

The Poetry and Prose of Wang Wei

王右丞集卷之十一 近體詩

11.1

奉和聖製慶玄元皇帝玉像之作應制

明君夢帝先，

寶命上齊天。

秦后徒聞樂，

4 周王恥卜年。

玉京移大像，

金籙會羣仙。

承露調天供，

8 臨空敞御筵。

斗迴迎壽酒，

山近起爐烟。

願奉無為化，

12 齋心學自然。

Juan 11: Recent style poems

11.1

Respectfully harmonizing with the imperial composition:
“Celebrating the jade image of the Illustrious Thearch of
the Mysterious Prime”: by imperial command¹

Our enlightened lord dreamt of his godly ancestor;
His precious mandate is equal to Heaven above.
The lord of Qin only heard music;²

4 It would be shameful to divine our years, like the king of Zhou.³
The great image has been transferred to the jade capital;
The Gold Register assembles the crowd of Transcendents.⁴
By the dew-collection plates they arrange Heaven’s offerings;⁵
8 In an empty space they spread the imperial mats.
The Dipper turns to greet the sacrificial ale;
The hills approach, releasing incense smoke.⁶
He wishes to receive the transformation of non-action;
12 With a pure mind he imitates the naturally-so.

1 The honorary designation for Laozi, granted in 666. Laozi was also considered the progenitor of the Tang imperial family. In 741, Xuanzong had a dream that Laozi appeared to him and commanded him to locate a jade statue of himself south of the capital. A team was sent to find it and found it buried. It was brought back to the capital and carried to the palace for offerings. Later, paintings were made of it and dispatched to Daoist temples throughout the empire.

2 The allusion to the Qin ruler here is unclear. There are hints in texts of a legend where Duke Mu 穆 of Qin was summoned to Heaven, where he was treated to a concert of unearthly music. This line would suggest that the emperor has an even more intimate connection to the divine.

3 King Cheng 成, an early Zhou ruler, made a divination that predicted that the Zhou would flourish for thirty reigns. The poet is suggesting that the Tang will last much longer than that.

4 A Daoist text that prescribes rituals for the summoning of Transcendents.

5 See note to 9.13.5.

6 Nature participates in the ritual: the Dipper constellation bends to ladle the ale, and mist from nearby hills resembles smoke arising from incense burners shaped to look like mountains.

11.2

奉和聖製與太子諸王三月三日龍池春禊
應制

故事修春禊，

新宮展豫游。

明君移鳳輦，

4 太子出龍樓。

賦掩陳王作，

杯如洛水流。

金人來捧劍，

8 畫鷁去迴舟。

苑樹浮宮闕，

天池照冕旒。

宸章在雲表，

12 垂象滿皇州。

11.2

Respectfully harmonizing with the imperial composition:
 “Celebrating the Spring Purification Festival at Dragon Pond
 on the Third Day of the Third Month with the crown prince
 and the other princes”: by imperial command¹

Performing the Spring Purification is an age-old custom;
 From the new palace an imperial progress sets out.

Our enlightened lord transports his phoenix palanquin;

4 The crown prince emerges from the Dragon Gate Lodge.²
 His rhapsody surpasses the work of the Prince of Chen;³
 Cups are set floating as they did once on the Luo River.⁴
 A man of gold comes to offer up his sword;⁵

8 The painted herons depart with the returning boats.⁶
 The garden trees float by the palace watchtowers;
 Celestial ponds reflect the tasseled coronet.
 His august compositions extend beyond the clouds,

12 Like astral omens that fill the imperial lands.

1 The Spring Purification Festival was originally held on the first *si* 巳 day (in the system of twelve “branches” in the calendrical system) of the third lunar month. In Tang times it was held on the third day of the third month, but the term *Shangsi* 上巳 (“First *si* day”) became an alternate name for it that is used elsewhere in Wang’s writings.

2 Dragon Gate was a Han-era palace gate.

3 Cao Zhi 曹植 (who had the title of Prince of Chen) once composed a rhapsody extemporaneously on the Copperbird Terrace 銅雀臺 right after it was constructed by his father Cao Cao.

4 The Purification Festival was said in medieval times to have begun when the Duke of Zhou diverted a stream of the Luo River through the Zhou capital so that banquets could be held by its winding waterways. He constructed a bend in the stream where participants could float ale cups in the current as a form of drinking game.

5 King Zhao 煦 of Qin was once feasting by the river on the third day of the third month when a man of gold emerged from the water and gave him a sword, proclaiming him the future ruler of the whole empire.

6 Images of herons were painted on the boats.

11.3

奉和聖製上已于望春亭觀禊飲應制

長樂青門外，

宜春小苑東。

樓開萬戶上，

輦過百花中。⁴

畫鷁移仙妓，

金貂列上公。

清歌邀落日，

妙舞向春風。⁸

渭水明秦甸，

黃山入漢宮。

君王來祓禊，

瀟灑亦朝宗。¹²

11.3

Respectfully harmonizing with the imperial composition:
 “During the Purification Festival at Spring-View Pavilion, watching
 the drinking”: by imperial command¹

Beyond the blue gates of Changle Hall,²
 East of the small garden at Yichun.³
 The mansion opens above a myriad doors;
 4 The palanquin passes through a hundred flowers.
 Painted herons transport the fairy entertainers,
 The gold marten caps are ranked before the high dukes.⁴
 The songs of Qing halt the setting sun;⁵
 8 Marvelous dances face the spring breeze.
 The Wei waters brighten the Qin domain;
 Yellow Mountain enters into a Han palace.⁶
 Our ruler comes for the spring cleansing;
 12 The Ba and Chan Rivers attend on his court.

1 Spring View Pavilion (Palace) was nine li east of Chang'an. Wei Jian had an artificial water course constructed there in 743.

2 See notes to 2.3.6 and 3.9.10.

3 See note to 1.2.6.

4 See notes to 11.2.8 and 7.3.1.

5 The singer Qin Qing could halt clouds themselves with his song (*Liezi*).

6 See note to 10.1.2.

11.4

奉和聖製幸玉真公主山莊因題石壁十韻之作應制

碧落風烟外，
瑤臺道路賒。
如何連帝苑，
4 別自有仙家。
比地迴鸞駕，
緣溪轉翠華。
洞中開日月，
8 窗裏發雲霞。
庭養沖天鶴，
溪留上漢查。
種田生白玉，
12 泥竈化丹砂。
谷靜泉逾響，
山深日易斜。
御羹和石髓，
16 香飯進胡麻。
大道今無外，
長生詎有涯。
還瞻九霄上，
20 來往五雲車。

11.4

Respectfully harmonizing with the imperial composition: “Visiting the mountain estate of Princess Yuzhen, ten rhymes inscribed on the wall”: by imperial command

The cyan vault is beyond the wind and smoke;
A gleaming terrace is far from the roads.

How can something connected to the imperial gardens

4 Be a separate house for Transcendents?

Following the terrain, the simurgh carriage turns;
Tracing the stream, the kingfisher banners twist.
Sun and moon are revealed within the grotto;

8 Sunset clouds issue from the windows.

Heaven-soaring cranes are raised in the courtyards;
A star-ascending raft is moored on the creek.¹
The seeded fields here yield white jade.²

12 Clay stoves produce cinnabar pills.

Because the valley is tranquil, the stream resounds.

Because the hills are deep, the sun is more apt to incline.

Imperial broth is blended with stalactites;³

16 Fragrant rice is presented with sesame.

Their Great Way now is infinite,
And there is no limit to Their longevity.
Ever gazing above the nine empyreans,

20 They come and go in rainbow carriages.

1 A legend tells of a man living by the seaside who would see a raft floating by every year in the eighth month. One year he got on it and found that it traveled into the sky, moving along the Heavenly River (the Milky Way).

2 The filial son Yang Boyong 陽伯雍 turned his mourning hut in the mountains into a stopping place for travelers. One traveler gave him some stone seeds. When Boyong planted them, they yielded jade.

3 Used in Daoist elixirs.

11.5

奉和聖製登降聖觀與宰臣等同望應制

鳳辰朝碧落，

龍圖耀金鏡。

維嶽降二臣，

4 戴天臨萬姓。

山川八校滿，

井邑三農竟。

比屋皆可封，

8 誰家不相慶。

林疏遠村出，

野曠寒山靜。

帝城雲裏深，

12 渭水天邊映。

喜氣含風景，

頌聲溢歌詠。

端拱能任賢，

16 彌彰聖君聖。

11.5

Respectfully harmonizing with the imperial composition: “Climbing Sage-Descent Tower¹ with my ministers and gazing out together with them”: by imperial command

His phoenix screens face the cyan vault,
His dragon strategies make the bronze mirror gleam.²

The peaks have graced us with two ministers;³

4 Bearing Heaven’s will they oversee the myriad surnames.

The Eight Commandants fill the hills and streams;⁴

In all the villages the harvest of the land has ended.⁵

Every household produces men worthy of high title;

8 What family does not celebrate the state of things?

Distant villages emerge from the sparse forest growth;

The countryside is broad, the cold hills are tranquil.

The imperial city lies deep in the clouds;

12 The Wei waters gleam at the edge of the sky.

An aura of joy fills the scenery;

The sounds of praise flood from their songs.

With respectful mien he is able to employ worthy men

16 Who increasingly make manifest the wise ruler’s wisdom.

1 At the Huaqing 華清 Palace on Mount Li. Given its name because of a miraculous appearance of Laozi there.

2 Bronze mirror: possibly a metaphor for enlightened governance.

3 *Shijing* 259 describes a mountain spirit that gave birth to two ministers of the Zhou, Fu 甫 and Shen 申.

4 Eight military officials appointed by Emperor Wu of the Han to oversee the well-being of the empire.

5 Literally, “Three arables” (*san nong*), which refers to arable land on the plain, on hillsides, and in marshes. The phrase can also be interpreted as “three farming seasons,” referring to spring, summer, and autumn.

11.6

奉和聖製御春明樓臨右相園亭賦樂賢詩應制

複道通長樂，

青門臨上路。

遙聞鳳吹喧，

4 閣識龍輿度。

褰旒明四目，

伏檻紓三顧。

小苑接侯家，

8 飛甍映宮樹。

商山原上碧，

瀆水林端素。

銀漢下天章，

12 瓊筵承湛露。

將非富民寵，

信以平戎故。

從來簡帝心，

16 詎得迴天步。

11.6

Respectfully harmonizing with the imperial composition: “I proceeded to Chunming Gate Tower, which overlooked the pavilion of the Director of the Secretariat, and composed a poem on rejoicing in worthy men”: by imperial command

The covered walkway connects with Changle Palace;
 The Blue Gate looks down upon the main road.¹
 From afar I hear the noise of phoenix pipes;

4 I can dimly make out the passage of the dragon carriage.
 He pulls back the tassels from his crown to let his four pupils see
 keenly;²
 He leans over the rail, stooping to humble himself thrice to worthies.³
 The little garden connects with the households of marquises;

8 The soaring roofs stand out against the palace trees.
 Mount Shang is green above the plain;
 The waters of the Chan are pure white at the edge of the wood.
 The Silver River descends with its sky-patterns;⁴

12 Snow-gem banquet mats accept the heavy dew.⁵
 If this banquet is not to thank those who have enriched the people,
 Then it is for those who have pacified the Rong.⁶
 He has ever inspected them in his mind,

16 So how could the fate of the nation be troubled?

1 See note to 3.9.10.

2 Sage-king Yao was reputed to have double pupils.

3 Literally, “three visits,” a reference to Liu Bei’s 劉備 repeated attempts to persuade the recluse Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮 to become his advisor. Only after Liu’s third visit was Zhuge Liang persuaded that he was serious about employing his talents.

4 The Silver River is the Milky Way. Sky-patterns may also be a complimentary term for imperial writing and refer to the emperor’s poem.

5 *Shijing* 174 (“Heavy is the dew”), which describes a happy banquet that lasts deep into the night.

6 Archaic poetic term for “barbarians.” This couplet celebrates officials who have done service to the state in both civil and military capacities.

11.7

奉和聖製暮春送朝集使歸郡應制

萬國仰宗周，
衣冠拜冕旒。
玉乘迎大客，
4 金節送諸侯。
祖席傾三省，
褰幙向九州。
楊花飛上路，
8 槐色蔭通溝。
來預鈞天樂，
歸分漢主憂。
宸章類河漢，
12 垂象滿中州。

11.8

奉和聖製送不蒙都護兼鴻臚卿歸安西應制

上卿增命服，
都護揚歸旆。
雜虜盡朝周，

11.7

Respectfully harmonizing with the imperial composition: “In late spring, seeing off the emissaries attending court upon their return to their commanderies”: by imperial command

The myriad lands look up to the revered Zhou;
 Their gowns and caps bow before his tasseled coronet.
 The jade carriage welcomes the great guests;
 4 With golden tallies the feudal lords are dismissed.
 The Three Departments pour at the farewell banquet;
 With raised carriage curtains they head toward the Nine Provinces.
 Willow catkins fly about the high road;
 8 The hue of sophoras shades the network of canals.
 They came, prepared to share the court’s pleasures;
 Then they go home to share the Han lord’s cares.
 His imperial verse is like the River of Stars:
 12 A celestial phenomenon that fills all the land.

11.8

Respectfully harmonizing with the imperial composition: “Seeing off Protector-General and Chief Minister for the Court of Dependencies Foumeng on his return to Anxi”: by imperial command¹

The Senior Minister invests him with an additional robe of office;
 The Protector-General unfurls his returning banners.
 The various barbarian tribes have all come to Zhou’s court;

1 This is Foumeng Lingyan 不蒙靈譽, a general of Western Qiang ancestry who was serving as Protector General of Anxi (in central Asia) from 741 to 747.

4 諸胡皆自節。
 鳴笳瀚海曲，
 按節陽關外。
 落日下河源，
 8 寒山靜秋塞。
 萬方氣祲息，
 六合乾坤大。
 無戰是天心，
 12 天心同覆載。

11.9

三月三日曲江侍宴應制

萬乘親齋祭，
 千官喜豫游。
 奉迎從上苑，
 4 被禊向中流。
 草樹連容衛，
 山河對冕旒。
 畫旗搖浦激，
 8 春服滿汀洲。

4 All the Hu have ceased to have their own state.¹
 He will have fifes sounded in the desert hinterlands;
 He will halt his riding crop beyond the Yang pass.²
 The setting sun descends on the source of the Yellow River;

8 The cold mountains are tranquil on the autumn frontier.
 Everywhere the malignant mists dissipate;
 In all directions, Heaven and Earth are at peace.
 It is the imperial will for there to be no fighting;

12 An imperial will shared with all above and all below.

11.9

Attending on a banquet at the Qujiang on the Third Day of the Third Month: by imperial command³

Ten thousand carriages come personally for the rituals;
 The thousand officials delight in this imperial excursion.
 They respectfully greet him from the imperial gardens;

4 He carries out purifications in the midst of the current.
 Plants and trees reach to the guards with their standards;
 Hills and rivers face his tasseled coronet.
 Painted banners tremble at the water's edge,

8 The robes of spring fill sandbank and islet.

1 Literally, they are all “from Kuai,” an allusion to *Zuo zhuan* Duke Xiang 29, in which a diplomat visiting Lu from Wu hears music from the various states performed. The text remarks that he had nothing to say about music “from Kuai,” probably reflecting the fact that the state was unimportant and likely to be soon destroyed.

2 See note to 8.13.2.

3 See note to 7.1.

仙簾龍媒下，
神皋鳳蹕留。

從今億萬歲，

12 天寶紀春秋。

11.10

奉和聖製十五夜燃燈繼以酺宴應制

上路笙歌滿，

春城漏刻長。

遊人多晝日，

4 明月讓燈光。

魚鑰通翔鳳，

龍輿出建章。

九衢陳廣樂，

8 百福透名香。

仙妓來金殿，

都人遶玉堂。

定應偷妙舞，

12 從此學新粧。

奉引迎三事，

司儀列萬方。

“Dragon Heralds” descend from the Transcendents’ fence;¹
 The phoenix cortège lingers on the divine riverbank.
 From now on, his infinite reign
 12 Will have its years recorded under “Heavenly Treasure.”²

11.10

Respectfully harmonizing with the imperial composition:
 “On the night of the Fifteenth lanterns were lit, accompanied
 by a public banquet”: by imperial command³

The road is filled with sound of mouth organ and singing;
 In the spring city the clepsydra drips long.

Strollers are more numerous than during the daytime;

4 The bright moon defers to the lantern light.

Fish-shaped keys open the Soaring Phoenix Mansion;⁴

The dragon carriage emerges from the Jianzhang Palace.⁵

On the busy streets they perform Heaven’s Music;⁶

8 Fine incense penetrates from Hundred Fortunes Hall.

Transcendent entertainers come from the golden buildings;

The people of the capital surround the jade halls.

They are set on spying on these marvelous dancers;

12 From now on they will imitate their fashionable dress.

They respectfully lead in the emperor to greet the Three Dukes;

Officials in charge of attendant courtesies take their ranks everywhere.

1 “Dragon Herald”: a fine horse whose superlative qualities are supposed to induce dragons to appear. “Transcendents’ fence”: the imperial palace gardens.

2 A reference to the change of the reign period to Tianbao in 742.

3 Specifically, the fifteenth of the first month, or the Lantern Festival. See also 6.14.

4 Keys were often formed in the shape of fish, because their ever-opened eyes signified watchfulness. This line simply describes the palace gates opening upon the departure of the emperor.

5 See note to 7.1.4.

6 Literally, “broad music,” probably a reference to Zhao Jianzi’s dream of Heaven (see note to 9.33.7).

願將天地壽，

16 同以獻君王。

11.11

奉和聖製重陽節宰臣及群官上壽應制

四海方無事，

三秋大有年。

百工逢此日，

4 萬壽願齊天。

芍藥和金鼎，

茱萸插玳筵。

玉堂開右个，

8 天樂動宮懸。

御柳疎秋景，

城鷗拂曙烟。

無窮菊花節，

12 長奉柏梁篇。

They wish they could all present their ruler
 16 With a longevity equal to Heaven and Earth.

11.11

Respectfully harmonizing with the imperial composition: “On the Festival of the Double Ninth, high ranking ministers and assembled officials celebrate the emperor’s longevity”: by imperial command

All within the four seas is at peace;

There have been large harvests throughout the autumn.

The court officials upon this day

4 Wish for a span of a myriad years, equal to heaven.

All flavors are harmonized within the metal tripods;¹

Sprigs of prickly-ash are inserted in tortoiseshell mats.²

They open the right side-room of the jade hall;

8 Hanging palace bells shake, producing heavenly music.

Imperial willows are sparse in the autumn light;

Crows on the city walls brush up against dawn mist.

On this endless festival of chrysanthemums,

12 We continually offer up our Cypress Rafters compositions.³

1 Reading *shaoyao* (“herbaceous peony”) here as *zhuoyao* 勾藥, which became a general term for the balancing of flavors in a mixture, named for an herb that possessed such balancing properties.

2 Prickly-ash (often translated as “dogwood”) produces a fruit used to flavor ale during Double Ninth celebrations.

3 See note to 7.1.4.

11.12

三月三日勤政樓侍宴應制

綵仗連宵合，
瓊樓拂曙通。
年光三月裏，
4 宮殿百花中。
不數秦王日，
誰將洛水同。
酒筵嫌落絮，
8 舞袖怯春風。
天保無為德，
人歡不戰功。
仍臨九衢宴，
12 更達四門聰。

11.13

和陳監四郎秋雨中思從弟據

嫋嫋秋風動，
淒淒烟雨繁。
聲連鶗鴂觀，
4 色暗鳳凰原。

11.12

Attending a banquet on the Third Day of the Third Month
at Administrative Diligence Hall: by imperial command

His bright-colored standards converge throughout the night;
Carnelian towers join, brushing up against the dawn.

In this season of the third month,

- 4 Palaces and halls are surrounded by blossoms.
Not inferior to the days of the Qin king;
Not different at all from the banquet at the Luo River.¹
On the banquet mats we are annoyed by falling catkins;
- 8 The dancers' sleeves are timid in the spring breeze.
Heaven protects with its power of non-action;
People are delighted by the accomplishments of peace.
He remains at the banquet, overseeing the busy streets,
- 12 Still letting his keen vision penetrate in all directions.

11.13

Harmonizing with Supervisor Chen Silang: “In the autumn rain,
thinking of my cousin Ju”

Gently lingering, the autumn breeze stirs;
Chill and bleak; heavy the murky rain.
Its sound reaches to the Ostrich Watchtower;²
4 Hues darken on Phoenix Plain.³

1 See note to 11.2.6.

2 One of four watchtowers located outside of Sweet Springs Palace in Han times.

3 Near Xinfeng, outside the capital.

細柳踈高閣，
輕槐落洞門。
九衢行欲斷，
8 萬井寂無喧。
忽有愁霖唱，
更陳多露言。
平原思令弟，
12 康樂謝賢昆。
逸興方三接，
衰顏強七奔。
相如今老病，
16 歸守茂陵園。

11.14

和僕射晉公扈從溫湯（時為右補闕）

天子幸新豐，
旌旗渭水東。
寒山天仗裏，
4 溫谷幔城中。

1 Xie Lingyun composed a poem, “Prolonged Rains,” which he sent to his cousin Xie Zhan 瞽. Here a reference to the poem of Chen’s that Wang is matching.

Slender willows are sparse by the high gallery;
 Light sophora leaves fall by the recessed gates.
 Passers-by will soon end on the busy streets;

8 The myriad households are tranquil with no clamor.
 Suddenly your “Prolonged Rains” chant
 Again sets forth much that you have to say.¹
 Lu Ji was longing for Lu Yun, his virtuous younger brother;

12 Xie Lingyun bade farewell to his worthy cousin Xie Zhan.
 Both of you met repeatedly in your lofty moods,
 But with aging features departed for mission after mission.²
 Now Xiangru is old and sick;

16 He is returning home to tend his garden at Maoling.³

11.14

Harmonizing with the Duke of Jin, the Vice-Director⁴:
 “Accompanying the emperor to the warm springs” (Serving as
 Rectifier of the Chancellery at the time)

The Son of Heaven progresses to Xinfeng,
 With banners raised to the east of Wei waters.
 Cold mountains are within the standards of his guards,
 4 The warm springs lie within his tent city.

2 A reference to the Chu minister Zichong who had to rush on seven different diplomatic missions during a war between Chu and Wu. The sense here is that Chen and his cousin are both high-minded scholars (like the Lu brothers and like Xie and his cousin), but now rarely get to meet due to official duties (and possibly due to the disruptions of rebellion).

3 See note to 4.22.14. Wang probably means that Chen is now Xiangru.

4 Li Linfu, in power from the late 730s.

奠玉群仙座，
焚香太一宮。
出游逢牧馬，
8 罷獵有非熊。
上宰無為化，
明時太古同。
靈芝三秀紫，
12 陳粟萬箱紅。
王禮尊儒教，
天兵小戰功。
謀猷歸哲匠，
16 詞賦屬文宗。
司諫方無闕，
陳詩且未工。
長吟吉甫頌，
20 朝夕仰清風。

He makes offerings of jade to the seat of assembled Transcendents;
 He burns incense at the Shrine for Taiyi.¹
 When he goes out for a stroll, he encounters a herd-boy;²

8 He ends the hunt when he possesses something that is not a bear.³
 Our Great Overseers transform through non-action;
 Our enlightened times are the same as high antiquity.
 Numinous polypores thrice flourish their purple;

12 Ten thousand carriage-loads of grain are beginning to rot.⁴
 Royal rituals respect the Confucian teachings;
 The imperial troops hold battle-merit of small account.
 Planning is given to resourceful statesmen;

16 Compositions all belong to literary exemplars.
 Though in charge of remonstrance I can find no errors;
 And I am not skilled enough to present my verse.
 I chant long the hymn of praise by Jifu,⁵

20 And from dawn to dusk I honor his clear breeze.

1 A supreme divinity worshipped in the Western Han; here indicates Xuanzong's rituals carried out at a Daoist shrine. See also note to 7.23.1.

2 *Zhuangzi*, chapter 24: The Yellow Emperor meets a boy herding horses during a stroll, who gives him Daoist-style advice on governing based on his own knowledge of horses.

3 King Wen of the Zhou went out hunting, and a diviner told him he would encounter quarry that was neither dragon nor bear. He then encountered Lü Wang 呂望 and made him one of his ministers.

4 That is, the harvests have been so plentiful the stored grain from previous harvests goes unused and begins to rot.

5 An allusion to *Shijing* 260, “Jifu has composed this poem, / as gentle as a clear wind” (Legge translation).

11.15

和宋中丞夏日遊福賢觀天長寺之作 (即陳左相所施)

已相殷王國，
空餘尚父溪。
釣磯開月殿，
4 築道出雲梯。
積水浮香象，
深山鳴白雞。
虛空陳妓樂，
8 衣服製虹霓。
墨點三千界，
丹飛六一泥。
桃源勿遽返，
12 再訪恐君迷。

1 The Vice-Censor-in-Chief is Song Ruosi 宋若思; the Chancellery Director is Chen Xilie 陳希烈, a minister prominent in politics from the late 740s until 754. He had strong Daoist sympathies. The Abbey is Daoist, and the Monastery Buddhist.

2 Chen Xilie was executed for serving An Lushan – here figured as the Yin King (that is, King Zhou 紂, the evil last ruler of the Shang). However, before that he could have been compared to the early Zhou minister Lü Shang 呂尚. Here his estate is compared to the stream in which Lü Shang famously fished.

3 The Buddhist monastery is compared to a palace for Mahāsthāmaprāpta, a bodhi-sattva in charge of the moon.

11.15

Harmonizing with Vice-Censor-in-Chief Song: “On a summer day, traveling to Fuxian Abbey and Tianshang Monastery” (both established by Chancellery Director Chen)¹

Having already served the Yin King's state as minister,
He only leaves behind him this Lü Shang stream.²

By the fishing jetty a palace of the moon has been established;³

4 From the paved road emerges a cloud ladder.⁴

From a pond's massed water floats a fragrant elephant;

In the deep hills a white cock crows.⁵

In the empty air apsaras play music;⁶

8 For clothing they tailor a rainbow.

Ink spots the chilicosm,⁷

Cinnabar flies from the six-and-one clay.⁸

Do not hurry back to this Peach Blossom spring;⁹

12 If you try to visit again, I fear you will lose your way.

4 This refers to the Daoist abbey. Through the rest of this poem Wang Wei uses parallel couplets to contrast the Buddhist institution with the Daoist one.

5 Gandhahasti, a bodhisattva associated with Maitreya, is portrayed as green with an elephant's trunk. Alternately, there is a jataka in which the Buddha was a fragrant elephant who treated his mother with filiality. White dogs and white chickens are supposed to be particularly auspicious animals for Daoist practitioners to keep.

6 This echoes a passage in the *Lotus Sutra* when apsaras (female spirits of the air and water) perform music to celebrate Śāriputra's attainment of highest enlightenment. This may be the subject of a painting in the monastery.

7 In the *Lotus Sutra*, the Buddha uses the metaphor of someone grinding all the matter in a chilicosm into ink and then dropping one spot of ink once for every thousand countries he passes through to express an infinitely huge number.

8 A substance comprised of seven elements blended together to act as a seal on stoves for refining cinnabar.

9 See note to 2.22a.4.

11.16

沈十四拾遺新竹生讀經處同諸公之作

閒居日清靜，
修竹自檀欒。
嫩節留餘籜，
4 新叢出舊欄。
細枝風響亂，
踈影月光寒。
樂府裁龍笛，
8 漁家伐釣竿。
何如道門裏，
青翠拂仙壇。

11.17

贈東嶽焦鍊師

先生千歲餘，
五岳遍曾居。
遙識齊侯鼎，

11.16

Reminder Shen Fourteen's new bamboo growing at his place for reading sutras: composed with various gentlemen

Living at leisure: things are daily more pure.
 The tall bamboo grows lovely.
 Its tender nodes still hold their culm sheaths;
 4 New thickets emerge from the old railings.
 Thin branches move wildly in the wind's echoes;
 Its sparse shadows are chill in the moonlight.
 The Music Bureau trims them to make their dragon flutes;
 8 Anglers cut them for their fishing rods.
 How do they compare, within the road gate,
 To the green and turquoise that brushes the Transcendent's altars?¹

11.17

Presented to Refined Mistress Jiao of the Eastern Marchmount²

You, mistress, are over a thousand years old
 And have resided on all of the Five Marchmounts.
 You can recognize from remote times the tripod of the Marquis of Qi,³

1 Comparing the bamboo here to ones in a couplet in an Yin Keng 陰鏗 (6th century) poem describing bamboo: “Flanking the pool, a clump of bamboo; green and turquoise are not disturbed by the cold ... they brush up against Transcendent's altars on Mount Heng.”

2 Mount Tai in Shandong. “Refined Mistress Jiao” was Jiao Jingzhen 焦靜真, a prominent Daoist disciple of Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎.

3 The magician Li Shaojun, who claimed to have lived hundreds of years, was able to recognize the provenance of a bronze tripod in the possession of Emperor Wu of the Han.

4 新過王母廬。
不能師孔墨，
何事問長沮。
玉管時來鳳，

8 銅盤即釣魚。
竦身空裏語，
明目夜中書。
自有還丹術，

12 時論太素初。
頻蒙露版詔，
時降軟輪車。
山靜泉逾響，

16 松高枝轉蹤。
支願問樵客，
世上復何如。

4 And have recently visited the cottage of the Queen Mother.
 You cannot take Kong or Mo as your teacher;
 So what business do you have asking Changju?¹
 Your jade pipe summons phoenixes from time to time;²

8 You can angle fish from a copper bowl.³
 Standing tall, you converse in the void;
 With bright vision you can read in the middle of the night.
 Of course you possess the art of recycling cinnabar,

12 And sometimes you discuss the origins of Primal Material.⁴
 You repeatedly accept the emperor's public summons,
 And at times descend in your carriage with muffled wheels.
 The hills are tranquil, so the stream echoes even more;

16 The pines are tall, the branches spread even thinner.
 Resting chin on staff, you ask a woodcutter –
 Can this compare with the human world?

1 Kong, Mo: Confucius and Mozi. *Analects* 18.6: Zilu inquires of the recluses Zhangju 長沮 and Jieni 桀溺 the way to the ford when he and Confucius become lost on a trip. Wang is saying that Jiao (unlike Confucians) *already* knows “the way to the ford.”

2 Xiao Shi 蕭史 was a man during the reign of Duke Mu of Qin. He was adept at playing the pipe. He married a daughter of the duke and taught her how to play. Later, their playing summoned a phoenix, and they constructed a terrace and lived with it for several years. Later they flew off on it and disappeared.

3 A feat demonstrated by Zuo Ci 左慈 of the Eastern Han.

4 The last stage physical objects pass through to come into being.

11.18

贈焦道士

海上游三島，
淮南預八公。
坐知千里外，
4 跳向一壺中。
縮地朝珠闕，
行天使玉童。
飲人聊割酒，
8 送客乍分風。
天老能行氣，
吾師不養空。
謝君徒雀躍，
12 無可問鴻濛。

1 Eight “gentlemen of methods” (*fangshi* 方士) who attended on the Prince of Huainan in Han times.

2 The Master of the Gourd was a Daoist who sold medicine in the marketplace; every night at sunset he would leap inside a gourd and spend the night there.

3 Fei Changfang 費長房 could “shrink the veins of the earth” so that he could travel great distances in a moment. Here, Jiao does the same in order to visit the imperial court.

11.18

Presented to the Daoist Jiao

On the sea you have traveled to the Three Isles;

In Huainan, you preceded the eight masters.¹

Seated, you know all things a thousand li away;

4 You can leap inside a gourd.²

You can shrink the earth so as to pay court at the jeweled watchtowers;³

You can travel to heaven, employ jade lads.

Giving drink to others, you intend to slice the ale;⁴

8 When you see off travelers, you suddenly split the wind.⁵

You, a venerable of Heaven, can circulate your *qi*;

My mistress has no need to live on the Empty.⁶

I defer to you, but you only hop like a bird;

12 There is no way for me to ask Hong Meng.⁷

4 When served ale by Cao Cao, Zuo Ci said he was going to “divide the ale.” He then used his arts to divide the ale within the cup into two parts and drank half of it, offering the rest to Cao.

5 The gods on Mount Lu were said to have the ability to aid or deter travelers, depending on whether they made offerings at their shrine.

6 Alluding to the “Rhapsody on the Owl” of Jia Yi: “he does not treasure himself for the sake of being alive; he drifts, living on the Empty.”

7 *Zhuangzi*, chapter 11: One Daoist sage, Yun Jiang 雲將, attempts to acquire deep philosophical knowledge on how to help the world from another sage, Hong Meng 鴻蒙. However, Hong Meng would only hop about like a sparrow and slap his buttocks.

11.19

投道一師蘭若宿

一公棲太白，
高頂出雲烟。
梵流諸壑遍，
4 花雨一峰偏。
跡為無心隱，
名因立教傳。
鳥來還語法，
8 客去更安禪。
晝涉松路盡，
暮投蘭若邊。
洞房隱深竹，
12 清夜聞遙泉。
向是雲霞裏，
今成枕席前。
豈惟留暫宿，
16 服事將窮年。

11.19

Spending the night at the *aranya* of Master Daoyi¹

Master Daoyi resides on Taibo,
A lofty peak that rises from the clouds and mist.
An Indic current flows through all the valleys,

4 While a rain of flowers occurs only on this peak.
You have hidden your traces for the sake of non-mind,
Though your name is known through your teaching's establishment.
Birds come – you still speak of the Dharma;

8 Guests depart – you continue peaceful meditation.
During the day I arrived at the end of the path in the pines,
And at dusk, took refuge beside this *aranya*.
Secluded chambers are hidden in deep bamboo;

12 I hear a distant stream in the clear night.
What formerly was hidden within the clouds,
Is now accomplished before pillow and mat.
How could I stay here only for a single night?

16 I will be at your service to the end of my years.

1 See note to 7.28.

11.20

山中示弟

山林吾喪我，
 冠帶爾成人。
 莫學嵇康懶，
 4 且安原憲貧。
 山陰多北戶，
 泉水在東鄰。
 緣合妄相有，
 8 性空無所親。
 安知廣成子，
 不是老夫身。

11.21

田家

舊穀行將盡，
 良苗未可希。
 老年方愛粥，
 4 卒歲且無衣。

1 In his “Letter to Shan Juyuan Breaking Off Our Friendship,” Xi Kang writes of being particularly lazy when living as a recluse.

2 A disciple of Confucius who was content in his poverty.

11.20

In the mountains: shown to my little brother

In the mountain forest I have lost my Self,
 While you have reached maturity in the cap and sash of office.
 I don't imitate Xi Kang's laziness;¹

4 For a time I find peace in Yuan Xian's poverty.²
 Many mountain shadows at my northern door;
 The stream water flows by my eastern neighbors.
 When karmic conditions join, the phantasmal *laksana* arise;³
 8 But when one's nature is empty, then one is not linked to anything.
 How do you know that Master Guangcheng
 Hasn't taken the form of this old man's body?⁴

11.21

Farmstead

Last year's grain is almost gone,
 And one cannot hope for the good sprouts to produce yet.
 This old man has grown fond of gruel,
 4 Passing the end of the year without clothes.

³ *Laksana* (*xiang*) are the marks that give an illusion of existence to the phenomena of the world. They continue to be produced in the phenomenal world we experience so long as we continue to produce karma through the consequences of our actions (usually through desire, anger, and ignorance).

⁴ A Daoist Transcendent, first mentioned in chapter 11 of the *Zhuangzi*, where the Yellow Emperor goes to learn from him in his mountain retreat.

雀乳青苔井，
雞鳴白板扉。
柴車駕羸牸，
8 草屬牧豪豨。
夕雨紅榴拆，
新秋綠芋肥。
餉田桑下憩，
12 旁舍草中歸。
住處名愚谷，
何煩問是非。

11.22

過盧員外宅看飯僧共題（七韻）

三賢異七聖，
青眼慕青蓮。
乞飯從香積，
4 裁衣學水田。
上人飛錫杖，
檀越施金錢。
趺坐簷前日，
8 焚香竹下烟。

The sparrows feed their young in the green moss by the well;
 Chickens squawk by the plain plank door.
 The rough cart transports my skinny cows,
 8 And I herd my pigs in straw sandals.
 Evening rain splits the red pomegranates;
 Recent autumn fattens the green taros.
 I bring my food to the fields, rest under a mulberry;
 12 Then leaning on my hut, I return through the grass.
 I name my residence “the Valley of the Fool”;¹
 Why bother to inquire into what’s wrong and right?

11.22

Visiting Vice Director Lu and watching him provide a meal for monks

Though the three initial stages of cultivation may differ from the seven
 last ones,²
 They all look with admiration on the Blue Lotus of the teachings.
 Begging for food, they come for fragrant abundance;
 4 Their robes cut in imitation of paddies.³
 Their Reverends raise their tin begging staffs,
 While the lay patron sets out gold donations.
 They sit cross-legged in the sunlight under the eaves;
 8 Smoke from burning incense wafts under the bamboo.

1 See note to 9.15–9.17.

2 The ten stages in the development of a Bodhisattva.

3 I.e., in a patchwork pattern. Monk’s robes were originally meant to be sewn from cloth scraps, in order to reinforce ascetic principles. See also 12.9.8.

寒空法雲地，
秋色淨居天。
身逐因緣法，
12 心過次第禪。
不須愁日暮，
自有一燈然。

11.23

濟州過趙叟家宴

雖與人境接，
閉門成隱居。
道言莊叟事，
4 儒行魯人餘。
深巷斜暉靜，
閑門高柳踈。
荷鋤修藥圃，
8 散帙曝農書。
上客搖芳翰，
中廚饋野蔬。
夫君第高飲，
12 景晏出林闔。

The chill sky – a place for Dharma clouds;
Autumn hues – the five Higher Heavens.

Though their bodies submit to the law of dependent causation,

12 Their minds surpass the grades of meditation.

No need for them to grieve at sunset;

For they have their own lamp that burns.

11.23

In Jizhou, visiting the Venerable Zhao's house for a banquet¹

Though you have had dealings with the human realm,
You have shut your gate and created a recluse's dwelling.

Daoist speech: the affairs of the venerable Zhuang;

4 Confucian conduct: left over from the man of Lu.

In the deep lanes, the slanting radiance is tranquil;
By the deserted gate the tall willows are sparse.

Shouldering your hoe, you cultivate your plot of herbs;

8 Removing their slip-covers, you air out your farming books.

“Fine guest, ply your fragrant writing brush;

I will serve you rustic produce from my kitchen.

Just drink to your delight, Sir;

12 The evening light is emerging from the village gate.”

1 Composed during the poet's service in Jizhou (in Shandong), 721–726.

11.24

青龍寺曇壁上人兄院集（并序）

吾兄大開蔭中。明徹物外。以定力勝敵。
 以惠用解嚴。深居僧坊。傍俯人里。
 高原陸地。下映芙蓉之池。竹林果園。
 4 中秀菩提之樹。八極氣霽。萬彙塵息。
 太虛寥廓。南山為之端倪。皇州蒼茫。
 渭水貫於天地。經行之後。趺坐而閑。
 升堂梵筵。餌客香飯。不起而游覽。
 8 不風而清涼。得世界於蓮花。記文章於
 貝葉。時江寧大兄持片石命維序之。
 詩五韻。座上成。

高處敞招提，
 虛空詎有倪。
 坐看南陌騎，
 4 下聽秦城雞。
 渺渺孤烟起，
 芊芊遠樹齊。

11.24

A Gathering at the courtyard of His Reverence Brother Tanbi at Blue Dragon Monastery (with preface)¹

My elder brother has completely liberated himself from the *skandha*,² and his vision penetrates beyond worldly things. The power of his *samadhi*³ overcomes opposition, and the uses of his compassion free us from severities. He dwells deep within the monastic community here, though it is set next to a village of men. It is situated on a high plateau, and below it shines a lotus pool. There are bamboo groves and orchards, and in the middle flourishes a Bodhi tree. When the vapors of the furthest directions clear away, and all the dust of the world settles, the sky stretches into boundless depths, bordered on the one side by Zhongnan Mountain. The imperial district seems boundless, and the Wei River passes through the center of Heaven and Earth. After he carries out his walking meditation, he sits in a lotus position at his ease; then he ascends the monastic mat in the main hall and feeds his guests with fragrant rice. Without rising he lets his vision wander; and it is cool here without a breeze. He finds the world within a lotus flower and records his compositions on patta leaves. At this time, my elder brother from Jiangning produced a flat piece of stone and requested me to compose a preface for it, and a poem in five rhymes. I composed it while still sitting.

In a lofty place the temple lies open,
Without a limit, in the void of sky.
We sit and watch horsemen on the lanes to the south,
4 And hear below us the roosters from Qin towns.
In the vastness a single line of smoke rises;
Luxuriant growth – distant trees stand even.

1 The use of “brother” here is not a religious term, but suggests that Tanbi was related to Wang in some way.

2 See note to 3.1.6.

3 Calming meditation.

青山萬井外，
8 落日五陵西。
眼界今無染，
心空安可迷。

11.24a

王昌齡：同王維集青龍寺曇壁上人兄院
五韻

本來清淨所，
竹樹引幽陰。
簷外含山翠，
4 人間出世心。
圓通無有象，
聖境不能侵。
真是吾兄法，
8 何妨友弟深。
天香自然會，
靈異識鐘音。

Green mountains beyond a myriad towns;
8 Setting sun to the west of the Five Barrows.¹
The realm of the eye today has no impurity;
When the mind is empty, how can it go astray?

11.24a

Wang Changling: Matching Wang Wei's "Gathering at Blue Dragon Monastery, at the courtyard of His Reverence Brother Tanbi: five rhymes"

This has always been a clear and clean place;
The bamboo and trees draw hidden shade.
Below the eaves the mountain's green is stored;
4 And a worldly mind leaves the human realm.
There is no visible manifestation of perfect penetration;
The realm of the Buddha cannot be violated.
This truly is the Dharma of our elder brother,
8 Which offers no obstructions to the profound understanding of
disciples.
Deva incense naturally collects in this place,
And I make out the sound of bells midst these numinous wonders.

1 See note to 6.6.4.

11.24b

王縉：同王昌齡裴迪游青龍寺曇壁上人院集和兄維

林中空寂舍，
階下終南山。
高臥一牀上，
4 迴看六合間。
浮雲幾處滅，
飛鳥何時還。
問義天人接，
8 無心世界閑。
誰知大隱客，
兄弟自追攀。

11.24c

裴迪：青龍寺曇壁上人院集

靈境信為絕，
法堂出塵氛。
自然成高致，
4 向下看浮雲。

11.24b

Wang Jin: With Wang Changling and Pei Di, I traveled to a gathering at the courtyard of His Reverence Brother Tanbi at Blue Dragon Monastery: harmonizing with my brother Wei

In the forest, an empty, quiet lodge;
At the foot of its steps, Zhongnan Mountain.
He lies high up on his single couch,
4 Turns to see the Six Directions together.
Floating clouds in several places vanish;
When will the flying birds return?
Inquiring after principles, gods and men join together;
8 When there is No Mind, the world is calm.
Who knows of this great hermit?
Brothers have come in to seek him out.

11.24c

Pei Di: A gathering at the courtyard of His Reverence Tanbi at Blue Dragon Monastery

A numinous realm truly is cut off,
The Dharma hall emerges from the dust and fog.
Naturally it creates a lofty flavor,
4 From here looking down one sees floating clouds.

逶迤峰岫列，
參差閣井分。
林端遠堞見，
8 風末疎鐘聞。
吾師久禪寂，
在世超人羣。

Weaving away are peaks and mountains in their ranks;
Unevenly are divided the lanes and wells.
At the edge of the wood one sees distant ramparts;
8 As the wind dies down, sparse bells are heard.
Our teacher long has meditated on silence.
In this world he surpasses the common crowd.