

《東華漢學》第 31 期；33-78 頁
東華大學中國語文學系 華文文學系
2020 年 6 月

Synecdochical Allusions and Mythical Archetypes in Li Shangyin's Poems: In Search of Archaic Hierophanies

Nipon Sasipanudej*

Abstract

This article aims to apply anthropology of religion to criticize Li's poems, and demonstrate that another function of the allusion extensively employed by Li Shangyin is the imaginary synecdoche as a part for the whole and the whole for a part, which links his profane allusions to the atemporal archetypes of the "primitive" religion. His use of mundane legends as "hierophany" becomes a "rite de passage" to the archaic sacredness which is both ahistorical, and transcends time and space as a modal form of religion. His arcane allusion evokes a role of "archetypal" religion in *Xikun* style poetry, only acquired by textual experience in the light of structuralistic reading.

Keywords: Synecdoche, Allusion, Li Shangyin, Mythical Time, Structuralist Reading, Hierophany

* Assistant Professor, Department of Chinese, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat University

A poem may appear to mean very different things to different readers, and all of these meanings may be different from what the author thought he meant. For instance, the author may have been writing some peculiar personal experience, which he saw quite unrelated to anything outside; yet for the reader the poem may become the expression of a general situation, as well as of some private experience of his own. The reader's interpretation may differ from the author's and be equally valid, it may even be better. There may be much more in a poem than the author was aware of. The different interpretations may all be partial formulations of one thing.¹

A poem is not just either what the poet "planned" or what the reader conceives.²

For the unconscious is not haunted by monsters only: the gods, the goddesses, the heroes and the fairies dwell there too; moreover, the monsters of the unconscious are themselves mythological, seeing that they continue to fulfill the same function that they fulfilled in all the mythologies — in the last analysis, that of helping man to liberate himself, to complete his initiation.³

Before the embarkation of structuralism upon the world of literary criticism, the entire poetic collection of Li Shangyin was scrutinized and interpreted voluminously by a genealogical approach set by Qing commentators, such as Feng Hao (馮浩, 1719-1801), Zhang Ertian (張

¹ T.S. Eliot, *On Poetry and Poets* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1957), p. 23.

² T.S. Eliot, *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism: Studies in the Relation of Criticism to Poetry in England* (London: Faber and Faber, 1964), p. 31.

³ Mircea Eliade, *Images & Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, translated by Philip Mairet (This book was originally published by Gallimard under the title of *IMAGES ET SYMBOLES*) (New York: A Search Book, 1969), p. 14.

爾田，1874-1945），Zhu Heling（朱鶴齡，1606-1683）and Zhu Yizun（朱彝尊，1629-1709）。Feng Hao published his commentary on Li Shangying's poems entitled *Commentary and Annotation on Yuxisheng's Poetry Collection*（玉谿生詩集箋注），which made a great contribution to rereading Li Shangyin's sense of unreality and obscurity by means of his positivistic methodology.⁴ Zhu Heling also published his collection called *Poetry Collection by Li Yishan*（李義山詩集）annotated by his own insight and interpretation. Not only are these commentators a product of a genealogical approach applied prevalently in Qing period and finally epitomized as the spirit of Qing criticism, but they also utilized it to recover Li Shangyin's notoriety to declare that Li's poetry was not “art for art's sake,”（唯美藝術）or “decadent art,” but strongly grounded upon the classical tradition called “expressing virtues through literature” or *wenyizaidao*（文以載道）。

I will not take part in arguing with their method of criticism which remains self-contradictory in their own approach. The self-controversy tells us that positivistic reading comes to a deadlock without any solution in claiming objective meanings, which they assume to exist in a text, as does

⁴ Li's poetry criticism is systematized by Qing commentators who employ a prevalently traditional approach initiated by Mengzi called “to trace back to (the author's) intentions,”（以意逆志）and a conventional method found in the *Book of Poetry*（詩經）called “to criticize things by understanding a man”（以人論事）。Yan Kunyan（顏崑陽），“Part II：Function and Limitation in the two Methods to “Criticize by Understanding a Man” and to “Trace Back to (the author's) intentions,” “Re-examining the Two Methods of Criticism on Li Shangyin's Poetry”（李商隱詩箋釋方法之檢討）in *Studies in Sinology*（中國學術年刊），1994, Vol. 15: 122-123. These critical methods rely on a premise that values the artwork, and strongly adhere to the author or the maker, not to readers, and an extra status of authorship is to prove and judge an intrinsic value of artwork, such the timeline of the author, the general cause-and-effect of psycho-analysis, the genealogy, the historical archives, and so on, to find out a certainty of meaning in artwork more than to demonstrate a fluidity of codes in a text. I do not argue that traditional reading has no value of its own in criticism, its banality of evil is to claim the certainty of meanings so as to get rid of endless possibilities of signification and symbolic feasibility of interpretations.

the Biblical reading, based on a belief in a single truth that God intends to transmit to us. Instead, I would prefer to introduce a new approach that reading itself is a kind of experience, not a search for meanings assumed to be inherited in a book. What kind of experience does it deal with? It is an interactive experience between the reader and cultural codes within a text. Some insights of the reader which the author neglects or cannot even expect will fulfill a missing piece of a jigsaw puzzle. Some missing meanings intertwined and woven by the reader's experience will limitlessly enrich a poem without probing into his or her personal life in genealogy. When he or she completes a losing meaning of the author's, who sees himself or herself in the reader, who discovers himself or herself in the poetry, they are mutually reflecting in a transparent mirror and reach a universality of experience as Huayan Buddhism says: "mass and mirror reciprocally reflect" (眾鏡相照).

Allusion as an Imaginary Synecdoche

One of the difficulties in appreciating Li's poems is his exuberant allusions later labeled as his distinctive style, becoming a poetic trend of late Tang poetry for a while.⁵ Hu Shi (胡適, 1891-1962), one of the most influential critics of modern time negatively criticizes that his overuse of allusions obstructs poetic reading and induces the sense of unreality or even obscurity hindering semantic insights. When China stepped into the process of modernization in order to ideologize modern criteria in an artistic expression, literati of the May Fourth Movement, who advocated their new literary representation based upon scientific and modern methods and

⁵ Besides Li Shangyin, late Tang poets who stylized their poetic expression in "xikunti" (西崑體), a form of hard poetry with meticulous elaboration and abundant allusions thereafter collected by Yang Yi (楊億, 974-1020), it has been said that Du Mu (杜牧) and Li He (李賀) are included in the trend.

supported vernacular Chinese in writing. That is to say, they held that it was plain and simple to reflect a real phenomenon and social reality to massify artworks and to provide some social solutions. The flourishing of Chinese realism, for this reason, emerged from such a new intellectual or a middle-class elite. To promote such a literary ideology, Hu Shi, as an avant-garde writer in vernacular Chinese, proposed the so-called “eight-to-negateism” (八不主義), one of them is to reject the use of antiquated allusions in signifying.⁶ If we hold such literary criteria to evaluate Li's works, his poetry is probably inappropriate. I do not herein discuss the origin of allusions extravagantly used by Li Shangyin, there are a great number of analyses we can trace back but rather excavate certain potentials and efficacies in his allusions to reassess his poems and, above all, to resist referential meanings in Qing critics' positivistic reading.

We tend to forget to question what is the very function of allusions. Some say it is to “refer” a previous story (or a particular fable in case of Li Shangyin). This previous story is often assumed to be referential to the author's biographical life. Whether it can be objectively referential to his life or not is another big problem. If so, how much and which part can it be referential to? James J. Y. Liu proposes “there may be practical reasons for using allusions; for instance, once a clandestine love affair is involved or a political or personal satire is intended. Under such circumstances, it affords an obvious way of avoiding scandal or prosecution,”⁷ these problems are not in the scope of my article.⁸

⁶ Wang Qiugui (王秋桂), ‘Objective Correlative’ in the Love Poems of Li Shang-yin (李商隱情詩中的「客觀對應物」)(MA Thesis of National Taiwan University) (Taipei: Jiaxinshuiniigongsi 嘉新水泥公司, no date), pp. 13-14.

⁷ James J. Y. Liu, *The Art of Chinese Poetry* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), p. 136.

⁸ See Yan Kunyang for further reading. Yan Kunyan (顏崑陽), “Re-examining the Two Methods of Criticism on Li Shangyin's Poetry”(李商隱詩箋釋方法之檢討).

I. A. Richards talks about one function of the allusion that “is a technical device for compression,”⁹ when an allusion is applied, some imagery and symbolism are compressed to economize unnecessary long descriptions. I argue that, in the process of compression, another allusive function — a synecdoche — is reborn, like a phoenix reincarnating out of eternal flame to create psychological effects by means of eternal occurrences of a mythical archetype that I will elaborate below. The synecdoche, which, in general, means “a figure of speech in which the name of a part, is used to stand for the whole (as hand for sailor), the whole for a part (as the law for police officers), the specific for the general (as cutthroat for assassin), the general for the specific (as thief for pickpocket), or the material for the thing made from it as steel for sword).¹⁰ The synecdochical function in allusions plays an important role in reading his poetry, for it can create a psychological effect by means of a part for the whole and/or the whole for a part, which helps construct the realm of sentiments or *jingjie* (境界) in the “mythical time”.

Allusion as a Mythical Archetype and Repetition

When an allusion cyclically evokes a myth, it belongs to the primordial archetypes or mythical prototypes, both superhuman and transcendental, “as everything is (nothing) but the repetition of the same primordial archetypes; this repetition, by actualizing the mythical moment when the archetypal gesture was revealed, constantly maintains the world in the same auroral instant of the beginnings.”¹¹ It steps into the archaic ideology of ritual repetition. In other words, it attributes to the main aspect of an archaic

⁹ I. A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (New York: Harcourt, 1963), pp. 290-291.

¹⁰ American Heritage Dictionary Online.

¹¹ Mircea Eliade, “The Regeneration of Time,” in *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, translated from the French by Willard R. Trask (Harper & Row: New York, 1959), p. 90.

ontology, the investigation of which bears on “the image of (man) himself formed by the man of the archaic societies and on the place that he assumes in the Cosmos. The major difference between the man in archaic and traditional societies and that in modern societies (...) lies in the fact that the former feels himself indissolubly connected with the Cosmos and its rhythms, whereas the latter insists that he is connected only with History. Of course, for the former, the Cosmos too has a “history,” if only because it is the creation of the gods and held to have been organized by supernatural beings or mythical heroes. But this “history,” about the Cosmos and human society is a “sacred history,” preserved and transmitted through myths. Moreover, it is a “history” that can be repeated indefinitely, in the sense that the myths serve as models for ceremonies that periodically reactualize the tremendous events that occurred at the beginning of time. The myths preserve and transmit the paradigms, the exemplary models, for all the responsible activities in which men engage. By virtue of these paradigmatic models revealed to men in mythical times, the Cosmos and society are periodically regenerated.”¹² Archaic ontologists attempt to pursue the sacred or the archetypes of profane activities in everyday mundaneness of life, “to summarize, we might say that the archaic world knows nothing about “profane” activities : every act which has a definite meaning — hunting, fishing, agriculture, games, conflicts, sexuality, — in a certain way participates in the sacred... Thus, we may say that every responsible activity in pursuit of a definite end is, for the archaic world, a ritual. But since the majority of these activities have undergone a long process of desacralization and have, in modern societies, become profane, we have considered it proper to group them separately.”¹³ In this rigorous sense, there is no

¹² Mircea Eliade, “Preface to the Torchbook Edition,” in *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, pp. vii-viii.

¹³ For further examples on profane activities, such as dance, struggles, conflicts, wars or even houses which maintain and reactualize mythically the celestial archetypes of territories, temples as well as cities and become the symbolism of the center early appeared in ancient scriptures and archaic myths, please see Mircea Eliade, “Archetypes and Repetition,” in *Cosmos and History: The Myth*

element in our life irrelevant to “religion,” or “mythical reality,” and “an object or an act becomes real only insofar as it imitates or repeats an archetype.”¹⁴ Therefore, reading allusions is a rite of repetition or participation in the archetypal past, which are supra-mundane and non-temporal. Mythical time can be rescued over and over by insightful reading and mindful reciting. Li’s use of allusions has a mythical function as an “organic embodiment” or a “living thing” which manifests “truth par excellence,”¹⁵ as Mircea Eliade (1907-1986) says:

As is generally admitted today, a myth is an account of events which took place in *principio*, that is, “in the beginning”, in a primordial and non-temporal instant, a moment of *sacred time*. This mythic or sacred time is qualitatively different from profane time, from the continuous and irreversible time of our everyday, de-sacralised existence. In narrating a myth, one re-actualises, in some sort, the sacred time in which the events narrated took place. (This, moreover, is why the myths, in traditional societies, are not to be narrated however or at whenever one likes; they can be recited only during

of the Eternal Return, pp. 6-17. Eliade says that: “take that dance, for example. All dances were originally sacred; in other words, they had an extrahuman model. The model may in some cases have been a totemic or emblematic animal, whose motions were reproduced to conjure up its concrete presence to magic, to increase its number, to obtain incorporation into the animal on part of man. In other cases, the model may have been revealed by a divinity (for example the pyrrhic, the martial dance created by Athena) or by a hero (cf. Theseus’ dance in the Labyrinth). ... What is of interest to us is its presumption of an extrahuman origin (for every dance was created in *illo tempore*, in the mythical period, by an ancestor, totemic animal, a god, or a hero). Choreographic rhythms have their models outside the profane life of man; whether they reproduce the movements of the totemic or emblematic animal or the motions of the stars; whether they themselves constitute rituals (labyrinthine steps, leaps, gestures performed with ceremonial instruments) — a dance always imitates an archetypal gesture or commemorates a mythical moment. In a word, it is a repetition, and consequently a re-actualization, of *illud tempus*, ‘those days’.” Ibid., pp. 28-29.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁵ Mircea Eliade, “Cosmogonic Myth and ‘Sacred History’,” in *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 73.

the sacred seasons, in the bush at night or around the fire before or after the rituals, etc.) In a word, the myth is supposed to happen — if one may say so — in a non-temporal time, in an instant without duration, as certain mystics and philosophers are conceived of eternity.¹⁶

A myth plays the role of a part for the whole and the whole for a part in an allusion beyond time, it “conforms with the atemporal model of the heroic myth,”¹⁷ which Eliade theorizes as “non-temporal time,” it is without any duration and happens repeatedly in the form of inherently archetypal (un)consciousness. In this light, the allusive myth is not merely referential to phenomenal reality to some extent, but also it is mythically cyclic and eternally returns in Tang readers’ or even modern readers’ consciousness, as Eliade says: “the narration of the myth is not without consequences for him who recites and those who listen. From the mere fact of the narration of a myth, profane time is — at least symbolically — abolished: the narrator and his hearers are rapt with sacred and mythical time,”¹⁸ whenever we read mythical allusions, we take part in a “rite de passage” or a “rite of passage,” signifying that we are endlessly in the process of redoing, representing or even retransmitting the archetypal model of emotions already illustrated by these myths, as to Eliade what the “sacred” does, thus a human does,¹⁹ what a character in a myth does, a modern man does, mankind is re-starting the archetypal drama of the world into two aspects: first to return to the primordial totality (of the archetype), second to repeat the cosmogony,²⁰ and mythical readability is only a “rite de passage” of the archetypal time.

¹⁶ Mircea Eliade, *Images & Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, translated by Philip Mairet (This book was originally published by Gallimard under the title of *IMAGES ET SYMBOLES*) (New York: A Search Book, 1969), p. 57.

¹⁷ Mircea Eliade, “Archetype and Repetition,” in *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, p. 38.

¹⁸ Mircea Eliade, *Images & Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, p. 57-58.

¹⁹ Mircea Eliade, “Archetypes and Repetition,” in *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, p. 21.

²⁰ Mircea Eliade, “Cosmogonic Myth and ‘Sacred History’,” in *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion*, p. 79.

The sacred time continually remains in process and this sort of time is perpetuated by periodical reiteration, since it is impossible to freeze the reality (or the real entity) inside its archetypal form or “germinal modality,” “as it was in the beginning, immersed as if it were in the primordial divine totality.”²¹

In the process of “rite de passage,” a history is able to cyclically metamorphose into a myth in one’s perception when time passes and becomes a “collective memory,” which operates epistemologically via the logics of “forgetfulness.” By virtue of its dialectics, a myth is ceaselessly reborn. So many historical allusions in poetic works function as myths or “mythemes” in Lévi-Strauss’s term. The Poet (as Li Shangyin) tends to fictionalize a history as a myth to express his individual experience and interpretation. For this reason, in a synecdochical allusion, a history turns into a redemption of myth, or figuratively speaking, the specter of myth in history is resummoned.

It can be said that the poetical allusion itself acts as a “rite de passage” of mythical prototypes — the exemplary events or the extrahuman models. “Nothing new happens in the world, for everything is simply the repetition of the same primordial archetypes; this repetition, by actualizing the mythical moment when the archetypal gesture was revealed, constantly maintains the world in the same auroral instant of the beginnings. Time only makes possible the appearance and existence of things. It has no final influence upon their existence, since it is itself constantly regenerated”²² and that is “archaic” in a religious sense Walter Benjamin claimed to belong to, even though we live in our modern material culture,²³ for all profane activities (such as dance, poetry, art) are created *in illo tempore* (or “once upon a time,” in the mythical period, by an ancestor, a totemic animal, a god

²¹ Ibid., p. 81.

²² Mircea Eliade, “The Regeneration of Time,” in *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, p. 90.

²³ Walter Benjamin also holds that our modern world which we claimed to be “modernized” at the end is arcane or archaic in a religious sense. The use of myths in Li’s poems is the same.

or a hero) and “the life of modern man is swarming with half-forgotten myths, decaying hierophanies and secularized symbols.”²⁴ This archaic sense is always redeemed by re-reading and reciting in numerous ways. A recital is a redemption of the archetypal past in our modern time. It helpfully rescues and cyclically repeats the presumed extra-human origin.²⁵

When we read Li's poems, a non-temporal time in a mythic allusion evokes what Kao Yu-kung called the sense of “unreality” as if “profane time were — at least symbolically —abolished: the narrator and his hearers are rapt with sacred and mythical time,” and this is the real power of allusions unseen by Qing critics who attempted to relate their use of allusions to referential reality by a genealogical approach and underestimated by May Fourth writers who labeled his poems as “Misty Poem” (朦朧詩). In this way, two of them were unable to unlock potentials in this use of allusions. They depreciated and questioned the arcana in his poems and forgot that there was nothing to find out in terms of referential meanings except for a mythical moment as a psychological effect rendered by sonorous incantations. Li's use of mythical allusions expresses the normality of suffering as “a primordial hierophany, the revelation *in illo tempore* of the norms of existence, a disclosure by a divinity or a mystical being.”²⁶ I will demonstrate below how a mythical archetype works by decoding the following poems, such as: The Patterned Zither, The Lantern, Chang'e,

²⁴ “The progressive de-sacralization of modern man has altered the content of his spiritual life without breaking the matrices of his imagination: a quantity of mythological litter still lingers in the ill-controlled zones of the mind.” Mircea Eliade, “Foreword,” in *Images & Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, p. 18.

²⁵ The term “extrahuman origin” or “extrahuman model” is often substituted for the following synonyms which strongly belong to cosmological and anthropological speculations: “primordial heroic myth,” “transcendental origin,” or “divine archetype”.

²⁶ Even modern suffering remains mythical in terms of archaic ideology of ritual repetition. “It means living in accordance with extrahuman models, in conformity with archetypes.” Mircea Eliade, “Misfortune and History,” in *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, p. 95. Eliade also defines “hierophany” in this way: “nature is hierophany and the “laws of nature” are the revelation of the mode of existence of the divinity.” Ibid., p. 59.

Qingling Terrace, Outworn Dwelling of Mister White Cloud, On the Sea, The Command Station and Ode to History. I categorize The Patterned Zither as *qingshi* (情詩), The Lantern as *yongwushi* (詠物詩), Chang'e, Qingling Terrace as *yonghuaishi* (詠懷詩), Outworn Dwelling of Mister White Cloud as *youxianshi* (遊仙詩), and On the Sea, The Command Station, Ode to History as *yongshishi* (詠史詩) so that every genre of poems can manifest the power of mythical archetypes in various ways.

Although the selected poems for my analysis are limited, a variety of myths has something in common from the beginning as “primordial” form, and I hope my elaboration can transmit something “in common” structurally.²⁷

The Patterned Zither: a Mythical Prologue

Jinse or “The Patterned Zither” is considered as the first poem of his entire collection. Yang Yi (楊億, 974-1020), a *xikun* poet of Northern Song Dynasty, enchanted with Li Shangyin’s *xikun* style (西崑體), successively collected and restored his poems as a whole, only two or three parts of

²⁷ My reading is mainly based on structural approach. I think that structural approach can incorporate T. S. Eliot, Mircea Eliade and Claude Lévi Strauss’s theoretical insights in many ways. However, whether Eliade as a theorist of myth can be considered as a structuralist, or not, is not a scope of my article. In my view, Eliade’s analysis strongly depends on structural approach that renders him a cross-cultural comparison of myths. The structural approach helps him extract a corpus of myths in order to link our “secular” deeds to the “sacred history” as archetypal modalities of human psyche. Theoretical difference between Carl G. Jung and Mircea Eliade is that Eliade makes an intimate nexus of “secular” activities to the “sacred history” as a religious form of human beings, but Jung does not. Eliade confirms that “I need scarcely say that, for Professor Jung, the archetypes are structures of the collective unconscious. But in my book I nowhere touch upon the problems of depth psychology nor do I use the concept of the collective unconscious.” Mircea Eliade, “Preface to the Torchebook Edition,” in *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, pp. viii-ix.

which remain.²⁸ His textual restoration thereafter fames Li Shangyin as one of the greatest poets of Tang. We are probably curious to know why Yang Yi edited and placed *The Patterned Zither* as the first stanza of the entire collection. It is nearly impossible to know the exact chronology of Li's poems, for textual transmission in Chinese literary culture definitely differs from our modern time. The so-called *xuanji* (選集) or "selected collection" is gradually included, collected and derived from numerous *mingpian* (名篇) or "poem title" by the time-consuming process in the long history. Certainly, when the reader recollects his poems in the first phase as *xiaoji* (小集) or "small collection," one possibly accepts or rejects certain works according to his or her personal criteria. It is not possible to know if Li Shangyin was indeed willing to place *The Patterned Zither* as the first poem of the collection. By Yang Yi's art of cutting and editing, Li Shangying is reread and reinterpreted in his *persona*.

To apply religio-anthropologic approach to Li's poem, it is worth noting that "collective memory" is not up to one person, plenty of secular myths can be precipitated from generation to generation, layer upon layer, and turn out to be "collective myth" of one nation. No matter Yang Yi as textual transmitter or Li Shangyin as author, they take part in "collective memory". In the process of his textual transmission relied upon reciting and editing, Yang Yi can enhance and pass on Li's poetic values; meanwhile, it proves the ineradicable power of "collective memory" of one nation. At this point, both Yang Yi and Li Shangyin, they can become "primordial man" as *persona* who stands equally in a larger structure of Chinese myths.²⁹ A. C. Graham translated *Jinse* as "The Patterned Zither":

²⁸ Stephen Owe (字文所安), "Wenxueshixiezu de xinfangxiang: Cong bianji *Jianqiao Zhongguo Wenxueshi tanqi*," (文學史寫作的新方向：從編輯《劍橋中國文學史》談起), presented at National Taiwan University in the title of "Zhongguowenxueshi zhong haiyou shi" (中國文學史中還有史) (Meta-history in Chinese Literature), p. 11.

²⁹ *Persona* in Latin means mask worn by actor in ancient Greek drama to intensify emotions or hide something to "reveal" a truth later. The term also signifies

The Patterned Zither

The patterned zither, for no reason, has fifty strings.
 Each string, each bridge, reminds one of a blossoming year.
 Chuang-tzu was mystified by his morning dream of the butterfly;
 And Wang-ti bequeathed his spring heart to the cuckoo.
 In the vast moon-lit sea, pearls shed tears.
 At sun-warmed blue-field, jade engenders smoke.
 This sentiment might have become a thing to be remembered.
 Only, at the time one was already bewildered and lost.³⁰

錦瑟

錦瑟無端五十弦，一弦一柱思華年。
 莊生曉夢迷蝴蝶，望帝春心托杜鵑。
 滄海月明珠有淚，藍田日暖玉生煙。
 此情可待成追憶，只是當時已惘然。

This poem is one of the most difficult to read due to its exuberant application of allusions. Even the great critic of the Qing Dynasty, Wang Shizhen (王士禛, 1634-1711) says that “it is hard to interpret *Jinse*.”³¹ Liang Qichao (梁啟超, 1873-1929), one of the most prominent modern critics describes *Jinse* in this way: “Yishan’s *Jinse*, *Bicheng*, *Shengnuci* and so on, I cannot comprehend what these poems connote. When a poem is dismantled to let me explain semantically, I totally cannot do that. But I touch its beauty, when I recite it, I become high-spirited and fresh. I know well that the beauty is multi-dimensional and mysterious. We accept its

one’s character for role playing in society.

³⁰ The translation by James J. Y. Liu’s in “Li Shang-yin’s Poem ‘The Ornamented Zither (Chin-se)’,” *Journal of American Oriental Society*, Vol. 85, No. 2. (1965): 129-130, with the revision based on A. C. Graham’s, in A. C. Graham, *Poems of the Late T’ang* (Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1995), p. 171.

³¹ 一篇《錦瑟》解人難。It is the second line of “Quatrain in Seven Characters” (七言絕句) written in honor of Shi Daoan (釋道安) who is an editor and commentator of Li Shangyin’s poems prior to Zhu Heling.

aesthetic values. We cannot easily look down and sweep away his poetic diction.”³² A. C. Graham states that it is “one of the most allusive of all Chinese poems.”³³ From the first to the last line, the poet obviously employs a set of correlative allusions to significantly construct a realm of sentiments or *jingjie* (境界). Modern readers unaccustomed to the allusive expression of Tang literati may feel clumsy to apprehend it; nevertheless, poets are likely to employ allusions without any concern about evasiveness. By quoting Cheng Xiangheng (程湘衡), Qian Zhongshu (錢鍾書, 1910-1998) interpreted *Jinse*, through the lens of literary positivism, “as the first poem of the entire collection, unless it is a coincidence, is somewhat an autobiographical foreword of his whole collection.”³⁴

In this poem, Li Shangyin uses the so-called “objective correlative” in T. S. Eliot’s poetic theory to intensify *jingjie* (境界). Li extracts the correspondent qualities of these interwoven allusions, exposes them layer upon layer and unifies them into *jingjie* by mythical time, constructed accumulatively by the stories behind the following allusions. In the first line, “The patterned zither, for no reason, has fifty strings,” the poet questions why the patterned zither before his eyes has fifty strings like this. *Jin* in Chinese directly means “decorated as luxuriously as a brocade or an arabesque texture of silk,” the quality of subtlety in a multicolored brocade

³² 義山的〈錦瑟〉〈碧城〉〈聖女祠〉等詩，講的什麼，我理會不著。拆開一句一句叫我解釋，我連文義也解不出來。但我覺得他美，讀起來令我精神上得一種新鮮的愉快。須知美是多方面的，是含有神秘性的，我們若承認美的價值；對此種文字，便不容輕輕抹煞。Liang Qichao (梁啟超), “Zhongguoyunwenlitousuobiaoxian de ganqing,” (中國韻文裏頭所表現的感情) (Sentiments Expressed in Chinese Verses) in *Yinshuishi wenji* (飲冰室文集) (The Collection of Sipping Chamber), Vol. 71, p. 38.

³³ A. C. Graham, *Poems of the Late T'ang*, p. 27.

³⁴ 〈錦瑟〉之冠全集，倘非偶然，則略比自序之開宗明義。Qian Zhongshu (錢鍾書), *Tanyilu* (談藝錄) (Record of Discussions on Art) (Supplementary Volume) (Taipei: Shulinchubanyouxiangongsi 書林出版有限公司, 1988), p. 114 (the forth supplementary note).

penetrates into the zither. It entails a symbiosis between the nuance of arabesque and the perplexity of life.

In terms of focalization, the poet constructs a room of literati and unintentionally drags his readers into his private space, where the zither is laid down, to be in touch with the smell of this scholastic room or *wenfang* (文房). If we know the story behind the alluded zither, *wushixian* (五十弦) refers to a previous text, *Hanshu* (漢書), which much more emotionally concentrates the melancholy of life by recollecting the scene: “Taidi orders the White Maid to play the zither with fifty strings, (he) grieves, and cannot refrain from, so he smashes his zither into twenty five strings.”³⁵ It does not matter whether the story is historically real, for it is (un)consciously fictionalized into the poem. A history can be conceived as a fictional work when time passes, and eventually becomes a trace of a collective memory or even a personal memory. Thus, a history, in this sense, cyclically reveals itself as a prototypical myth in human consciousness. In remembrance of an allusive meaning, the synecdochical function beneficially redeems the mythical time from the archetypal past to create *xinxian* (心弦) or soul strings with variant nuances like a number of zither strings in the action of fingering. *Wuduan* or “for no reason” strongly intensifies his unintelligibility of life as well as mythically sublimates his incomprehensibility of life, in the face of which the poet feels stunned, frenzied and ponderous. The patterned zither indeed becomes a metaphor of life. His current suffering resonates through the archetypal one in a primordial heroic myth, which makes it mythical in the sense of *in illo tempore*. Therefore, a visualized image of the zither placed therein is a “hierophany”.

Structurally, “each string, each bridge”, which functions as a metonymy of musical fingering and as an imagery of musical intoxication, strongly invokes the power of sorrowful melody. Music as a temporal art

³⁵ 泰帝使素女鼓五十弦瑟，悲，帝禁不止，故破其瑟為二十五弦。 *Hanshu* (漢書) (Chronicles of Han) in the volume of “jiaosizhi” (郊祀志)。

reaches its full potential, as “music can imitate human feelings more vitally than can the visual arts, since a feeling is an activity taking place in time, so is music.”³⁶ “Reminds one of a blossoming year” implies that the poet has experienced all tastes of life and drifts into a glimpse of reminiscence.

In the involuntary memory, the poet flows into the spirit of a butterfly which alludes to a philosophical fable by Zhuangzi, who dreams of becoming a butterfly, without knowing he is Zhuangzi. Once he has woken up, he discovers that he is not the butterfly.³⁷ The alluded butterfly functions as an imaginary synecdoche and reveals the oscillation between consciousness and unconsciousness. It blurs a clear-cut boundary between reality and imagination. If what happens in one's dream is as realistic as that in his or her awakening, how can he or she identify distinctively the world we live in; is it a dream or reality? By the power of the atemporal model of the dreamlike myth as the whole for a part, the poet dives into his site of memory or “lieu de memoir” where the mythical time eternally returns and reaches the realm of “timelessness” or “eternal present,” “it is the present which knows no past or future.”³⁸

In the fourth line, the poet distills a quality of the indestructible specter of Wang Di who abdicates his throne and dies. His specter turns out to be *dujuan*, a cuckoo chirping lamentingly.³⁹ *Chunxin* signifies *shangchun de xin* (傷春的心) or a “broken heart in youth,”⁴⁰ which lastly metamorphoses into the spirit of a cuckoo. The onomatopoeic quality of *dujuan* is echoed and resonates by the semi-told myth, which links the in-between boundaries of existential beings and non-existential ones, where the full potential of a

³⁶ W. J. Bate, “The Classical Tradition,” in *Criticism: The Major Texts* (New York, Harcourt, Brace: 1952), p. 5.

³⁷ 昔者莊周夢為蝴蝶，栩栩然（自得貌）蝴蝶也。Zhuangzi, in the chapter of “qi wulun” (the Equality of Things).

³⁸ Kao Yu-kung and Mei Tsu-lin, “Syntax, diction, and Imagery in Tang Poetry,” in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 31, 1970, p. 121.

³⁹ 蜀王杜宇，號望帝，後因禪位，自亡去，化為子規。Huan yuji (寰宇記) (Universal Geography of the Taiping Era).

⁴⁰ 目極千里兮傷春心。Chuci (楚辭) in the chapter of Zhaohun (招魂) .

synecdoche is unleashed. His orientation toward the quality of the undead helpfully uplifts the unrested spirit to the celestial space, where it is everlastingly lingering and reaching for the immortality of unfulfilled desire. *Cang* (滄) in the fifth line, besides its sensorial chilliness, the blue-green color has an archetypal modality of aqua-god or celestial ascending towards transcendental world, which appears in many religions.⁴¹

Whenever an allusion invokes a myth, it renders the sense of “unreality” gradually accumulated in every stratum throughout the poem as an organic form of “cloud” or “mist” vitalizing the subject-matter which it conceals.⁴² The sense of “unreality” is much more intense, when the line “in the vast moon-lit sea, pearls shed tears” is incanted so sonorously that the mythical time suffuses into every texture of poetic signification. It alludes to a myth of a mermaid or a merman (which is unidentifiable), when the moon is lit in the infinitude of the South Sea, he or she drops his or her tears as

⁴¹ In Dunhuang Cave, the blue color as *huiqing* (回青) (Mohammedan blue) is applied to portray the conglomeration of Bodhisattvas in heaven as well as Islamic mosques are significantly painted by blue color which has an archetypal power to link disciples to the realm of transcendence. In literary culture of the west, blue color often refers to sadness without reason or contemplation with despair. The obsession with blue-sky color seems to be “collective memory” of mankind unquestionably.

⁴² Zhao Zhixin (趙執信) and his friends of literati discuss about the sense of vagueness in poetic representation in this way: “Fangsi is frustrated that he has no artwork now and says that “poetry is like a dragon, if its head, tail, claws, scales and mane are not perfect, it is not a dragon.” Si Kouxi says that “poetry is like the spirit of a dragon, it just reveals claws and scales in the cloud. Why is it depicted perfectly? This is a very duty of a sculptor or a painter. I say that “the spirit of a dragon is continually extending and changing, it indeed has endless variations and dims a purview of a viewer, it merely appears to be some part of scales and claws and perfect only on head and tail parts, it still remains to be a dragon; if we stick to what we see and think that one dragon must be a form of a perfect sight, one sculptor is likely to say goodbye to sculpting it.” 昉思嫉時俗之無章也，曰：「詩如龍然，首尾爪角鱗鬣，一不具，非龍也。」司寇哂之曰：「詩如神龍，見其首不見其尾，或雲中露一爪一鱗而已，安得全體？是雕塑繪畫者耳。」余曰：「神龍者，屈伸變化，固無定體。恍惚望見者，第指其一鱗一爪，而龍之首尾完好，故宛然在也。若拘於所見，以為龍具在是，雕繪者反有辭矣。」Zhao Zhixin(趙執信), *Tanlonglu*(談龍錄)(Record of Talking about Dragon), paragraph 2.

pearls.⁴³ The imagery of shining pearls in the dim light of the vast sea is very powerful, for it represents a symbolic sadness never existing in the world but permeates the “unreal” quality of sadness into the “real” world, at the same time. The symbolism of pale and cool colors of the pearls helps link and elevate the mythic sadness to its universality. Whenever the poem is recited, the mythical archetype is rescued over and over from the profane destruction where the pearls eternally shine and remain sacralized in a mythical aura. It is a space where the text is self-deconstructed; in other words, it textually destroys itself and is ready to reconstruct itself infinitely as a life form.

The symbolism of shells and pearls, whether in or out of the Chinese context, is relevant to primitive thinking. “Belief in the magical virtues of oysters and shells is to be found all over the world, from prehistoric until modern times,”⁴⁴; the pearls in Li’s poem play a key role of the collective archetype in an archaic ontology as well. In the Chinese context, it concerns Han cosmology, grounded upon the binary opposition of *yin* and *yang*. In the cosmological speculation of the Han, the shells in ancient China “participate in the sacredness of the Moon; at the same time, they embody those of the aquatic power,”⁴⁵ the moon has influences upon pearls,⁴⁶ and

⁴³ 南海外有鮫人，水居如魚，不廢績織。其眼泣則能出珠。Bowuzhi (博物志) (Records of Diverse Matters). By neglecting the mythological allusion behind it, James J. Y. Liu interprets this line as “intentional fallacy” in this way: “even pearls are crying, let alone the poet himself. A world seen under the light of ‘Pathetic Fallacy’ is thus revealed. James J. Y. Liu, “Part III. Towards a Synthesis: Allusions, Quotations, and Derivations,” in *The Art of Chinese Poetry*, p. 136.

⁴⁴ Mircea Eliade, “Observations on the Symbolism of Shells,” in *Images & Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, p. 125.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 127.

⁴⁶ In the treatise *Lüshichunqiu* of the third century B.C., we read: “the moon is the root of all that is *yin*; when the moon is full, the *pang* (螃) and the *ke* (殼) mussels are full; all *yin* things are abundant (waxing); when the moon is dark (the last day of the moon) the *pang* and *ke* mussels are empty: all *yin* things are deficient (waning). B. Karlgren, “Some Fecundity Symbols in Ancient China,” in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, No. 2, Stockholm, 1930, pp. 1-54, p. 36.

the radiance of pearls represents *yin* power,⁴⁷ which is always utilized in funeral customs to adorn the noblemen in their tombs with an intention to preserve the body from decay,⁴⁸ and preventing moisture.⁴⁹ When a

⁴⁷ Mozi, in the fifth century B.C., after having observed that the pearl oyster pang 蚌 is born without help of the male, adds: “therefore, that the pang can at length bear the pearl is because it concentrates wholly on its *yin* force.” Ibid. “The moon,” writes Liu Ngan of the second Century B.C., “is the origin of *yin*. That is why the brains of fish shrink when the moon is empty, and why the shells of univalves are not full of fleshy parts when the moon is dead.” Liu Ngan adds, in another chapter: “the bivalves, the crabs, the pearls and the turtles grow and diminish with the moon.” J. –J. de Groot, *Les fêtes annuellement célébrées à Émouî: Étude concernant la religion populaire des Chinois*, Paris, 1886, Vol. II, p. 491. Relations between the moon and water, *ibid.*, pp. 488 ff. Influence of the moon upon pearls, pp. 490 ff. In Chinese history, “the king’s chariot was ornamented with jade (rich in *yang*) and that of the queen with peacock feathers and shell-work, emblems of *yin*. The rhythms of cosmic life pursue their normal course so long as the circulation of these opposite and complementary principles is proceeding without hindrance.” Mircea Eliade, “Observations on the Symbolism of Shells,” in *Images & Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, p. 128.

⁴⁸ “And in Chinese sepulchers, we also find jade impregnated with *yang* — the masculine, solar and ‘dry’ principle — and jade of its own nature resists decomposition.” Mircea Eliade, “Observations on the Symbolism of Shells,” in *Images & Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, p. 135. “If there is gold and jade in the nine apertures of the corpse, it will be preserved from putrefaction,” writes the alchemist Ko Hung. B. Laufer, *Jade: A Study in Chinese Archeology and Religion*, Field Museum, Chicago, 1912, p. 299. Tao Hung Ching (the fifth century) gives the following instances: “when, at the opening of an ancient tomb, the corpse looks alive, then there is, inside and outside of the body, a large quantity of gold and of jade. According to the regulations of the Han dynasty, the princes and lords were buried in their clothes adorned with pearls, and with boxes of jade, for the purpose of preserving the body from decay.” B. Laufer, *op. cit.*, p. 299. Cf. also Karlgren, “Some Fecundity Symbols,” pp. 22 ff. Giseler, “Les Symboles de Jade dans le Tao-isme,” in the *Revue d’Histoire des Religions*, 1932, Vol. 105, pp. 158-181.

⁴⁹ “Besides the *pei* oyster, the Chinese funeral service also made use of the largest and finest of the mussels, *shen*. Mussels and bivalve shells were placed at the bottom of the tomb.” B. Karlgren, “Some Fecundity Symbols in Ancient China,” in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, No. 2, Stockholm, 1930, p. 41. Cheng Hsuan mentions the custom that: “before the coffin is to be lowered, one first fills the bottom with *shen* in order to prevent moisture.” Ibid. Pearls were placed in the mouth of the dead person, and “it is stated in the funeral rituals for the Sovereigns (of the Han dynasty) that ‘their mouths were filled with rice; pearls and jade stone were put therein, in accordance with the established ceremonial usages’.” De Groot, *Religions*

homology of the force of *yin* and cool colors are merged into the elfish and aqueous myth, it represents an imaginary corpse, which becomes cold but alive or a symbolic undead whose suffering remains in the world. The aquatic power in the oceanic and tearful imagery hides one's desire of purge or "catharsis".

In the sixth line, "geographic names in Tang poetry often include colors or other vision- oriented words,"⁵⁰ such as the Azure Field. Azure can be a non-restrictive adjective, its quality of color centrifuges to the quality of jade, when the sunrays pour on the Azure Field full of jade stones beneath it,⁵¹ Si Kongtu (司空圖 ,837-908) remarks Dai Shulun's criticism on the poet: "the scene presented by (the) poet is like smoke which rises from fine jade when the sun is warm on the Azure Field, it can be seen from a distance, but not from close to,"⁵² it evaporates a delusory mirage, a mirage of life enchanting the eyes of the beholder. The quality of *qing* (青) color in jade helpfully tints a mythical color in an aerifying action, as "beauty is eternity gazing at itself in a mirror. But you are eternity and you are the mirror,"⁵³ and "beauty is life when life unveils her holy face. But you are life and you are the veil."⁵⁴ The allusion in the sixth line accomplishes the whole of accumulative fables in the previous ones and, meanwhile, entails a certain ritual signification. The "ritual" here means "life is an inevitable ritual of transition" as a "rite de passage," if we are in a state of transitional flux, we take part in a religious sense to some extent,

Systems of China, 1892, I, p. 277.

⁵⁰ Kao Yu-kung and Mei Tsu-lin, "Syntax, diction, and Imagery in Tang Poetry," in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 31, 1970, p. 77.

⁵¹ The Azure Field once was a mountainous place of jade production, another name is Jade Mountain, it is Chang'an County or Xi'an City at present. 藍田山在長安縣東南三十里，其山產玉，亦名玉山。Chang'an zhi (長安志) (Records of Chang'an).

⁵² 司空表聖云：戴容州叔倫謂詩家之景，如藍天日暖，良玉生煙，可望而不可置于眉睫之前也。Kunxuejiwen (困學紀聞) (Records on Hardship in Studying), Vol. 18.

⁵³ Kahlil Gibran, "On Beauty," in *The Prophet* (Bilingual Edition) (Taipei: Cosmos, 1999), p. 275.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

and, by a religious sense, we are part of the myth as an eternal redemption of the extra-temporal archetype.

When allusions are gradually added up to the climax of all redemptive myths, the poet in the last line applies a propositional language instead of an imagistic one in the expression, “this sentiment might have become a thing to be remembered,” and “only at the time when one was already bewildered and lost.” By applying a theory of Ernst Cassirer’s, dividing a language into two poles: the imagistic pole and the propositional pole to analyze poetry, when the poet uses a proposition in his work (which often appears in the last line), “it no longer describes but assert; it no longer calls for visualization, which is the proper response to imagery, but for assent or dissent, which is the proper response to assertion.”⁵⁵ Regarding “this sentiment” or *ciqing*, “this” functions as a demonstrative adjective to identify something propositional and something that “can be waited for” or *kedai*. That means it is lost in English translation, functioning as a modal or a helping verb to indicate some potentiality of an action and “already” functions as an adverb to point out the completion of a deed. These propositional statements awaken the reader, taking him out of a subconscious trance in the mythical time to contemplate the past where the poet experiences “here and now”.⁵⁶ The Reader or “I” of the here-and-now becomes a being in time or “dasein” in a state of constant flux of time from the mythical past to the existential present and reaches the archetypal model of human consciousness via a “rite de passage”. The experience of “I” and the poet’s come across and overlap in the third space or “heterospace” as an aesthetic frontier, imperturbable and unconquerable through cultural hegemony or epochal disparity.

The qualitative orientation of homology, such as visual quality (a multi-colored brocade, merged into the texture of zither, or blue smoke,

⁵⁵ Kao Yu-kung and Mei Tsu-lin, “Syntax, diction, and Imagery in Tang Poetry,” in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 31, 1970, p. 58

⁵⁶ Barthes also applies the term “here and now” to actualize his structuralist reading in order to rebut the genealogical approach promoting the certainty of textual meanings. Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author” (1977), paragraph 4.

vaporized by the sunray), sound quality and kinetic quality (a melody mingled with a movement of fingerings) help allusions complete a synecdochical scene of a musical performance which merely appears in imagination. This freezes the extension of time and also infiltrates the mythical time into the here-and-now of textual reading where the legendary phoenix is eternally reborn.

Profane Light and Sacred Sufferings in *Yongwushi*

Images express the nostalgia for a mythicized past transformed into an archetype, and that this “past” signifies not only regrets for a vanished time but countless other meanings... The longing for something *altogether different* from the present instant; something in fact inaccessible or irretrievably lost: “Paradise” itself.⁵⁷

Deng or the “Lantern” is a poem representing a poetics of seeing in the tradition of Chinese poetry. The intriguing aspect of the “Lantern” is that nowhere does it directly signifies its existence. In the process of poetic decoding, we nonetheless discover that it is ubiquitous whenever we are joyful, sad or contemplative or even in our daily activity inside our personal space. Its radiance companionably illuminates our indescribable emotions simultaneously absorbed into the radiance. This is one of the complex poems with multi-layered allusions.

The Lantern

It's still pure and bright tirelessly till the end,

Simmered and endured on my own.

In a blossom time, I follow wine to faraway,

In a rainy night, I lean on the window asleep.

In cold dimness, a yellow thatch post paves,

⁵⁷ Mircea Eliade, “Foreword,” in *Images & Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, p. 17.

And illuminates Guilin Purple Building.
 Like brocaded bag with decorative patterns concealed,
 Defeated on jade chessboard, I have no more turn.
 Wherever there is no wonderful dream,
 Who can't hide sorrow?
 A shadow rolls by curtain ballasts,
 A sunray flows on a grass mat.
 Others appeal to be *Panyue*,
 But I pursue to be Sorrow.
 There remains a lingering speck of flame,
 Shimmering in delicacy when being lowered. (Translation is mine.)

燈

皎潔終無倦，煎熬亦自求。
 花時隨酒遠，雨後背窗休。
 冷暗黃茅驛，暄明紫桂樓。
 錦囊名畫掩，玉局敗棋收。
 何處無佳夢，誰人不隱憂。
 影隨簾押轉，光信簟文流。
 客自勝潘岳，儂今定莫愁。
 固應留半焰，回照下幃羞。

According to Feng Hao, it denotes that the poet is relegated from the court by locating its poetic meaning within Li Shangyin's biographical life,⁵⁸ which remains unjustifiable in relation to textual genealogy and transmission. Instead of positivistic juxtaposition, in Zhuangzean fables, we often discover that a referential person, in terms of communicative situations, must be a primordial man, a plant or an animal as a

⁵⁸ Cited in Zhou Zhenfu(周振甫), *Li Shangyin xuanji*(李商隱選集)(The Selected Works of Li Shangyin) (Shanghai: Shangaigujichubanshe 上海古籍出版社, 2012), p. 136.

mythico-ritual character which is non-existential. However, it seems so ubiquitous that we know no past or present. It is the archetypal man as mythical figure or image from our “imaginary unconscious” who atemporally encounters the normality of suffering as a “myth-like” pilgrim who longs for spiritual salvation and profound insight in “modern” time.

In the first couplet, the poem alludes to a Zhuangzean predicament, the poet allegorizes a type of profane suffering as useful trees and grease: useful trees on a mountain will be cut off for its abundant utilities and frying grease will burn itself for the purpose of cooking or illuminating. Trees and grease are mythically anthropomorphized to foreshadow human destiny repeatedly. The synecdochical allegory persuades the advantages of being useless instead of those of being useful. When a man is useful, he will be easily eliminated as a cut tree or fried grease. Even though it is to be like this, the narrator is proud and willing to be the lantern, *jiaojie* that signifies the lantern radiance or *dengguang* (燈光). *Jie* connotes his perseverance of spiritual purity in his own personality, and *jian'ao* implies the lantern flame or *denghuo* (燈火) in a gesture of melting flame. Light and flame in a manner of self-annihilation to radiate strongly have a mythico-ritual function. It evokes a primordial man who willingly suffers from his own heroic decision in order to become the “eternal” lantern as many mythical sages cyclically and historically do.

In fact, our current suffering endlessly derives from an archaic one, which bears on a mythico-ritual meaning by virtue of various archetypal scenarios in either Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism or even Christianity, which values suffering as high as a present of God's. He endows you with sufferings, by which you feel the existence of the Supreme Being. When you suffer, it will bring about your celestial wings like an angel to be reunited with Him. It amounts to saying that suffering is more valuable than happiness. In Buddhism, current suffering is a continuation of the anterior life as a previous mythical scenario and it is endless until we reach *nirvana*. In Confucianism, current suffering by one sage is a continuum of an archaic

suffering already encountered by several mythical sage-kings or mythically personalized heroes. We are merely a temporary character inside the greater structure of archetypal sufferings. In Daoism, suffering is very mythical as many characterized sages already confronted; nevertheless, suffering, by acting as an onlooker, is often transformed into “spiritual freedom” or “spiritual salvation” as “self-detached self-contemplation” or *choushen jingguan* (抽身靜觀) in the Daoistic expression that “peacefully observes and self-attains” or *wanshi jingguan jie zide* (萬事靜觀皆自得) .

The “profane” eternally shines out of the “sacred” which is mythical and atemporal. The primordial character in the poem seems to be much more archetypal by the following lines which continually invoke a set of mythical scenarios of mankind’s predicaments. From the second to the third couplet, the radiance of the lantern accompanies us in solitary places, *sui* and *bei*, as transitive verbs, drag the reader into the gap of the text to escort intimately the poet in the dim light: “in a blossom time, I follow wine to faraway. In a rainy night, I lean on the window asleep.” The poet’s ingenuity lies in the imagery use of “yellow thatch post” or *huangmaoyi* (黃茅驛) as a limit of space utilized as a semantic pivot to open the broader space of “Purple Building of Guilin”. The yellow thatch post functions as a terminal where mail horses converge and leave; it echoes the archetypal myth of union and separation universally manifested in diverse cultures. In a Zhuangzean mytheme, life is a temporary journey or a stopping station as a “rite de passage” which everyone is confronting and transiting.⁵⁹ *Xuanming* or “to illuminate” implies a symbolic lantern shining out on a path to Guilin. Its radiance spatially absorbs the past, present and future in abstraction; it grants some mythico-religious meanings upon our ephemeral life. The normality of suffering is deepened by the historical incapability of sages who are not placed in a high rank like a brocaded bag

⁵⁹ When Zhuangzi’s wife had passed away, he sank into sadness and cried in the first place. Then he realized that life is merely a transition of being into another dimension of existence, he viewed it as an endless journey both aesthetic, and adventurous.

whose famous decorative pattern is concealed. Like a jade chessboard, it becomes refined and brightened by the lantern; notwithstanding, it is still a chessboard showing a defeated strategy. His ordeal is similar to a lot of previous literati who suffer from the same situation. Whenever and however tormented they feel, the lantern accompanies them everywhere to soothe and meanwhile grants them some kind of mythical values.

In the fifth couplet, the poem evokes the archetypal suffering appearing in the *Book of Poetry* with an insomniac narrator, who has something in his mind and profoundly feels pain and suffering.⁶⁰ The terms *jiameng* (佳夢) and *yinyou* (隱憂) insinuate that the lantern is his companion. When the poet walks through the curtain, he has to touch its ballasts and his moving shadow projectively slides on it. When he lies down on a finely woven grass mat, the radiance of the lantern flowingly skims over it. The seventh couplet firmly alludes to more archaic suffering. The poet grumbles about many literati who endeavor to become a man, *Panyue* (潘岳) in *A New Account of the Tales of the World* whose youthful appearance is so ravishing that when he walks out with his zither on Luoyang Road, a lot of maids will surround him hand in hand.⁶¹ On the contrary, the poet compares himself to a mythical “sorrow” or *mochou* symbolized as the Maid of the Stone City chanted in the form of *yuefushi* (樂府詩): “Where is Sorrow? Sorrow is in the West of the Stone City.”⁶² This City functions as a synecdoche of the whole story. It is not important whether the maid is real or not in the *Tangshu* (唐書) described in this way: “the Song of Sorrow came from a musical piece of the Stone City. The Stone City had a girl named as *Mochou*

⁶⁰ 耿耿不寢 如有隱憂 (Shijing 詩經) (Book of Poetry), in the section of *Guofeng* (國風) of *Beifeng* (邶風), *Bozhou* (柏舟).

⁶¹ 潘岳妙有姿容，好神情。少時挾彈出洛陽道，婦人遇者莫不連手共縈之。Liu Yiqing (劉義慶), *Shishuoxinyu* (世說新語) (*A New Account of the Tales of the World*), in the chapter of *rongzhi* (容止) (So Ravishing that Stand Stunned).

⁶² 莫愁在何處？莫愁石城西。“Yinyuezhi II” (音樂志二) (Record of Music II) in *Tangshu* (唐書), Vol. 29, p. 065.

(its literal meaning is non-melancholy), she was capable of singing, thus the music from the Stone City and Zhongfu had sorrowful melody.”⁶³ The arcana of allusions reflect Li’s mythical craving for the archetypal sadness experienced by the ancient. The modern sadness of a man always echoes a primordial torture of the past as if our profane life were a continuum of the sacred. In the last couplet, it alludes to the line of Ji Shaoyu (紀少瑜, ?-?) of Liang Dynasty: “with only the fleeting of one or two specks of light, I can take off the gown.”⁶⁴ This line of Li Shangyin also represents the poetics of seeing on the grounds that he constructs a distance of perspective to contemplate the fluid shadow and the gliding light when lowering the curtain. The symbolism of the lantern accompanying the narrator everywhere becomes a hierophany of a mythological being narrating his divine purity in his own personality, no matter how much he suffers from his own decision or determination, as if “the life of modern man were swarming with haft-forgotten myths, decaying hierophanies and secularized symbols.”⁶⁵ When a hierophany manifests its full function in the situation of communication, it completes the authentic role of *yongwushi* (詠物詩) as well.

Allusive Perception as Manifestation of Hierophanies in *Yonghuaishi*

Throughout religious history, sensory activity has been used as a means of participating in the sacred and attaining the divine.⁶⁶

⁶³ 莫愁樂，出於石城樂。石城有女子名莫愁，善歌謠，石城樂和中復有「莫愁」聲。Ibid.

⁶⁴ 惟餘一兩焰，纔得解羅衣。Ji Shaoyu(紀少瑜), “Candeng”(殘燈)(The Last Remaining Light).

⁶⁵ Mircea Eliade, “Foreword,” in *Images & Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, p. 18.

⁶⁶ Mircea Eliade, “Sense-Experience and Mystical Experience among Primitives,” in *Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries: the Encounter between Contemporary Faiths*

In religious experience between the sacred and the profane, its spiritual continuum lies in of the multiplicity of hierophanies,⁶⁷ “because it is a hierophany, it reveals some modality of the sacred; because it is a historical incident, it reveals some attitude man has had towards the sacred.”⁶⁸ Here I will demonstrate one of magico-religious hierophanies Li Shangyin often uses as allusion: the modality of the sky, or high rising which is relevant to the transmission of one's soul. The sacredness of the sky and sky gods is profanely utilized as the full realization of the transcendental quality of “height,” and become a hierophany of contemplation. Whenever one contemplates the sky, he is entering into the archetypal realm of religious consciousness, or a “rite de passage” to an idealized world.⁶⁹

Chang'e⁷⁰

On a mica screen, a candle shadow sheds,

and Archaic Realities, translated by Philip Mairet (New York and Evanston: Harvill Press, 1960), p. 74.

⁶⁷ See the variety of archetypal imagery in Mircea Eliade, “Approximations: the Structure and Morphology of the Sacred,” in *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (Cleveland and New York: the World Publishing Company, 1963), pp. 7-12. The range of primitive imagery is largely investigated by Eliade, and he does not think that his study already covered its full range of hierophanies.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁶⁹ “The transcendental quality of “height,” or the supra-terrestrial, the infinite, is revealed to man all at once, to his intellect as to his soul as a whole. (...) The whole nature of the sky is an inexhaustible hierophany. Consequently, anything that happens among the stars or in the upper areas of the atmosphere—the rhythmic revolution of the stars, chasing clouds, storms, thunderbolts, meteors, rainbows—is a moment in that hierophany.” *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

⁷⁰ In terms of definition, I narrow down *wuyong* and consider Chang'e as a series of abstract myths which does not refer to tangible object or *wuti* (物體) in the external world (or “still-life object” in personal space in Western art). I simply focus on its lyrical function, and classify it as *yonghuaishi*. According to Ke Qingming's categorization, Qingling Terrace is obviously attributed to an artistic expression, called *ting* (亭), *tai* (臺), *lou* (樓), *ge* (閣) as a literary form in Chinese tradition. One of its function is a lyricism of spiritual transcendence and transformation by beholder. Ke Qingming (柯慶明), “*Ting, Tai, Lou, Ge—a Discussion on Aesthetics of Wandering and Scrutinizing of Life as Another Form of Expression*” (從「亭」、「臺」、「樓」、「閣」說起——論一種另類的遊觀美學與生命省察) in *Chinese Literary Bulletin of National Taiwan University* (臺大中文學報), 1999, Vol. 11: 151-158.

The Milky Way sinking, I know the stars subsiding.
 For chasing elixir, Chang'e must regret,
 Between the green sea and blue sky, one heart is in dimmet.
 (Translation is mine.)

嫦娥

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。

The allusion can be narrated in this way, “Yi pursues the drug of immortality from the Queen Mother of the West, Heng’e steals it, and adrift to the Moon Palace.”⁷¹ In order to avoid the homonym of *heng* (姮) in her name which is connate to *heng* (恒) of Wen Emperor of Han (漢文帝), the character is replaced by *chang* (嫦), signifying eternity as *chang* (常). In the light of positivistic interpretation, Zhou Zhenfu and He Zhuo endeavor to biographically link Chang’e to Li Shangyin’s deceased wife without genealogical investigation directly relevant to the precise date, or month, or even place where the poem is written. Instead of juxtaposing vaguely his overall biography to the poem, the lonely sentiment by the poem is highlighted, and reverberates the mythical loneliness from far away. The profane loneliness of the narrator is personified as the divine Chang’e, an archetype of loneliness in Chinese culture. When the poet contemplates the sky, the sky goddess as Chang’e textually mythicizes his “modern” loneliness which functions as a replica of the divine suffering by Chang’e.

The divine solitude by Chang’e reflected via the profane lonesomeness of the narrator is also questioned by *gai*, or “must” to express his worldly bond which cannot be relinquished completely, and turn out to be a tension between the profane and the transcendental. The ambivalent intention of Chang’e in stealing is often understood in this way: she longs for

⁷¹ 羿請不死之藥於西王母，姮娥竊之以奔月宮。Huainanzi (淮南子) in the chapter of Lanming (覽冥) .

immortality, so she steals the drug. If we deconstruct the signification of “stealing,” we maybe come across a divergent meaning that she is fed up with this world, so she steals the drug to become immortal. The oscillating meanings of “boredom” and “immortality” intensify the myth-like dilemma between the profane longing and the transcendental salvation, and become a mytheme of alienation of mankind.

The transcendental meaning can be found in every texture of the poem, a symbolic stone as *yunmu*, or “mica” is imbedded with religious quality by its fairy shape, transparency, and color, “for those to whom a stone reveals itself as sacred, its immediate reality is transmuted into supernatural reality. In other words, for those who have a religious experience all nature is capable of revealing itself as cosmic sacrality.”⁷² The sense of contemplation lies in *pingfeng*, or “screen,” when one is insomniac, and looks into *yinhe*, or the “Milky Way”. By combining the third line of meaning, the imagery of the sea and blue sky merged in one shade not simply mythically conveys her solitariness on the moon, but also expresses the dislocation of lonely feeling between Chang’e and the narrator perfectly. It helpfully unleashes the full function of *yonghuaishi* (詠懷詩).

Qingling Terrace

Qingling Terrace on shore in slanting afterglow,
Pure souls from ancient times live in eventide.
Not strange Han Ping turns to butterfly,
Flies adrift on petals in afterlife. (Translation is mine.)

青陵臺

青陵臺畔日光斜，萬古貞魂依暮霞。
莫訝韓憑為蛺蝶，等閒飛上別枝花。

⁷² Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion: The Significance of Religious Myth, Symbolism, and Ritual within Life and Culture*, translated by Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., no year), p. 12.

The name of terrace functions as a mytheme invoking a heroic past of one king, the tragic narrative can be put in this way: “King Kang of Song discards Han Ping, and marries a maid of He Clan. She is charming, and he snatches her. Han Ping commits suicide. His wife remains decaying chillily under her robe. The king holds on her, and ascends the terrace. He forthwith jumps off, and perishes without her robe in two hands.”⁷³ The *Record of Pacific Universe* also cites the myth, and supplements that “the two hands transform into nymphalid.”⁷⁴ The poem is tightly interwoven with the world of correspondence in Baudelaire’s sense. The visual and scent are aroused by the interplay between twilight hue and clinging ghost(s) in the rim of being and non-being, and its celestial freedom as *jiadie* is enhanced by a high ascending of a beholder. The themes of ascending, celestial freedom and divine transcendence are intermingled with imagistic texture of the poem, representing a continuum of earthly desire and divine supremacy.

The poet’s profane desire is analogized as the high rising to the summit of Qingling Terrace aromatized by magico-mythical power of transmigration. Qingling Terrace functions as a “hierophany,” opening the eyes of the beholder into the realm of atemporal tragedy to search for some lost meaning of the dead, and to contemplate its arcanum via twilight scenery. Now, he takes part in the “rite de passage” of his mundane longing into the mythical ordeal. Whenever the poet experientially shares the mythical transaction of one’s soul by pondering the terrace, the mythological time is renewed over and again in his profane “*déjà vu*”. His worldly vision merely redeems the mythical sense-experience of the past.

⁷³ 宋康王舍人韓憑為蜨，取妻何氏，美，康王奪之。憑自殺。其妻乃陰腐其衣。王與之登臺，遂自投臺下，左右攔之，衣不中手而死。*Soushenji*（搜神記）。

⁷⁴ 着手化為碟。*Taipinghuanyuji*（太平寰宇記）(*Record of Pacific Universe*).

Divine Sublimation in *Youxianshi*

Most Tang poets always long for being pure, and supreme, or *qinggao* (清高) as immortals which are idealized in many aspects. Some immortals are really deities, while others are human beings idealized through their secular deeds. Paying visit to or contemplating on their lives and practices is a sublimation of one's profane psyche. A profane self, which cannot reach the final goal as a transcendence of the mundane world, will be sublimated into poetry. Sublimation is a process of divine rituality which reveals one's spiritual "catharsis" bridging the poet to the sacred.

Outworn Dwelling of Mister White Cloud

Mistake Mister White Cloud in life,

In remembrance of wine shop, I chance upon the Flower of Immortals.

Fading footmarks, the willows on wall intertwine,

Afterglow on returning crows at eventide. (Translation is mine.)

白雲夫舊居

平生誤識白雲夫，再到仙簷憶酒壚。

牆外萬株人絕跡，夕陽惟照欲棲烏。

New Tang Record says that Mister White Cloud refers to Ling Huchu who has been grateful to Li Shangyin in many ways,⁷⁵ but the poet in his life misunderstands him. The point is that the profane life of a man is linked to the sacred life of the immortal as a "rite de passage" that one deserves to pass. Worthy life of Ling Huchu is merely a rite of passage to the "immortality". Li ritualizes one's secular life to become an immortal. Furthermore, Li alludes a series of ancient sages that Ling Huchu is worth making a nexus mythically, such as: Wang Junchong, Ji Kang, and Ruan Ji who assemble to drink wine at the shop of Mister Huang, appeared in *A New*

⁷⁵ 《新唐書·藝文志》：令狐楚表奏十卷，注曰：自稱《白雲孺子表奏集》。

Account of the Tales of the World, as a myth which the poet presupposes to identify himself and Ling Huchu with the group of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove. The poet keeps the style of *gaoshi* (高士) in lamentation, the profane sadness that he is encountering right now is a continuum of the mythical sadness that the ancient sages have ever faced before: “Wang Junchong took light carriage across the wine shop of Mister Huang, and dismounted. He turns to his companions, and says: ‘I, in the past, Ji Kang, and Ruan Ji, gathered here to have sweet wine. ... After Ji Kang died in youth and Ruan Ji passed away, the shop becomes a spiritual tie. Today, even though it is truly close, it seems to be faraway across mountains and rivers.’”⁷⁶

The term, *zhan* (蓊), as a hierophany, seems to be mythical as *champaka* in Sanskrit which smells fragrant in a place of immortal which has never existed in the world,⁷⁷ but he can pay visit by the term, *zaidao* (再到). The willows entangled into the wall, and the imagery of lost footprints enhance separation feeling as a remnant which is both lingering in his mind, and ephemeral. His *youxianshi* expresses his secular suffering; in the meantime, it links to the mythical world in transcendence.

Prophetic Aloofness and Heroic Idealization in *Yongshishi*

Besides its synecdochical function, whenever the poet uses allusions, he keeps aloof or distance from what he is depicting, it renders a new function, bird's-eye point of view. This bird's-eye view creates the style so-called “prophetic” in sage-like or saint-like tradition, linking the profane

⁷⁶ 《世說新語·傷逝》：王濬沖「乘輅車經黃公酒壚下過，顧謂後車客：『吾昔與嵇叔夜、阮嗣宗共酣飲於此壚……自嵇生夭、阮公亡以來，便為時所羈縻。今日視此雖近，邈若山河』。」

⁷⁷ *Champaka* is recognized in Hindu culture for its mysterious scent in twilight. It is often on altars or shrines as offering for gods. Li Shangyin seemingly knows how to extract the quality of arcana in fragrance.

purview to the sacred visionary. The prophetic view in allusion helpfully delimits the edge between mythical past and trajectory future, and reach atemporal present which always renews the mythic past; meanwhile, reflects the future. The narrator becomes ahistorical sage contemplating upon what is manifested to his eyes. His point of view in allusion is implicitly religious as the poem:

On the Sea

On his Stone Bridge, the Lord is gazing at the East, a path to be immortalized,

To be eternal, Xufu tries in vain.

The Lord constantly satirizes Magu with his long nails,

When the Blue Sea has turned to a mulberry garden, whose life could be so long-lasting! (Translation is mine.)

海上

石橋東望海連天，徐福空來不得仙。

直遣麻姑與搔背，可能留命待桑田！

The point of view in the poem creates the prophetic vision upon ones who long for the immortality. The narrator keeps aloof consciously from the vanity of mankind who always tries in vain to seek the Realm of Immortality, or *xianjing* (仙境). The Stone Bridge alludes to Qin Emperor who constructs it to appreciate sunrise. The imagery of stone itself intentionally has mythical function as Eliade proposes, every pebble functions profanely as a “rite de passage” to the unknown or undiscovered sacrality. It is atemporal, or even ahistorical archetype utilized ritually to represent the sacred that mankind longs for in history. The imagery in the first line is enhanced by the act of gazing toward the East where the sea seemingly links to the Heaven. The stone imagery with the act of seeing, when it is combined to the Land of Immortality, reveals Daoistic ultimate goal; simultaneously, satires the vanity of such a desire. The strong sense of a prophet shows in the last line by alluding to the myth of Magu, a female

immortal with long nails like bird claws. The myth is narrated in this way: “when Magu pays visit to Caijing (a mortal who practices the Way of Immortality) at his home, Caijing notices that Magu has long nails like bird claws. Caijing speaks in mind, ‘it will be great, if one can scratch his back easily when he itches.’ Magu also murmurs that ‘since I have welcomed mortals, I have seen the three East Seas transformed into mulberry fields. I desire to go to Penglai, where water is shallower when new mortals converged a half, and now it doesn’t turn out to be tombs again, does it?’ ”⁷⁸

Li uses the myth as a prophecy to satire sharply that even though one can meet an immortal or the Land of Immortality, he cannot live long as the immortal can do, while the immortal is able to wait for watching long-lastingly many tombs of mortals, who try in vain to be immortal. The allusion of the last two lines is aloof, prophetic, meditative, mythical, and ritualistic. The poem helpfully maintains the tradition of sagehood in prophecy.

My approach, besides Li’s *qingshi* (情詩), *yonghuaishi* (詠物詩), *yonghuaishi* (詠懷詩), and *youxianshi* (遊仙詩), can be also applied into *yongshishi* (詠史詩) as heroic idealization. Although it is based on the historical fact, it is sacralized by heroic deeds that the narrator longs for. The divinization of mythic action reflects religious need via historically decaying facts. The narrator turns to be a profane “being” towards the sacred modality. The full function of *yongshishi* will be completed by religious sublimation as the poem:

The Command Station

Frightened of his sharp pen, apes and birds shrill,

The wind and the rain surround him like shields.

Even in vain, his divine brush fills,

⁷⁸ 麻姑至蔡經家，經見麻姑手似鳥爪，心中念言：背癢時，得此爪以爬背乃佳也。麻姑自言：接待以來，見東海三為桑田。嚮到蓬萊，水乃淺於往者會時略半也，豈將復還為陸陵乎？*Magushanxiantanji* (麻姑山仙壇記) (Records on the Immortal Site of Magu Mountain).

In dream, he meets his king surrendered.
 Brilliant Guan Zhong and Yue Yi feel no qualm,
 Guan Yu and Zhang Fei can't resist, who else can?
 On the year at Jinli I pass by his temple,
 Lament *Song of Liangfu* to heal. (Translation is mine.)

籌筆驛

猿鳥猶疑畏簡書，風雲常為護儲胥。
 徒令上將揮神筆，終見降王走傳車。
 管樂有才終不忝，關張無命欲何如？
 他年錦里經祠廟，梁父吟成恨有餘。

Chen Yongzheng says “the poem is written in the Reign of Dazhong, the ninth year, when Zhong Ying in winter is transferred to Chang'an, and accompanied by Li Shangyin.”⁷⁹ Although the poem mainly talks about the mortal Zhu Geliang, a talented prime minister of Shu State in Three Kingdom Period who is not successful to save his nation, the poet borrows this mythicized scene to pour out his unsatisfactory emotions, and dilemma he faces. A series of heroic deeds as the sacred modality is also alluded to Guan Zhong, Yue Yi, Guan Yu, and Zhang Fei to enhance Li's mundane melancholy when he passed by their holy temples. His secular agony is just a replica of the sacred sufferings that divinized literati have experienced before. It can be said that the poem can complete the full function of lyricism in historical poetry. In reminiscence of their sacred “destiny,” Li as “dasein” becomes a “rite de passage” that links his profane misery to the atemporal fate, and fulfills his universal longing in anthropomorphic religion.

Ode to History

In depth, the Northern Lake is running,

⁷⁹ Chen Yongzheng (陳永正), *Li Shangyin shixuan* (李商隱詩選) (The Selected Poems of Li Shangyin) (Taipei: Yuanliu chubanshiye gufenyouxiangongsi 遠流出版事業股份有限公司, 2005), p. 28.

A myriad of defeated flags and poles are lined up.
Three hundred years are like a daydream,
How can a dragon-like mountain remain? (Translation is mine.)

詠史

北湖南埭水漫漫，一片降旗百尺竿。
三百年間同曉夢，鍾山何處有龍盤。

The poem essentially writes about the fate of Six Dynasties that waged war to conquer each other for 300 years, but the point of view in “gazing” is prophetically aloof in the tradition of saint-like contemplation. The viewpoint links his secular gazing to the “divine” eyes of a prophet who has ever lived in “once upon a time” or *in illo tempore*.

Conclusion

As a modern reader of Li's poems, I have attempted to introduce a religio-anthropological approach into Chinese poetry in *Xikun* style, neglected in Chinese poetic criticism. Li Shangyin's sumptuous use of allusions can be seen as an imaginary synecdoche, relying on the principles of a part for the whole and the whole for a part. Once a mythical allusion is recited cognitively, a part for the whole will functionally redeem the atemporal model of the heroic myth, once sacred and divine, and the whole for a part will helpfully engage the reader into the tide of mythological time.

In recollection of their sacred destiny, poet as *saeculum* becomes a “rite de passage” that links his secular deed to the atemporal modality via myths in order to fulfill his desire in anthropomorphic religion. The profane allusion is merely a continuum of the sacred time where the mythological deeds of the ancient are retrieved. When one applies a religio-anthropological approach of reading to Li's works, one sharpens his symbolic thinking looked over by Qing critics as Feng Hao, Zhang Ertian

and so on, who are ideologically obsessed with positivistic reading and blame that Li's allusions block the naturalness of reading and interpretation. His exuberant allusions recall the archetypal suffering of mankind, cyclically renewed again and again by reading. At the time when we read an allusion, the synecdochical imagery manifests itself as a "hierophany" that drives us into a rite of passage linking a profane desire to the sacred past, lost paradise that we always seek for.

As well as writing, if reading allusions is to drift into a "rite de passage," poetic reading is religious and ceremonial on its own, isn't it? It simultaneously fulfills the reader's incomplete desire and completes a lost meaning of the author. It can turn the reader into a piece of a puzzle of meanings. This is an enigmatic function of Li Shangyin's allusions.

References

1. Classical texts

Ban Gu (班固). *Hanshu* (漢書) (Chronicles of Han).

Gan Bao (干寶). *Soushenji* (搜神記) (In Search of the Sacred).

Kongzi (孔子). *Shijing* (詩經) (Odes).

Liu An (劉安). *Huannanzi* (淮南子) (Huainanzi).

Liu Yiqing (劉義慶). *Shishuoxinyu* (世說新語) (A New Account of the Tales of the World).

Ouyang Xiu, Song Qi (歐陽脩、宋祁). *Xintangshu* (新唐書) (New Book of Tang).

Qu Yuan (屈原). *Chuci* (楚辭) (Verses of Chu).

Song Minqiu (宋敏求). *Chang'an zhi* (長安志) (Records of Chang'an).

Wang Yinglin (王應麟). *Kunxuejiwen* (困學紀聞) (Records on Hardship in Studying).

Yan Zhenqing (顏真卿). *Magushanxiantanji* (麻姑山仙壇記) (Records on the Immortal Site of Magu Mountain).

Yue Shi (樂史). *Huanyuji* (寰宇記) (Universal Geography of the Taiping Era).

Zhang Hua (張華). *Bowuzhi* (博物志) (Records of Diverse Matters).

Zhao Zhixin (趙執信). *Tanlonglu* (談龍錄) (Record of Talking about Dragon).

Zhuang Zhou (莊周). *Zhuangzi* (莊子) (Zhuangzi).

2. Modern criticisms

Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author" (1977).

- Bate, W. J. *Criticism: The Major Texts*. New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1952.
- Eliade, Mircea. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion: The Significance of Religious Myth, Symbolism, and Ritual within Life and Culture*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., no year.
- . *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*. Translated from the French by Willard R. Trask. Harper & Row: New York, 1959.
- . *Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries: the Encounter between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities*. Translated by Philip Mairet. New York and Evanston: Harvill Press, 1960.
- . *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. Cleveland and New York: the World Publishing Company, 1963.
- . *Images & Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*. Translated by Philip Mairet. (This book was originally published by Gallimard under the title of IMAGES ET SYMBOLES.) New York: A Search Book, 1969.
- . *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion*. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1969.
- Eliot, T.S. *On Poetry and Poets*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1957.
- . *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism: Studies in the Relation of Criticism to Poetry in England*. London: Faber and Faber, 1964.
- Gibran, Kahlil. *The Prophet*. Bilingual Edition. Taipei: Cosmos, 1999.
- Graham, A. C. *Poems of the Late T'ang*. Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1995.
- Kao Yu-kung and Mei Tsu-lin. "Syntax, diction, and Imagery in Tang Poetry." in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 31, (1970).
- Liang Qichao (梁啟超). *Yinbingshi wenji* (飲冰室文集) (The Collection of Sipping Chamber), Vol. 71.
- Liu, James J. Y. "Li Shang-yin's Poem 'The Ornamented Zither (Chin-se)'." in *Journal of American Oriental Society*, Vol. 85, No. 2. (1965).

- . *The Art of Chinese Poetry*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1962.
- Richards, I. A. *Principles of Literary Criticism*. New York: Harcourt, 1963.
- Chen Yongzheng (陳永正). *Li Shangyin shixuan* (李商隱詩選) (The Selected Poems of Li Shangyin). Taipei: Yuanliuchubanshiyegufenyouxiangongsi (遠流出版事業股份有限公司), 2005.
- Qian Zhongshu (錢鍾書). *Tanyilu* (談藝錄) (Record of Discussions on Art). Taipei: Shulinchuban youxiangongsi (書林出版有限公司), 1988.
- Zhou Zhenfu (周振甫). *Li Shangyin xuanji* (李商隱選集) (The Selected Works of Li Shangyin). Shanghai: Shanghaigujichubanshe (上海古籍出版社), 2012.

3. Articles

- Ke Qingming (柯慶明). “Cong ting, tai, lou, ge shuoqi—lun yizhong linglei de youguanmeixue yu shengmingxingcha” (從「亭」、「臺」、「樓」、「閣」說起——論一種另類的遊觀美學與生命省察), *Taidazhongwenxuebao* (臺大中文學報) (Chinese Literary Bulletin of National Taiwan University), Vol. 11 (1999).
- Owen, Stephen (宇文所安). “Cong bianji Jianqiao Zhongguo Wenxueshi tanqi” (史中有史——從編輯劍橋中國文學史談起) (Meta-history in Chinese Literature), *Dushu* (讀書), 2008.5.
- Yan Kunyang (顏崑陽). “Li Shangyinshi jianshifangfa zhi jiantao” (李商隱詩箋釋方法之檢討) (Re-examining the Two Methods of Criticism on Li Shangyin's Poetry), *Zhongguoxueshuniankan* (中國學術年刊) (Studies in Sinology), Vol. 15. 1994.

4. Thesis

Wang Qiugui (王秋桂). *Li Shangyin qingshizhong de keguan duiyingwu* (李商隱情詩中的「客觀對應物」) ('Objective Correlative' in the Love Poems of Li Shang-yin). Taipei: Jiaxin shuinigongsi(嘉新水泥公司), no date.

5. Online dictionary

American Heritage Dictionary Online.

Selected Bibliography

- Eliot, T.S. *On Poetry and Poets*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1957.
- . *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism: Studies in the Relation of Criticism to Poetry in England*. London: Faber and Faber, 1964.
- Eliade, Mircea. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion: The Significance of Religious Myth, Symbolism, and Ritual within Life and Culture*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., no year.
- . *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*. Translated from the French by Willard R. Trask. Harper & Row: New York, 1959.
- . *Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries: the Encounter between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities*. Translated by Philip Mairet. New York and Evanston: Harvill Press, 1960.
- . *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. Cleveland and New York: the World Publishing Company, 1963.
- . *Images & Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*. Translated by Philip Mairet. (This book was originally published by Gallimard under the title of IMAGES ET SYMBOLES.) New York: A Search Book, 1969.
- . *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion*. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1969.
- Kao Yu-kung and Mei Tsu-lin. "Syntax, diction, and Imagery in Tang Poetry." in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 31, (1970).
- Liu, James J. Y. "Li Shang-yin's Poem 'The Ornamented Zither (Chin-se)'." in *Journal of American Oriental Society*, Vol. 85, No. 2. (1965).

- Owen, Stephen (宇文所安). "Cong bianji Jianqiao Zhongguo Wenxueshi tanqi" (史中有史——從編輯劍橋中國文學史談起)(Meta-history in Chinese Literature), *Dushu* (讀書), 2008.5.
- Wang Qiugui (王秋桂). *Li Shangyin qingshizhong de keguan duiyingwu* (李商隱情詩中的「客觀對應物」) ('Objective Correlative' in the Love Poems of Li Shang-yin). Taipei: Jiaxin shuini gongsi (嘉新水泥公司), no date.
- Yan Kunyang (顏崑陽). "Li Shangyinshi jianshifangfa zhi jiantao" (李商隱詩箋釋方法之檢討) (Re-examining the Two Methods of Criticism on Li Shangyin's Poetry), *Zhongguoxueshuniankan* (中國學術年刊) (Studies in Sinology), Vol. 15. 1994.
- Zhou Zhenfu (周振甫). *Li Shangyin xuanji* (李商隱選集) (The Selected Works of Li Shangyin), Shanghai: Shanghaigujichubanshe (上海古籍出版社), 2012.

李商隱詩中借代性的用典與神話性的原型： 追求上古神靈之彰顯

韓文傑*

【摘要】

本論文運用宗教人類學分析李商隱的詩，示範其泛用典故，其功能可以視為幻想的借代，局部就是為了全部，而全部也是為了局部。他的用典雖然含有許多世俗的故事、神話，其實相關到「原始」宗教之超越時空的原型。他所採用之民間故事，可以視為「神靈之彰顯」（hierophany），轉換成為「過關儀式」（rite de passage），而走向上古的神靈性質，其神靈性質已經超越歷史時空，成為宗教典範之形式。其神秘的典故，造成後世用典濃厚的西崑體詩頗有「原型」的宗教意義。其宗教意義只能通過結構性讀法而得來。

關鍵詞：借代、典故、李商隱、神話時間、結構性讀法、神靈之彰顯

* 泰國國立法政大學中文系助理教授