verb "to make," namely, 化 *hua* ("to transform into, to become"). But when it is used, the purpose is not so much to state the change as to emphasize it or

something related to it. For example, in describing a palace girl Li Po writes: 只愁歌舞散 / 化作綵雲飛 "One is concerned only that as song and dance cease, She will metamorphose into a bright-colored cloud and fly away." (454) The word *hua*, in the context of *san* ("cease"), *ts'ai-yün* ("bright-colored cloud"), and *fei* ("fly"), focuses upon the dissolution of merrymaking caused by change, and not change itself. Li Shang-yin wrote 願得化爲紅綬帶 / 許敎雙鳳一時銜 "Would that [I] might change into a red seal belt, And let the twin phoenixes carry me for a while." (*CTS*, 6172) Again, the emphasis is on the wishfulness, and not on the process of change.

Let us now turn to Simple Replacement in which the tenor is replaced by the vehicle without being mentioned at all. It is a type encompassing a wide spectrum, from cliché at one end to symbol at the other. Like any other poetry, Chinese poetry is replete with clichés. Thus the moon is frequently referred to as "bright mirror," "jade wheel," or "half compass"; a lady may be a "flower," her eyes "autumn waves," etc. There is an easy explanation for the origin of such clichés. When a metaphor loses its freshness through overuse, it turns into a cliché, at which point the link between the tenor and the vehicle is no longer sustained by felt similarity but by conventionalized association. While clichés, strictly speaking, cannot be considered instances of Simple Replacement—since they are metaphors whose membership has expired—they nevertheless illustrate an important principle. When "replacing" the tenor, the cliché gives emphasis to its perceptual qualities: "bright mirror," "jade wheel," and "half compass" all point to the shape or the color of the moon, and "autumn waves" points to the clarity and liveliness of a lady's eyes.

The same principle applies when we come to Simple Replacement proper. Among T'ang poets, Li Ho is most famous for his penchant for using substitutes. Thus a sword is referred to as "jade dragon," wine as "amber," the sky as "circular blue" 圓蒼, autumn flower as "cold red," and spring grass as "chilly green."[12]

The recognition of a term as replacement depends partly upon the shared qualities and partly upon the context. Liu Tsung-yüan wrote 破額山前碧玉流 "Cracked forehead, before the hill azure jade flows." (*CTS*, 3940) Here "azure jade" refers to a fountain, and the

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[12] Ch'ien Chung-shu 錢鍾書, *T'an-yi lu* 談藝錄 (Shanghai: K'ai-ming, 1937), p. 68.

line says it flows as if the forehead of the hill had been cracked open. The verb "flow" which immediately follows provides the clue, and this again illustrates the primacy of the verb.

In Po Chü-i's poem cited below, there are several instances of Simple Replacement.

時難年荒世業空　　弟兄羈旅各西東
田園寥落干戈後　　骨肉流離道路中
弔影分爲千里雁　　辭根散作九秋蓬
共看明月應垂淚　　一夜鄉心五處同

The times are hard, the year lean, and ancestral estate empty.
Brothers take to the road, each going a different direction.
Field and garden are desolate after lance and shield;
Flesh and bone dislocated along highways and byways.
Accompanied only by [our] shadows, [we] separate to be geese
　　of a thousand miles.
Leaving [our] root, [we] scatter to be tumbleweed of the ninety-
　　day autumn.
As we look at the bright moon together, tears should fall;
The homesickness of this one night is the same in five places.
　　　　　(*Three Hundred T'ang Poems*,[13] No. 206; *CTS*, 4839)

In lines 3 and 4 "lance and shield" stands for war, and "flesh and bone" stands for brothers. They can be considered as either metaphors or metonyms, but are actually clichés. In lines 5 and 6 both "geese" and "tumbleweed" point to an antecedent, "brothers" of line 2. It is significant that there is not a single pointer as required by the Pointing Formula. The context, of course, makes the reference clear. In addition, Po Chü-i provided an extraordinarily long and explicit title: "After Honan was ravaged, famine came to the east of the Pass. My brothers dispersed, each residing in another place. I looked at the moon, felt disturbed, and jotted down my feelings to send to eldest brother at Fou-liang, seventh brother at Yü-ch'ien, fifteenth brother at Wu-chiang, and also to younger brother and sister at Fu-li and Hsia-kua." What the poet did was to relegate external matters to the title so that in the poem itself he could concentrate on presenting instead of representing.

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[13] Yü Shou-chen 喻守眞, ed., *T'ang-shih san-pai shou* 唐詩三百首 [*Three Hundred T'ang Poems*] (Hong Kong: Chung-hua, 1973), pp. 247-48.

The only remaining case to be discussed is the Genetive. Its closest analogue in Chinese is a term containing a classifier. When Li Yü writes 問君能有幾多愁 / 恰似一江春水向東流 "Let me ask you, sir, how much sorrow do you have, That is just like a *riverful* of spring water flowing to the east?" the use of *chiang* "river" as a measure word serves to indicate, directly, the magnitude of water, but also, indirectly and metaphorically, the endlessness of sorrow. Other nouns are also used as classifiers for invisible entities such as the wind, thus making it accessible to the senses and imagination: "a fluteful of wind," "a hairpinful of wind," "a sleeveful of wind," and "a sailful of wind." The same is true of the following couplet: 懸燈千嶂夕 / 卷幔五湖秋 "Hanging lamps, one thousand peaks of evening; Unfurled scroll, five lakes of autumn." (420) The couplet means "The hanging lamps light up the evening over one thousand peaks; The rolled-up curtain reveals autumn on the Five Lakes."

We hope that the above discussion has succeeded in bringing out one important difference between noun metaphors in Chinese and Western poetry. In Western poetry, particles and other grammatical elements play an indispensable role in the formation of metaphors. Among Brooke-Rose's five types, the Copula uses the copula and other verbs of a similar nature; the Pointing formula mentions the tenor first and then refers to it by means of the demonstrative "that" (A . . . that B); the Genitive requires the preposition "of"; and the Link with "To Make" by definition has to have the verb "to make." As we have seen, grammatical particles rarely occur in Recent Style poetry, and they do not play a major role in any of the preceding types of metaphor. The copula and the negative do appear in metaphors, but the purpose of their presence is to emphasize the tension and ambiguity in the metaphor, and not to constitute it. To put the matter positively, we may say that the vast majority of noun metaphors in Recent Style poetry are constituted via the principle of equivalence, and the link between tenor and vehicle rests upon their shared qualities. The fact that metaphors in Chinese poetry tend to be subtle instead of intrusive follows as a corollary in two senses: sometimes only the vehicle appears in the poem while the tenor is merely implied; sometimes both terms appear but their relation, unmarked by any grammatical elements serving as pointers, is discernible only through the qualities they share.

We will conclude this discussion with a brief summary of what

has been said about verbs and verb metaphors. When a noun and a verb occur together in a deviant construction, it is always the noun that conforms to the verb, not vice versa. This principle, which we discussed in detail in 2.3 "The Centrality of Verb," summarizes the general characteristics of verb metaphors—metaphors whose linguistic form is that of a noun followed by a verb or stative verb in predicate position. There is a further consequence: because the meanings of verbs and adjectives are stable, they can function as pointers when occurring in metaphors spanned by two nouns. Thus in "floating cloud, wanderer's mind," the word "floating" makes clear the quality with respect to which the wanderer's mind is being compared to a cloud. In "Clouds envelop distant peaks, one thousand flakes of sorrow," the verb "envelop" points to another aspect of clouds, that they are as encompassing as sorrow. In this sense, adjectives and verbs also function as pointers.

But there is an important difference between pointers of this kind and those discussed by Brooke-Rose. Words such as "make," "is," "that," "the," and "of" are in themselves devoid of perceptual qualities. Their function in constituting a metaphor is to indicate which term is the tenor, which is the vehicle, and to link them. Such words are the tangible embodiment of the metaphoric relation. On the other hand, when adjectives and verbs occur in Recent Style poetry as pointers, they embody the qualities by virtue of which nouns assume the role of tenor and vehicle. The metaphoric relation has no concrete linguistic manifestation; it is simply constituted by the principle of equivalence. It will be recalled that we said in SDI that nouns in Recent Style poetry are oriented towards qualities, not objects, and this is part of the reason why pointers in Chinese poetry differ in character from their counterparts in Western poetry.

We are now ready to present an alternative typology of metaphors. In what follows, if an example has occurred before, it will be cited without comment; if not, a brief note will explain what it is intended to illustrate.

I.   Noun Metaphors
  A.   With Marker
    i.   Positive: 牀前明月光   疑是地上霜 "Bright moonlight before the bed, [I] suspect is frost on the ground."

    ii.   Negative: 水國秋風夜　殊非遠別時 "Water country, au-
tumn wind night, Surely this is not the time for
long separation."
B.   Without Marker: 夜來風雨聲　花落知多少 "By night the
sound of wind and rain; [Who] knows how many flowers
have fallen." (758) (The sound of wind and rain is the falling
flowers.)
C.   Mediated by a Third: 泠泠七弦上　靜聽松風寒 "Clang,
clang above seven strings, Quietly listen to the chill of pine
wind." (763) (What is above the strings is the chill of pine
wind. It is, however, not clear whether the mediating third
element is the music, the silence, or the mood.)
II.   Verb Metaphors
  A.   With Verb: 山青花欲燃 "The hills are green, and the flowers
about to burn."
  B.   With Attributive Adjective: 秋水清無力 "Autumn water is
clear and feeble."
III.   Mixed
  A.   Quality Mediating between Nouns: 玉階生白露 "Jade steps
give rise to white dew." (764) (Here the qualities of being
white, cold, and transluscent mediate between the nouns;
thus the equivalence relation is established between "jade"
and "white," and extends to connect "jade steps" and
"white dew." See 2.6, last example.)
  B.   Noun and Verb Metaphor Together: 落花如有意　來去逐船流
"Falling petals, as if interested, Circle around in pursuit of the
boat." (760) (To say that fallen petals have interest is to
personify petals, and hence to use a verb metaphor. But
"fallen petals" is also an implicit substitute for the addressee,
someone who may be in love. This is a noun metaphor. See
4.1)

2.6 *Equivalence as organizing principle*

The five-syllabic quatrain is the shortest form in Recent Style
poetry. Its compact size poses a special challenge to the poet, who,
with only twenty syllables at his disposal, must leave many things
unsaid. What he cannot say, however, he can still convey by indirect
means. It therefore comes as no surprise that it is in this form that

one finds the most effective use of the principle of equivalence. In what follows, we will present examples in which the use of the principle of equivalence has the effect of successively linking up all the nouns, thus bringing the poem to a focus, and at the same time creating another level of organization.

Wang Wei "Miscellaneous Poem"

君自故鄉來　　應知故鄉事　　來日綺窗前　　寒梅著花未

You, sir, come from my home town,
Should know happenings at my home town.
On the day you came, in front of the silk-screened window,
The winter plum tree, has it blossomed? (756)

"Home town" of line 1 is of course the same as "home town" of line 2. "Silk-screened window" serves as the setting for "winter plum blossoming," thus focusing upon the latter. Through still another equivalence relation, "winter plum blossoming" is identified with "happenings at my home town," and thereby acquires added significance. It is indeed the focus, both of the poem and the poet's concern. Through these interlinked equivalences, then, the poet without ever mentioning the subject directly, conveys his intense longing for home.

Meng Hao-jan "Seeing Chu Ta off to Ch'in"

遊人五陵去　　寶劍值千金　　分手脫相贈　　平生一片心

The traveller leaves at Five Tombs;
The treasured sword is worth a thousand in gold.
As we part, I take it off to make a present,
One single-minded devotion of my whole life. (758)

The equation between "a thousand in gold" and "treasured sword" highlights the value of the latter; thus *pao chien*, which means "sword" in other contexts, is literally "treasured sword" here. Lines 3 and 4 say "I take it off to make a present, One single-minded devotion of my whole life," and the gift is actually the sword. There is therefore a further equation linking "treasured sword" to "one single-minded devotion of my whole life." Let us also note that the last line consists of one noun phrase, literally "whole-life's one-

single-sheet-of heart," in which two modifiers precede the nucleus "heart." "One single sheet" speaks to the purity and intensity of friendship. But the term that brings the entire poem to a focus is "whole life." Unlike other spatial and temporal expressions that set forth the background, this term treats time as a positive quality; as a modifier of "heart," it projects the continuity and all-inclusive-ness of time onto the sentiment of friendship. Thus the poem opens with "traveller leaves at Five Tombs," which outlines the spatial-temporal background. Against this background, the poem focuses upon the feeling between friends, symbolized by a gift, which, as we just saw, is equated not just with "devotion," but with "one single-minded devotion of my whole life."

<p align="center">Li Po "Thoughts on a Silent Night"</p>

牀前明月光　　疑是地上霜　　擧頭望山月　　低頭思故鄉

Bright moonlight before the bed,
I suspect is frost on the ground.
Raising my head, I look at the mountain moon;
Lowering my head, I think about home. (764)

This well-known poem by Li Po consists of a series of real and imagined equations. "Bright moonlight" is equated through the copula "is" with "frost on the ground," but the equation is sus-pended, if not altogether negated, by "[I] suspect." Mountain moon is related to bright moonlight as cause and effect, and to home through thought and association. In either case, the equation is further sustained by shared features; moonlight and mountain moon have brightness in common, and mountain moon and home are both objects far away in space.

<p align="center">Li Po "Jade Step Plaint"</p>

玉階生白露　　夜久侵羅襪　　郤下水精簾　　玲瓏望秋月

Jades steps bring forth white dew,
Which, as the night lingers on, wets gauze stockings.
Taking down the crystal curtain,
Translucent, gaze at the autumn moon. (764)

This deceptively simple poem is organized, first of all, according to

the principle of temporal succession. A lady stands on the steps. After a while, she feels her stockings getting wet, goes inside, lets down the crystal curtain, and gazes at the moon.

There is another principle operating alongside. Jade steps and white dew are white, cold, and translucent. So are gauze stockings, crystal curtain, and autumn moon. In fact, the same set of qualities is shared by all the nouns. Further, the nouns and adjectives that serve as modifiers call attention to these qualities: "jade," "white," "gauze," and "crystal." If there is a single word that encapsulates all these qualities—cold, white, translucent—it is *ling-lung* 玲瓏 of line 4. The *Shuo-wen* says that it means the sound of jade. Another common meaning is "open latticework." But *ling-lung* is also some- times applied to describe a girl, as in *hsiao-ch'iao ling-lung* 小巧玲瓏 ("cute, elegant, refined"). In the context of the present poem, it is not entirely clear whether the word *ling-lung* applies to the way the moon is viewed, that is, through the crystal curtain, or to the lady viewing the moon. It is nevertheless clear that the word *ling-lung* brings to a focus the qualities pervading the entire poem.[14]

This poem illustrates Jakobson's principle of equivalence in two crucial aspects: first, the nouns—"jade steps," "white dew," "gauze stockings," "crystal curtain," "autumn moon"—are not contiguous in the speech-chain, and yet they are linked together. Second, the linkage is achieved by equivalence. That is, similarity and dissimilarity, which in ordinary language contrast an item in the speech-chain to items outside it, here hold among items within the speech-chain; indeed the principle of equivalence serves to organize the poem. This illustrates Jakobson's statement, "The poetic func- tion projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination."

2.7 *Equivalence relation and the lyric*

Having shown that the equivalence relation organizes and unifies the lyric (specifically, the five-syllabic quatrain), we are now ready to take up the historical question: How did the lyric as a self- conscious tradition evolve, and how, in the process of evolution of

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[14] Our interpretation of the "Jade Step Plaint" was anticipated by Ch'eng Pao-i 程抱一 in his "Ssu-hang te nei-hsin shih-chieh 四行的內心世界" ["The Interior World of the Quatrain"], *Chung-wai Literary Monthly*, 2.2 (July 1973), 28–36.

the lyric, did the equivalence relation become its constitutive principle? Since the focus of this paper is T'ang poetry, we will be particularly interested in the period immediately preceding the T'ang, namely, the Six Dynasties.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English defines the lyric as "expressing writer's own thoughts and sentiments usu. briefly. . . ." The two defining features, then, are the subjective or emotional emphasis of the content, and the compactness of the vehicle. In what follows, we will try to locate the historical bases for these two features—the first in the various restatements of the Preface to the Book of Odes by Six Dynasties theorists of literature and the second in the doctrine, highly influential during the Six Dynasties, which asserted that "words do not exhaust meaning." Finally we will suggest that the emergence of the couplet as a basic structural unit of the poem, which also occurred at this time, provided the formal context for the application of the principle of equivalence.

The Preface to the Book of Odes, attributed to Wei Hung 衞宏 of the Han dynasty, was generally regarded as the classical statement on the nature and function of poetry, and like most classical state-ments, it was subject to conflicting interpretations. We will not try to resolve the age-old controversy here. Instead we will take a brief look at the Preface and then proceed to examine some statements by Six Dynasties critics, in particular, those by Liu Hsieh 劉勰 and Chung Yung 鍾嶸 which paraphrased key passages of the Preface. The purpose is to show that whatever the "true" meaning of the Preface might have been, the Six Dynasties critics predominantly took the view that the function of poetry is to give expression to the lyrical impulse. The opening passage of the Preface states:

Poetry is where the heart's wishes go. What lies in the heart is "wish," when ex-pressed in words, it is "poetry." When an emotion stirs within one, one expresses it in words; finding this inadequate one sighs over it; not content with this one sings it in poetry; still not satisfied, one dances unconsciously with one's hands and feet.[15]

The controversy centered around the meaning of the term 志 chih, which we translated as "heart's wishes" or simply "wish." This translation is intended to reflect our belief—which is, however,

[15] Mao shih 毛詩 (SPTK ed.), 1.1b–2a.

unproven—that the statement simply says that the lyrical impulse gives rise to poetry. But another interpretation is also possible. *Chih* literally means "will" or "intention," and on this basis, some critics have argued that *chih* stands for one's moral ideal. According to this view, the function of poetry is to serve as a vehicle for moral instruction.

While the Preface is ambiguous, the statements by Liu Hsieh and Chung Yung are much clearer—at least when taken as a whole. The following passage is from Chapter Six, "An Explanation of Poetry," in Liu Hsieh's *Dragon Carvings of a Literary Mind*.[16]

The Great Shun said, "Poetry expresses the heart's wishes in words; songs set words to music." This exposition by the sage has clearly shown the nature of poetry. Therefore, "what lies in the heart is 'wish,' when expressed in words, it is 'poetry.' " Poetry (*shih*) means to "to keep" (*ch'ih*). In other words, it is what keeps one's nature and emotion. The "Three Hundred Poems"[17] can be summed up in one phrase, "No evil thoughts." The interpretation [of poetry (*shih*) as "to keep" (*ch'ih*)] is in accord with this observation.

   Man is born with seven emotions, which are moved in response to external objects. It is only natural to be moved by external objects and to sing one's heart's wishes.

The pronounced moralistic and didactic attitude of the first paragraph is immediately neutralized by the second paragraph, which clearly favors the lyrical view. This discrepancy can be partly explained by the fact that the first paragraph consists entirely of quotations, and is less likely to represent Liu's own view. Elsewhere, Liu Hsieh's overall sympathy for the lyrical view is even clearer, for example, in the following statements. "Therefore thought is transmitted via ideas, and ideas via words." (*SPTK* ed., 6.1b; Shih, p. 218)[18] "When emotions are moved, they express themselves in words; and when reason is born, it emerges in a pattern." (*SPTK* ed., 6.3a; Shih, p. 222) The following passage is from Chung Yung's

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[16] Liu Hsieh, *Wen-hsin tiao-lung* [*Dragon Carvings of a Literary Mind*] (*SPTK* ed.), 2.1a. For this passage, we adopt, with slight modification, James J. Y. Liu's translation in his *The Art of Chinese Poetry* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 71.

[17] The "Three Hundred Poems" refers to the *Book of Odes*.

[18] For this and subsequent citations from the *Wen-hsin tiao-lung*, "Shih" stands for Vincent Shih's translation. The page number refers to the Chinese-English edition: Vincent Yu-chung Shih 施友忠 tr., *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* (Taipei: Chung Hwa, 1960). Shih's book provides a convenient reference, but we have sometimes used our own translation.

Preface to the *Shih-p'in* 詩品. "Ether (*ch'i*) moves objects, and objects influence man. Therefore when nature and emotion are stirred, they become manifest in song and dance."[19]

All these passages paraphrase the Preface to the *Book of Odes*. The first thing to notice is that, except for the second half of the first quotation which uses a paranomastic definition ("poetry [*shih*] means 'to keep' [*ch'ih*]") to support Confucius's remark on the moral purity of the *Odes*, nothing whatsoever is said about the didactic purpose of poetry. Second, several terms are used interchangeably with *chih*, "will, wish," the controversial term. Whereas the Preface says "what lies in the heart is *chih*, when expressed in words, it is poetry," in these passages "emotion," "emotion and nature," "thought," and "ideas" are all said to be what poetry expresses. Thus in this interpretation via paraphrase, the term *chih* is taken to stand for the inner state of mind in its entirety. In view of the fact that Liu Hsieh and Chung Yung are commonly regarded as the leading theorists of their era, we may conclude that during the Six Dynasties the function of poetry was thought to be that of giving expression to the lyrical impulse.

The Preface also aptly describes the poet's need for expression, and his inability to find the adequate means. Emotion stirs in him, and he successively turns to speech, sighs, and poetry as possible outlets. But finding all of them inadequate he finally dances unconsciously with his hands and feet. In other words, the poet's state of mind may be described as "I feel X," but there is no ready-made expression for X in language. How the poet expresses X, his inchoate state of mind, is a question we will come to eventually.

Brevity of expression, the second defining feature of the lyric, has its primary conceptual basis in the doctrine "words do not exhaust meaning" 言不盡意. (Hereafter referred to as "the doctrine.") The term translated as "meaning" is *i* 意, which also means "intention," "thought," and "ideas"; a closer but more verbose equivalent would be "state of mind." The extent to which the doctrine dominated the intellectual scene of that period can be gathered from a passage in the *Shih-shuo hsin-yü* 世說新語 which stated that at one time the only three topics being talked about in the lower Yangtze

[19] Cited in the "Biography of Chung Yung," *Liang shu* 梁書 (SPPY ed.), 49.5b–6a.

region were "music is neither happy nor sad," "nourishing life," and "words exhaust meaning."[20] Hsi K'ang was the famous protagonist for the first two topics, and the third, which interests us now, was debated avidly by Wang Pi 王弼, Hsün Ts'ai 荀粲, and Ou-yang Chien 歐陽建 among others. Briefly, Ou-yang Chien defended the positive thesis ("words can exhaust meaning"), Wang Pi and Hsün Ts'ai the negative thesis, and the latter won the day.

The impact of the doctrine upon literary theory can be discerned in the following passages. In discussing the proper way to handle descriptions of nature, Liu Hsieh reached the conclusion that "the physical world represents a variety of colorful objects, the language one uses to analyse them should be brief." (Wen-hsin tiao-lung (SPTK ed.) 10.2ab; Shih, p. 352) Later in the same chapter he said, "[If] the description of physical things comes to an end but the mood still persists, [the author may be said] to have understood completely [the art of writing]" 物色盡而情有餘者曉會通也. (SPTK ed., 10.2b; Shih, p. 353) The term translated as "comes to an end" is chin "to exhaust," and the passage clearly echoes the doctrine that words do not exhaust meaning. Chung Yung did likewise in his definition of 興 hsing "metaphor" (so called): "when the words have already come to an end but the meaning persists it is called hsing 'metaphor.'" (Liang shu 梁書 (SPPY ed.) 49.6b) When T'ao Ch'ien wrote his famous line "In these things there is a fundamental truth I would like to tell, but lack the words,"[21] he was restating Chuang-tzu's ideas, but also expressing a view prevalent at his time.

Earlier we characterized the poet's problem as that of trying to express X, his inchoate state of mind, but finding no exact equivalent for it in language. One alternative is to resort to paraphrase and circumlocution. The poet can try to approximate X by first using some words to describe it, and then modifying them with more words. This is the kind of extensive treatment of a subject exemplified by fu 賦. But here the doctrine makes a decisive impact. For it asserts

[20] Liu I-ch'ing, Shih-shuo hsin-yü, "Wen-hsüeh ti-ssu" 文學第四 (SPTK ed.), A.15ab. For the doctrine "words do not exhaust meaning," see T'ang Yung-t'ung 湯用彤, Wei-chin hsüan-hsüeh lun-kao 魏晉玄學論稿 (Peking: Jen-ming, 1957), p. 26–47; and Mou Tsung-san 牟宗三 Ts'ai-hsing yü hsüan-li 才性與玄理 (Hong Kong: Jen-sheng, 1963), p. 243 ff.
[21] James Robert Hightower's translation in The Poetry of T'ao Ch'ien (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 130.

that as long as words are words, it makes little difference whether one uses a few words or many words; neither can exhaust meaning. The former at least has the virtue of brevity. Indeed, the course of development which eventually led to the creation of Recent Style poetry clearly shows the influence of the doctrine; the number of lines in a poem decreased until it reached the standard length of four or eight.

The third and last factor to be considered is the emergence of the couplet as a basic structural unit of the poem. One of the distinguishing features of Six Dynasties poetry is its use of the couplet. However, it is not often realized that poets and critics of the time began to think about the principle underlying the couplet and in the process discovered what we have called the equivalence relation. For this, let us again turn to the *Dragon Carvings of a Literary Mind.*

In the chapter *li-tz'u* 麗辭 devoted to the couplet, Liu Hsieh distinguished four varieties, two of which he defined as follows: "A couplet of contrast is one in which different ways of reasoning meet on common ground; a couplet of agreement is one in which different facts illustrate a single idea." (*SPTK* ed., 7.8b; Shih, p. 272) Two important insights are contained in this passage. First, the principle underlying the couplet is either that of agreement or contrast. This is precisely what we have called the principle of equivalence. Second, the couplet embodies "a common ground" or "a single idea," which is expressed differently by its two members. The "common ground" or "single idea," we wish to suggest, is the meaning that exists in the tension sustained by the two members, and therefore, in this sense, cannot be exhausted by words. This becomes clear when we consider the examples given in the later part of the chapter to illustrate inferior couplets: 遊鴈比翼翔 / 歸鴻知接翮 "Roaming geese soar together wing to wing; Returning swans know enough to link their plumes"; 宣尼悲獲麟 / 西狩泣孔丘 "Hsüan-ni (Confucius) lamented the capture of the unicorn; During the hunt in the west K'ung Ch'iu (Confucius) shed tears." (*SPTK* ed., 7.9a; Shih, p. 273) In the two examples above, the two lines of a couplet may be said to express a single idea. But that idea is exhausted by the words in the lines taken individually or jointly; without the difference in the two members to sustain the tension, there is no residual meaning. From

this we may infer that the "common ground" or "single idea" must refer to something which is generated by the two lines of the couplet. Thus for poorly constructed couplets, one plus one equals one, but for well constructed couplets, the sum is greater than its parts.

The couplet is a lyric in miniature. It is compact. It is informed by a single idea or a common ground. In addition, the structure of the couplet requires the use of the principle of equivalence. When the principle is extended beyond the matching units of the two lines to the entire poem, we have examples such as the "Jade Step Plaint" of the last section—a poem in which all the nouns, linked by the principle of equivalence, focus upon a common quality. In sum, the emergence of the couplet during the Six Dynasties provided the formal context for the initial use of the principle of equivalence, which, when extended, became an integral part of the lyric.

We began this section by asking how the self-conscious tradition of the lyric developed, and would like to end by saying a few words about what is implied by the term "self-conscious." If we were interested in the origin of the lyric tradition as such—leaving aside the question of self-conscious awareness—we would probably be led to the very beginning of Chinese poetry. However, we are interested instead in finding out when the practitioners of the lyric also became consciously aware of the principle involved. It comes as no surprise that we find the beginning of that awareness in the Six Dynasties, for before then there was not very much literary criticism. This seemingly commonplace answer does have an important implication. The principle of equivalence, it will be recalled, has its natural home in linguistics. It was then extended by Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss to the structural analysis of poetry in general, and by us to the study of Recent Style poetry. The reader may very well feel that our mode of analysis, however fascinating, is alien to the Chinese tradition. But what we have shown is that Liu Hsieh, the foremost Chinese theorist of literature, was aware of the two defining features of the lyric—compactness and subjective content—and the principle of equivalence as well. If so, what we have just done is both to locate the conceptual bases for the T'ang lyric in the preceding era, and to provide the structural analysis of poetry with premises rooted in the Chinese tradition.

3. ALLUSION AND HISTORICAL ARCHETYPE

3.1 *Definition and scope*

At the outset, we should say something about our use of the term "allusion," and thereby indicate the scope and direction of this section. *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* defines "allusion" as "an implied or indirect reference." But in our view, it is inconsequential whether the reference is direct or indirect, explicit or implicit. Wang Wei's "Lady Hsi," which we discussed in 1.2, makes an explicit and direct reference to the *Tso chuan*, the locus classicus for the story of Lady Hsi:

> Do not think present favors,
> Can make one forget past love.
> Looking at flowers with eyes filled with tears,
> She will not speak to the Prince of Ch'u. (756)

The poem, written at a banquet given by Prince Hsien of T'ang, compares two beautiful women of different times who suffered a similar fate: one, a cake vendor's wife forcibly taken away from her husband by Prince Hsien, and the other, Lady Hsi, of a much earlier time, who was taken by the Prince of Ch'u after the fall of the state of Hsi; both were unable to forget their love for their husbands. Now, the title "Lady Hsi" unmistakably points to the story in the *Tso chuan*, which makes the historical reference in the body of the poem direct and explicit. Nevertheless, we will say that Wang Wei uses an allusion to tell the story of the cake vendor's wife.

Let us now consider Lu Lun's "Frontier Song," discussed in 2.4.

> The woods are dark, the grass startled by the wind,
> The general draws his bow at night.
> Next morning he looks for his white plumed arrow,
> And finds it sunken in the edge of a rock.

Nothing in the title or the poem itself suggests the use of allusion— at first sight, anyway. Nevertheless, as we pointed out earlier, the language of the poem clearly echoes a well-known passage in the Biography of Li Kuang in the *Shih chi*.

In the first poem, the title mentions Lady Hsi and the reference in the text is direct and explicit. In the second, it is the body of the poem—its similarity to a well-known earlier text—that calls attention to another level of meaning. By our definition, both poems use allusion, and the principle involved seems to be as follows: allusion is present in a poem if that poem makes reference to an event embedded in the main event of the poem.

A final word of clarification. We would like to alert the reader to the fact that the word "allusion" is used here as the equivalent for the Chinese term 用事 *yung-shih*, literally "use event." "Event" is understood here as past event, something mentioned in a preexisting text. "Use event" should be distinguished from "mention event." If an event contemporary to the poet is referred to directly, then we will say that he "mentions the event"; but only if he uses a past event to refer to a present event would we say that he "uses an event." "Historical allusion" is probably a more precise translation of *yung shih*. But since "allusion" is shorter, we will often use it to stand for "historical allusion," which in turn stands for *yung shih*. The subject matter of this section is therefore historical allusion.

3.2   *The structure of allusion*

In considering historical allusion, a number of questions arise. What are the essential ingredients of an allusion, especially the kind of historical allusion which figures so prominently in the poetry of Tu Fu and Li Shang-yin? In what ways are metaphor and allusion alike, and in what ways are they different? What function does allusion serve for poets and for poetry? What does the use of historical allusion in poetry tell us about the Chinese attitude towards history? These are large questions. A concrete example should help to bring these questions to a sharper focus.

竇融表已來關右　　陶侃軍宜次石頭

Tou Yung's memorial has already reached West of the Pass.
T'ao K'an's army should be camped by Rocky City. (627)

This couplet comes from Li Shang-yin's "More Reflections" 重有感, in which the poet expresses his anxiety over the recent political upheaval.

At the time the eunuchs had attained dominance over the reigning

emperor Wen-tsung—his person, his movements, and his decisions. Outraged by such usurpation of imperial authority, the ministers plotted a restoration. They contrived a report that sweet dew had formed on the pomegranates in the Office of the Capital Garrison, and invited the emperor to come to view this auspicious omen with the eunuchs. Loyalist soldiers were hidden at the scene with orders to attack the eunuchs and take the emperor away. The soldiers, however, were discovered before they were able to attack, the eunuchs fled with the emperor as their hostage, and the plot was a total failure. The only hope was for regional commanders to come to the aid of the emperor. One regional commander in particular, a man by the name of Liu Ts'ung-chien, had already presented a memorial in which he said, "I will carefully improve the territory assigned to me, ready my arms and men, and serve as a confidant to Your Majesty. If the evil subordinates are hard to control, I vow unto death to clean up the emperor's quarters."[22] But having vowed his loyalty to the emperor, Liu did not take any further action. Li Shang-yin's poem was written at this historical juncture and the couplet cited spoke directly to this point.

Tou Yung was a general of the Han dynasty, and a regional commander like Liu Ts'ung-chien. To make the parallel complete, Tou also presented a memorial offering to put his army at the disposal of the emperor. The first line of the couplet, then, describes Liu's action through an allusion to Tou: "Tou Yung's memorial has already reached West of the Pass," where "West of the Pass" stands for the capital. The second line, "T'ao K'an's army should be camped by Rocky City," is also about Liu Ts'ung-chien, but the relation is vastly different. At the time of Su Chün's rebellion during the Chin dynasty, T'ao K'an was persuaded to become the leader of an alliance. As the "Biography of T'ao K'an" in the *History of the Chin Dynasty* 晉書陶侃傳 tells it, T'ao K'an "in martial attire, embarked together with Wen Ch'iao and Yü Liang, met up with the armies of the Rocky City, fought Su Chün and killed him in battle." What T'ao did in a previous dynasty Liu Ts'ung-chien had not yet done when the poem was written. Thus Li Shang-yin expressed his hope that Liu would act as decisively as T'ao. The key

[22] *Hsin T'ang shu* 新唐書 (*SPPY* ed.), 207.11a.

word is "should"; "T'ao K'an's army should be camped by Rocky City" means, in this context, that Liu's army should be camped by the T'ang capital Ch'ang-an to attack the eunuchs, instead of remaining at its border outpost. In fact, the fate of the T'ang dynasty was held in suspense between Liu's intention and his action, between presenting the memorial pledging allegiance to the emperor and leading his army to the capital.

We can now attempt to answer the question: what are the essential ingredients of historical allusion? A historical allusion has two poles, one related to a contemporary topic and the other to a historical event. The two are compared, and the purpose of the comparison is to bring out the similarity between the two and thereby provide the opportunity to characterize or comment on the contemporary event. This much seems obvious. But it has not been sufficiently emphasized that a historical event is often chosen for comparison because, in the most crucial aspect, that event is totally unlike the present event. Liu Ts'ung-chien was compared to T'ao K'an because, whereas T'ao took action, Liu merely announced his intention to act. A convenient name for this kind of historical comparison, which emphasizes contrast instead of similarity, would be *negative allusion*.

3.3   *Metaphor and allusion compared*

Similarity and contrast are then the operative principles of allusion. Earlier we pointed out that metaphor also works by means of similarity and contrast. Indeed we introduced the notion of "metaphoric relation" so that both relations can be encompassed under one term. We can now say that the equivalence relation—that is, similarity and contrast—is the common denominator of metaphor and allusion.

In what ways are metaphor and allusion different? The simplest answer is that they focus on different things, metaphor on quality and allusion on action. Let us see why.

What is the limitation of metaphor as a means of expression? That is, suppose metaphor in all its rich variety is at the poet's disposal, is there anything that cannot be expressed? There is, namely, man's moral action. Here we understand "moral action" as the term for a rather complex matter. X died, and Y is the physical cause of X's death. We say Y killed X. But to characterize

Y's action adequately in moral terms, we need to know a great deal more. We need to know Y's relation to X, the circumstances that led to this killing, Y's motive for killing X, and so on. The intrinsic complexity of moral action is further attested by the fact that the English vocabulary contains a vast number of terms for the act of killing: "murder," "homicide," "assassination," "execution," "mercy killing," "manslaughter," "infanticide," and "fratricide," to mention only the more common ones. The Chinese historiographic tradition, beginning with the *Tso chuan*, had a vastly complex and carefully distinguished vocabulary just to describe the death of a king. To know which term to use for a specific act of killing requires that we look into the full circumstances, which, to repeat, are intrinsically complex. Now, if we were right in arguing earlier that metaphor is essentially focused on qualities, then multiplying the number of metaphors and improving upon their power would only yield more and more qualities, simple and refined, but never circumstances, motive, and intent—the *sine qua non* of moral action in our sense of the term.

Writers of Recent Style poems face an even more acute problem when they try to treat moral action. The maximum length of a Recent Style poem is eight seven-syllable lines, or fifty-six syllables in all. Within such a short compass, it is hardly possible to explain the circumstances and motives of an act, and without the circumstances and motives, an act is not a moral act. With the use of historical allusion, however, the impossible becomes unnecessary. The background material—circumstances, motives, personal relations, etc.—need not be explained but only alluded to. The mere mention of a historical person or place activates the complex of ideas and events conventionally associated with it, which, when grafted onto the present topic, prepares the stage for moral action. In this use of history as shorthand, the Chinese poet works very much like the Zen painter who can conjure up a face, a human figure, or a mountain scene with just a few strategically placed lines and dots.

Let us illustrate with the couplet by Li Shang-yin just discussed. A general sent a memorial to the emperor. Under what circumstances did he send it, why did he send it, and what was said in the memorial? We need to know these facts in order to understand and assess

this act as a moral act. But to set down all these things, as it was indeed done in the *New History of the T'ang Dynasty* (*Hsin T'ang shu*), would require another poem at least. The mere mention of Tou Yung's name and the implied parallel between Tou Yung and Liu Ts'ung-chien, however, make clear that the central government was weak, and that the general offered to lead an army to the capital for the purpose of restoring the emperor to his rightful place. In short, if a poet wishes to treat man's moral action in Recent Style poetry at all, it seems that he must resort to historical allusion. Human action is one subject the poet cannot treat if he limits himself to metaphor.

3.4   *Global and local allusion*

Since historical allusion, by definition, relates a past event to a current topic, it follows that one of its functions is to add another level of meaning. In this connection, we wish to make a distinction between two different types of effect, *local* and *global*. The effect of an allusion is local if the double meaning accrues only to the line containing it, and global if the added meaning affects not only its vehicle but the whole poem as well. In the latter case, historical allusion also becomes an organizing principle. Let us consider lines 5 and 6 in the third poem in Tu Fu's "Autumn Meditations":

> A thousand houses rimmed by the mountains are quiet in
>   the morning light,
> Day after day in the house by the river I sit in the blue of
>   the hills.
> Two nights gone the fisher-boats still come bobbing on the
>   waves,
> In the cool autumn swallows wilfully flit to and fro.
> . . . A disdained K'uang Heng, as a critic of policy:
> As a promoter of learning, a Liu Hsiang who failed.
> Of the school-friends of my childhood, most did well.
> By the Five Tombs in light cloaks they ride their sleek
>   horses.[23] (583)

Lines 5 and 6 were discussed in 1.2. Two historical allusions were

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[23] A. C. Graham's translation in *Poems of the Late T'ang*, p. 53, slightly modified.

used. The function of these allusions is to compare Tu Fu himself
with illustrious men of the past, thereby pointing up Tu Fu's failure.
Insofar as these lines address themselves both to the past and the
present, they have double reference and meaning. But the meaning
of the rest of the poem remains for the most part at the literal level.
This couplet, then, is an example of local and localized use of
allusion.

    For an example of the global effect of allusion, let us turn to another
poem by Tu Fu, "The Temple of Yü."

禹廟空山裏　　秋風落日斜　　荒庭垂橘柚　　古屋畫龍蛇
雲氣生虛壁　　江聲走白沙　　早知乘四載　　疏鑿控三巴

> The Temple of Yü in empty mountain;
> Autumn wind, the setting sun slants.
> In deserted courtyard hang oranges and grapefruits;
> The ancient halls are decorated with dragons and snakes.
> Misty air exudes from hollow walls;
> River sound speeds along white sand.
> A pioneer in inventions, he rides the four vehicles.
> Channelling and tunnelling, he brings the three Pa regions
>   under control. (485)

As the title indicates, the subject matter is the Temple of Yü,
located somewhere along the Yangtze in Szechuan. Yü was re-
nowned as the tamer of rivers in legendary times. As a cultural hero
he was also credited with numerous other achievements. At first
glance, the poem seems to be divided into two parts: the first six
lines describe the temple and its setting, and the last two lines pay
tribute to Yü. Line 7 recalls Yü as the pioneer in the use of four
means of transportation, for land, water, mud, and mountain. Line
8 praises Yü's overall achievement as the tamer of rivers while
referring to a specific instance, the Yangtze around the San Pa
gorges, the site of the Temple and the occasion for the present poem.

    A closer reading reveals that the organizing principle of this poem
is far more subtle. In addition to sharing common subject matter,
the first six lines are further unified by a set of adjectives with
similar connotations: "empty," "setting (sun)," "deserted," and
"hollow." The resulting textural motif endows this poem with a
pronounced elegiac overtone. Second, and this is the point of this

illustration, not only does the last couplet record Yü's achievements, the other lines allude to them as well. According to the *Book of Documents*, oranges and grapefruits were some of the gifts Yü received from tribute nations. According to *Mencius*, it was Yü who drove dragons and snakes to the marshes. These items—oranges and grapefruits, dragons and snakes—occur in lines 3 and 4. In addition to being part of the temple scene, they also serve as physical testimony to Yü's greatness: the oranges and grapefruits he received as tribute have now become trees bearing fruit in his courtyard, and the dragons and snakes he subdued now guard his temple. The same applies to the next two lines: "Misty air exudes from hollow wall; River sound speeds along white sand." First of all, these lines describe what is seen and heard. But as the tamer of rivers, Yü is present, through his mana, in all things composed of water. The two terms "misty air" and "river sound" thus suggest that it is Yü who moves, and moves in, the mist above and the river below.

The poem, then, has two levels of meaning. At one level, every line is about the Temple of Yü or its immediate surroundings, and this physical focus unifies the poem. At another level, almost every line speaks to a momentous event in the past in terms of its present effect. The figure of Yü looms large behind all these events, and therefore serves as another unifying focus. Unlike the local use, the global use of historical allusion is capable of generating a new level of meaning for the entire poem as well as serving as an organizing principle.

3.5   *History as archetype*

The frequent use of historical allusion presupposes a mutual understanding between the poet and his audience, and that understanding is in turn based upon a shared outlook. What are the main features of this outlook insofar as they bear upon the problem at hand? In other words, we are asking the question raised earlier: what can the use of historical allusion in poetry tell us about the Chinese attitude towards history and the world at large? A related question is: what attitude should we adopt when we encounter historical allusion in poetry?

First, history is written history. As such, a historical event has a well-defined textual locus, and an integrity and solidity that defy

revision or scepticism. For example, in our study of "The Temple of Yü," it is totally irrelevant that Yü was a mythical figure who probably did not exist. What matters is that the achievement of Yü was recorded in the classics, and that these facts about the past, so codified, were known to the poet and his audience alike. To participate in that world, we must read as they did and suspend our disbelief.

If modern scepticism is one obstacle to the proper appreciation of poetry, traditional pedantry is another. Beginning with the Sung dynasty, a tradition of exegesis grew which made writing commentary to poetry an occasion for historical research, and most importantly, for exhibiting the commentator's erudition. Whenever a historical fact was mentioned in poetry, the commentator would spare no effort to find out what really happened. To see why such efforts clearly go beyond the frontier of criticism we need only consider the nature of historical allusion. Earlier we noted that allusion has two poles, one related to a historical event and the other, a contemporary topic. A historical event mentioned in poetry, such as Tou Yung's presenting a memorial to the emperor or T'ao K'an's leading an alliance, has a single, well-defined *locus classicus*. When that is located, there is no need to do further research. The poet has that passage in mind when he uses the allusion. When we know that passage, we know as much as the poet, and that is enough. The current topic is likely to be more diffuse since it is often referred to indirectly. But even here a principle of limitation is readily at hand. Allusion depends upon the similarity or contrast between the past and the present. Once the historical event is circumscribed by its textual locus, then we only need to know enough about the current topic to understand the point of comparison. In either case, exhaustive research into history is hardly called for.

What has just been said can also be stated more generally. Whenever we compare two events, we must single out certain features for comparison, such as whether a general has the courage to come to the aid of his sovereign in time of need. Such features, since they can participate in more than one event, must be universals. Consequently, it is the universal or archetypal aspect of history that should engage our attention, not the concrete details. If we may

rephrase Aristotle, not only poetry, but also history in the context of poetry, is concerned with the universal.

Second, the historical process consists of the eternal recurrence of archetypes, either personalities or events. In particular, both what has happened and what has yet to happen are thought of in terms of some familiar pattern. Thus we find Li Shang-yin in "More Reflections" using Tou Yung's memorial as an allusion to record the news that Liu Ts'ung-chien intended to lead his army to the capital. At the same time, he expressed his hope in terms of another allusion, that T'ao K'an actually did lead an alliance. The sense of poignancy and urgency we get from Li Shang-yin is because history has already repeated itself, but only partially, and human action is still required to bring about the desired outcome. Indeed, much of the reflection on contemporary topics in T'ang poetry is phrased, so to speak, as an implicit answer to the question, "Will history repeat itself?" Thus Tu Fu laments the decline of the T'ang empire by noting the absence of tribute from the South: "Malachites of Yüeh-shang, there is no news; Bright pearls of South Seas, long remain silent" 越裳翡翠無消息 / 南海明珠久寂寥. (578) In a similar vein, Wang Ch'ang-ling records his disappointment in the weakening of border defense with the wish that Li Kuang of the Han dynasty, nicknamed "Winged General," would return: "If Winged General of Dragon City were present, He would not let the Hunnish cavalry cross Mount Yin." Li Po went one step further; he not only notes what took place in the past, but emphasizes its irrevocable passing by contrasting it with the present: "Palace maids like flowers filled spring hall; And now, there are only partridges flying." 宮女如花滿春殿 / 祇今惟有鷓鴣飛. (*CTS*, 1846)

The fact that both the present and the future are thought of in terms of the past implies a distinctive concept of change. Change, in this perspective, is not the occurrence of some totally new event, but the nonoccurrence of a familiar event. Hence the total impression is that of persistence and permanence. Let us take up the two types of allusion one by one. A positive allusion, which emphasizes the analogy between the past and the present, clearly does not convey the sense of change. A negative allusion, which emphasizes the contrast between the past and the present, apparently points to change. But even here, the present is being compared to the past; the negative

allusion says in effect that the present should be like the past but is not. The dominant partner is still the archetype, that which has appeared before and is expected to appear again.

In the beginning of this essay we discussed semantic categories. We are now ready to extend the analysis to historical archetypes. Just as the semantic categories accomplish an archetypal organiza- tion of the world of things, so the historical archetypes accomplish the same for the world of events, especially those concerned with human action. The same conclusions also follow. When a word occurs in poetry, it not only refers to a particular thing, but also represents the category to which it belongs. When a historical allusion appears in poetry, what is referred to is not just a past event or a present event like it, but also the timeless archetype. Thus, with respect to both things and events, a poem not uncommonly has at least two levels of meaning, individual and archetypal. For this reason, the world in Recent Style poetry is remarkably solid and stable. Individual things or persons come and go, but the archetypes remain unchanged. In fact we may say that human action takes place against the backdrop of eternal history, and it is this fact that endows action with moral significance.

4. METAPHORIC LANGUAGE AND ANALYTIC LANGUAGE

4.1 *War of words*

What is the role of syntax in poetry? This question was given a tentative answer towards the end of SDI. It seems fitting to consider the question once again from the perspective of the present paper.

The earlier answer was formulated in terms of the distinction between imagistic language and propositional language. When external syntax is weak and the internal composition of noun compounds contains elements strongly oriented towards sensory qualities, what we have is imagistic language. When syntax is strong and analytic clarity dominates over sensory intensity, what we have is propositional language. Further, we observed that the two languages are complementary in distribution and in function. In a Recent Style poem, the middle couplets by and large use imagistic language to display the sensory qualities of individual objects. In contrast, continuous syntax, which occurs most frequently in the final

couplets, unifies the discrete items that appeared earlier in the poem. In short we argued that the two languages, respectively defined by the presence and absence of syntax, serve different functions in different parts of a Recent Style poem.

The role of syntax in poetry, however, is a problem that is still very much with us. The present paper began by calling attention to the central importance of the principle of equivalence, and pro- ceeded to show that when simple images are related as equivalents through their shared qualities, the result is metaphoric language. It was then pointed out that metaphoric language is just imagistic language viewed from a more inclusive perspective, a perspective that takes the equivalence relation among nouns into account. But equivalence is a relation that operates in the absence of, and some- times in competition with, syntactic relations between contiguous elements. The question again arises whether syntax has any positive role to play in poetry. The problem becomes all the more acute since Jakobson seems to imply that equivalence is the only relation that matters in poetry. If so, there is no room for syntax.

Our earlier theory, which viewed metaphoric language and analytic language as being separate but equal, implied a rejection of Jakobson's extreme position. We are now ready to go one step further and show that, in addition to the functions performed by each language separately, the two sometimes also join forces to ac- complish things that cannot be accomplished by either alone. Moreover, each language is associated with one of the two basic modes of thought. In the earlier paper we noted the similarity between imagistic language and mythical thinking in that they both emphasize concentration, isolation, and intensity. Another feature of mythical thinking is its preference for equivalence and identity; for the mystic, all things are equivalent to each other and to the One. Clearly the mode of thought underlying metaphoric language is analogous to, if not identical with, mythical thinking. On the other hand, analytic language uses syntax to indicate the various relations among parts of a sentence—relations such as spatial and temporal condition, class membership, implication, etc. It is a self-conscious and discursive language with an obvious affinity to conceptual thinking. Thus in considering the interplay between the two lan- guages, we will also be concerned with the interplay between the two modes of thought.

Three kinds of examples will be given. The first is a special type of metaphor in which the if-then relation brackets the metaphor and thus neutralizes the metaphoric force. The second is the extended metaphor, in which mythical thinking first establishes the equivalence relation and then analytic thinking takes over to extend the metaphor to its logical conclusion. In the third set of examples, we will attempt to show that spatial and temporal relations, usually thought of as the domain of analytic language, can also be expressed through the use of imagistic-metaphoric language. The purpose of all this is to illustrate how the two languages (and the two underlying modes of thought) interact.

At first sight metaphor seems to be the eminent domain of metaphoric language and the equivalence relation that constitutes it. But actually analytic language and conceptual thinking are also often involved. "My love is a red, red rose" is a metaphor equating two things; the copula "is" emphasizes the equivalence relation but the metaphor can just as well be expressed without it, for example, "My love, a red, red rose." Now consider "My love, a rose, is red." Here both modes are present. "My love" is identified with a rose, and then further implications are drawn. Mythical thinking, which sees everything as One, effects the initial identification. Drawing implication is the work of conceptual thinking. The result, then, is an extended metaphor of the most rudimentary sort, in which conceptual thinking is subordinate to, and serves the interest of, mythical thinking. Consider now another variant: "If my love is a rose, then it is red." "My love is a rose" is a metaphor. But the metaphoric force is neutralized when it occurs as the premise of an inference; "if . . . then . . ." brackets the metaphor and subsumes the equivalence relation under a logical relation. In other words, conceptual thinking in this example dominates over mythical thinking.

The situation in T'ang poetry is analogous, but there is one difference. In Chinese, the relation between reason and consequence is not always marked; in the proper context, two successive sentences without any explicit marker are sufficient in themselves to constitute an implicative relation. In 落花如有意 / 來去逐船流 "Fallen petals, as if interested, Circle around in pursuit of the boat" (760), the relation of implication is clearly marked by the word *ju* "as if"; the fallen petals are first personified hypothetically, whereupon certain consequences

follow. The two lines are actually meant to be an invitation; the
hearer is invited to be like the fallen petals and come to follow the
boat. In the next example, which occurs at the end of a farewell
poem, the relation is not as clear. 春風知別苦 / 不遣柳條青 "Spring
wind knows parting is bitter; Does not cause willow branches to
turn green." (766) These lines can be read as we have translated
them, in which case they constitute a metaphor, a personification
of the spring wind into something that knows and cares. Or else, we
may see in these lines an implicit if-then relation: "*If* the spring
wind knew that parting was bitter, *then* it would not cause willow
branches to turn green." The implicative relation makes everything
perfectly rational and the metaphor disappears. But parting is some-
thing that reason does not willingly accept; what is being sought
under such circumstances is not rationality but rationalization.
Indeed we can detect in these lines a poignant wish: "[I wish]
spring wind would know that parting is bitter, and [therefore]
would not cause willow branches to turn green."

This ambiguity in language is symptomatic of a deep and pervasive
ambiguity in thought. On the one hand, the poet is using metaphoric
language to state what for him is simply a matter of fact: the spring
wind happens to know what parting is like and tries to be helpful.
We should add that the mode of thought here is prior to the split
between the self and the objective world, between dream and reality,
and therefore "fact" in this instance includes everything, real or
imagined.

On the other hand, the poet is using analytic language to state a
relation of implication, and therefore thinking rationally and
realistically. The presence of the if-then relation, however implicit,
means that he posits the antecedent as a hypothetical state of
affairs, thus recognizing its difference from the real. In drawing
his conclusion, he relies upon what obtains in the real world, that
is, only sentient beings can know and care. There is, however, a fur-
ther complication. In saying that parting is bitter, the poet is speak-
ing with the voice of experience. But to expect the spring wind to
know this too, and to project this expectation into a wish, is to
revert to the voice of innocence. Thus instead of the unified and
undifferentiated world of mythical thinking, what we have is a
polarization of that world into two, one perfectly lucid and ra-

tional, and the other permeated by passion and longing. Somehow, the poet and the rest of us, having met the real world head on, refuse to accept it as such, and still hope to return to the other world where things can be transformed at will. It is this ambiguity, this subtle shift from one language to the other that creates levels of meaning in poetry, and gives it tension and depth.

Much of what has just been said also applies to the next two examples. Meng Hao-jan, in thinking about his friend far away, writes: 還將兩行淚 / 遙寄海西頭 "Would still take two lines of tears, And send far to the west of the sea." (439) These are run-on lines, welded together by various syntactic markers. Into this analytic language representing the objective world, however, the poet injects a metaphor; the verb "to send" converts "tears" into something like a letter. Yet in equating the two, the poet succeeds only in calling attention to the fact that tears cannot be sent. It is as if he recognizes the impossibility but insists upon doing it. 隴山鸚鵡能言語 / 爲報家人數寄書 "Parrot of Mount Lung knows how to speak; Time and again conveys messages to keep folks at home informed." (*CTS*, 2106) Since the first line is apparently the premise of the second, the mode of thought seems to be that of analytic thinking—until we realize that even if the parrot could speak, it still would not know where to deliver the message. Again, wishful thinking intrudes into the exercise of reason.

4.2   *Extended metaphor*

The interplay between metaphoric and analytic language may take two forms. In the first, a metaphor is embedded in an analytic relation such as implication. "If my love is a rose, then it is red" exemplifies this form, which was discussed in some detail in the last section. The second form makes the metaphor the dominant partner. Once the basic equivalence has been established by mythical thinking, conceptual thinking joins in to draw further inferences. "My love, a rose, is red" illustrates this variety, to which we will now turn. Indeed it is possible to outline the development of extended metaphor in T'ang poetry.

One of Tu Fu's lines reads 山青花欲燃 "The hills are green, and the flowers about to burn." (766) Its antecedent is Yü Hsin's 庾信 line 山花焰火燃, literally "Hill flower flaming fire burn," which

means "flowers in the hills are burning like flaming fire." The reader is invited to draw the further implication that the flowers are flaming red. Between Yü Hsin and Tu Fu, there was a further compression. The middle term "fire" was deleted. The primacy of the verb "burn" in "the flowers about to burn," however, forces the reader to draw the implication that flowers are being compared to fire, and the further implication that flowers are flaming red. In short, once the initial equivalence has been established, the other consequences follow by necessity.

The extended metaphor was much favored by Li Ho. 羲和敲日玻璃聲 "Hsi-ho whips the sun that tinkles like glass." (CTS, 4400) An intermediate step is again omitted. The sun is like glass because both are bright and shiny. Therefore when Hsi-ho, the charioteer of the sun, hits it, the sun tinkles like glass. 銀浦流雲學水聲 "By the Silver River, flowing clouds mimic sounds of water." (CTS, 4399) "Silver River" is the Milky Way. The adjective "flowing" equates clouds with water, leading to the further implication that when clouds move, they also sound like water. Li Ho's influence is evident in the poetry of Li Shang-yin, one of his most famous admirers. The latter writes 月浪衡天天宇濕 "Moon waves cross the sky, and the eaves of the sky become wet." (CTS, 6233) The metaphor linking the moon and the waves is further extended to lead to the conclusion that the moon, like the waves, can wet the eaves of the sky.

The purpose of these examples is partly to trace the lineage of a literary technique. But even more important, they show how a metaphor works both by compression and extension. The first is effected by mythical thinking, the second by conceptual thinking, and in this joint enterprise, mythical thinking plays the dominant role.

4.3 Space and time as qualities

Having seen that analytic language intrudes into metaphor formation, the eminent domain of metaphoric language, we may wonder whether the converse is also true. In this section we will show that space and time, which usually serve as the framework for various analytic relations, are also treated as qualities in poetry, and as such, become the stuff of metaphor.

Conceptual thinking characteristically analyzes a whole into parts,

and then specifies the relations among those parts. One important subclass is spatial and temporal relations. Indeed, every language has terms such as "before," "after," "simultaneous with," "above," "below," etc. Space and time, however, can also be thought of as infinitudes, as qualities intensified to the utmost degree. To say "tomorrow is Thursday" or "tomorrow I will go to New York" is to calibrate time into measured parts, or to define an event in the spatial-temporal framework. But to say "tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow" is to savor the endless duration of time, and the dreariness of one's existence. In 2.6 we gave an example of time treated as quality: "As we part, I take it off to make a present, One single-minded devotion of my whole life." Let us now consider two more poems, both by Li Shang-yin.

Ch'ang O

雲母屏風燭影深　　長河漸落曉星沉
嫦娥應悔偷靈藥　　碧海青天夜夜心

Behind the mica screen candle shadows are deep.
Long River gradually falls, morning star sinks.
Lady Ch'ang O should regret having stolen the elixir.
[Over] azure seas [and] blue skies, night after night
　　the [same] thought. (834)

The first two lines describe someone, probably a persona of the poet, behind a mica screen watching the night turning into dawn. Why is he so lonely? The answer is given in terms of an allusion to Lady Ch'ang O, who stole her husband's elixir and fled to the moon upon being discovered. Her transgression was to exceed the limits of finitude. In this sense, she illustrates the fate of all romantics. Having hitched his wagon to a star, be it love, truth, or beauty, the romantic finds himself cut off from the rest of the world. That fate is presented in the last line, "[Over] azure seas [and] blue skies, night after night the [same] thought."

In the last line, space and time are treated as qualities. Qualities are expressed by adjectives, which are distinguished by two grammatical characteristics, among others. They can precede a noun and modify it, e.g., "good heart," "cold night." The ycan take comparative and superlative degrees, and be modified by the intensifier

"very," e.g., "colder," "coldest," and "very cold." In terms of both these criteria, "night after night" behaves very much like an adjective. It precedes the noun "thought" and serves as its modifier. "Night after night" expresses the endless extension of time, or the future intensified to the utmost degree. Indeed, what has been said about "night after night" applies with equal force to "azure seas, blue skies, night after night" as a whole. Finally, the three nouns "azure seas," "blue skies," and "night after night" have the same qualities of vastness and emptiness. They are metaphors for each other and for the state of mind of Lady Ch'ang O. It is all the more ironic that having taken the elixir, she conquered time and thereby became its eternal prisoner.

The Sui Palace

紫泉宮殿鎖煙霞　　欲取蕪城作帝家
玉璽不緣歸日角　　錦帆應是到天涯
於今腐草無螢火　　終古垂陽有暮鴉
地下若逢陳後主　　豈宜重問後庭花

Palaces and halls of Purple Spring lock in smoke and haze;
[Emperor Yang] still wishes to take Wu City as the empire's
　　seat.
Jade seal was not destined to go to Sun Corner;
Brocade sails should have reached world's end.
And now, rotten grass has no fireflies;
To eternity, drooping willows will have dusk crows.
In the underworld, if he meets the Last Ruler of Ch'en,
Should he again be queried on "Blossoms
　　of the Back Court"? (622)

With pointed irony, this poem comments on the passing of the Sui dynasty, particularly its last ruler Emperor Yang. The Emperor already had in his possession the magnificent palaces of Ch'ang-an (represented by the synecdoche "Purple Spring" in line 1), so huge that they lock in haze and smoke. But his greed knew no bounds. He embarked upon an ambitious naval expedition, intending to visit the furthest reaches of the civilized world, and along the way, to take Nanking (Wu City) for his capital. While the Emperor was away, Ch'ang-an fell and together with it, the Sui dynasty. The

jade seal, symbol of imperial authority, passed into the hands of Emperor Kao-tsu of the T'ang dynasty, who is referred to in the poem as "Sun Corner." Emperor Yang was also famous for his extravagance. It is said that his ships had brocade sails and that he ordered his subjects to collect several pecks of fireflies, which he released when he went out for a stroll in the hills at night, lighting up an entire valley. Music and dance was a passion he shared with another earlier dethroned king, the Last Ruler of Ch'en. According to the popular interpretation of history, both these emperors lost their empires because they indulged in sensual pursuits to the point of neglecting affairs of state. The last couplet makes a pungent comment on their parallel careers: "In the underworld, if he meets the Last Ruler of Ch'en, Should he again be queried on 'Blossoms of the Back Court'?" "Blossoms of the Back Court" is the name of a tune composed by the Last Ruler. Emperor Yang was said to have met him and discussed this tune with him. The poet now imagines the two emperors meeting again in the underworld and wonders whether they would talk about the tune again.

   Such is the historical background, the raw material of this poem. Let us now examine the treatment of space and time, especially in lines 4 to 6. "Brocade sails should have reached world's end" presents an image of shining sails stretching all the way to the horizon. The implication is that had the Sui dynasty not fallen, Emperor Yang would have been able to prolong his journey indefinitely. Space, then, becomes a metaphor of time; the endless extension of sails to the end of the world represents the journey of the emperor and his dynasty into everlasting time. In lines 5 and 6, the noun-images, usually static, convey a vivid sense of the passage of time: "And now, rotten grass has no fireflies; To eternity, drooping willows will have dusk crows." Emperor Yang has disappeared from the scene. The only testimony of his once magnificent presence is the absence of fireflies in rotten grass—for he had depleted the species—and the rows of willows serving as perches for crows. Note that the emperor's permanent legacy is uniformly represented by transient entities: rotten grass is about to die (rotten grass was also believed to be the source of fireflies), fireflies are short lived, and dusk crows will disappear into the night. The passage of time is thus doubly under- scored; not only did the great man pass away, even the marks he left

will shortly come to naught. And in achieving this effect, the poet not only aligns objects along the axis of time through the use of "and now" and "to eternity," but also lets transiency infect objects, thus transforming time into a quality.

4.4   *Jakobson revisited*

"The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination." We began our inquiry with this statement by Jakobson. Indeed, we have attempted to focus on the principle of equivalence, and to examine the workings of meaning, metaphor, and allusion in T'ang poetry from that unified perspective. Thus this entire paper may be considered a critique, in both the positive and negative sense, of Jakobson's theory and the structuralist approach it represents. But our discussion of Jakobson's theory has been scattered throughout this paper. It seems appropriate, as our inquiry draws to a close, to bring together the various points we have made, and to arrive at some tentative conclusions.

Three questions deserve our special attention. First, what is the scope of applicability of the principle of equivalence in poetry? Second, in what ways does Recent Style poetry favor or disfavor the use of the principle of equivalence as a mode of analysis? The first question is oriented towards literary theory, and the second towards the special characteristics of Recent Style poetry. But since the two are closely intertwined, we shall discuss them together. Finally, what does the use of the principle of equivalence in poetry tell us about the way our mind works, and about ourselves? Let us now turn to the first two questions.

1.   Jakobson's theory shows the greatest strength with regard to the phonological aspects of poetry. As we have seen, rhyme, alliteration, meter, and prosody can all be analyzed as equivalence relations. In the area of grammar, however, Jakobson's theory begins to falter. There are, of course, well-known instances in which grammatical parallelism generates or reinforces semantic parallelism. In their joint paper on Baudelaire's "Les Chats,"[24] however,

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[24] Roman Jakobson and Claude Lévi-Strauss, " 'Les Chats' de Charles Baudelaire," *L'Homme* 2 (Jan.–April, 1962), 5–21. An authorized English translation appears in Richard and Fernande DeGeorge, ed., *The Structuralists from Marx to Lévi-Strauss* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, Doubleday Anchor, 1972), pp. 124–46.

Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss's application of the principle of equiva-
lence led to some rather implausible results. They saw in the
"paradoxical choice of feminine substantives for the so-called
masculine rhymes" a conformation of the theme of sexual ambiguity
in the poem—that *les chats* and their alter ego, *les grands sphinx*, share
an androgynous nature. Leaving aside the question whether there
is an actual connection between gender and sex, we may still wonder
whether "masculine rhyme," a technical term in metrics, has any
sexual implication. The authors also observe that all grammatical
subjects in the sonnet are in the plural, and proceed to point out
the word *solitudes* is ambiguous; the idea of solitude is expressed by
the word itself, while multitude, by the plural morpheme, *-s* at the
end, thus echoing an aphorism by Baudelaire, "Multitude, solitude:
termes égaux et convertibles par le poète actif et fécond." But as
Riffaterre has rightly pointed out, some of the grammatical subjects
are conventional, meaningless plurals such as *ténèbres* and *funèbres*;
other plurals are dictated by nature and not the poet's choice, e.g.,
cats have two *prunelles*.[25] And *solitudes* is just a cliché, a hyperbole,
meaning "desert"—an emphatic plural stemming from the Latin.
The general conclusion is that while grammatical subjects are
indeed in the plural, and can be made mutually equivalent, this
fact is irrelevant to our understanding of the sonnet.

What interests us here are not the specific shortcomings, which
could be remedied with better-chosen examples, but the general
implications. In both instances—masculine/feminine and solitude/
multitude—the argument proceeds from grammar to meaning.
That is, instead of treating semantics as an autonomous domain
and making a frontal assault, Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss approached
the phenomenon of meaning obliquely, via grammar. The reason,
we suspect, is that they thought of meaning either as referent, or as
the counterpart of grammatical category. We have earlier urged
the view that meaning is composed of generic category and specifying
quality. If that view is adopted, a stronger case can be made for the
application of the principle of equivalence in poetry.

It will be recalled that in 2.1 we cited three couplets by Wang
Wei to show that even though the individual words vary from
couplet to couplet, the very same set of categories was used in each.

[25] Riffaterre, p. 199.

1. Bright moon shines in pines; Clear fountain flows over rocks.
2. Fountain sound gurgles over precipitous rock; Sun color is cold in blue pines.
3. Mend clothes under autumn sun; Dip bowl amidst old pines.

All three couplets embody the categories Heaven, Earth I (rock), Earth II (water), and Plant. The conclusion we drew then was that nouns in a Recent Style poem not only refer to individual objects but also represent the categories to which they respectively belong. Hence they operate at two levels of meaning at once.

Wang Wei's three couplets also provide a clear illustration of structuralism, which has been defined by Riffaterre as follows:

> . . . a structure is a system made up of several elements, none of which can undergo a change without effecting changes in all the other elements; thus the system is what mathematicians call an invariant; transformations within it produce a group of models of the same type (that is, mechanically interconvertible shapes), or variants. The invariant, of course, is an abstraction arrived at by defining what remains intact in the face of these conversions; therefore we are able to observe a structure only in the shape of one or another variant. We are now ready to agree with Cl. Lévi-Strauss that a poem is a structure containing within itself its variants ordered on the vertical axis of the different linguistic levels.[26]

In the above example, there is an invariant structure, the abstract couplet consisting of four semantic categories: Heaven, Earth I, Earth II, Plant. That abstract structure is realized in three mutually equivalent couplets cited above. We should note that this analysis is made possible by the presence of semantic categories as an established convention, which gives the lexicon of Chinese poetry an organized structure absent in Western poetry. Moreover, the absence of morphological suffixes for masculine/feminine and singular/plural in Chinese removes an unnecessary distraction.

To conceive of meaning not as referent but as quality is a thesis found throughout this paper and the previous one. In SDI we showed that due to a combination of several factors, nouns in Recent Style poetry are strongly oriented towards sensory qualities. In 2.6 of the present paper we went one step further and showed that in some poems all the nouns, through their shared qualities, are equivalent to each other, thus generating a level of organization above and

[26] Riffaterre, p. 190.

beyond that of narrative sequence. The prime example was Li Po's "Jade Step Plaint," but this mode of analysis can be applied to other poems as well.

So far we have been considering the scope of applicability of the principle of equivalence. "Scope" in one sense means the various constituents of language—phonology, syntax, semantics, etc. Our overall conclusion is that the principle is remarkably powerful in accounting for the phonological aspects of poetry. In the realm of meaning, however, the verdict is less clear. If Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss's "Les Chats" is a fair indication of structuralism in action, then we must conclude that the results achieved by focusing upon equivalences among grammatical and referential meaning are rather haphazard. The principle of equivalence, however, is re-markably effective for Recent Style poetry, though the principle was originally formulated on the basis of Western poetry. The reasons, as we have seen, are the presence of semantic categories and the strong orientation towards qualities on the part of nouns in T'ang poetry.

2. "Scope" also has another meaning, which raises another question. When we undertake to analyze a poem, what are the outer limits of relevance or the scope of our inquiry? In common with other new critics and structural linguists, Jakobson places exclusive emphasis on the text of the poem. This is clearly his practice when he is engaged in practical criticism, such as his study of Baudelaire's "Les Chats" or Shakespeare's "Th'Expence of Spirit."[27] His theoretical standpoint can be inferred from the statement, "The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination." The principle of equiva-lence, when projected by the poetic function, runs along the axis of combination, which by definition lies in the domain of *parole*, that is, what is actually said or written.

On this point we find ourselves in serious disagreement. There are at least two types of phenomena, both central to Recent Style poetry, which cannot be accounted for if the scope of inquiry is confined to the text alone. The first is the relation between an individual

[27] Roman Jakobson and Lawrence G. Jones, *Shakespeare's Verbal Art in "Th'Expence of Spirit"* (The Hague: Mouton, 1970).

word and its semantic category. The word occurs in a poem, but the category occurs only by proxy. A couplet is also related to other couplets exhibiting the same invariant structure, for example, the three couplets by Wang Wei cited above. The second is the frequent occurrence of covert metaphor and allusion. Both metaphor and allusion, it will be recalled, consist of two terms related by equivalence. In the covert variety, only one term occurs in the poem. The other term is merely hinted at, but an audience who shares the same tradition as the author clearly grasps the comparison. However, if we let the scope of equivalence relation extend beyond the poem, we have moved from text to context, and as a result, deserted the central dogma of new criticism and structural linguistics as it is commonly understood.

There is, however, a ready reformulation. De Saussure's system rests on the twin pillars of speech and language. Following Jakobson's lead, we tried to limit the application of the principle of equivalence to speech exclusively—that is, to the actual text of a poem—and have constantly found ourselves at every turn compelled to go beyond. Now, critics have often stressed the importance of tradition, for example, T. S. Eliot in "Tradition and the Individual Talent,"[28] and more recently Northrop Frye in "The Critical Path."[29] To define "tradition" in a few words is impossible, but the following formula may be of some use. Tradition is that body of knowledge accumulated over time which the poet draws upon in making his creation, and which the audience must be aware of in order to enjoy and understand a poem. Tradition, then, is something that lies outside a particular poem but immediately bears upon it. Just as language functions as the reservoir for speech, so the poetic tradition plays the role of depository and source for individual poems. The addition of the concept of tradition to structuralism, we would therefore urge, seems to be the best way to overcome its demonstrated shortcomings while remaining true to the spirit of structural linguistics.

3.   Next we must consider Jakobson's implied claim that the poetic language is constituted by the principle of equivalence

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[28] T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1950), p. 3–11.
[29] Northrop Frye, "The Critical Path," *Daedalus* (Spring 1970), p. 274.

alone: "*The* poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination." The first thing to be said is that there is indeed one important type of poetry, the lyric, which fits Jakobson's thesis. The lyric is a short poem expressing the poet's own thought or emotion. Having chosen a short verse form, the poet must resort to indirect means to express what he has no room to say. It therefore comes as no surprise that it is precisely in the five-syllabic quatrain, the shortest form in Recent Style poetry, that we find clear examples of poems organized and informed by the principle of equivalence. (See 2.6.) Indeed, with respect to this genre of poetry, Jakobson is right in saying that the poetic function is constituted by the principle of equivalence.

Nevertheless, the lyric is not all of poetry, nor is metaphoric language the same as poetic language. In SDI we showed that metaphoric language and analytic language—then called "imagistic language" and "propositional language"—are complementary in distribution and in function. In the present section we have suggested that these two languages also enter into cooperative alliance or intrude into each other's domain. Three types of examples were given. The implicative relation in some instances neutralizes a metaphor and dominates it. In other examples, mythical thinking establishes the initial equivalence, then conceptual thinking takes over to extend the metaphor to its logical conclusion. Finally, examples have been given to show that time and space, ordinarily thought of as frameworks for analytic relations, are also often treated as qualities, as images of infinitude or transiency.

The basic difference between our view and Jakobson's can be stated as follows. For Jakobson, the poetic function suspends the relations that obtain in ordinary language and replaces them with another set. In ordinary language, the principle of equivalence relates, along the axis of selection, items in speech to those in language. Such relations are suspended or pushed to the background when the principle of equivalence is projected into a different axis. Further, in ordinary language, contiguous constituents along the axis of combination are related by grammatical construction. But in poetic language, such constituents are related by the principle of equivalence. This is how we have understood Jakobson's statement cited above. Perhaps we have misinterpreted him. But since there

is a prevalent view which looks upon poetic language as something radically different from ordinary language, we should deal with the issue on its intrinsic merit, regardless of what Jakobson said or may have said.

For us, there are two languages of poetry: metaphoric language and analytic language. The dividing line between the two does not coincide with that between poetic language and ordinary language, but crosses it. There is much poetry in everyday speech and vice versa. Metaphoric language and analytic language can best be thought of as abstractions—the former constituted by the principle of equivalence, and the latter by logical or grammatical relationships. Ordinary language and poetic language differ only in degree, not kind; ordinary language has a higher proportion of the analytic relation, and poetic language a higher proportion of the metaphoric relation.

Tension is involved at all levels. The principle of equivalence, by definition, relates two items by similarity *and* contrast. Earlier we concocted a term, "metaphoric relation," as a substitute for the more common term "metaphor," because the latter in ordinary usage leans too much towards similarity (1.2). In our discussion of allusion, we also called attention to two varieties, positive allusion and negative allusion, though similarity and contrast are present in both (3.2). When we come to the two languages of poetry, the same tension manifests itself on an even larger scale. Analytic relation operates in ordinary language. It also operates in the language of poetry, the only difference being that the analytic relation must now cooperate with and compete with the metaphoric relation, its polar opposite. In ordinary language, the principle of equivalence relates items in the speech-chain to those outside it. The same still holds in the language of poetry. There are, however, two additional roles. The first, as already noted by Jakobson, is that the principle of equivalence relates non-contiguous items in a poem to each other. The second role is derived from the fact that a poem is not only a speech-chain, but also something rooted in a literary tradition—the depository for and source of individual poems. Insofar as the principle of equivalence relates a specific poem to other poems in the same tradition, it assumes an additional role.

The fact that poetry uses two types of language, metaphoric and

analytic, means that poetry is the voice of a divided self. Mythical thinking speaks through the voice of innocence, and conceptual thinking through the voice of experience. This thesis, already adumbrated in the earlier paper, finds fresh support in the present one. We saw T'ang poets rationalizing metaphors by bracketing them in if-then relations. Sometimes with utmost lucidity, they drew perfectly logical conclusions from totally implausible premises; having assumed that tears are letters, one poet tries to send them; having confirmed the fact that parrots can mimic speech and thus acquire human characteristics, another wishes to convert them into messengers. Space and time participate in this pervasive ambiguity. Sometimes they serve as the framework which contains physical objects; sometimes they infect objects which contain them as qualities.

The difference between metaphor and allusion is partly the difference between innocence and experience. Metaphor and metaphoric relation link together sensory qualities, thereby intensifying them. For the child and the mystic, all things are equivalent to each other and to the One.[30] Their ideal is purity, intensity, and perhaps also sensual delight. Morality does not enter into consideration in their undertakings. The closest approximation to this state of mind in literature is the lyric, where the equivalence relation reigns supreme. Allusion, however, operates on a different plane altogether. Without experience, there is no history, and without history, there is no historical allusion. Allusion, as we have seen, is also primarily concerned with man's moral action, whereas metaphor traffics mostly in sensory qualities. To think of history as the recurrence of archetypes is to relate the present to the past, and to leave the immediacy of the here and now. It is to desert innocence for experience.

We have then provisionally answered the third question posed at

[30] Compare with this statement by Northrop Frye, "Blake After Two Centuries," in *Fables of Identity* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Harbinger paperback, 1963), p. 141: "The conceptual element in poetry is also part of its content, and conceptual thinking in poetry is more or less assimilated to another kind of thinking which organizes the poetic structure. The unit of this formally poetic thinking is the metaphor, and the metaphor is inherently illogical, an identification of two more things which could never be identified except by a lunatic, a lover, or a poet—one may perhaps add an extremely primitive savage."

the beginning of this section: what does the use of the principle of equivalence in poetry tell us about the way we think, and about ourselves? The lyric, informed by the principle of equivalence, represents the return to innocence, purity, and harmony. Even though we know that things are fragmented, we periodically wish to visit the ideal world where all things are one, which was once the only world. But insofar as poetry contains many genres other than the lyric, and employs devices such as extended metaphor and historical allusion, poetry speaks the voice of the divided self.

4.5   *Methodological overview*

Finally we should assess the permanent contribution, if any, made by Jakobson's theory of equivalence relation, and chart the course for future study. The basic issue is this: is structuralism a passing fashion, or does it have something of permanent value to say about the relation between linguistics and poetics?

In "The Critical Path," Northrop Frye asked: what is the total subject of study of which criticism forms a part? He proposed two larger contexts for criticism: one, the unified criticism of all the arts which did not (and does not yet) exist; and the other, some larger study of verbal expression which had not yet been defined. We have on the whole chosen the second path. Beginning with Aristotle, there is a long and noble critical tradition built upon the definition of poetry as verbal art, the excellent use of language. The twentieth century witnessed the development of structural linguistics and its successors. Concurrently, philosophy took a linguistic turn. As part of this broad intellectual movement, linguistic criticism emerges as one of the main approaches to poetry.

What does a critic do when he analyzes poetry linguistically? He may try to relate facts about a specific language to characteristic features of the poetry written in that language. This is one of the lines of inquiry we have been pursuing. As a secondary endeavor, we are also engaged in a comparative study of Recent Style poetry and English poetry. The proper term for a study of this kind is probably "contrastive study." In general, when one language is the later stage of another, or two languages are derived from a common source, we use the comparative or historical method to study them. The aim is to reconstruct the proto-language, or to derive the later stage

from the earlier stage by a set of rules. If two languages are un-
related, then a study involving both is called "contrastive study,"
with typological classification as its main aim. Similarly, if two
literatures are historically related, we can study them comparatively.
The aim is to trace literary influence, or to show how the same
tradition diverges under different circumstances. If two literatures
are unrelated, such as Chinese poetry and English poetry, then the
study of the two together should have a different aim and be called
by a different name. "Contrastive study" seems most appropriate.
(For the purpose of the present discussion, we will ignore the
negligible influence of Chinese poetry upon Imagism.)

What is the aim of any contrastive study? When we compare two
things, we will notice many differences. Progress is made when
many differences are reduced to a few key ones, or some basic
differences in the two languages can be shown to be the root of the
differences in the two associated literatures. This is what we have
tried to accomplish. Thus in SDI, we showed that the absence of the
definite article and the demonstrative adjective in the language of
Recent Style poetry contributes to making nouns oriented towards
qualities instead of objects. English has "the," "that," and the
relative clause. Consequently, it is much easier to accumulate
details upon a noun-substance. The very same absence of "the" and
"that," together with other factors, explains why the Pointing
Formula is not one of the metaphor-making devices in Recent Style
poetry, and why Simple Replacement turns out to be a covert
metaphor (2.6). Other examples can be multiplied. Note, however,
that our primary focus is the relation between Chinese language and
Chinese poetry. English is used as a way to set forth contrast. The
general form of our argument is as follows: Language A has feature
x. Its poetry has feature x'. Language B does not have feature x.
Its poetry also does not have feature x'. Therefore, in language A
and its associated poetry, feature x is the source of feature x'. We
are only interested in Chinese, which is language A. But to demon-
strate its relation to Recent Style poetry, we need to bring in English
language and English poetry. Any other European language and
literature will serve the purpose of contrast just as well.

Brooke-Rose's work is similar in kind to ours. Though called *A
Grammar of Metaphor*, her book is actually a highly successful attempt

to relate specific facts about the English language to various types of metaphor in English poetry. In her work and ours, specific facts about English and Chinese form the basis of the main argument.

There is, however, another type of linguistic criticism which focuses upon principles operative in all languages, instead of specific facts about this or that language. Herein lies the permanent significance of Jakobson's pioneering work. The basic assumption is that poetry is language writ large. The pervasive principles of poetry must have their roots in language. Conversely, if a principle is basic to language, then it must appear in poetry, either intact or with a different domain. Selection and combination are the two basic modes of arrangement in speech. Therefore the principle of equivalence, which underlies selection, must be operative on all levels of poetry.

These are general considerations. In the course of this paper, we have given specific examples drawn from Recent Style poetry to show how the principle of equivalence explains the emergence of new meaning and multiple meaning, and how metaphor and allusion can both be thought of as equivalent relations. The couplet, a structural unit central to many forms of Chinese poetry, requires both semantic and syntactic equivalences. In due course, as we turn to that topic, the principle of equivalence will again serve as the keynote of our analysis.

In view of these general and specific considerations, it is clear that Jakobson has opened up a new path for linguistic criticism. Details of his theory undoubtedly require reformulation, and we have suggested a few. But unless we abandon the linguistic approach to the study of poetry altogether, there is every reason to believe that Jakobson's conception of the relation between linguistics and poetics is here to stay.

A new question now arises. Is there another principle as important as the principle of equivalence in language? If so, what are its manifestations in poetry? Syntax is formed along the axis of combination, and it operates via contiguity; constituents close to each other are formed into units first, and more remote ones are successively brought into the circle. Contiguity, then, is another principle whose implications for poetics requires serious consideration.

In rhetoric, there are at least two terms based upon the concept of continuity or contiguity: synecdoche, a figure of speech in which

a part is used for the whole, or vice versa; and metonymy, a figure of speech consisting of the use of the name of one thing for that of another of which it is an attribute or with which it is associated. These have been discussed by Jakobson in "Linguistics and Poetics." Fenollosa's preference for the strong verb is based upon the idea that this type of verb reflects the transference of power in nature, that is, a dynamic connection between physically contiguous objects. When Chinese critics talk about 詩眼 "eye of the poem," they have very much the same thing in mind (SDI, 3.5). The general question raised is this. If poetry is mimesis, then it must be able to imitate static and dynamic continuity in nature, and reenact that sense of power. How does poetry achieve this? The answer will have to await a future occasion.

FINDING LIST

TSSCY	CTS*	Poet's Name	TSSCY	CTS	Poet's Name
		5-character 8-line Poems			
420	1192	Sun Ti 孫逖	454	1702	Li Po 李白
422	1276	Wang Wei 王維	457	1804	
425	1274		481	2440	Tu Fu 杜甫
	1269		485	2489	
439	1635	Meng Hao-jan 孟浩然	491	2523	
		7-character 8-line Poems			
578	2512	Tu Fu		4839	Po Chü-i
583	2510				白居易
622–1	6161	Li Shang-yin 李商隱		72	Li Yü 李煜
627	6188				
		5-character 4-line Poems			
754–1	1300	Wang Wei	764–1	1701	Li Po
754–2	1301		764–2	1709	
756–1	1299		764–3	1808	
756–2	1304		766–1	1874	
758–1	1666	Meng Hao-jan	766–2	2475	Tu Fu
758–2	1667		771	3153	Lu Lun 盧綸
760	1418	Ch'u Kuang-hsi 儲光羲		4108	Liu Yü-hsi 劉禹錫
763	1481	Liu Ch'ang-ch'ing 劉長卿			
		7-character 4-line Poems			
793	1444	Wang Ch'ang-ling 王昌齡	812	2757	Han Hung 韓翃
	1846	Li Po		3940	Liu Tsung-
	2106	Ts'en Shen 岑參			yüan 柳宗元
796	2849	Wang Chih-huan 王之渙	834	6197	Li Shang-yin
				6172	
		Other Forms			
	4399	Li Ho 李賀		6233	Li Shang-yin
	4400				

*See Note 1.