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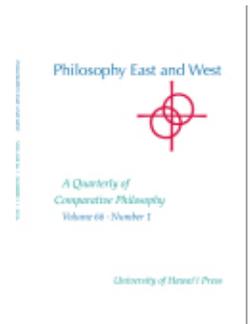
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LI YU'S THEORY OF DRAMA: A MODERATE MORALISM



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Chinese drama was developed in the thirteenth century, but its roots can be traced back to *music* (*yue* 乐), one of the *six arts* (*liuyi* 六艺), the main subjects in the Confucian curriculum. *Yue* is not only a synthesis of instrumental music, song, poetry, and dance as aspects of the fine arts, but also a method to promote moral education. In Confucianism, moral implications trump all other considerations in the discussion and evaluation of *yue*. This is what makes Confucianism the radical moralism that dominated Chinese aesthetics before the Han dynasty. But Confucian moralism was attacked by Ji Kang 嵇康 (223–262), a great scholar, musician, and Daoist philosopher who argued for the radical autonomism of music in his essay “On the Absence of Sadness and Pleasure in Music” (*Sheng wu aile lun* 声无哀乐论). Ji Kang’s Daoist autonomism is the antithesis of Confucian moralism. When Chinese drama was developed in the thirteenth century, most dramatists defended its moralism. But Li Yu 李渔 (1611–1680) is an exception. Nevertheless, Li Yu did not argue for the autonomy of drama. Instead, he managed to combine Confucian moralism and Daoist autonomism and argued for a moderate moralism in drama. In the present essay, I will give an account of Confucian moralism and Daoist autonomism first, and then focus on Li Yu’s moderate moralism. I will not be tempted to analyze and retell the stories, but will instead limit my research to the theory of drama.

A Confucian Radical Moralism

Yue is not only instrumental music and song but the performing arts that include instrumental music, song, poetry, and dance, and can be identified as the initial form of Chinese drama.¹ *Yue* can function as both recreation and moral education. These two functions can be both in tension and collaborative. Confucianism values *yue* as an indispensable tool for moral education, while Mohism attacks it for its grand waste. The dispute between Mozi, the founder of Mohism, and Xunzi, one of the representatives of Confucianism during the pre-Qin period, is remarkable. David Cooper includes them in his anthology on aesthetics and makes an interesting comparison between them and the dispute between Plato and Aristotle. Cooper writes:

Their dispute has an echo of one between Plato and Aristotle. The pleasures of music for Mo Tzu, like those of most poetry for Plato, are too trivial to engage the attention of responsible people and a dangerous distraction from the stern demand of civic life. As Aristotle did in the case of drama, Hsun Tzu emphasizes the beneficial impact that music can have upon emotions and, thereby, upon the conduct of our lives.²

Cooper's comparison might inspire us to compare *yue* in ancient China with tragedy in ancient Greece. But there are some problems in Cooper's analogy. First, Cooper's comparison might mislead us into thinking that Mozi's rejection of *yue* is earlier than the Confucian advocacy of it, assuming that Xunzi belongs to a later generation, and his essay "A Discussion of *Yue*" is a direct response to Mozi's "Against *Yue*." But, Xunzi's arguments are not totally original. Actually they come from a Confucian tradition that is itself the target of Mozi's attack. The Confucian appreciation of *yue* that is summarized by Xunzi in this essay should be taken both chronologically and logically as the thesis in the dialectic, while Mozi's rejection of *yue* is the antithesis. Second, the difference between Plato and Aristotle is not as profound as the conflict between Mozi and Xunzi. Mozi's "Against *Yue*" is a straightforward critique of the Confucian support for *yue*, while Xunzi's "A Discussion of *Yue*" is a refutation of Mozi's assertions. This critique and refutation cannot be found in the case of the dispute between Plato and Aristotle. Confucianism and Mohism are not different generations of the same school. They belong to totally different schools and contradict each other in many other aspects as well.

However, regardless of their contradictions, both the Mohist and the Confucian aesthetics of *yue* are radical moralisms. *Yue* is only evaluated morally in both cases. Mozi's case is somewhat complicated. He asserts that making *yue* is wrong not because of its defects; indeed, he allows that *yue* is delightful and enjoyable:

Mozi condemns *yue* not because the sound of the great bells and rolling drums, the zithers and pipes, is not delightful; not because the sight of the carvings and ornaments is not beautiful; not because the taste of the fried and broiled meats is not delicious; and not because lofty towers, broad pavilions, and secluded halls are not comfortable to live in. But though the body finds comfort, the mouth gratification, the eye pleasure, and the ear delight, yet if we examine the matter, we will find that such things are not in accordance with the ways of the sage kings, and if we consider welfare of the world we will find that they bring no benefit to the common people.³

According to Mozi, "the three great worries of the people" are "that when they are hungry they will have no food, when they are cold they will have no clothing, and when they are weary they will have no rest."⁴ *Yue* does nothing to relieve these worries but in fact only aggravates them. Mozi continues:

Now there are great states that attack small ones, and great families that molest small ones. The strong oppress the weak, the many tyrannize the few, the cunning deceive the stupid, the eminent lord it over the humble, and bandits and thieves rise up on all sides and cannot be suppressed. Now let us try sounding the great bells, striking the rolling drums, strumming the zithers, blowing the pipes, and waving the shields and axes in the war dance. Does this do anything to rescue the world from chaos and restore it to order? I hardly think so. Therefore Mozi said: If you try to promote what is beneficial to the world and eliminate what is harmful by laying heavy taxes on the people for the purpose of making bells, drums, zithers, and pipes, you will get nowhere. So Mozi said: Making music is wrong!⁵

Mozi's rejection of *yue* is based totally on moral considerations. There are indeed some similarities between Mozi's opposition to *yue* and Plato's censorship of

the arts. But they are also different in many respects. Mozi never criticizes *yue* itself. He does not divide *yue* into the good and the bad, the moral and the immoral. *Yue* should be totally abolished due to its wasting of human resources, even if *yue* itself is enjoyable and harmless. For Plato, some music is harmful because it nourishes emotions that in turn threaten the listener's character. Painting and drama are harmful since they create illusions and deceive the people. In a word, Plato expels artists because of the defects in their work, while Mozi rejects the making of *yue* due to its waste of resources.

Confucianism is different from Mohist asceticism, but it is not hedonism either. Confucianism allows for appropriate pleasure. First, pleasure itself should be regularized and under control; second, its sources and causes should be proper and justified; third, its results should contribute to moral education. Recreation includes pleasures that are both appropriate and inappropriate. Inappropriate pleasure offends against moral education. Pursuing excessive pleasure threatens personal health and social stability. Pleasure that is the outcome of injustice makes others suffer pain and eventuates in social struggle. Confucianism treats pleasure discriminately. Only appropriate pleasure can be recognized since it serves as a catalyst for moral education. Confucius said: "They who know the truth are not equal to those who love it, and they who love it are not equal to those who delight in it."⁶ Delight and enjoyment are superior to mere knowledge and love.

The primary goal of *yue* is to entertain people. When *yue* is carefully applied as an instrument for moral education, it can be more effective than exhortations. Xunzi says:

Yue is joy, an emotion which man cannot help but feel at times. Since man cannot help feeling joy, his joy must find an outlet in voice and an experience in movement. The outcries and movements, and the inner emotional changes which occasion them, must be given full expression in accordance with the way of man. Man must have his joy, and joy must have its expression, but if that expression is not guided by the principles of the Way, then it inevitably becomes disordered. The former kings hated such disorder, and therefore they created the *yue*'s forms of the odes and hymns in order to guide it. In this way they made certain that the voice would fully express the feelings of joy without becoming wild and abandoned; that the form would be well ordered but not unduly restrictive; that the directness, complexity, intensity, and tempo of the *yue*'s performance would be of the proper degree to arouse the best in man's nature, and that evil and improper sentiments would find no opening to enter by. It was on this basis that the former kings created their *yue*. And Mozi criticizes it. Why?⁷

Xunzi's basic arguments for *yue* are: first, pursuing joy or pleasure is the human being's natural inclination and should be satisfied; second, this natural human inclination should be guided by the principles of the Way, otherwise it will become a source of disorder; third, the former kings who created their *yue* aimed at both expressing the emotion of joy and educating their people on the principles that are crucial for a harmonious society. Furthermore, Xunzi extended emotions from joy to anger, despair, sorrow, resentment, pain, sadness, anxiety, and so on that are designated as natural emotions (*tianqing* 天情). All natural emotions demand expression. When the expression-performance is guided by the principles and properly

regulated, it can be called *yue* or refinement (*wen* 文).⁸ *Yue* can transform anger, despair, sorrow, resentment, pain, sadness, anxiety, and so on into joy through a regulated expression-performance. Now we have two kinds of joy identified in the *Xunzi*. One is that which is expressive of the natural emotions, such as anger, pain, sadness, anxiety, and so on; the other is a second-order pleasure based on its appropriate expression. It is pleasure because on the one hand it satisfies the need to express our natural emotions, and on the other it embodies principles and is regulated in such a way as to transform all emotions into joy.

There are many reasons for the Confucian valuing of *yue*, but two are preeminent. First is its epistemological function. Through interpreting *yue*, those in authority can experience the natural emotions of the people and get a clear understanding of their society, since the natural emotions of the people are a reflection of their social lives. Based on this understanding, those in power can enact appropriate laws and regulations for improving their society. Second is its educational function. *Yue* can teach people the principles of proper order and the way to express their emotions appropriately, a process through which their natural emotions can be refined and purified from barbarism to civilization. Both epistemological and educational functions are based on moral considerations.

In short, Confucianism and Mohism, despite their opposition, are radical moralisms in their evaluation of *yue* and the arts because such evaluation is based purely on moral considerations.

The Daoist Aesthetics of Radical Autonomism

Daoism stands in opposition to both Confucianism and Mohism. Both Confucian and Mohist aesthetics constitute radical moralisms, while the Daoist argues for a radical autonomism of the aesthetic. Radical autonomism in aesthetics "is the view that art is a strictly autonomous realm of practice. It is distinct from other social realms which pursue cognitive, political or moral value. On this account, because art is distinct from other realms of social value, it is inappropriate or even incoherent to assess artworks in terms of their consequences for cognition, morality and politics."⁹

Zhuangzi, one of the representatives of Daoism who is an opponent of both Mozi and Mengzi, the latter a representative of Confucianism, did not argue a radical autonomism for aesthetics.¹⁰ But his ontological discrimination or ontology of diversity is indispensable for the evolution of a radical autonomism. One important aspect of Zhuangzi's wisdom exists in treating things and moments independently and separately. All things under the heavens are equal, due not to their similarity but to their incomparability. Small cicadas are on a par with the great peng bird, not because the small and the big are the same but in the sense that, because the small is small and the big is big, both are independent and disparate. By the same token, dreaming and awake, life and death, and this moment and that moment are equal in that they are separate moments.¹¹ If this interpretation is correct, Zhuangzi's philosophy of diversity and isolation should be very different from the correlative cosmology that is taken by some sinologists as the distinctive feature of Chinese thought.¹²

In the third century, a neo-Daoism developed in scholarly circles. Ji Kang, one of the leading thinkers of these neo-Daoists, articulates a version of radical autonomism for *yue*. *Yue* in Ji Kang's time does not reference the synthesis of music, song, poetry, and dance, but music itself, including song and instrumental music. Nonetheless, it is relevant to our discussion of drama. Chinese drama is different from modern drama and perhaps closer to opera, in which music plays an important role. To understand Chinese drama one needs to understand music first. Tina Lu writes:

In general, recycling was the norm in drama; some sort of precedent can be found for nearly every play of the period, suggesting that the purpose of dramas was less the denouement of plot than the expression of feeling. A reader immersed in traditional narrative would have been able to guess how a play would end; one read or attended *Mistress and Maid* not to find out that the beautiful and sensitive Jiaoniang was doomed to die and never to marry her cousin Shen Chun, but to be moved again by the songs in which each expressed the emotions of first flirtation and then tragic love.¹³

Taste in music changed rapidly in Ji Kang's time. Sadness (*bei* 悲) was considered the primary value in music.¹⁴ This new tendency contradicts the adage "yue is joy" or "music is pleasure" (*yue zhe le ye* 乐者乐也) that prevailed before Han dynasty. Ruan Ji 阮籍 (210–263), Ji Kang's contemporary, criticized this new tendency in his "On Music" (*yue lun* 乐论) in order to defend this earlier association with pleasure, while Ji Kang embraced the new understanding of music as sadness and made a series of profound arguments on its behalf.

Ji Kang did not simply announce that "music is sad." Instead, he disassociated music from pleasure, sadness, and any emotion whatsoever. Ontologically speaking, music is a sequence of sounds. We can say music is good or bad, but we cannot say music is sadness or joy. Ji Kang's argument here is very similar to the ontological argument for autonomism in aesthetics. Noël Carroll formulates the argument this way:

1. If artworks can be evaluated morally, then they must be the kinds of things that can bear moral properties, viz., persons or person-like entities to whom the relevant mental properties apply.
2. Artworks are not the kinds of things that can bear moral properties; they are not persons or person-like entities to whom the relevant mental properties apply.
3. Therefore, artworks cannot be evaluated morally.¹⁵

For Ji Kang, music is not the kind of thing that can bear emotional properties. To call music sad or joyful is a category mistake.¹⁶

But, music does have strong affective power. Nobody can deny that listeners are moved by music. Ji Kang did not deny this either. But he argued that music only releases the emotions that are already present in the listener. Music itself does not have emotions. Listeners do not receive emotions from music. The fact is that music triggers the emotions that already exist in the listener's heart. Therefore, even if a listener is moved by music, it does not mean that the music has emotions. Ji Kang took wine as an example:

The heart affected by harmonious music resembles wine in stirring up a person's emotions. Wine can be sweet or bitter, while the drinker may become happy or angry. One cannot say that wine contains the emotions of delight or anger, even though drinking can make people happy or angry. By the same token, one cannot claim that music contains the emotions of sadness or joy, even though hearing it can make people feel delight or sorrow.¹⁷

Ji Kang's arguments are somewhat complicated and ambiguous. But his main point is that music and mind are different kinds of thing, one external and the other internal. Music is not a thing that bears emotional properties, nor can it instill emotions into listeners or express the emotions of a musician.¹⁸ When the relation between music and emotion is broken, music is then free to trigger any emotion, whether it be pleasure or sadness. People enjoy sad music, not because the music is sad, but because their hearts are sad.

Ji Kang's theory of music is one of extreme autonomism. What it separates from music is not only the moral, political, and cognitive considerations but also the emotions that are normally taken to be the core of the aesthetic response.

Storytelling, Fiction, and Moderate Autonomism

The origins of Chinese drama can certainly be traced back to *yue* or music, but its more affinitive genres are storytelling and fiction. Storytelling is an oral performance with a long history in China. Since the Song dynasty, storytelling has been an important part of urban culture.¹⁹ The relationship between storytelling, the short story, the novel, and drama is quite intricate. In the later Ming dynasty, a kind of ecological system of narrative for both drama and fiction emerges. As Tina Lu points out, "they share the same pool of source material, a shared stratum of narrative."²⁰ Everyone in the ecosystem makes her contributions to the narratives. Writer, commentator, editor, and even reader enjoy considerable freedom to interpret and even replenish the texts.²¹

But what is the real purpose of the fiction writer? The folk storyteller is ranked far lower than the elite literati. But the fiction writer is different from the folk storyteller. The latter is illiterate, while the former has received a good education in the classics. Practicing the skill of writing poetry and classical prose can help a person pass the civil service examination, the only route for most persons to become officials and to become rich and honored in feudal China. Fiction and drama are not socially redeeming works. Engaging in producing them has nothing to do with the examination system, and, to make matters even worse, it means that the author no longer has any ambition and is willing to descend socially. The reason that a person would give up the examination route and turn to the writing of fiction is indeed complicated and varies from person to person. But making a profit would be a reasonable one. The main way for writers to earn a living is through entertainment, an opening that is rare for those specializing in the Confucian classics.

The readers of fiction are diverse. They could be Confucian scholars and successful merchants. Since Chinese is a language with a long history and so full of meta-

phorical meaning, there is space in fiction large enough to accommodate different interpretations. This is the reason why commentaries are published along with fiction. Like modern art critics, commentators try to discover the deep meaning of the text that is hidden from ordinary readers. In short, there are two levels of meaning: one for entertainment, the other for moral edification. Some readers are satisfied with the former, while others search for the latter. As Tina Lu writes:

How should we understand the persistent efforts by commentators to intervene in and shape the way readers encounter the fictional text? According to one scholarly interpretation, these commentaries point to deep-seated anxieties about status that can only be understood in the context of social change in the late Ming. Everyone, elite and merchant, might be able to buy the same book and even to read it, but only some who would be able truly to understand it; without commentary, a reader might understand a novel only on the most superficial level. The early Qing critic Liu Tingji neatly encapsulated this perspective when he wrote: "Those who read *The Plum in the Golden Vase* and learned to pity were bodhisattvas; those who read and wanted to imitate were beasts."²²

But in the later Ming dynasty, society is so open and multilayered that there is no pressure on beasts to become bodhisattvas. Both beasts and bodhisattvas can co-exist, with each minding its own business. The function of fiction to entertain and to provide moral education can be separated.

This attitude toward fiction is close to a moderate aesthetic autonomism that allows for moral evaluation while maintaining that aesthetic value is independent, and is thus different from both radical autonomism and radical moralism. Noël Carroll writes:

A given artwork may legitimately traffic in aesthetic, moral, cognitive and political value. But these various levels are independent or autonomous. An artwork may be aesthetically valuable and morally defective, or vice versa. But these different levels of value do not mix, so to speak. An aesthetically defective artwork is not bad because it is morally defective and that provides a large part of the story about why a work can be aesthetically valuable, but evil. Let us call this view moderate autonomism because, though it allows that the moral discussion and evaluation of artworks, or at least some artworks, is coherent and appropriate, it remains committed to the view that the aesthetic dimension of the artwork is autonomous from other dimensions, such as the moral dimension.²³

The separate and independent reactions to fiction satisfy the basic demands of moderate autonomism.

Li Yu's Theory of Drama and Moderate Moralism

But drama is different from fiction. Fiction can be read by readers individually, while drama is performed for audiences to appreciate together as a group. Li Yu was well aware of the ontological difference between drama as the art of performance and literature as the art of writing. "Drama is written solely for enactment" (*Tianci zhi she, zhuan wei dengchang* 填词之设，专为登场).²⁴ Scholars who specialized in drama criticism, such as Jin Shengtian 金圣叹 (1608–1661), did not have this awareness.

Li Yu expressed admiration for Jin's talent in drama interpretation, but he was disappointed at Jin's ignorance of the ontological difference between drama and literature:

圣叹所评，乃文人把玩之《西厢》，非优人搬弄之《西厢》也。文字之三昧，圣叹已得之；优人搬弄之《西厢》，圣叹犹有待焉。

What Jin Shengtan comments upon is the *Western Chamber* read and enjoyed by literati, not the *Western Chamber* enacted by actors and actresses. Shengtan grasped its literary *samadhi*, but he did not yet understand it as a drama played by actors and actresses.²⁵

The ontological difference between drama and literature, according to Li Yu, inevitably results in a different kind of appreciation:

总之，传奇不比文章，文章做与读书人看，故不怪其深，戏文做与读书人与不读书人同看，又与不读书人之妇人小儿同看，故贵浅不贵深。

In short, drama is different from prose. Prose is written for literati to read by themselves, and so it certainly has its profundity; but drama is made for literati and illiterates alike to watch together and for women and children who are unable to read to watch together, and so it is a kind of thinness rather than profundity that is preferred.²⁶

A similar reaction from his audiences was expected by Li Yu, whether they were rich or poor, literate or illiterate, highbrow or lowbrow, male or female. He enjoyed animated responses from all audiences, where people could be moved to cry, laugh, get angry, feel afraid, and react with thunderous applause.²⁷ At the end of his drama *The Mistake with the Kite* (*Fengzheng wu* 风筝误), he wrote a poem to summarize his hedonistic view of drama:

传奇原为消愁设，费尽杖头歌一阕；
何事将钱买哭声？反令变喜成悲咽。
惟我填词不卖愁，一夫不笑是吾忧；
举世尽成弥勒佛，度人秃笔始堪投。

Drama was originally established for entertainment,
and people spend their money for a song.
Why do people spend their coins to buy a sob
and to turn their joy into sadness?
My lyrics alone are not for sorrow,
and I get upset if there is a single person who doesn't laugh.
Only when all human beings become the happiest Maitreya
can I give up my writing, which aims at rescuing people from their grief.²⁸

Drama is not for contemplation but for fun. All audiences should be entertained and treated equally. Through entertainment, people can be brought together and united. This same recognition of the function of art can be found in Leo Tolstoy's *What is Art?* "Art, all art, has in itself the property of uniting people. All art causes those who perceive the feeling conveyed by the artist to unite in the soul, first with the artist, and secondly with all who have received the same impression."²⁹ Li Yu expected a great response from his audience. Everyone could be infected by and delight in the happy atmosphere created by his drama. Here both Li Yu and Tolstoy emphasize the infectious power rather than the moral content of art. "The stronger the infection, the

better the art is as art, regardless of its content—that is, independently of the worth of the feelings it conveys.”³⁰ This is one of the reasons why I argue moderate moralism for Li Yu’s theory of drama. I shall return to this point later.

Drama means comedy, at least in Li Yu’s view—a perspective that is very different from the Western concept of drama in which tragedy is taken as representative. Li Yu believed he had a talent for comedy. He was confident in his ability to match old masters such as Tang Xianzu 汤显祖 (1550–1616).³¹ He once proudly wrote to a friend:

渔自解觅梨枣以来，谬以作者自许。鸿文大篇，非吾敢道；若诗歌词曲以及俚官野史，则实有微长。不效美妇一颦，不拾名流一唾，当世耳目，为我一新。使数十年来，无一湖上笠翁，不知为世人减几许谈锋，增多少瞌睡。

Since I looked for publishers, I counted myself a writer. Although I wouldn’t dare to claim any major contribution, still, what I write, ranging from poetry and drama to fiction, does have one small merit. I never need to “knit my brow” in imitation of great beauty or “pick up the spittle” of famous men. Thanks to my writings, the eyes and ears of the contemporary world have been completely refreshed. Had there had not been a person like me over these last few decades, I wonder how much less people would have chattered, and how many more naps they would have taken?³²

Li Yu was born and grew up during the late Ming dynasty, when hedonism and the aestheticization of the everyday prevailed among scholars. This zeitgeist fostered his humorous personality. At the age of twenty-four he easily passed the civil service examination at the county level, but he did not seem to treat this accomplishment seriously. He failed in the provincial examination twice and then totally abandoned it by the age of thirty-three, when the Ming dynasty was replaced by the Qing. Li Yu decided to be a professional writer—someone who writes for a living. And he enjoyed his writing very much. In *Casual Expressions of Idle Feeling*, he listed several therapeutic methods or “medicines.” For him, various kinds of enjoyment can serve as medicine. One among them is ordinary enjoyment (*suchang lewei zhi yao* 素常乐为之药).³³ Different people have different experiences of ordinary enjoyment. Some indulge in poetry or music, while others are addicted to drink or playing chess. Li Yu confessed that his ordinary enjoyment is writing, especially fictional stories and drama. He took writing as a medicine to cure himself. Writing can function as medicine not due to its chemical properties, but because of its capacity for distraction. Li Yu wrote:

予生无他癖，惟好著书，忧藉以消，怒藉以释，牢骚不平之气藉以铲除。因思诸疾之萌蘖，无不始于七情，我有治情理性之药，彼乌能崇我哉！故于伏枕呻吟之初，即作开卷第一义，能起能坐，则落毫端，不则但存腹稿。迨沉疴将起之日，即新编告竣之时。一生剗剗，孰使为之？强半出造化小儿之手。此我辈文人之药，“止堪自怡悦，不堪持赠君”者。而天下之人，莫不有乐为之一事，或耽诗癖酒，或慕乐嗜棋，听其我为，莫加禁止，亦是调理病人之一法。总之御疾之道，贵在能忘；切切在心，则我为疾用，而死生听之矣。知其力乏，而故授之以事，非扰之使困，乃迫之使忘也。

I have never known any other obsession than writing, an activity through which all my sorrows are allayed, my anger dispelled, and my feelings of discontent and injustice

eradicated. I consider that all illnesses stem from the emotions, and therefore, if I have a medicine to control the emotions, there is no way illness can bedevil me! Hence, at the onset of an illness, while moaning and groaning in bed, I come up with the idea for the beginning. If I am able to get up, I set down the details, but otherwise I keep the draft in my mind, awaiting the day that I begin to throw off my illness, which is the day the new work gets finished. Who made me write all the works I have published throughout my career? Most of them came to me from the hand of the imp who controls our fortunes. Therefore, writing is the medicine of our literati. But "it can only satisfy one's own needs and cannot be presented to others." However, all human beings under the heavens have their own obsessions. Some are addicted to poetry or drink, others indulge in music or playing chess. If we do as we please without prohibitions, that would be one way of therapy. In short, the effective way of controlling an illness is to be able to forget it. If it occupies my mind, that means it is controlling me, and my life and death are at its disposal. I know I would be weak when I am sick, but I am intentionally engaged in what enjoy. The aim is not to disturb and confound me, but to force me to forget the illness.³⁴

Writing drama not only enables one to forget an illness, but also elevates one into an imaginary ecstasy:

文字之最豪宕，最风雅，作之最健人心脾者，莫过于填词一种。若无此种，几于闷杀才人，困死豪杰。予生忧患之中，处落魄之境，自幼至长，自长至老，总无一刻舒眉，惟于制曲填词之顷，非但郁藉以舒，愠为之解，且尝僭作两间最乐之人，觉富贵荣华，其受用不过如此，未有真境之为所欲为，能出幻境纵横之上者：我欲做官，则顷刻之间便臻荣贵；我欲致仕，则转盼之际又入山林；我欲作人间才子，即为杜甫、李白之后身；我欲娶绝代佳人，即作王嫱、西施之原配；我欲成仙作佛，则西天蓬岛即在砚池笔架之前；我欲尽孝输忠，则君治亲年，可跻尧、舜、彭钱之上。

Among genres of literature, drama is the boldest and most graceful, and one's health can be improved through writing it. If this genre did not exist, men of talent and heroic action would die of frustration. I was born amid disaster, and have lived a life of poverty; from childhood to maturity, from maturity to old age, I have scarcely known a moment of success. When writing plays, however, I not only gain relief from my depression and resentment, I can lay claim to the title of the happiest man between Heaven and Earth. I feel that all the joys of rank, riches, and glory are no greater than mine. If one cannot fulfill one's desires in real life, one can produce an imaginary realm in which to do exactly as one wishes. If I want to be an official, then in a flash I attain honor and rank. If I want to be a scholar, then in the twinkling of an eye I am among the mountains and forests. If I want to be a genius among men, then I become the incarnation of Du Fu or Li Bai. If I want to marry a great beauty, then Wang Qiang or Xi Shi becomes my first wife. If I want to be the immortal or Buddha, then the West Heaven or Penglai Island emerges in front of my inkstone and brushholder. If I want to be dutiful and loyal, then the emperor governs well and parents live a long life, and they can be superior to Yao, Shun, and Peng Jian.³⁵

Writing drama provides great freedom. Its fictional world can help its writer to satisfy her desires imaginatively. Drama can fulfill those aspirations that cannot be reached in one's real life. This view is somewhat similar to the Freudian association between the poet and daydreaming. According to Freud, "happy people never make phantasies, only unsatisfied ones. Unsatisfied wishes are the driving power behind phantasies; every separate phantasy contains the fulfilment of a wish, and improves on

unsatisfactory reality.”³⁶ Creative works are similar to daydreaming in that they both are the fulfillment of unsatisfied wishes. Freud admitted, “We do not in any way fail to recognize that many imaginative productions have travelled far from the original naïve day-dream, but I cannot suppress the surmise that even the most extreme variations could be brought into relationship with this model by an uninterrupted series of transitions.”³⁷ The unsatisfied wishes in Li Yu’s real life became the driving force behind his playwriting.

Li Yu’s dramas satisfied not only his own desires but also the wishes of his audiences. The dramas often “made audiences laugh or cry, bristle with outrage, or virtually die of fright” (能使人哭，能使人笑，能使人怒发冲冠，能使人惊魂欲绝).³⁸ His contemporaries were so eager to get his plays that he did not even have time to polish them before they were printed and staged. He confessed:

凡作传奇，当于开笔之初，以至脱稿之后，隔日一删，逾月一改，始能淘沙得金，无暇瑜互见之失矣。此说予能言之不能行之者，则人与我中分其咎。予终岁饥驱，杜门日少，每有所作，率多草草成篇，章名急就，非不欲删，非不欲改，无可删可改之时也。每成一剧，才落毫端，即为坊人攫去，下半犹未脱稿，上半业已灾梨；非止灾梨，彼伶工之捷足者，又复灾其肺肠，灾其唇舌，遂使一成不改，终为锢疾难医。予非不务洁净，天实使之，谓之何哉？

When one writes a drama, he should edit it daily and undertake a major revision every month, both in the beginning and after finishing the draft. Only after such a process can the play reach its perfection. However, while I can offer this advice, I cannot practice it, a fault that I share with others. I spend the whole year on “hunger migrations” and rarely seclude myself to write. When I finish something, most often it is roughly written—a rush job. It is not that I don’t want to edit or revise the manuscript, but just that I haven’t the time. When I finish a play, no sooner have I added the last detail than the publisher snatches it from me. The first half is in press before the second is even complete. And that’s not all—the nimbler actors have already engraved it in their hearts and on their tongues; it never gets revised, and so suffers forever from an incurable disease. It is not that I don’t strive for verbal economy, but the fact is that Heaven thwarts me at every turn. What can I say?³⁹

Li Yu was “a best-selling author in his own time.”⁴⁰ He needed not only time to revise his works but also the energy to fight with those who would pirate it. He once wrote to a friend:

弟之移家秣陵也，只因拙刻作祟，翻版者多，故违安土重迁之戒，以作移民就食之图。不意新刻甫出，吴门贪贾，即萌覬觐之心。幸弟风闻最早，力恳苏松道孙公，出示静止，始寢其谋。乃吴门之议才熄，而家报倏至，谓杭人翻刻已竣，指日有新书出贸矣。弟以他事滞金阊，不获亲往问罪，只命小婿谒当事，求正厥辜。虽蒙稍愆贪恶，现在追板，尚未知后续如何？噫！蝇头之利几何，而此辈趋之若鹜。似此东荡西除，南征北讨，何年是寢戈偃甲时？

My family moved from Hangzhou to Nanjing because of the harassment of literary pirates. Thus I violated the precept that a person should not leave his hometown and move to another place in order to survive. To my surprise, my new work had only just appeared when the greedy merchants of Suzhou began to appropriate it. Fortunately, I got wind of their plans ahead of time and pleaded as strongly as I could with His Honor Sun, the

Suzhou-Songjiang Intendant, that he post a notice ordering them to cease and desist. That put a stop to their scheme, but no sooner had the Suzhou plot been snuffed out than I suddenly got a message from home to the effect that a Hangzhou publisher had finished reprinting the book and was going to put it on sale in a few days time. I was detained in Suzhou on other business and could not get back to accuse them, and so I told my son-in-law to visit the authorities and seek redress for this crime. Although these pirates have received little punishment for their greed, and although the printing blocks are now being sought, I still don't know what the outcome will be. Alas! How much is such a petty profit worth that these people rush after it like ducks to water? I have been fighting with pirates like this from east to west, north to south. When will it end?⁴¹

Li Yu's great success as a playwright was due to the genius of his natural humor and wit (*jiqu* 机趣) and in his unique concept of drama. He admitted that the genius of wit cannot be taught. Wit is the "semen of drama":

予又谓填词种子，要在性中带来，性中无此，做杀不佳。

I said that the semen of drama should come from one's nature. If one doesn't have it in his nature, no matter how hard he works on it he cannot write a good play.⁴²

But a unique concept of drama is even more important. Li Yu was different from both the old masters and his contemporaries in many respects. First, he preferred fiction to music, in contrast to the common view that prefers music to storytelling.⁴³ Although he was aware of the ontological difference between drama and fiction, as both playwright and novelist he emphasized the role of fiction in a play. In order to enhance the narrative function of drama, he increased the amount of dialogue in his plays. In short, according to Li Yu, a new and vagarious plot is the most important element for drama. What I should mention here is that he was aware of the ontological difference between the fictional and the actual. The fictional wasn't seen as the representation of the actual:⁴⁴ "Drama is not realistic but fabulous" (传奇无实，大半皆寓言耳).⁴⁵ He was very cautious with respect to any association between the fictional and the actual and swore never to hint obliquely at actual people in his plays:

予向梓传奇，尝埒誓词于首，其略云：加生且以美名，原非市恩于有托；抹净丑以花面，亦属调笑于无心；凡以点缀词场，使不岑寂而已。但虑七情之内，无境不生，六合之中，何所不有，幻设一事，即有一事之偶同；乔命一名，即有一名之巧合；焉知不以无基之楼阁，认为有样之葫芦？是用沥血鸣神，剖心告世，倘有一毫所指，甘为三世之暗。

Once I printed my play, I swore at its beginning that its main idea of bestowing the Sheng and Dan with virtues doesn't show my gratitude to my benefactors; painting the Jing and Chou with funny faces only makes a harmless joke. What I do is to meet the need of play and try to make the drama not too boring. However, our human emotions can create anything, and anything can happen under the sun. When I create a fictional event, a real event can be found that is similar to it, and when I create a fictional character, a real one could coincide with it. Why must people always take the fictional to be similar to the real? Therefore, I swear before the gods and all men: If I use the fictional to imply the real, I will be mute for three lifetimes as punishment.⁴⁶

With this awareness of ontological difference between the fictional and the real, Li Yu could take everyday life as the subject of his plays and needn't worry about any confusion between the fictional and the real. Old masters and Li Yu's contemporary playwrights preferred the surrealistic legends to real life in order to avoid this confusion. Because he criticized these clichés and depicted real life in his plays, his works could arouse the sympathy of his contemporary audiences.⁴⁷

Second, real life as the subject not only attracts an audience's interest but also makes the drama new. The old masters and Li Yu's contemporary playwrights, who would use popular and conventional story lines, couldn't come up with anything new. Li Yu criticized this phenomenon many times. On one occasion he wrote:

“人惟求旧，物惟求新。”新也者，天下事物之美称也。而文章一道，较之他物，犹加倍焉。嘎嘎乎陈言务去，求新之谓也。至于填词一道，较之诗赋古文，又加倍焉。非特前人所作，于今为旧，即出我一人之手，今之视昨亦有间焉。昨已见而今未见也，知未见之为新，即知已见之位旧矣。古人呼剧本为“传奇”者，因其事甚奇特，未经人见而传之，是以得名，可见非奇不传。

“In people one seeks only the old, in things the new.” Newness is a term of approbation for everything in the world, but doubly so for literature. This is what the statement “striving to rid one's writing of clichés—oh, how hard it is!” refers to. And in the art of drama, newness is twice as valuable again as it is in the other literary genres. Not only is the work of past authors now obsolete, there is a gulf even in my own writing between what I wrote yesterday and what I am writing today. Yesterday's work has appeared, while today's has not, and if we regard what has not yet appeared as new, we must accept what has already appeared as old. The ancients called drama *chuanqi* 传奇, which means literally disseminating what is new. Only because the new and strange has never before appeared can it be used in drama, and hence if the story is not new enough, it cannot be disseminated and called *chuanqi*—that is, drama.⁴⁸

Newness is not only the essence of drama, but also an indispensable property demanded by its audiences. People want to see new things, especially a play with an unexpected plot:

戏法无真假，戏文无工拙，只是使人想不到，猜不着，便是好戏法，好戏文。

Drama's plot is beyond true or false, and its text is beyond skillful and clumsy. The best drama is beyond an audience's imagination and speculation.⁴⁹

吾每观旧剧，一则以喜，一则以惧。喜则喜其音节不乖，耳中免生芒刺，惧则惧其情事太熟，眼角如悬赘疣。

Whenever I am to see an old play, I am both happy and fearful. Happy, because the musical arrangement will be agreeably familiar and will not make thorns grow in my ears. Fearful, because the subject matter may be all too familiar, causing scales to form over my eyes.⁵⁰

Old plays or plays that tell familiar stories suppress their entertainment value, since people seek the new in things.

Third, the entertainment value consists of not only newness but also popularity. In pursuit of popularity, Li Yu insists that drama should have a well-knit plot,⁵¹ a distinctive main character,⁵² and plain, funny, and even vulgar language:

曲文之词采，与诗文之词采虽但不同，且要判然相反。何也？诗文之词采贵典雅而贱粗俗，宜蕴藉而忌分明；词曲不然，话则本之街谈巷议，事则取其直说明言，凡读传奇而有令人费解，或初阅不见其佳，深思而后得其意之所在者，便非绝妙好词。

The merit of drama's language is not only different from poetry's but also diametrically opposed. Why? Poetry's language values the elegant and devalues the vulgar, welcomes the dense and avoids the distinct. In drama this is not the case. Its dialogue comes from the talk of the street, and its narration prefers the clear and the direct. When one reads drama, if one has difficulty in understanding it, or cannot recognize its merits at a first reading but grasps its profundity only after thinking it over and over again, the language of this drama is definitely not good.⁵³

According to Li Yu, the main value of drama exists in entertainment. In order to entertain his audiences and readers, Li Yu often adopted sexual descriptions and dirty jokes in his stories and plays. Even today, the blatant pursuit of sexual titillation in his works still makes some readers uneasy. For example, his erotic novel, *The Carnal Prayer Mat* (*Rouputuan* 肉蒲团) is considered too scandalous to be published. The authoritative modern edition of his complete works (*Liyu quanji* 李渔全集) that was published in 1991 contains only a summary.⁵⁴ But I don't think Li Yu could be criticized as indiscriminately hedonistic. Perhaps we need to differentiate between Li Yu as a historical person and as a comedy writer, as Patrick Hanan finds that there are two Li Yus, the "true" Li Yu and the "false" Li Yu. Hanan confesses that his book "is concerned above all with the 'false' Li Yu and his generally comic permutations of self, rather than with any search for a 'true' Li Yu."⁵⁵ Xiao Xinqiao 萧欣桥 also remarks on the different valuations of Li Yu. Much of the debate and most of the vitriol have been reserved for the historical Li Yu, not his literary works.⁵⁶ But the difference is to be found not only in the gap between the historical Li Yu and his literary works, but also between his literary works and his literary theory or aesthetics. Now we have three Li Yus: as a historical person, as a playwright, and as a theorist of literature or aesthetician. Perhaps while the historical Li Yu is a moralist and the playwright Li Yu is a hedonist, it seems proper for us to argue that his dramatic theory is a moderate moralism.

Moderate moralism, as Noël Carroll supposes, "contends that some works of art may be evaluated morally (contra radical autonomism) and that sometimes the moral defects and/or merits of a work may figure in the aesthetic evaluation of the work. It does not contend that artworks should always be evaluated morally, nor that every moral defect or merit in an artwork should figure in its aesthetic evaluation. That would amount to radical moralism."⁵⁷ The differences between moderate moralism and a radical autonomism or a radical moralism are clear, but what is the difference between moderate moralism and moderate autonomism? Although both moderate moralism and moderate autonomism would allow that an artwork can be evaluated morally and aesthetically, there is a clear difference between them. Carroll argues:

Moderate moralism maintains that in some instances a moral defect in an artwork can be an aesthetic defect, and that sometimes a moral virtue can count as an aesthetic virtue. This opposes the view of moderate autonomism which admits that artworks can be morally defective and morally bad for that reason, but then goes on to say that the moral

badness of a work can never count as an aesthetic defect. Nor can the moral virtuousness of an artwork ever count toward anything more than the moral goodness of the work. A moral virtue in an artwork never adds to the aesthetic merit of the work.⁵⁸

Let's put it simply. The difference between moderate moralism and moderate autonomism is that the former admits a relation, no matter how devious, between moral virtue and aesthetic virtue, but the latter denies any relation between them. Li Yu emphasized this relation in many places. For example, in his own prologue to *The Carnal Prayer Mat*, he wrote:

In these times, people are reluctant to listen to lectures on the canonical texts, but they love to read fiction. Not all fiction, however, for they are sick of exemplary themes and prefer obscenity and fantasy. Truly, today's morals have sunk to new depths, and anyone with a concern for public morality will want to right the situation. But if you write a didactic work exhorting people to virtue, not only will you get no one to buy it; even if you were to print it and bind it and distribute it free with a complimentary card, the way benefactors bestow Buddhist scriptures on the public, people would tear the book apart for use in covering their wine pots or rolling their tobacco, and refuse to bestow a single glance upon its contents. A far better solution is to captivate readers with erotic material and wait until some moment of absorbing interest before suddenly dropping in an admonitory remark or two to make them grow fearful and sigh: "Since sexual pleasure can be so delightful, surely we ought to reserve our pleasure-loving bodies for long-term enjoyment instead of letting them turn into 'ghosts beneath the peony blossoms,' sacrificing the reality of pleasure for its mere name?" One then waits until the point at which retribution is made manifest and gently slips in a hortatory word or two designed to provoke the sudden revelation: "Since adultery is always repaid like this, surely we ought to reserve our wives and concubines for our own enjoyment instead of trying to 'shoot a sparrow with the priceless pearl,' repaying worthless loans with real money?" Having reached this conclusion, readers will no longer go astray, and if they don't go astray, they will naturally cherish their wives, who will in turn respect them. The moral education of the Southern Zhou and Southern Zhao songs is really nothing more than this: the method of "fitting the action to the case and the treatment to the man." It is a practice that is incumbent not only upon fiction writers; indeed, some of the sages were the first to employ it, in their classical texts. If you doubt me, look at how Mencius in Warring States times addressed King Xuan of Qi on the subject of Royal Government.⁵⁹

According to Li Yu, sexual pleasure is the way of or a path to moral education. Without this moral implication, no matter how profound or obscure it is, a drama or story could not be good both morally and aesthetically.

There are many reasons for Li Yu to uphold a moderate moralism for drama. The obvious one is that moderate moralism is good not only for attracting ordinary audiences but also for seeking sponsorship from the gentry. But the deeper reason is, perhaps, Li Yu's unique understanding of drama. Drama was seen by Li Yu as a synthetic art that includes music, poetry and prose, and fiction. If radical autonomism is appropriate for the evaluation of music, and radical moralism is appropriate for poetry and prose, and moderate autonomism is appropriate for fiction, then moderate moralism would be most appropriate in the evaluation of drama.

Notes

- 1 – Wang Jide 王骥德 (?–1623) said, “Opera is one branch of music” (曲·乐之支也). See Wang Jide, *Qu lu* 曲律 (The law of opera), in *Zhongguo lidai meixue wenku* 中国历代美学文库 (The library of aesthetics of China’s past dynasties), ed. Ye Lang 叶朗 (Beijing: Gaodeng Jiaoyu Chubanshe 高等教育出版社, 2002), vol. 7, no. 3, p. 37. Also see Tan Fan 谭帆 and Lu Wei 陆炜, *Zhongguo gudian xiju lilun shi* 中国古典戏剧理论史 (A history of the theory of classical Chinese drama), 2nd ed. (Shanghai: Huadong Shifan Daxue Chubanshe 华东师范大学出版社, 2005).
- 2 – *Aesthetics: The Classic Readings*, ed. David Cooper (Oxford and Malden: Blackwell, 1995), p. 45.
- 3 – *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- 4 – *Ibid.*
- 5 – *Ibid.*, pp. 47–48.
- 6 – *Confucian Analects*, Book VI, Chapter XVIII, James Legge’s translation.
- 7 – Cooper, *Aesthetics: The Classic Readings*, p. 50.
- 8 – Feng Youlan is definitely right when he interprets *wen* 文 as the aesthetic expression of natural emotions: “With this [Xunzi’s] interpretation, the meaning of the mourning and sacrificial rites becomes completely poetic, not religious.” See Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, ed. Derk Bodde (New York: Free Press, 1976), p. 150.
- 9 – Noël Carroll, “Moderate Moralism,” *British Journal of Aesthetics* 36, no. 3 (July 1996): 225.
- 10 – However, a story recorded in the “Tianzifang” 田子方 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* shows that Zhuangzi has a quasi-autonomy in mind: The ruler Yuan of Song wished to have a painting; the masters all came (to undertake the task). Having received his instructions and made their bows, they stood, licking their brushes and preparing their ink. Half their number, however, remained outside. There was one who came late, with an air of indifference, and did not hurry forward. When he had received his instructions and made his bow, he did not keep standing, but proceeded to his shed. The duke sent a man to see him, and there he was, with his upper garment off, sitting cross-legged, and nearly naked. The ruler said, “He is the man; he is a true painter.”
- 11 – See Hans-Georg Möller, “Zhuangzi’s ‘Dream of the Butterfly’: A Daoist Interpretation,” *Philosophy East and West* 49, no. 4 (October 1999): 439–450.
- 12 – For a correlative cosmology of early China, see Magnus Fiskejöö, ed., “Reconsidering the Correlative Cosmology of Early China,” Special issue of *Bulletin of The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities Östasiatiska Museet*, Stockholm (Värnamo, Sweden: Fälth and Hässler), no. 72 (2000).

- 13 – Tina Lu, “The Literary Culture of the Late Ming,” in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, ed. Kang-I Sun Chang and Stephen Owen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), vol. 2, p. 118.
- 14 – For details, see Ronald Egan, “The Controversy Over Music and ‘Sadness’ and Changing Conceptions of the Qin in Middle Period China,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 57, no. 1 (June 1997): 5–66.
- 15 – Noël Carroll, “Art and the Moral Realm,” in *The Blackwell Guide to Aesthetics*, ed. Peter Kivy (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 140.
- 16 – Ji Kang, “On No Sadness or Pleasure in Music,” in Ye Lang, *The Library of Aesthetics of China’s Past Dynasties*, 4:114.
- 17 – Ji Kang, “On No Sadness or Pleasure in Music,” p. 115.
- 18 – For a comprehensive analysis, see Egan, “The Controversy over Music and ‘Sadness.’”
- 19 – See Chen Ruheng 陈汝衡, *Songdai shuoshu shi* 宋代说书史 (History of storytelling in the Song dynasty) (Shanghai: Shanghai Wenyi Chubanshe 上海文艺出版社, 1979).
- 20 – Tina Lu, “The Literary Culture of the Late Ming,” p. 117.
- 21 – Ibid., p. 116.
- 22 – Ibid., p. 114.
- 23 – Noël Carroll, “Art and the Moral Realm,” p. 231.
- 24 – Li Yu, *Xianqing ouji* 闲情偶记 (Casual expressions of idle feeling), in *Li Yu quanji* 李渔全集 (Complete works of Li Yu) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Guji Chubanshe 浙江古籍出版社, 1991), vol. 3, p. 66.
- 25 – Ibid., p. 65.
- 26 – Ibid., p. 24.
- 27 – Ibid., p. 69. Different from modern theater, traditional Chinese theater has only a stage for performance and no restrictions on audiences. Audiences are not assigned designated seats and are not expected to contemplate the performance with a disinterested attitude. Instead, they can communicate with actors and with each other freely. For details, see Zhang Lian 张连, *Zhongguo xiqu wutai meishu shi lun* 中国戏曲舞台美术史论 (The history and theory of the stagecraft of Chinese drama) (Beijing: Wenhua Yishu Chubanshe 文化艺术出版社, 2000).
- 28 – Li Yu, *Fengzheng wu* 风筝误 (The mistake with the kite), in *Complete Works of Li Yu*, 4:203.
- 29 – Leo Tolstoy, *What Is Art?* trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (London: Penguin Books, 1995), p. 129.
- 30 – Ibid., p. 121.

- 31 – Li Yu, *Casual Expressions of Idle Feeling*, p. 57.
- 32 – Li Yu, “Liweng yijiayan wenji” 笠翁一家言文集 (Li Yu’s exclusive words: Essays), in *Complete Works of Li Yu*, 1 : 164. The English text is based on Patrick Hanan’s translation; see Patrick Hanan, *The Invention of Li Yu* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 2.
- 33 – Li Yu, *Casual Expressions of Idle Feeling*, pp. 352–353.
- 34 – *Ibid.*, p. 353. The English text is based on both the author’s and Hanan’s translation; see Hanan, *The Invention of Li Yu*, pp. 52–53.
- 35 – *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- 36 – Sigmund Freud, “The Relation of the Poet to Day-Dreaming,” in *The Nature of Art: An Anthology*, ed. Thomas Wartenberg (San Francisco: Wadsworth, 2002), p. 110.
- 37 – *Ibid.*, p. 112.
- 38 – Li Yu, *Casual Expressions of Idle Feeling*, p. 69.
- 39 – *Ibid.*, p. 52. The English text is based on both the author’s and Hanan’s translation; see Hanan, *The Invention of Li Yu*, p. 58.
- 40 – Wai-Yee Li, “Early Qing to 1723,” in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, ed. Kang-I Sun Chang and Stephen Owen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), vol. 2, p. 203.
- 41 – Li Yu, “Li Yu’s Exclusive Words: Essays,” pp. 167–168. The English text is based on Hanan’s translation; see Hanan, *The Invention of Li Yu*, pp. 12–13.
- 42 – Li Yu, *Casual Expressions of Idle Feeling*, p. 21.
- 43 – *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 44 – A clear differentiation between the fictional and the actual can be found in Nelson Goodman’s *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1976).
- 45 – Li Yu, *Casual Expressions of Idle Feeling*, p. 15.
- 46 – *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- 47 – *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.
- 48 – *Ibid.*, p. 9. The English text is based on both the author’s and Hanan’s translation; see Hanan, *The Invention of Li Yu*, p. 45.
- 49 – Li Yu, *Casual Expressions of Idle Feeling*, p. 63.
- 50 – *Ibid.*, p. 70. The English text is translated by Hanan; see Hanan, *The Invention of Li Yu*, p. 46.
- 51 – Li Yu, *Casual Expressions of Idle Feeling*, pp. 10–12.
- 52 – *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9.

- 53 – Ibid., p. 17.
- 54 – See *Complete Works of Li Yu*, vol. 9.
- 55 – Hanan, *The Invention of Li Yu*, p. vii.
- 56 – Xiao Xinqiao, “Preface to *Complete Works of Li Yu*,” in *Complete Works of Li Yu*, 1:15–16.
- 57 – Noël Carroll, “Moderate Moralism,” p. 236.
- 58 – Noël Carroll, “Moderate Moralism versus Moderate Autonomism,” *British Journal of Aesthetics* 38, no. 4 (1998): 419.
- 59 – Quoted by Hanan; see Hanan, *The Invention of Li Yu*, pp. 130–131.