

Article

A Historical Study of the Relationship between Zhou Zuoren and Long Yusheng

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Abstract: The 2025 Linking Publishing edition of Zhou Zuoren riji [The Diaries of Zhou Zuoren] provides a new documentary basis for reexamining Zhou Zuoren's relationship with the ci scholar Long Yusheng. Their correspondence began in late 1942, earlier than the year 1943 commonly accepted in scholarship. Their interactions encompassed the reciprocal exchange of books, assistance with publication, mutual financial support, and other dimensions. Long Yusheng's eldest daughter, Long Shunyi, served as an important link, transforming Zhou and Long's personal friendship into a close bond between their families. The shared aesthetic sensibility of dan---outward restraint sustained by inward passion---expressed in the poems and ci lyrics Long presented to Zhou illuminates the course of their intellectual and emotional affinity. A comprehensive examination of the historical record both offers a corrective to existing accounts and reveals the spiritual dimensions of this relationship beyond their everyday exchanges.

Keywords: Zhou Zuoren; Long Yusheng; *Zhou Zuoren riji* (The Diaries of Zhou Zuoren)

1. Introduction

The relationship between Zhou Zuoren and Long Yusheng has usually been understood against the background of their wartime political choices and postwar experiences. The fact that both were burdened by the stigma of wartime collaboration and later endured imprisonment undoubtedly formed an important condition of their affinity [1]. Yet this perspective alone cannot explain why their relationship lasted for more than two decades or how its forms and content changed over time. Their contacts encompassed not only correspondence and literary sociability but also the reciprocal exchange of books, assistance with publication, mutual financial support, and sustained interaction between their households. The relationship should therefore be examined not simply as a bond between companions in adversity, but as an evolving network of scholarly, material, familial, and emotional ties.

The 2025 Linking Publishing edition of Zhou Zuoren riji provides a more continuous documentary basis for reassessing this relationship. Its records of Zhou's contact with Long extend over more than two decades and preserve details of correspondence, book-giving, remittances, and family visits that appear only fragmentarily in the surviving letters, chronological biographies, and memoirs [2]. Read alongside Long Yusheng's poems and ci lyrics addressed or presented to Zhou, these diary entries raise several related questions: When did direct contact between Zhou and Long begin [3]? Through what practices was their relationship maintained and deepened? What role did Long's eldest daughter, Long Shunyi, play in extending the relationship from the two men to their families and the next generation? And how did Long's writings to Zhou articulate their shared aesthetic sensibility and intellectual and emotional affinity?

To address these questions, this article takes Zhou Zuoren riji as its principal source and reads it in conjunction with correspondence, poetry, chronological biographies, and memoirs. Combining historical reconstruction with close textual analysis, it first reviews existing scholarship on the Zhou--Long relationship and reassesses the date of their

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earliest contact. It then examines the multiple dimensions of their interaction, Long Shunyi's role in connecting the two households, and the image of Zhitang in Long Yusheng's poetry and ci. By treating the relationship as a continuous and changing historical process rather than as a series of isolated exchanges, the article seeks to reconstruct its documentary contours and clarify its significance for understanding the later intellectual and emotional lives of Zhou Zuoren and Long Yusheng.

2. A Review of Scholarship on the Relationship between Zhou Zuoren and Long Yusheng

Discussion of the relationship between Zhou Zuoren and Long Yusheng can be traced to Wang Hui's "Between Light and Darkness: Remembering Mr. Shi Cheng." Long Yusheng's daughter Long Shunyi once asked Wang Hui for his assessment of Zhou and lamented, "The older generation is almost all gone, and the younger generation will understand even less," revealing the depth of the Long family's personal attachment to Zhou [4]. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, scholarly understanding of the two men relied mainly on chronological biographies and related foundational sources. Zhang Juxiang and Zhang Tierong's *Zhou Zuoren nianpu* and Zhang Hui's *Long Yusheng xiansheng nianpu* were major contributions of this period. *Zhou Zuoren nianpu* outlined the course of Zhou and Long's contact, especially their meetings following Zhou's journey to Nanjing in 1943, and thereby helped establish the "1943 thesis" concerning the beginning of their relationship [5]. Zhang Hui's chronology, meanwhile, systematically examined Long Yusheng's life and historical circumstances. Zhang described its purpose as an effort "to explore and understand, in a spirit of seeking truth from facts, the painful choices of an ordinary intellectual at a moment of great historical upheaval" [6]. Taking this statement as a point of departure and drawing on Wang Hui's discussion, Sanmu's "Reading the Chronology" critically analyzed how Zhou and Long came to fall into disgrace and questioned the limitations of "sympathetic understanding" as a research approach [7]. This dialogue among chronology, memoir, and historical evaluation reflects the central concerns through which scholars at the beginning of the twenty-first century reconsidered this period.

As research based on chronological biographies accumulated, scholarly attention shifted from broad discussions of biography and intellectual history toward more specific primary documents. In 2007, Zhang Lin annotated two letters from Zhou Zuoren to Long Yusheng, dated 1952–1954, included in *Jindai ciren shouzhazha moji*, published by the Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy, Academia Sinica [8]. This prompted Zhi'an's scholarly response concerning the interpretation of the letters [9]. In 2012, Zhang Lin published and annotated four additional letters from Long to Zhou [10]. These studies brought research on the Zhou–Long relationship into a phase centered on the textual examination of correspondence and made aspects of their post-1949 contact more visible. More recent discoveries have further expanded the documentary basis of the field. *Long Yusheng shiyou shouzhazha*, compiled by Zhang Ruitian, reproduced five letters from Zhou to Long in facsimile, while Gao Bin used the *Kucha'an shujian* held by the National University of Singapore Libraries to collect and examine twenty letters written by Zhou to Long Yusheng and Su Qianying in the early PRC period [11]. Gao's study revealed Long's role as an intermediary in Zhou's exchanges with overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia and extended analysis of the relationship into a broader social network [12].

Existing scholarship has thus moved from chronological reconstruction to the textual study of correspondence, establishing the basic documentary framework for research on the Zhou–Long relationship and illuminating their political circumstances, epistolary exchanges, and social networks. Most studies, however, focus on individual groups of documents or specific questions. The relationship's development over more than two decades, the changing forms of interaction within it, and its extension into the domestic sphere have yet to receive systematic examination. In particular, Long Shunyi's practical role in connecting the two households and the aesthetic and intellectual dimensions

expressed in Long Yusheng's poems and ci lyrics to Zhou remain open to further investigation.

The Linking Publishing edition of Zhou Zuoren riji records contact among Zhou Zuoren, Long Yusheng, and Long Shunyi across twenty-one years. Table 1 provides an annual overview of the frequency and principal forms of these interactions, establishing the chronological framework for the discussion that follows.

Table 1. Interactions between Zhou Zuoren and Long Yusheng Recorded in Zhou Zuoren Riji, 1942-1966

Year	Communications between Zhou and Long (including telegrams)	Entries concerning Long Shunyi, Long Yusheng's eldest daughter	Notes
1942	2	0	Earliest known record of correspondence
1943	51	1	First meeting in Nanjing in April; in August Long Yusheng traveled north with his daughter Long Shunyi and stayed at Kucha'an; Long Shunyi first appeared in the diary.
1944	—	—	Zhou Zuoren's diary for the year is lost; Qiushi was founded, with Long Yusheng as its director.
1945	56	2	Long and Zhou engaged in frequent financial dealings.
1946–1948	—	—	Zhou Zuoren was imprisoned; the diary contains no records.
1949	14	0	Zhou Zuoren was released from prison.
1950	31	0	Through Long Yusheng's introduction, Xu Shaonan established contact with Zhou Zuoren.
1951	10	4	The diary records exchanges of books between Zhou Zuoren and Long Shunyi.
1952	20	0	
1953	41	1	
1954	43	3	Long Shunyi visited for the first time with her husband and eldest daughter.
1955	22	2	Long Shunyi asked Zhou Zuoren to revise and polish a sample translation.
1956	37	17	Long Shunyi began studying with Zhou Zuoren.
1957	14	32	Long Shunyi's festival gifts became regular.
1958	13	15	
1959	8	19	
1960	15	11	
1961	10	9	Long Shunyi brought Lucian's Dialogues, and Zhou Zuoren began translating it.
1962	15	20	
1963	9	12	
1964	18	13	
1965	13	3	Zhou Zuoren finalized his will.
1966	3	1	The final correspondence recorded in the diary occurred in July; the diary continues through August 23. Long Yusheng died in November, and Zhou Zuoren died in May 1967.

3. Reassessing the Beginning of Their Contact

Previous scholarship generally regarded the relationship between Zhou Zuoren and Long Yusheng as having begun in Nanjing in April 1943. According to Zhang Juxiang and Zhang Tierong's *Zhou Zuoren nianpu*, on April 5, 1943, Zhou Zuoren, at Wang Jingwei's invitation, left by train for Nanjing to take up a position as a member of the National Government Committee under Wang's collaborationist regime and to give lectures [5]. On April 10, Zhou traveled by train to Suzhou to deliver a lecture [5]. Long Yusheng was then a professor at National Central University in Nanjing and a member of the Legislative Yuan of the Reorganized National Government under Wang Jingwei [6]. Together with Shen Qiwei and his wife, as well as Zhou Fengyi, Su Ruicheng, Wang Gulu, Yang Honglie, and others---eight people in all---Long accompanied Zhou to Suzhou. In addition to attending Zhou's lecture, they visited Mount Lingyan, paid respects at Zhang Taiyan's tomb, and visited Yu Yue's Chunzai Hall [5]. After Zhou returned to Nanjing, Long accompanied him on a boat trip on Xuanwu Lake and commemorated the occasion in the poem "Written in Late Spring of the Guiwei Year while Boating on Xuanwu Lake with Qiwei and Elder Zhitang." [6].

The new edition of *Zhou Zuoren riji*, however, shows that contact between the two men had already begun in late 1942. On December 24, 1942, Zhou's diary records, "Received one volume of *Shuangzhaolou shici* from Long Yusheng"; on the following day it records, "Sent letter: Long Yusheng." [2]. These entries indicate that their contact began slightly earlier than 1943, the date previously accepted. On February 16 of the following year, the diary again records, "Sent a letter to Long Yusheng," also before April 1943, the date previously identified as the beginning of their relationship [2].

Although late December 1942 can now be identified as the earliest known date of direct correspondence, the precise occasion for Long's gift of the book remains unclear. At the time, Long Yusheng was participating in the editing and collation of Wang Jingwei's poetry collection *Shuangzhaolou shici gao*. Whether the gift was connected with this work, and whether the two men had already learned of one another through a third party, are questions on which the diary is silent and which require further corroborating evidence. When Zhou Zuoren traveled to Nanjing in April 1943, Long received him and the two met face to face. Thereafter, the frequency of their correspondence increased sharply: the diary records more than fifty letters and packages exchanged that year. In August, Long traveled north with his eldest daughter, Shunyi, and stayed at Zhou's home; the diary records four late-night conversations, attesting to the closeness of their friendship [2].

In sum, late 1942 is the earliest date that can presently be established. This new finding corrects the previous account, but it also raises new documentary questions that can be resolved only through the future discovery of original letters, memoirs, or other evidence.

4. The Multiple Dimensions of Their Interaction

Existing scholarship on the relationship between Long and Zhou has often located its explanation in their similar historical fates. Both were burdened by the stigma of wartime collaboration and both endured imprisonment, experiences used to explain why they became close. Yet the durability of their relationship lay more fundamentally in the richness of their interactions and the depth of their cooperation. Correspondence, exchanges of books, scholarly discussions, publication matters, and mutual financial support---these concrete and minute everyday interactions formed a more resilient and complex inner fabric of their relationship.

The selection of books they gave one another shows, first, that each maintained a detailed awareness of the other's reading interests and scholarly concerns. After their meeting in Nanjing in April 1943, Zhou sent Long *Zhangshi congshu xubian* [Supplement to the Zhang Family Collectanea], presumably knowing of Long's teacher-disciple connection with Zhang Taiyan [2, 6]. He also sent his own *Yaowei ji* [Medicinal Flavors], and in June sent a short piece from *Sangxia congtao* [Miscellaneous Talks beneath the

Mulberry Tree] together with "one packet of manuscript, fourteen pages." [2]. When Long traveled north and stayed at Kucha'an in August, he presented Zhou with four volumes of a Hou edition of *Shimingjia ci* [Ci by Ten Masters] and some old vermilion ink [2]. By tailoring his gifts to Long's interests and entrusting manuscripts to him, Zhou had already developed considerable appreciation and trust for Long not long after their first meeting. This informed practice of book-giving continued throughout their relationship after 1943. Although Zhou's diary is missing for 1944 and he was imprisoned from late 1945 until early 1949, the surviving diary for 1945 still records Long asking Zhou to purchase *Gugong zhouban* [Palace Museum Weekly] on his behalf [2]. In 1950, Zhou again purchased *Fashu daguan* [A Grand Survey of Calligraphy] for Long and sent him both volumes of Yu Pingbo's *Yaoye guisi yin* [Melody of Boudoir Thoughts on a Long Night] [2]. Long and Yu had met through Zhou during Long's northern journey in 1943, and thereafter maintained contact, often forming friendships through ci poetry [13]. Zhou's gift on this occasion thus conveyed mutual understanding between friends. Such details show that the connection between the two men never truly lapsed.

After 1949, translation became Zhou Zuoren's principal occupation, and translated works made up a larger proportion of the books he gave Long. *Kyōgen* and *Ukiyoburo* were both products of his translation work during this period [2]. When *Lu Xun de gujia* [Lu Xun's Family and Former Home] was published in 1953, Zhou received twenty complimentary copies from the publisher and immediately sent one to Long. In December of the same year, he copied out Lu Xun's poems on three sheets and sent them to Long; his 1958 revision of *Ming Qing xiaohua sizhong* [Four Collections of Ming and Qing Jokes] was also among his gifts [2]. In 1964, he passed on calligraphic and poetic manuscripts by Zhu Yongzhai [2]. Zhu knew Long and had once painted *Xiaowuliutang shuoci tu* [Illustration of Expounding Ci at Xiaowuliu Hall] for him, so Zhou's act may be regarded as a transmission of friendship among men of letters [1]. Long's return gifts consisted mainly of writings on ci studies. *Cixuan* [Selected Ci], *Jin cixuan* [Selected Modern Ci], and *Changduanju* [Long and Short Lines] all gathered the results of his work in his specialist field, and each man made gifts of the writings at hand [2]. "Who says the bond of flesh and blood comes from nature? / How could it compare with the affinity of lacquer and glue? / In trivial things, intimacy makes affection closer still; / With an offering of incense, I long read Yaotang's books." [3]. Books were the everyday language through which they maintained their relationship and conveyed mutual understanding, rather than merely objects of ceremonial exchange. Their bond had long exceeded the ordinary friendship of companions in adversity and had become a deep friendship between scholars with shared interests.

In the publication of articles, Zhou used his connections to forward one of Long Yusheng's manuscripts to Ta Kung Pao for publication, while Long's "A Glimpse of the Northern Journey" appeared in *Yiwen zazhi*, of which Zhou was director [1, 2]. Another especially important platform for their interactions was the monthly journal *Qishi*. Founded in March 1944 and discontinued in March 1945, the journal was directed by Long Yusheng [1]. Its purpose was to "fulfill the responsibilities of modern Chinese people," strengthen the thought and character of the citizenry, and overcome divisions among the Chinese people, in the hope of "combining the physical and intellectual powers of four hundred million compatriots into a single body." [14]. *Qishi* was a place where Zhou Zuoren could "speak of dreams"; it was also a forum in which he could speak as an Enlightenment intellectual after his "literary shop" had long been closed. He published five essays there: "One of My Dreams," "The Dream of a Renaissance," "Miscellaneous Talks on Literature," "An Account of Mr. Du Fengchen," and "A Mahayana Book of Enlightenment." In their argumentative logic, these essays took early Confucianism as a foundation, called for the naturalization of ethics, opposed moral coercion contrary to human feeling, and invoked the "benevolence" of Confucianism and Mohism to argue for transforming individual moral commitment into collective practical achievement. Although the essays approached the subject from different angles, they ultimately elaborated the same set of ideas. Significantly, Long Yusheng likewise wrote in the

inaugural statement of Qiushi: "What distinguishes human beings from birds and beasts is that they can not only employ their intelligence and stand on their own, but can also merge the individual into the collective." [14]. This closely corresponds in both reasoning and conclusion to the Mencian statement quoted by Zhou in "One of My Dreams"---"What distinguishes human beings from birds and beasts is but slight"---and to Zhou's discussions of "the benevolence of Confucianism and Mohism" and "I too am among humanity." The correspondence was clearly not coincidental.

Qiushi also revealed Long Yusheng's passionate and forthright side. Unlike the posture of "a man of letters born in chaotic times, twisting and moaning, haggard and consumed by self-pity," the articles he published in Qiushi were filled with anxiety for the age and calls for reform: "Can it really be that China's future is beyond rescue [15]? This question has revolved in my mind for I know not how many years!" [16]. Zhou Zuoren later described his attitude toward writing by saying, "I also relish writing of extreme pungency, with the pain of pinching the arm until it bleeds." [17]. Long's intellectual bearing resonated with the spirit Zhou advocated at the time: scholars should not stop at the self-deliverance of the Hinayana, but should follow the Mahayana path to benefit later generations [18]. It likewise corresponded with the hope for an overall revival of Chinese culture expressed in "The Dream of a Renaissance." "We live in dreams every day. Although it is said that dreams after the Beginning of Spring have no basis, wishing only for good dreams and refusing to give them up is simply a common human feeling and nothing strange." [19]. Both men wrote from positions of disgrace, while Zhou's prose was continually marked by the self-mockery and self-consolation of one who "spoke of dreams." In the political circumstances in which they lived, they wrote of their longing for the full development of human beings. This delicate balance and the historical subtleties it contains provide a textual basis for understanding their affinity.

Long and Zhou also engaged in frequent financial dealings. On February 1, 1945, Long handed Zhou 1,800 yuan in miscellaneous receipts; on February 6, Zhou recorded that "Mr. Hao sent over 5,000 yuan through him." [2]. "Mr. Hao" may have been Hao Pengju. At the time, Zhou Zuoren was still contributing to Qiushi, which was funded by Hao Pengju [1]. There is, however, no direct evidence currently confirming this identification, which therefore remains tentative. On May 13, Zhou recorded, "Received a telegram from Yusheng stating that the Specie Bank had remitted 100,000 yuan through the Central Reserve Bank"; on July 3, he recorded, "Received a telegram reporting a remittance of 200,000 yuan from Yusheng." [2]. These entries show that their dealings went beyond exchanges of courtesies between friends and included concrete forms of financial cooperation. After 1949, their financial exchanges more often took the form of gifts than transactions, in two main ways: direct gifts of money or necessities, and introductions that expanded the other's sources of income. After Zhou was released from prison, for example, Long visited him in Shanghai and gave him 10,000 yuan [2]. Zhou, in turn, twice sent medicine to Long's wife [2]. Long also introduced the Southeast Asian Chinese businessman Xu Shaonan to Zhou [2]. Xu "requested a calligraphic inscription"; Zhou completed and sent it, and subsequently received 300,000 yuan remitted by Long on Xu's behalf [2]. Xu later arranged additional remittances of 770,000 and 420,000 yuan [2]. Zhou's political position after 1949 was difficult. During the anti-bourgeois campaign of 1952, an article of his was cut short and a translation contract was also terminated, placing him under immense psychological and financial pressure [2]. As Gao Bin has observed, such exchanges with overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia effectively constituted an indirect form of support for intellectuals in China [12]. Long was deeply grateful for Xu Shaonan's assistance and commemorated it in the lines, "I remember Jingyang's generous concern; / breathing warmth and moisture, he long sustained Kucha'an." [3]. Such mutual support in times of hardship was an important means by which both men sustained their livelihoods in straitened circumstances. Material and financial assistance, together with scholarly sympathy, formed the deeper foundation of their relationship.

5. Long Yusheng's Daughter Long Shunyi and Her Relationship with Zhou Zuoren

During the more than twenty years of interaction between Zhou Zuoren and Long Yusheng, Long's eldest daughter, Long Shunyi, played a distinctive role that should not be overlooked. She accompanied her father to visit Zhou in Beijing in 1943 and thereafter remained in contact with Zhou's family. Her relationship with Zhou gradually came to encompass the borrowing and return of books, the seeking and receiving of instruction, and visits between the families, developing into an independent relationship with both scholarly and personal dimensions. She also exerted a positive influence on the long-term relationship between Zhou and Long and became an important link between two generations.

Long Shunyi's independent relationship with Zhou Zuoren can be traced to 1946. That year, Zhou was escorted to Nanjing and detained in Laohuqiao Prison. His daughter-in-law Zhang Tanfang wrote to Long Shunyi and asked her to look after him locally. Although her own family was in extremely difficult circumstances, Long Shunyi continued to take food to Zhou every week or every ten days and also brought him books and paper [5]. This exceptional period made Zhou grateful to her and led Long Yusheng to regard the Zhou family even more as his own kin. The relationship between Zhou and Long thus began to extend from a friendship between two men into interaction between their families. As a woman of the younger generation, Long Shunyi became the person who maintained the bond between the two households at their most difficult moment.

After 1949, Long Yusheng remained in Shanghai, while Long Shunyi worked in Beijing at the Peking Library [1]. Her contact with Zhou became increasingly regular, and exchanges of books were the earliest form of routine interaction between them. On March 4 and 7, 1951, Zhou's diary respectively records, "Received two English books (Grimms) returned by Ms. Long" and "Ms. Long returned two English books (J. A. Symonds)." [2]. The former were Grimm's fairy tales, of which Zhou owned a 1935 English translation [18]. Symonds was the British scholar John Addington Symonds, whose views Zhou had approvingly when discussing attitudes toward women in Greek literature [20]. During Zhou's imprisonment, works on Greek literature and other Chinese and foreign books had already been carried into the prison through Long Shunyi's hands [21]. The reappearance of book exchanges in the diary after 1949 shows that this connection had never truly been severed. Between 1953 and 1955, Long Shunyi occasionally visited Zhou, sometimes accompanied by her husband or daughter, entries dated February 3 and May 16, 1954, and February 12, 1955 though their meetings were not yet frequent [2]. On February 27, 1955, Zhou recorded, "Ms. Long came and asked me to revise and polish a sample translation." [2]. Their relationship had thus extended into matters of work, and Long Shunyi began to participate in Zhou's translation activities.

From 1956 onward, the frequency of Long Shunyi's meetings with Zhou increased markedly. Between late August and the end of December that year, she appeared seventeen times in the diary, most often in connection with "seeking instruction." Zhou wrote, for example, "Ms. Long came in the morning; no lesson," "Ms. Long asked for leave and did not come," and "Ms. Long came in the morning and said that in future she would change to Wednesday afternoon." [2]. These entries reveal a fixed schedule of meetings and a recognizable mode of teacher-disciple instruction. Entries such as "Ms. Long came to seek instruction and borrowed Modern Greek," and "Ms. Long came and left an exercise book for me to examine later," [2]. together with the later record that "Ms. Long returned a Greek grammar," suggest that she may have been studying Greek with Zhou [2]. Long Shunyi usually came alone for instruction and could almost be regarded as one of Zhou's last private pupils. This relatively traditional mode of instruction itself indicated that Zhou treated her with the full seriousness of a genuine teacher-disciple relationship, a significance that Long Yusheng would also have understood.

The relationship between the Zhou and Long families thus developed from a friendship between two men into a bond across two generations that combined old friendship, teacher-disciple ties, and kin-like affection. Seeing his eldest daughter take Zhou as her teacher, Long Yusheng witnessed a new teacher-disciple bond added to their old friendship, further deepening the intimacy between the two families.

At the same time, Long Shunyi's position at the Peking Library enabled Zhou to borrow needed books through her. The works included books for his personal reading, such as *Shishuo* [Tales of the World], but most of the borrowing served the progress of his translation work [2]. Zhou once borrowed *Zhuomu ji* [Woodpecker Collection], two volumes of *The Pillow Book*, five volumes of *Konjaku Monogatari*, and *Lucian's Dialogues*, among other works [2]. Some diary entries mention only the gift or loan of books without recording specific titles; see the entries for March 15, April 7, and November 9, 1953; March 11, 1957; December 23, 1962; and November 27, 1964. Retranslating *Lucian's Dialogues* directly from the original was a wish Zhou had cherished for fifty years [2]. In his will, finalized on April 26, 1965, Zhou wrote: "I have now reached the full age of eighty and will die without regret. I leave these few words as guidance for handling affairs after my death. After death, I may be cremated, or the ashes may be retained in the customary way and then buried as convenient. The ideal is for a person to vanish in sound and trace after death. Nothing I wrote in my life is worthy of mention; only the Greek dialogues translated in my later years fulfilled a wish of fifty years. Those who understand will know this for themselves." Their relationship was thus embedded in Zhou's scholarly practice and intellectual life. Long Shunyi's assistance was not temporary; it continued throughout his translation work in later life and constituted a practical condition that enabled that work to proceed.

Over the course of their long association, the affection between Long Shunyi and Zhou Zuoren gradually took on the character of kinship and ultimately became a stable and regular pattern of family interaction. This was expressed, on the one hand, in ceremonial gifts at seasonal festivals and, on the other, in routine visits involving whole families. From 1957 to 1966, Long sent Zhou food as festival gifts every year at the Spring Festival, the Dragon Boat Festival, and the Mid-Autumn Festival, sometimes through her husband Shao Guanhai. Shao and their eldest daughter, Shao Hongdu, also frequently accompanied her on holiday or ordinary visits, while Zhou often sent his son Zhou Fengyi to deliver letters and messages to Ms. Long. Long Shunyi's perspective allows us to perceive more clearly the warmth of personal and familial ties in the relationship between the two households. Their interactions exceeded the purely intellectual sphere and were imbued with the atmosphere of family life and mutual care across generations. This was an important emotional basis for a relationship that lasted more than twenty years and remained vital over time. When Long Yusheng died, the elegiac couplet sent by Zhou Fengyi and Zhang Tanfang read: "With the passing of a great and elegant spirit, the literary world has lost a master craftsman; / His exemplary model remains, forever marking the sea of learning and inspiring new tides." It was signed, "Nephew Zhou Fengyi and Zhang Tanfang." [1]. Such a designation from members of the younger generation was not the language of casual acquaintances. By this point, the relationship had crossed two generations.

6. The Image of Zhitang in Long Yusheng's Poetry and Ci

A friendship is defined not only by the frequency of contact, but also by the depth of mutual understanding. Long Yusheng was both a scholar and a practitioner of *ci*, and his understanding of and feelings toward Zhou Zuoren were crystallized in the poems and *ci* lyrics he presented to him. According to *Renhan shi ci geci ji* [Collected Shi Poems, Ci Lyrics, and Song Lyrics], Long wrote nine such works for Zhou between 1943 and 1964, almost the entire span of their relationship. If the diaries and letters show what the two men did, these poems reveal how Long viewed Zhou: what ideals he invested in Zhou and what kind of self-understanding he derived from their relationship.

Early in their relationship, Long wrote two poems: "Written on the Return Journey after Accompanying Elder Zhitang's Party to Suzhou to Pay Respects at Zhang Taiyan's Tomb and Visit Yu Quyu'an's Chunzai Hall" and "Written in Late Spring of the Guiwei Year while Boating on Xuanwu Lake with Qiwu and Elder Zhitang." The available evidence suggests that this was the first meeting between Long and Zhou. The poems focus on narrative and landscape: "Yesterday we ate our fill at the Shi family's table; drunk,

we climbed to Lingyan's highest level," and "Mountain shadows rise and fall as water strikes the embankment; along the long causeway, grasses grow lush." Neither poem devotes much attention to Zhou himself. At this stage, Long's attitude toward Zhou was primarily one of admiration, and Zhou appeared as a respected cultural elder.

After both men were imprisoned in succession because of wartime collaboration, the tone of Long's poems to Zhou changed completely. Zhou was escorted to Nanjing in May 1946 and imprisoned in Laohuqiao Prison [5]. Long was also imprisoned in 1946, first in Laohuqiao Prison in Nanjing and then in Shizikou Prison in Suzhou [1]. These experiences affected both men profoundly. Long identified closely with Zhou; the shock of prison life made his emotional expression especially intense. He repeatedly referred to their ordeal in his poetry: "Laohuqiao joins Shizikou; / deep at night, bonfires flare and foxes cry," and "Atop Purple Mountain the setting sun dims; / beside Laohuqiao, lions roar." [3]. The former was written in 1953 and the latter in 1964. Across this twelve-year span, the past remained present in his writing, showing how difficult it was for either man to forget and inevitably evoking a sigh.

Long's poetic world, however, did not stop at shared suffering. After enduring extreme circumstances, he gradually moved toward a leisurely and restrained tone, consciously seeking genuine feeling and meaning in everyday life. Long repeatedly praised the *dan* of Zhou's writing, saying, for example, that "his poetry is like coming upon a painting by Ni Yu." [3]. The paintings of Ni Zan, also known as Ni Yu, are renowned for their plainness, sparseness, coolness, and stillness. In a lyric to the tune "Shuidiao Getou," Long wrote, "Filtering the sparse shadows at the forest's edge, / lightly applying a small Ni Yu scene, / I sway at ease." [3]. The lines show his appreciation of Ni Yu's sparse, understated style and the self-contentment it inspired. Projecting this aesthetic onto Zhou was not only high praise but also an expression of Long's own ideal. Long's later poems to Zhitang contain plainness, indignation, resonance, and other emotions, but plainness remains the governing register. Outbursts of indignation and moments of resonance arise intermittently, yet they are always contained by a rational pursuit of equanimity and ultimately return to an open and expansive state of mind. In the progression of opening, development, turn, and conclusion, Long's poems repeatedly return to a small space: plainness constitutes the closing movement, bringing both the poem and the author's complex emotions to rest. Lines such as "The jujubes by the wall are nearly ripe; / my dreaming soul flies beside Kucha'an," "I sit in delight as days and months within the pot seem as long as heaven," and "Bound in heart and courage, affection close; / every understated line reveals true love" all express Long's ideal of life: simplicity and quiet, dwelling in a humble room, with "one plain couch, alone and serene."

"Thinking of Elder Zhou Zhitang in Beijing on an Autumn Day" contains the lines, "At times I recognize Yuanming through his bold pungency; / when adversity comes, one ought to struggle." [3]. Long's reference to Tao Yuanming in a poem for Zhou may be read, on one level, as a response to Zhou's aesthetic preferences---Tao was Zhou's favorite among ancient Chinese men of letters [22]. More importantly, Long used Tao to construct an ideal image of the man of letters who could withstand trial. Whether through "bold pungency" or the statement that "when adversity comes, one ought to struggle," Long deliberately drew attention to Tao Yuanming's wrathful, vajra-like side. This both praised Zhou and offered Long a means of explaining and consoling his own circumstances.

A close examination of Long's understanding of Tao Yuanming reveals the distinctive significance Tao assumed when Long wrote for Zhou. Long paid particular attention to the sorrow in Tao's poetry. Reading the "Miscellaneous Poems" and "Poems on Impoverished Scholars," he wrote: "Observing the grief held within and the mournful tones expressed without, winding through recurrent irony and admonition, I could never read them without remaining melancholy for some time." [23]. Sorrow formed one underlying tone of Tao Yuanming's life. Zhou likewise described Tao as one who, "when the times were difficult and his strength unequal to them, cast off cap and sash with ease." Tao did not act because he could not act. Both men identified in Tao a passive strain: a state of mind and a choice shaped by social and historical conditions rather than by pure

contentment. The affinity between Tao Yuanming and Long Yusheng lay first in this sorrow; more broadly, both were "people of sorrow who harbored commitments of their own." [23].

Long offered a detailed account of the spiritual character underlying Tao Yuanming's "commitments of his own": "Among those who could remain detached and clarify their aspirations, willingly endure emaciation and hardship while retaining passion within and a spirit of resistance to a corrupt society, there was Tao Yuanming in the Jin dynasty." [24]. In Long's understanding, Tao was filled with passion and possessed a spirit of resistance. Long Zhu Xi to emphasize Tao's boldness: "The Classified Conversations of Master Zhu says: 'Everyone describes Yuanming's poetry as plain, but see how it arises from boldness. The work in which he unconsciously reveals his true nature is "Ode to Jing Ke." How could a merely plain person utter such words?'" [24]. Tao Yuanming did not simply delight in rural seclusion. He was benevolent and courageous, treated fame and profit lightly, and placed great weight on saving the world; for this reason, his poetry could express compassion and ardor with such sincerity and depth. Long argued that the creation of a new system of Chinese poetry required poets to possess "courage born of a benevolent heart," [25]. further demonstrating the influence of Tao Yuanming's spirit on his poetics.

Zhou Zuoren also wrote about Tao Yuanming: "Those who grasp only the superficial features of one school are truly narrow and uncomprehending. If they penetrate deeply, they will generally converge and reach similar ground." [26] 16 Zhou maintained that Tao was always Confucian and also Daoist, and emphasized that "he was very active; the clearest expression is his poems on 'Reading the Classic of Mountains and Seas.'" [27]. Long and Zhou thus shared important elements in their understanding of Tao. They saw him as a person with passion held within and a broad concern for the world, an image that also embodied the ideal of life pursued by Zhou and Long themselves. In a letter to Long, Zhou jokingly described his translation work as a "cottage industry," but concluded that it was "indirectly also useful to the country. This means not only that there is hope of publication in the future, but also that the government regards my earlier work as valuable. It has not all been in vain, and privately I am delighted." [8]. Long understood Zhou in these terms. In a note to one of his presentation poems, he wrote: "In recent years, the elder has devoted himself entirely to translating European classical literature. He says that among his lifetime contributions this may count for the most, and deeply regrets the writings of his youth." [3]. "One watches a wondrous blossom gestate and take root." [3]. Long's admiration for Zhou also arose from the results of this arduous translation work and the practical concern it revealed.

What Long truly admired, therefore, was Zhou's "passion held within." Long once found Zhang Zhifu's Huangzhou compositions somewhat too austere and arid, but wrote of Zhou that "an austere life grows richer in flavor." [3, 28]. The source of this increasing richness was passion. Zhou's prose was restrained without lapsing into melancholy; it discovered genuine feeling and meaning in everyday life, while his wide reading gave it philosophical depth. As Long wrote, "Truly good poetry generally contains true fire within. True fire is passion. A person without passion can only be compared to withered wood and dead ashes; how could such a person deserve to be called plain?" [29]. The restraint of Zhou's prose and the restraint of its human feeling nevertheless reveal genuine meaning and concern at every turn. To some extent, this *dan* was a need of survival after 1949 for intellectuals such as Zhou Zuoren and Long Yusheng, who had been imprisoned under the stigma of wartime collaboration. Yet the "passion held within" that they emphasized when appreciating *dan* became the ideal state they genuinely pursued in later life. Amid political upheaval and the vicissitudes of personal fate, they found an aesthetic mode and a philosophy of life through which to attain a measure of spiritual repose.

7. Conclusion

The relationship between Long Yusheng and Zhou Zuoren was neither that of an initiated disciple admitted to the inner circle of Kuyu Studio nor merely the bond of casual

companions in adversity. The relationships of Yu Pingbo, Fei Ming, Shen Qiwu, and others with Zhou were based more directly on teacher-disciple transmission and the transmission of literary ideas. Long, by contrast, befriended Zhou as a scholar of ci; each had his own scholarly center of gravity, while their common ground lay in taste and circumstance. Their relationship therefore possessed a distinctive equality. It was a close friendship across generations, grounded in a shared aesthetic sensibility and colored by common historical experience. The independent friendship that developed between Long Shunyi and Zhou Zuoren further extended the relationship beyond the two men and transformed it into a close bond between two generations of their families, a rare development within Zhou's circle of relationships in later life.

This relationship offers a case through which to observe the late-life spiritual world of politically compromised literati. Once the stigma of wartime collaboration had been fixed, political paths forward were closed, and both Zhou Zuoren and Long Yusheng sought a way to sustain themselves. They found an outlet in dan, using everyday life to withstand the burdens of the world and aesthetic taste to sustain their self-identity as intellectuals. Long's repeated emphasis on dan sustained by inward passion shows that they did not truly move toward nihilism. Plainness was an outward mode of conduct; passion was the concern that remained unextinguished within. This is a common thread for understanding Zhou's translation work in later life and Long's pursuit of ci studies, as well as the reason their relationship endured for more than twenty years without interruption. The Linking Publishing edition of Zhou Zuoren riji provides abundant details for reconstructing the full contours of this relationship. As new materials continue to emerge, the study of this relationship remains open to further development.

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