

“Hide-and-Seek” –
On the Reclusion and Political Activism
of the Mid-Tang *Yinshi* (“Hermit”) Fu Zai

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By the late 8th century, a successful political career for a Tang 唐 (618–907) literatus would likely require degree holding. In particular, the much coveted *jinsbi* 進士 degree had become an essential qualification for any ambitious scholar who aspired after top-ranking positions in the government. Indeed, statistics demonstrate that a substantial number of chief ministers since Emperor Xuanzong’s 玄宗 (r. 712–756) reign were *jinsbi* graduates.¹

There are exceptions, of course. Sons of high officials, often from prominent families, could find their way into central government through the *yin* 蔭 protection privilege,² and there is no lacking of examples of those who entered government this way and eventually achieved highly successful careers. Li Deyu 李德裕 (787–849), one of the most notable cases, began his career in government through this channel of *yin* protection, and moved on to serve in Emperors Wenzong’s 文宗 (r. 827–840) and Wuzong’s 武宗 (r. 841–846) courts as chief minister.³ Nonetheless, there is little doubt that degree credential was much sought after, and it brought prestige to literati because literary skill was *the* most important measure of talents in Tang times.

Whether they opted for examination degrees or relied on their family background and connections, most literati would actively assert themselves in politics in order to climb up the ladder of officialdom. For one examination candidate who successfully rose to the top of officialdom, there were hundreds and thousands of those who faced great frustration at the tiresome examinations and the equally challenging phase of getting good placements from the Ministry of Personnel.⁴

1 Throughout the Tang dynasty, high-ranking positions in government were mostly occupied by members of prominent families. By late-Tang, over 80% of those who rose to the position of chief minister were *jinsbi* graduates. See Mao Hanguang 毛漢光, “Tangdai da shizu de jinshi di” 唐代大士族的進士第, in *Zhongguo zhonggu shehui shilun* 中國中古社會史論 (Taipei: Lianjing, 1988), 362; Wu Zongguo 吳宗國, *Tangdai keju zhidu* 唐代科舉制度 (Shenyang: Liaoning daxue, 1997), 173–184.

2 See Wu Zongguo, *Tangdai keju zhidu*, 13–19; Zhang Zexian 張澤咸, “Tangdai de menyin” 唐代的門蔭, *Wen shi* 文史 27 (1986), 47–59; Yang Xiyun 楊西雲, “Tangdai menyin zhi yu keju zhi de xiaochang guanxi” 唐代門蔭制與科舉制的消長關係, *Nankai xuebao* 南開學報 1997:1, 60–65.

3 For a study of his life, see the chronological biography by Fu Xuancong 傅璇琮, *Li Deyu nianpu* 李德裕年譜. Ji’nan: Qilu shushe, 1984.

4 The famous literatus Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824), for example, spent ten years after he obtained the *jinsbi* degree in the capital Chang’an 長安 to “wait” for proper official assignment. See the three letters that he wrote to a chief minister for help, *Quan Tang wen* 全唐文 (Dong Gao 董誥, ed. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983; hereafter cited as *QTW*), 551:11b-23a. The appointment process seems to have become more challenging after the An Lushan Rebellion as central government delegated substantial authority of recruitment to local governments. For a study of this development in mid- and late-Tang, see Jin Yingkun 金滢坤, “Zhong-wan Tang quanxuan zhidu bianhua yu keju jidi rumu de guanxi” 中晚唐銓選制度變化與科舉及第入幕的關係, *Renwen zazhi* 人文雜誌 2002:4, 110–116.

However, there were also those who chose a seemingly different path of retreating to famous mountains, living a life of serenity. They acquainted themselves with other like-minded literati, often forming self-taught groups and referring to their way of life as a form of reclusion. Indeed, many of them addressed themselves or were looked upon by others as *yinshi* 隱士 or its variants such as *yinzhe* 隱者, *dunyin* 遁隱, or *shanyin* 山隱, notions variously rendered broadly as hermit, recluse, and eremite.⁵ However, most of them were no real hermits in its narrow sense, who withdrew physically and mentally from any involvement in the realm of politics and state affairs.⁶ They neither lived a solitary life nor rejected the possibility to serve in public offices. In fact, many of them consciously and unambiguously revealed their enthusiasm in public service, and quite a few would eventually enter government. Some even became highly successful in the world of politics.

As “hermits,” they were a highly respected group. Local officials competed with each other to recruit them into their offices, reflecting a complex cultural-political character of the discourse on hermits that evolved since the early medieval period.⁷ *Yin* 隱 was an identity, representing a system of values that not only shaped the life attitude of the literati but also played a subtle role in shaping politics in local governments. Yet, the eremitic tradition is a dynamic process that encompasses a whole range of social, political, intellectual, and religious processes in interaction. The editors of *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 furnished explicitly a statement that conceptualizes such a tradition by the early eleventh century:

古之隱者，大抵有三概：上焉者，身藏而德不晦，故自放草野，而名往從之，雖萬乘之貴，猶尋軌而委聘也；其次，挈治世具弗得伸，或持峭行不可屈于俗，雖有所應，其於爵祿也，汎然受，悠然辭，使君常有所慕企，怳然如不足，其可貴也；末焉者，資槁薄，樂山林，內審其才，終不可當世取捨，故逃丘園而不返，使人常高其風而不敢加訾焉。… 唐興，賢人在位眾多，其遁戢不出者，纔班班可述，然皆下概者也。… 然放利之徒，假隱自名，以詭祿仕，肩相摩於道，至號終南、嵩少為仕塗捷徑，高尚之節喪焉。⁸

In general, in ancient times there were three categories of hermits. The greater ones hid their bodies, and yet [the brilliance of] their virtue did not become opaque. Hence, although they exiled themselves in the wilderness, their eminent reputation always accompanied them. Even the rulers, with their great authority, would seek them out and humbly invite them for their service. [For those hermits] of a lesser degree, despite their ability to govern the world, they were unable to apply themselves. Holding fast their upright character, they refused to bend to the worldly mores. Although there were times when they responded to invitations, they accepted titles and stipends dispassionately, and would turn them down at

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- 5 These terms are not an accurate description of these groups of literati, nonetheless, they are widely used to describe literati who demonstrated a clear tendency to refrain from serving in public office at least during a certain period of their career. Instead, they adhered to a serene living close to nature, in mountains or by the rivers and seas. In this study, we use these English terms interchangeably.
- 6 For a definition of eremitism that stresses these aspects of behavior, see Aat Vervoom, “The Origins of Chinese Eremitism,” *Xianggang Zhongwen daxue Zhongguo wenhua yanjiusuo xuebao* 香港中文大學中國文化研究所學報 15 (1984), 250.
- 7 For a study of certain patterns of the discourse on hermits in Han and early medieval China, see Alan Berkowitz, *Pattern of Disengagement: The Practice and Portrayal of Reclusion in Early Medieval China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 17–63, 126–148. See also Gao Jiyi 郜積意, “Handai yinyi yu jingxue” 漢代隱逸與經學, *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 20:1 (2002), 27–54; Hashimoto Jun 橋本循, “In’itsu shisō no ryūhen ni tsuite” 隱逸思想の流変について, *Ritsumeikan bungaku* 立命館文學 150–151 (1957), 171–178.
- 8 *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 et al., eds., Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975; hereafter cited as *XTS*), 196:5593–5594.

great ease. This led to the admiration from the part of the rulers. Melancholically, they felt that they lacked [worthy subjects]. This is what made [these hermits] so valuable. For the last category of hermits, their talents were shallow, and they were delighted of dwelling in mountains and forests. Inspecting their talents internally, [they realized that] they were ultimately incapable of getting positions in the world. Therefore, they escaped to the wilderness and did not return. [Nonetheless], people often regarded them highly and did not dare to find faults in them ... When the Tang rose, numerous worthy subjects occupied official ranks, and few would refuse to serve. However, [for those who did so], they belonged to the last category ... For those who sought profit, they insincerely hid their names in order to attract titles and salaries. They crowded the roads, saying that Mount Zhongnan and the Shaoshi peak of Mount Song were the shortcut to officialdom.⁹ The lofty virtue of eremitism has been lost.

Despite this simple categorization of hermits, it certainly reveals a spectrum of values and motivations that underpin the tradition. Such a reflection was not new. Statements articulated during the Period of Disunion, most readily attested by the genre of ‘Biography of the Hermits’ in the dynastic histories on the period, provide certain theoretical foundations for the tradition since antiquity. They cite, in particular, the authority from classics such as the *Yijing* 易經, *Shijing* 詩經, and the *Analects*.¹⁰ There are also examples by those who articulated their views in a less “official” capacity, with notable examples such as Huangfu Mi’s 皇甫謐 (215–282) *Gaoshi zhuan* 高士傳, and Ge Hong’s 葛洪 (283–363) *Baopu zi* 抱朴子.¹¹ Nonetheless, despite the height of the tradition reached by the third and fourth centuries,¹² many statements on eremitism put forward by early Tang times remained sporadic, and few would present a framework that characterizes the gradation of practitioners of eremitism like the one given in *Xin Tang shu*.¹³

One exception is the introductory statement to the biography of hermits in *Liang shu*, which also categorizes hermits at three different levels. It is a view that prillives moral-ethical

9 This alludes to the biography of Lu Zangyong 盧藏用 (d. 713). See XTS 123:4374–4375.

10 See the chapters of “Yimin” 逸民 in *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 (Fan Ye 范曄, ed. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973), 83:2755; “Yinyi” 隱逸 in *Jin shu* 晉書 (Fang Xuanling 房玄齡, et al., eds. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982), 94:2425–2426 and *Sui shu* 隋書 (Wei Zhen 魏徵, et al., eds. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), 77:1751–1752 (largely identical with *Bei shi* 北史 (Li Yanshou 李延壽, ed. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 88:2907–2908); “Chushi” 處士 in *Liang shu* 梁書 (Yao Silian 姚思廉, et al., eds. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), 51:731–732; “Gaoyi” 高逸 in *Nan Qi shu* 南齊書 (Xiao Zixian 蕭子顯, ed. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1972), 54:925–926 (largely identical with that in *Nan shi* 南史 (Li Yanshou, ed. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992), 75:1855–1856); “Yishi” 逸士 in *Wei shu* 魏書 (Wei Shou 魏收, et al., eds. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 90:1929. While some of these works were compiled in early Tang, most of those involved were scholar-officials who served at the end of the Period of Disunion so that the views on the tradition of eremitism can still be seen as a representation of a generally assessment of such a discourse by “contemporary” thinkers.

11 See Niwa Taiko 丹羽兌子, “Kō Hitsu to Kōshi den: ichi in’itsuja no shōgai” 皇甫謐と高士伝——隱逸者の生涯, *Nagoya daigaku bungakubu kenkyū ronshū (shigaku)* 名古屋大学文学部研究論集 (史学) 50 (1970), pp. 49–66; Shimomi Takao 下見隆雄, “Hōbokushi gaihen ni okeru inja snabi no imi” 抱朴子外編における隱者賛美の意味, *Tetsugaku* 哲学 1982:4, 23–40. See also Alan Berkowitz, “Hidden Spoor: Ruan Xiaoxu and His Treatise on Reclusion,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 111:4 (1991), 704–711.

12 See Wolfgang Bauer, “The Hidden Hero: Creation and Disintegration of the Ideal of Eremitism,” in Donald Munro, ed., *Individualism and Holism: Studies in Confucian and Taoist Values* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1985), 157.

13 See *Liang shu* 51:731.

values that shaped eremitism. While praising those *yinshi* who refused to compromise their principles in the face of dynastic transition, it does not characterize the lesser practitioners of eremitism who chose such a path to abandon the moral virtues of rites and filiality just to escape the danger of the time in a negative sense. In the case of *Xin Tang shu*, where reclusion was categorized into three grades, those who belonged to the lowest category were said to be motivated largely by a strong sense of self-interest. Nonetheless, it explicitly admits that the personal integrity preserved in such an act of retirement “counteracted the trend toward greed and self-seeking, and such men served ‘a use by their uselessness.’”¹⁴

What particularly interest us here in the above statement is that the three grades are not exclusively pre-Tang modes of seclusion. The last one is explicitly stated as the more prevalent mode practiced during the Tang. Obviously, it does not come close to any form of substantive reclusion in which one “practiced it for life” and unremittently eschewed of an official career.¹⁵ To the contrary, their retirement to mountains and marshes was precisely for securing official positions. While many of these Tang “hermits” may be viewed as hypocrites, this does not stop us from discussing them as hermits or to reduce the usefulness of examining their mode of thinking and behavior within the context of the eremitic tradition.

Eremitism is not a monolithic construct, as the scheme of categorization readily attests the diverse nature of the discourse. Moreover, *yin* was an identity commonly perceived and acknowledged by the Tang literati. It is historically relevant and useful in understanding those values that shaped the outlook and helped guide the behavior of many Tang literati. It is precisely in this sense that the statement in *Xin Tang shu* helps testify the relevance and usefulness of the concept, even though it does not offer further information on other sub-groups of Tang hermits,¹⁶ which would certainly further our understanding of the complexity of the Tang intellectual world. If many hermits chose to retire to mountains for the sake of gaining entrance to officialdom, then there must be something substantive in the concept of reclusion that served the pragmatic goal of attracting interest from among those in authority. The act of reclusion, viewed in such a lifestyle and its perceived virtues, was certainly significant enough in the minds of the Tang literati. If not, few would have chosen the path of reclusion as a shortcut to political success. Moreover, *yin* points to the “relationship of the individuals to the state and society”¹⁷—more specifically, one’s attitude towards the state within the Tang cultural-political milieu.

It is in this respect that this paper attempts to broaden our understanding of such an attitude within a specific political context, in particularly, through a close examination of the life and career of the mid-Tang literatus Fu Zai 符載 (759–812?). While it is unnecessary to generalize the case of Fu, this case study would nonetheless reveal, or at least suggest, some salient features of the nature of eremitism shared by many Tang *yinshi*. Fu exhibited strong tendency to adhere to a reclusive lifestyle, and was perceived as a noteworthy hermit by his contempo-

14 See Li Chi, “The Changing Concept of the Recluse in Chinese Literature,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 24 (1962–1963), 245.

15 Alan Berkowitz, “Topos and Entelechy in the Ethos of Reclusion in China,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114:4 (1994), 632–633.

16 See Wu Zaiqing 吳在慶, “Tan Tangdai yinshi de yinyi dongji yu guiyin zhi lu” 談唐代隱士的隱逸動機與歸隱之路, *Zhoukou shifan xueyuan xuebao* 周口師範學院學報 21:4 (2004), 26–33.

17 Aat Vervoom, “The Origins of Chinese Eremitism,” 252.

raries.¹⁸ He was active at the turn of the ninth century when leading mid-Tang literati such as Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773–819) endeavored to revive Confucianism. There is evidence showing that Fu was somewhat associated with some of them, or at least shared with them a few important mutual patrons. Despite the fact that some of his writings have been lost, those that survived are still sufficient to allow us to assess some important traits of Fu’s political career in relation to values that might have guided his decisions made about those career options that were opened to him.

A careful study of his career choice, in particular, should shed light on important features of the Tang literati discourse. For this purpose, a reconstruction of his life is necessary to evaluate his career and the values that he adhered to in making such decisions. It shows that Fu, perhaps many other *yinshi* too, was playing some kind of “hide-and-seek” game, and the rules of this game reveal their action and inaction.

Life of a Mid-Tang Literatus/Hermit

Our knowledge of Fu’s life and his family is very limited. There is no contemporary biographical material survived. The two Tang standard histories and the *Tang caizi zhuan* 唐才子傳 furnish no biography for him, and the biographical sketch found in the Qing 清 anthology *Quan Tang wen* offers only a meager amount of information:

載字厚之，蜀人。隱居廬山。李異觀察江西，辟掌書記。試太常寺協律郎，授監察御史。

Style Houzhi, [Fu] Zai was a native of Shu. He retired to mount Lu, [and was later] invited by Li Xun (746–808), Surveillance Commissioner of the Jiangnanxi [circuit], to serve as his secretary. [Later], he occupied the positions of probationary Chief Musician in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices and Investigating Censor.¹⁹

An earlier and more detailed account is in Chao Gongwu’s 晁公武 (1105–1180) *Junzhai dushu zhi* 郡齋讀書志:

符載字厚之，岐襄人。幼有宏遠之志，隱居廬山。聚書萬卷，不為章句學。貞元中李異江西觀察薦其材，授奉禮郎。為南昌軍副使，繼辟西川韋皋掌書記、澤潞祁士美參謀。歷協律郎、監察御使。元和中卒，段文昌為墓志附於後。集皆雜文，末篇有數詩而已。集前有崔群、王湘〈送符處士歸觀序〉，皆云載蜀人，以比司馬、王、揚云。

Fu Zai, style Houzhi, was a native of Qixiang. When he was young, his had ambitious goals. He retired to mount Lu and had in his possession a collection of ten thousand *juan* of books, [but] he was not interested in the art of composition. During the middle of the Zhenyuan period (785–805), he was recommended by Li Xun, Surveillance Commissioner of the Jiangnanxi circuit to the position of Court Gentleman for Ceremonials. [Concurrently], he served as the assistant commander of the Nanchang Army. Later, he was invited to serve as secretary of Wei Gao (746–805), [Military Governor of] Xichuan, and as a military advisor to Xi Shimei (756–819), [Military Governor] of Zelu. Fu had occupied the positions of Chief Musician in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices and Investigating

18 For example, see Bai Juyi 白居易 (772–846), “Dai shu” 代書, in *Bai Juyi ji* 白居易集 (Taibei: Hanjing wenhua, 1984), 43:942.

19 *QTW* 688:1a. The renditions of official titles follow Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985. This account of his official titles when he served Li Xun is not totally accurate. More on this will be dealt with later in this section.

Censor. He died in the middle of the Yuanhe period (806–820), and Duan Wenchang (773–835) composed a tomb inscription for him, which is attached to the end [of his collected works]. His collected works consist of mainly miscellaneous writings, with only a few poems in the last *juan*. In the front matters are [two] “Preface to the poem sending Fu off to visit his parents” composed by Cui Qun and Wang Xiang. Both note that Fu was a native of Shu, and compared him to Sima Xiangru (179–117 BCE), Wang Chong (27–91), and Yang Xiong BCE 53 – 18 CE).²⁰

This is by far the most detailed pre-modern account of Fu’s life that is available to us, for the tomb inscription by Duan is no longer extant. It is also a largely accurate account for most of the information can be verified by Fu’s own writings. When Chao Gongwu put together his bibliography, Fu’s collection was still extant. Since the tomb inscription by Duan was included in it, Chao must have consulted this source when he put together the short biographical outline. Of course, there are still gaps and problems in the account. For example, Cen Zhongmian 岑仲勉 has pointed out that it is unclear where exactly Qixiang was located.²¹

Fu left behind a collection of writings in fourteen *juan*.²² However, by the Yuan 元 (1279–1368) dynasty, a substantial portion of them had been lost.²³ Nonetheless, based on the writings still extant and with the help of other Tang-Song materials, it is possible to provide a sketch that outlines some of the key events in his life. Since Pan-Lü Qichang has recently published a biographical study of Fu,²⁴ the following section that provides a biographical sketch of Fu’s life makes use of Fu’s writings, other Tang-Song sources, and Pan-Lü’s study. This provides the necessary context to situate a proper discussion of the intellectual implication of Fu’s career in mid-Tang China.

Liu Zongyuan, in a letter to Zhao Zongru 趙宗儒 (745–831), addressed Fu as Wudu Fu Zai 武都符載.²⁵ Wudu (in Gansu 甘肅) is likely his prominent clan (*junwang* 郡望), not the place where he grew up. According to the tomb inscription that Fu composed for his wife, he

20 See *Junzhi dai shu mu zhi*, in Xu Yimin 許逸民 and Chang Zhenguo 常振國, eds., *Zhongguo lidai shumu congkan* 中國歷代書目叢刊 (Beijing: Xiandai, 1987), 18:3a-b. Wang Xiang’s preface is no longer extant. A preface to a poem, by Cui Qun, sending Fu back home to visit his parents has survived. However, instead of comparing Fu with Sima Xiangru and Yang Xiong, it compares him with figures such as Yan Hui 顏回 and Yan Guang 嚴光. See “Song Luyue chushi Fu Zai gui Shu jinsheng xu” 送廬嶽處士符載歸蜀觀省序, *QTW* 612:10b.

21 Cen Zhongmian has pointed out that Qi 岐 refers to Qizhou 岐州 (in Shaanxi) where Fengxiang was located. It is where the Fu’s family maintained its ancestral burial ground. However, it is unclear what “Xiang” 襄 really refers to. See the entry “Zaishuo Fu Zai” 再說符載, in *Tangshi yushen* 唐史餘藩 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 125. Pan-Lü Qichang 潘呂棋昌 surmises that because Fu had at one point stayed as a guest in Fan Ze’s 樊澤 (749–798) office when the latter was the governor of Xiangyang and Shan’nan East Circuit (Xiangyang Shan’nan dongdao 襄陽山南東道), it is possible that this caused Chao Gongwu to mistaken Fu’s native place. See “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu” 符載事蹟考述, *Kongda remen xuebao* 空大人文學報 2 (1993), 99. I am grateful to Prof. Chen Jo-shui 陳弱水, National Taiwan University, for obtaining this article by Pan-Lü Qichang.

22 *XTS* 60:1605.

23 According to the “Yiwen zhi” 藝文志 in *Song shi* 宋史 (Tuo Tuo 脫脫, et al., eds. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977), 208:5340, only two *juan* of Fu’s writings remained.

24 See “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 93–119.

25 “He Zhao Jiangling Zongru pi Fu Zai qi” 賀趙江陵宗儒辟符載啟, *Liu Hedong quanji* 柳河東全集 (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian, 1998), 35:369. See also “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 98.

returned her casket to the ancestral burial ground in Fengxiang 鳳翔 (in Qizhou 岐州).²⁶ As his writings testify that he came from Shu, and the fact that he traveled back there to visit his parents, there is little doubt that he grew up in this area. Yet, the specific location in Shu where he spent his early years is unclear. One thing we can be certain is that he was not from Chengdu 成都, because he talked about himself as a guest there.²⁷

We know practically nothing about his parents and most other members of his family. Fu’s wife is a daughter of Li Cheng 李暹, prefect of Fangzhou 房州. She died in 795 at the age of thirty-six *sui* 歲, and bore a son Kuangru 匡儒 and a daughter Shangqing zi 上清子.²⁸ Fu also mentioned a cousin from the Cui 崔 family who was married to an official with the surname He 何, likely He Shigan 何士幹 (*jinsbi* 766).²⁹ Despite the scanty information it seems that Fu, though certainly not of a humble upbringing, was not a member of any prominent or powerful family.³⁰ He often presented himself as a man of humble background, using labels such as: wild man (*yeren* 野人),³¹ common folk (*fangfu* 凡夫),³² mountain dweller (*shanke* 山客),³³ the vulgar one (*pihu* 鄙夫),³⁴ and weakling (*nuofu* 懦夫).³⁵

Fu Zai retreated to mount Qingcheng 青城 at a young age (*ruonian* 弱年), no more than nineteen years of age, in around 774.³⁶ He was accompanied by three close friends: Yang Heng

- 26 “Wangqi Lishi muzhi ming” 亡妻李氏墓誌銘, in Lu Xinyuan 陸心源, ed., *Tangwen shiji* 唐文拾遺 (in *QITW*), 27:1b-2b.
- 27 See “Jian’an Xichuan mufu zhugong xiezhen zan bingxu” 劍南西川幕府諸公寫真讚并序, *QITW* 690:28b.
- 28 “Wangqi Lishi muzhi ming,” *Tangwen shiji* 27:1b-2b. See also “Ji waijiu Fangzhou Li shijun wen” 祭外舅房州李使君文 and the funeral prayer “Ji qi Lishi wen” 祭妻李氏文, *QITW* 691:18b-20a. See the diagram for the family tree of his wife. The name “Kuangru” is indicative of Fu’s Confucian commitment, while “Shangqing zi” suggests that she was either “offered” to a Daoist temple or she chose the path of a Daoist living when she grew up.
- 29 See “Wei Cuishi mei ji dafu Helang wen” 為崔氏妹祭大夫何郎文, *QITW* 691:20a-b. Fu’s funeral prayer of He includes reference to his literary talent and his success in the examinations. See “Ji He dafu wen” 祭何大夫文, *QITW* 691:151. For his *jinsbi* degree, see Meng Erdong 孟二冬, *Dengke jikao buzheng* 登科記考補正 (Beijing: Beijing Yanshan, 2003), 10:420.
- 30 The reference in *Junzhai dushu zhi* that Fu had accumulated over ten thousand *juan* of books and his marriage strongly suggest that it was unlikely that he came from too obscure a social background. As will be demonstrated later in this section, the highly selective nature of his career choice also points to his possible origin from the “leisure” class.
- 31 See “Da Lu dafu shu” 答盧大夫書, *QITW* 688:26b; “Tufu zhen baoning ji” 土汭鎮保寧記, *QITW* 689:18a; “Xiangyang Beilou ji” 襄陽北樓記, *QITW* 689:6b. In “Huainan jiedushi Baling gong Du You xiezhen zan zengxu” 淮南節度使灞陵公社佑寫真讚贈序, *QITW* 690:27b, he addresses himself as a “shanlin yejian zhi shi” 山林野賤之士, a wild and lowly person from the mountains and forests.
- 32 See “Jizeng Yu shangshu shu” 寄贈于尚書書, *QITW* 688:22a.
- 33 See “Tufu zhen baoning ji” and “Jian’an Xichuan mufu zhugong xiezhen zan zengxu,” *QITW* 690:28b.
- 34 “Jiangling Lu shiyu zhai yanji guan Zhang yuanwai hua songshi tu” 江陵陸侍御宅讌集觀張員外畫松石圖, *QITW* 690:2b; “Zhonghe jie pei He dafu huiyan xu” 中和節陪何大夫會讌序, *QITW* 690:7a.
- 35 “Song Lu shiyushi fu Wang linggong mu xu” 送盧侍御史赴王令公幕序, *QITW* 690:16a. The notion *ruonian* refers to a young age. For young men reaching the age of twenty, often referred to by the term *ruoguan* 弱冠, they would participate in the cap ritual (*guanli* 冠禮) that symbolized adulthood. Here, we take *ruo* tentatively as the age of nineteen or younger. If so, Fu was born some time around 756.
- 36 See “Xie Li Xun changshi shu” 謝李巽常侍書, *QITW* 688:23b. Cui Qun’s “Song Luyue chushi Fu Zai gui Shu jinsheng xu,” *QITW* 612:10b, gives the same date.

楊衡, Wang Jianyan 王簡言, and Li Yuanxiang 李元象, all came from Shu as well.³⁷ Together, they would later be known as the “Four Companions in the Mountain” (*Shanzhong siyou* 山中四友).³⁸ There, they cleared some lands and built their own dwellings and immersed themselves in learning.

After staying in mount Qingcheng for about six years,³⁹ the young men moved along the Three Gorges on boat and eventually entered mount Lu near Xunyang 潯陽 (in Jiangzhou 江州) in 780. It was probably on their way there that Fu and others stopped at Jiangling 江陵, where he met Lu Li 陸澧, Surveillance Commissioner, and his brothers: Ba 灞, Run 潤 and Huai 淮. He also befriended with the famous painter Zhang Zao 張璪 and monk Xuanlang 玄覽.⁴⁰ This was in the early Jianzhong 建中 period (780–783). When they arrived at mount Lu,

37 See “Jingzhou yu Yang Heng shuoju yin songyou Nanyue xu” 荊州與楊衡說舊因送越南越序, *QTW* 690:19b. In “Ji chushi Lijun wen” 祭處士李君文, *QTW* 691:17b, Fu noted that he, as well as Wang Jianyan and Li Yuanxiang, came from Shuchuan 蜀川. The tomb inscription that Fu composed for Yang Heng’s father also shows that Yang Heng came from the province of Shu. See “Xipu ling Yang fujun muzhi ming” 犀浦令楊府君墓誌銘, *QTW* 691:4b. Fu also noted in “Da Lu dafu shu,” *QTW* 688:26b, that there were five of them living together in mount Lu. It is unclear who the fifth person was. According to the “Tang Ezhou Kaiyuan si Xuanyan zhuan” 唐鄂州開元寺玄晏傳, Fu, together with Yang Heng and Li Yan 李演, were acquainted with monk Xuanyan 玄晏 (749–800). See *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳, in *Taishō shinshū daizokyo* 大正新脩大藏經 (Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaiyoku 渡邊海旭, eds. Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924–1932), vol. 50, no. 2061, 29:893b. Based on this reference, Cen Zhongmian believes that Li Yan and Li Yuanxiang are the same person. See his *Tangshi yushen*, 125. Moreover, an entry in Sun Guangxian 孫光憲, *Beimeng suoyan* 北夢瑣言 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002), 5:118 notes that Fu, together with Yang Heng and Song Ji 宋濟, resided in mount Qingcheng. However, none of Fu’s extant writings mentions Song Ji at all. Two poems by Song are preserved in *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩 (Cao Yin 曹寅, et al., compil. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 472:5354. According to the brief biography, Song was active during Emperor Dezong’s 德宗 (r. 779–805) reign. Together with Fu and Yang Heng, they lived in mount Qingcheng. The biography of Yang Heng in the same work gives Yang, Fu Zai, Cui Qun, and Song Ji as the “Shanzhong siyou” (*Quan Tang shi* 465:5279).

38 See Jiang Hanchong 姜漢椿, *Tang zhiyan jiaozhu* 唐摭言校注 (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue, 2003), 2:35. Only three names are given: Fu Zai, Yang Heng, and Li Qun 李群. Cen Zhongmian points out that Li Qun was mistaken as one of the four. See his “Ba Tang zhiyan” 跋《唐摭言》, in *Cen Zhongmian shixue lunwen ji* 岑仲勉史學論文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 689. The names of the four varied in a number of sources. Moreover, the idea of a “group of four” was also complicated by the fact that Fu was closely acquainted with some other friends in Mount Lu. For a brief discussion on this point, see “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 102–103.

39 Fu indicated that he spent a total of twelve years in mount Qingcheng and mount Lu: 「青城匡廬，岑巖際天。…孰謂笑忽與中師啟煩襟，期晦明，一十二年於茲矣。」 Cen Zhongmian thinks that the twelve-year period began when Fu first entered mount Lu in around 780 (early Jianzhong) to the point when he wrote this preface in Zhenyuan 貞元 seventh year (792). See his “Ba Tang Zhiyan,” 689. However, it should refer to the time Fu and Yang resided in mount Qingcheng and mount Lu. The phrase “qi fan jin, qi hui ming” 啟煩襟，期晦明 describes the life of serenity during their stay in the mountains. The preface moves on to note the five years that had passed when he returned to the mundane world. Since Fu stayed in mount Lu for five to six years, his stay in mount Qingcheng should then span roughly six years. See *QTW* 690:20b.

40 See “Jiangling Lu shiyu zhai yanji guan Zhang yuanwai hua songshi tu” and “Jiangling fu Zhiqi si Yun shangren yuanbi Zhang Zao yuanwai hua shuangsong zan” 江陵府陟祀雲上人院壁張璪員外畫雙松讚, in *QTW* 690:1a-2b and 690:26a respectively. It is noted in Duan Chengshi’s 段成式 *Yonyang zazhu* 酉陽雜俎 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 12:117 that this happened at the end of the Dali 大曆 (766–

they built their own dwellings and immersed in the learning of the Confucian classics and the philosophers. As a result, they gained fame. Bai Juyi, as noted already, considered Fu Zai and Yang Heng as the more noted ones who had retreated to that mountain to cultivate themselves in Confucian scholarship.⁴¹

Mount Lu was a famous spot where, for centuries, young scholars, retired officials, Daoist priests and Buddhist monks chose their dwellings. The famous Buddhist monk Hui Yuan 慧遠 (334–416), for example, built the Donglin 東林 temple there, attracting a large number of followers both from among the clergies and the lay people, of course, including famous scholars and officials. Bai Juyi would build his thatch hut there in the Yuanhe period, and composed the “Caotang ji” 草堂記 to commemorate the occasion, giving a vivid depiction of the surroundings of this serene site.⁴² Intellectual life in mount Lu was highly dynamic, and Fu’s learning of Confucian scholarship there would likely have benefitted from his interactions, both socially and intellectually, with many other mountain dwellers and religious figures.⁴³ For example, he was acquainted with the Daoist priest Huang Dongyuan 黃洞元, the 15th generation patriarch of the Maoshan 茅山 sect, when both of them moved to mount Lu in around 780.⁴⁴ As noted earlier, it was around the same time that he befriended with the Buddhist monk Xuanyan.

He also wrote to Bao Jie 包佺 (*jinshi* 747), prefect of Jiangzhou. Impressed by Fu, Bao sent him high regards and this resulted in the spread of Fu’s name in the literary arena.⁴⁵ In 783, Fu was acquainted with Wang E 王鏐, who took up the position of prefect of Jiangzhou.⁴⁶ Moreover, an official with the surname Cui 崔, serving in Jiangxi 江西, visited Fu often during a three years period while the former traveled on official trips to Xunyang.⁴⁷ These examples

780) period when monk Xuanlang was living at the Zhiqi temple. Since Fu and his friends moved to mount Lu in around 780, it was probably on their way that they stopped in Jiangling.

41 See note 18 above.

42 See *Bai Juyi ji* 43:933.

43 For a general discussion of mount Lu in the intellectual history of medieval China, see Kimura Eiichi 木村英一, “Chūgoku chūsei shisōshi jo ni okeru Rozan” 中国中世思想上に於ける廬山, in Kimura Eiichi, ed., *Eon kenkyū: kenkyū hen* 慧遠研究: 研究篇 (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1962), 502–533.

44 In particular, Huang was resided in Zixiao feng 紫霄峰. See “Huang xiangshi Qutong ji” 黄仙師瞿童記, *QTW* 689:11a. Yang Heng also befriended with this Daoist master. See his poem, “Deng Zixiao feng zeng Huang xianxian” 登紫霄峰贈黃先仙, *Quan Tang shi* 465:5284. According to the biography of Yang Heng in *Tang caizǐ zhuàn*, Fu and his friends settled in Wulao feng 五老峰. See *Tang caizǐ zhuàn jiaojian* 唐才子傳校箋 (Xin Wenfang 辛文房. Fu Xuancong, et al., annotations and commentary. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), vol. 2, 5:598. Fu’s essay is an early record of the legend of Qutong ascending the Heavens. For a study of this interesting legend, see Sunayama Minoru 砂山稔, “Gudō tōsen kō – Chūban Tō no shitaifu to Bōzanha dōkyō” 瞿童登仙考—中晚唐の士大夫と茅山派道教, in *Zui-Tō dokyo shisō kenkyū* 隋唐道教思想研究 (Tokyo: Hirakawa Shuppan Inc., 1990), 364–388.

45 See “Shang Wei shangshu shu” 上韋尚書書, *QTW* 688:13b and Yu Xianhao 郁賢皓, *Tang cishi kao quanbian* 唐刺史考全編 (Hefei shi: Anhui daxue, 200), 158:2279.

46 See “Ji Nanghai Wang shangshu shu” 寄南海王尚書書, *QTW* 688:17a and Yu Xianhao, *Tang cishi kao quanbian* 158:2279.

47 See “Song Luyue chushi Fu Zai gui Shu jinsheng xu,” *QTW* 612:10a-11a. Fu’s writings place his six years stay in mount Lu somewhere between 780 and 785. This preface also notes that Fu retreated to mount Lu for six years (*banji* 半紀). It was composed on the occasion that Fu was sent back to Shu to visit his parents, and it is dated on the ninth month. The year should be Zhenyuan 1st year (785). However, there is an obvious problem with this text because it is said to be a work by Cui Qun. It was already included into the early Song collection *Tang wencui* 唐文粹 (Yao Xuan 姚鉉. Taipei: Shijie shuju,

show that his “reclusive” living in mount Lu was far from being a life of solitude, and they likely relate to what Fu meant by “broadening his experience.”⁴⁸

In the ninth month of 785, after five to six years in mount Lu, Fu finally left and returned home to pay visit to his parents in Shu.⁴⁹ It was on his way that he met Li Cheng. Impressed by Fu’s talents, Li soon married his daughter to Fu.⁵⁰ This marriage connected Fu to a prominent family, for the Lis were related to the imperial clan, belonging to the Elder Zhengwang (*Da Zhengwang* 大鄭王) branch.⁵¹ His wife’s grand uncle, Li Gao 李嵩, was a high-ranking official in Emperor Xuanzong’s court.⁵² Yet, it is quite unlikely that this connection was helpful at all in his future political career.

Soon after marriage, he returned home. He was around the age of thirty and his reputation readily attracted interest from among the local officials. As he left mount Lu to search for employment to provide for his parents, it is natural that he did not stay at home for too long. He traveled in the nearby areas to seek for patrons.⁵³ However, Fu was highly selective, turning down a number of invitations from local officials.⁵⁴ In the eighth month of 785, for example, Lu Yuanqing 盧元卿, Surveillance Commissioner of Eyue 鄂岳, dispatched an envoy to invite Fu to join his government but was only turned down with the reason of bad health.⁵⁵ Nonetheless, Fu was a guest in Lu’s government in Jiangxia 江夏 early in the following year.⁵⁶

1989), 98:8a. The first problem is that Cui, born in 772, was only about thirteen in 785. Second, it is mentioned in the text that Cui was serving in the office in Jiangxi for three years already when he composed this preface, which is quite impossible given his young age. Cui passed the *jinsbi* examination in 792 when he was twenty-one, and his biographies in the two standard histories do not provide any information if he started his career that early. However, as Cen Zhongmian has pointed out, Cui was still in his early teens at the time. He suspects that there is a problem of textual corruption. Fu’s friend was perhaps someone from a Cui family, but not Qun. See his “Ba Tang *zhijian*,” 690. It is also possible that this friend of Fu’s just happened to have the same name of Qun, but not the one who later passed the *jinsbi* examination and moved on to become a chief minister during the Yuanhe period.

- 48 “Zhang wen jian zhi lu” 張聞見之路, see “Jingzhou yu Yang Heng shuojiu yin songyou Nanyue xu”, *QTW* 690:20a.
- 49 In “Song Luyue chushi Fu Zai gui Shu jinsheng xu”, *QTW* 612:11a, Cui Qun clearly indicated that Fu left mount Lu in the ninth month.
- 50 “Ji wajiu Fangzhou Li shijun wen,” *QTW* 691:19a. See Pan-Lü Qichang, “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu”, 103.
- 51 See *XTS* 70a:2003. However, only one son’s name, that of Li Gou 李邁, is listed under Li Sheng 李昇, Cheng’s father, on the table of genealogy of the imperial clan.
- 52 See his biography in *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (Liu Xu 劉昫, et al., eds. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1988; hereafter cited as *JTS*), 112:3335–3336.
- 53 「君家在岷蜀，展愛高堂，將聖賢典籍，充人子幣帛，…方伯地君不以厚禮遵吾子，予未之信。」 “Song Luyue chushi Fu Zai gui Shu jinsheng xu,” *QTW* 612:11a.
- 54 Fu explicitly noted about this in “Shang Wei shangshu shu,” *QTW* 688:13b-14a; “Xie Li Xun changshi shu,” *QTW* 688:24a.
- 55 See “Da Lu dafu shu,” *QTW* 688:26a-27b. See Cen Zhongmian, “Xu Lao Ge du *Quan Tang wen zaji*” 續勞格讀全唐文札記, in *Quan Tang wen ji shiyi pianming zuozhe suoyin* 全唐文及拾遺篇名作者索引 (Taibei: Dahua shuju, 1987), 28 for the identification of this Lu dafu. See also Pan-Lü Qichang, “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 103.
- 56 See his “Tufu zhen baoning ji,” *QTW* 689:16b-18a and “Xiari Lu dafu xi song Jing shiyu zhi Nanhai xu” 夏日廬大夫席送敬侍御之南海序, *QTW* 690:14b-16a.

In the seventh month of 786, he visited Li Gao 李臯 (733–792), military governor of Jingnan 荊南.⁵⁷ Proably later that year, Fu traveled to Zitong 梓潼 (in Zizhou 梓州), receiving financial support from Li Suming 李叔明 (d. 787), military governor of Jian’nan dongchuan 劍南東川. At this time, Yang Heng came to join Fu, and they were also accompanied by another friend, Xu Jingwei 徐景威, whom they acquainted with earlier in mount Lu. The three engaged in Confucian learning, went on trips in nearby mountains of Qi 郪 prefecture, composed poems and enjoyed wine.⁵⁸ Fu did not stay in Zizhou for too long. He went on trips searching for other opportunities.

In 788, he went to Chengdu, trying to get a position in Wei Gao’s government.⁵⁹ Nothing seems to have worked out there. Fu probably wrote to Fan Ze, then military governor of Jingnan, for financial support.⁶⁰ Perhaps because of this, he was invited by Fan for a visit, for Fu would travel there the next year. Before he arrived there, he visited Li Gao, now military governor of Shan’nan 山南 in the sixth month of 789,⁶¹ and the prefect of Ezhou 鄂州 in the eighth month.⁶²

Fu probably arrived in Jinzhou late in 789.⁶³ Yang Heng, who had just passed the *jinsbi* examination in Chang’an, came to join him.⁶⁴ Perhaps unable to obtain appointment, Yang decided to meet Fu in Jingzhou to look for opportunities together. It is obvious that Fu’s life had been rather unstable during these few years. It was also around this time that his good friends Wang Jiangyan and Li Yuanxiang passed away in poverty.⁶⁵ Fu stayed in Jingzhou for about two to three years, between 789 and 791,⁶⁶ for, in the summer of 791, Fu was there,

57 See Pan-Lü Qichang, “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 103.

58 See “Xunyang suimu song Xu shijiu Jingwei you Lufu xu” 潯陽歲暮送徐十九景威遊潯府序, *QTW* 690:18b. Fu addressed Li Shuming as Li taifu 太傅. He was prefect of Zizhou and military governor of Jian’nan dongchuan between 768 and 786. See Yu Xianhao, *Tang cishi kao quanbian*, 229:3025. According to *JTS* 12:342, Li was given the honorary title of “Taizi taifu” 太子太傅 in the fifth month of 784.

59 See “Jian’nan Xichuan muwu zhugong xiezhen zan,” *QTW* 690:28a-b.

60 「載亦敢以肺腸之事干之。誠能迴公方寸之地，為小子生涯庇蔭之所。移公盈月之俸，為小子度世衣食之業，使隱不遺親。」 “Shang Xiangyang Chu dafu shu” 上襄陽楚大夫書, *QTW* 688:15b. “Chu” 楚 should be “Fan” 樊. This letter is not dated, but internal evidence suggests that it was written before he traveled to Jinzhou.

61 As noted earlier, Fu was formerly acquainted with Li when he was military governor of Jingnan. Li was transferred to the post of governor of Shan’nan in 787 and remained there until 792. See Yu Xianhao, *Tang cishi kao quanbian* 189:2587–2588. Fu attended a banquet with Li in Xiangyang and composed the “Xiangyang Beilou ji” 襄陽北樓記, *QTW* 689:5a-6b, to celebrate the completion of the Beilou. According to “Ji Nanghai Wang shangshu shu,” *QTW* 688:17b-18a, the banquet was given by Wang E.

62 See “Dengzhou cishi ting biji” 鄧州刺史廳壁記, *QTW* 689:1a-4a. It was composed on the fifteenth day of the eighth month of Zhenyuan fifth year (789). We only know that the surname of this prefect was Wang. See also Pan-Lü Qichang, “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 104.

63 See Pan-Lü Qichang, “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 104.

64 It was for financial reasons that Yang sat for the *jinsbi* examination. See “Jingzhou yu Yang Heng shuojiu yinsong you Nanyue xu,” *QTW* 690:20a-b. For Yang’s degree, see Meng Erdong, *Dengke jikao busheng*, 12:523–524.

65 Li Jianyan was not buried until twenty some years later. See “Ji chushi Lijun wen,” *QTW* 691:17a-b.

66 “He Fangong tian huohu song” 賀樊公畋獲虎頌, *QTW* 688:5a-7b, is dated to the twelfth month of Zhenyuan sixth year (790). “Fangong” is Fan Ze, who was appointed governor of Jingnan in Zhenyuan third year (787). See *XTS* 139:4953. See also Cen Zhongmian, “Xu Lao Ge du *Quan Tang wen zaji*,” 27. The governor seat was in Jingzhou, and the essay explicitly notes that Fan had been in his office for four

sending Yang Heng off to accompany Qi Yin 齊映 (746–795), who was appointed Surveillance Commissioner of the Guiguang 桂管, to his new office.⁶⁷

We have no information about Fu's whereabouts during the next three to four years, between 791 and 794. It is likely that he moved back to mount Lu with his family and drifted around in the neighboring areas for supports. We hear about his activities again in 795. Fu was invited in the third month to a banquet by Yan Shiliang 嚴士良, prefect of Jiangzhou,⁶⁸ and this would be a difficult year for Fu, because his wife passed away in the same month.⁶⁹ Fu would later remarry to a woman from the Hongnong Yang 弘農楊 clan. While it is unclear when this took place, we know that He Shigan was involved in bringing this marriage together.⁷⁰

After taking care of his wife's funeral in the fourth month,⁷¹ Wang probably took a trip to Guangzhou 廣州, trying to get a position in Wang E's government in Lingnandong 嶺南東. Fu was acquainted with Wang earlier when he was in Jiangling and Xiangyang. It is noteworthy that Yang Heng was in his entourage in Guangzhou at this time.⁷² One may surmise that this trip might have to do with this specific connection. Fu left for Guangzhou in the fifth month. However, due to serious illness, he stopped at Nankang 南康 (in Qianzhou 虔州) for treatment and was forced to return to mount Lu by the tenth month, already in the winter season.⁷³ It was on his way back that he stopped by the local government in Jiangzhou, where

years. In the summer of 791, Fu was still in Jingzhou. He composed the "Jingzhou yu Yang Heng shuojiu yin songyou Nanyue xu," *QITW* 690:19b-31b. Pan-Lü Qichang speculates that Fu might have stayed in Jingzhou until early in 792 when Fan was transferred to the post of military governor of Shan'an. See "Fu Zai shiji kaoshu," 105. It was when Fu moved to Xiangzhou that he wrote Fan a letter requesting him to repair the tomb of Meng Haoran 孟浩然 (689–740). See "Cong Fan Han'an wei Lumen chushi qiu xiumu jian" 從樊漢南為鹿門處士求修墓牋, *QITW* 688:27b-28a. Also see *XTS* 203:5779–5780. Pan-Lü dates this letter to 797. See "Fu Zai shiji kaoshu," 106. However, there is no clear evidence to support this date.

- 67 "Jingzhou yu Yang Heng shuojiu yin songyou Nanyue xu," *QITW* 690:19b-21b. See also *JTS* 136:3751.
- 68 According to Yu Xianhao, *Tang cishi kao quanbian* 158:2280, Yan served as prefect of Jiangzhou in 795 only. This was recounted a year later in his letter to a Lu Yuanwai 盧員外 of Qizhou 鄆州. Fu noted about this event because the two met in the banquet, likely for the first time. 「去年春三月，某有謂暫出蓬戶間，適值麾幢將度潯陽，嚴太守命某為貳食之客。偶於末席，備聆嘉話。」 "Zeng Qizhou Lu yuanwai shu" 贈鄆州盧員外書, *QITW* 688:20b-21a. I have yet to identify this Lu Yuanwai. According to this letter, his mood was melancholic; it seems unlikely that this took place after his wife's death in the same month. Perhaps this was because of his concern of his wife's health. Therefore, we place this as an earlier event. Pan-Lü Qichang places his visit of Yan in Zhenyuan 12th year (796). See her "Fu Zai shiji kaoshu," 105. However, this is not supported by any evidence. According to Yu Xianhao, Lu Qian 廬虔 likely replaced Yan as prefect of Jiangzhou later in 795 (see *Tang cishi kao*, 2278), Fu could not have attended the banquet in 796.
- 69 See "Wangqi Lishi muzhi ming," *Tang wen shiji* 27:1b-2a.
- 70 See the discussion in note 89 below.
- 71 Fu stored her casket temporarily in the "Northern Peak of the Dehua xiang" 德化鄉 on the twenty-first day of the fourth month. See "Wangqi Lishi muzhi ming" 亡妻李氏墓誌銘, *Tang wen shiji*, 28:2a.
- 72 Fu mentioned in "Ji Nanhai Wang shangshu shu" 寄南海王尚書書, *QITW* 688:16b-18a, that he had heard from a couple of visitors, likely from Guangzhou, that Yang Heng was serving in Wang's government at that time. Fu indicated that this was in the third month. According to the way it was narrated in the letter, this would likely be in 796. According to Yu Xianhao, Wang's governorship there endured from 795 to 801. See his *Tang cishi kao quanbian* 257:3168.
- 73 A number of letters record this. See "Ji Nanhai Wang shangshu shu," *QITW* 688:16b-18a, "Da Zelu Wang shangshu shu" 答澤潞王尚書書, *QITW* 688:18a; it is noted in this letter that he reached Jiangzhou

he obtained a letter of invitation from Wang Qianxiu 王虔休, governor of the Zelu 澤潞 province. He turned down the offer, obviously because of his ill health.⁷⁴

In the autumn of 796, a military official (Guangjun jiangjun 冠軍將軍) by the name Li Yuan 李圓 came to visit Fu in mount Lu. The two discussed about the art of swordsmanship. Li showed Fu an essay by Zhang Jianfeng’s 張建封 (d. 800), military governor of Xusi 除泗. The title of the essay was “Baojian ming” 寶劍銘. In early 797, Fu wrote Zhang a letter to seek for employment, which was accompanied with a copy of his “Gexi jian zhi” 葛溪劍志.⁷⁵ This, however, did not work out. Fu probably asked Fan Ze for support while he was in Xiangyang in the sixth month and composed an essay for the occasion of the completion of Xiyuan 西園.⁷⁶ He stayed there until the next spring.⁷⁷

Fu probably stopped by Hongzhou 洪州 as a guest of Li Xun before returning to mount Lu because he was there in the spring of 798.⁷⁸ Not long after he arrived back in mount Lu, Fu received a sum of forty thousand cash from the prefect of Jiangzhou, Li Kang 李康. With this, Fu purchased some lands in Sanjian feng 三澗峰, close to Donglin and Xilin 西林 in mount Lu.⁷⁹ Probably impressed by Fu’s talents during his brief stay in Hongzhou, Li Xun invited Fu to join his government. Fu turned down the invitation three times before finally accepted the offer. He was given the official appointments of Gentleman of Ceremonials at the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (*Taichang si fengli lang* 太常寺奉禮郎) and Military Vice Commander of the Nanchang Army

in the tenth month, already in winter 「至冬十月歸山下」), and “Zeng Qizhou Lu yuanwai shu,” *QTW* 688:20b.

74 See “Da Zelu Wang shangshu shu,” *QTW* 688:18a-19a. Wang’s governorship was between the tenth month of Zhenyuan tenth year (794) and the third month of the fifteenth year (799). See also Pan-Lü Qichang, “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 106.

75 See “Ji Xusi Zhang dafu shu” 寄除泗張大夫書, *QTW* 688:19a-20b. Zhang served as military governor in Xusi between 788 and 800. See Yu Xianhao, *Tang cishi kao quanbian* 64:925. Fu noted in this letter that Zhang had then been in Xusi for ten years already. Thus, this letter should be dated to 797. Pan-Lü Qichang also dates this to this year. See her “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 106. It is noteworthy that she dates Fu’s trip to Guangzhou to 796, see “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 116–117, n. 24. However, in view of his letter to Zhang Jianfeng, this would be quite unlikely because this letter clearly reveals that Li Yuan’s visit was in the “autumn” of the year before: 「適值去年秋，有冠軍將軍李圓者，道來自東。」 If Fu did travel to Guangzhou in 796, then he could not have met Li Yuan, for he was still on his way back to mount Lu. He did not return until the winter, in the tenth month!

76 See “Xiangyang Zhang duangong Xiyuan ji” 襄陽張端公西園記, *QTW* 689:11b-12b.

77 See “Ji Fan sikong wen” 祭樊司空文, *QTW* 691:18b. See also Pan-Lü Qichang, “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 106. This prayer was composed later in autumn when Fu was back in mount Lu, and it shows clearly that Fu had met Fan not long before.

78 Fu composed an essay for the newly renovated Ganzi Hall (*Gangzi tang* 甘子堂), probably a quarter in Li’s Hongzhou government office. See “Ganzi tang gefu yiwu shi xu” 甘子堂各賦一物詩序, *QTW* 690:8b-9a. Also see “Xie Li Xun changshi shu,” *QTW* 688:23a-b. 「一昨候謁盛府，禮數優賚。… 嘗於甘子堂中，輒以私志，上廣視聽。」

79 「近者江州李使君以俸錢四萬，為某買山。號三澗峰，在二林之右。孤巖絕壑，匡廬之左，壞褐破袍，沛然滿篋，方將面屨峰，構草堂，詠歌堯舜。」 See “Xie Li Xun changshi shu,” *QTW* 688:23b. For Li Kang’s prefectship, see Yu Xianhao, *Tang cishi kao quanbian* 158:2281. Yu cites an essay by Liu Ke 劉軻 which shows that Li was serving in Jiangzhou in the spring of 798 already. It is, however, not sure if Fu solicited this fund directly. In addition, the nature of their relationship is unclear, for there is no other reference about Li Kang in his works. Based on the two works cited by Yu Xianhao, Li was a keen patron of Buddhism. Their mutual interest in the Buddhist religion may be another reason for their acquaintance and the support that Li gave Fu.

(*Nanchang jun fushi* 南昌軍副使). Li's first letter clearly shows that this exchange took place in the early summer, and these appointments had already been approved by the central government. If all these exchanges took place in the summer, then Fu might have assumed his position in Jiangxi later that year. If so, he served in the Jiangxi government for just about one year, between 798 and 799,⁸⁰ for – once again, due partially to health problems – Fu retired back to mount Lu in late 799. He was accompanied by Xu Jingwei briefly, and the latter would soon leave for Luzhou 潞州, taking up a position there through the connection of his relative Xi Shimei.⁸¹

Some time at the turn of 800, Yang Heng requested Fu to write a funeral prayer for his father Ou 鷗, who would be buried with his wife in Chen Cang.⁸² On the first day of the second month of 800, Fu traveled to Jiangxia 江夏 to visit the military governor He Shigan. There, they celebrated the Zhonghe 中和 festival together.⁸³ Fu returned to mount Lu by the summer and received a letter from Yu Di 于嶼 (d. 818), who replaced Fan Ze as the military governor of Shan'nandong after Fan died in the autumn of 798. Yu sent Fu a copy of the tomb inscription of Meng Haoran and invited him to join his government. However, Fu turned down the invitation.⁸⁴ Near the end of the year, Xiao Cun 蕭存 (739–800), son of the famous *gwen* 古文 advocate Xiao Yingshi 蕭穎士 (706–759), died.⁸⁵ Since Fu was acquainted with Xiao a few years earlier as the latter settled in Zixiao feng in mount Lu, he composed a tomb inscription for Cun.⁸⁶

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- 80 These exchanges between the two are extant. However, the writing on the final acceptance has not been preserved. The three letters of invitation by Li are in *QTW* 526:5b-6b, and Fu's replies are in *QTW* 688:22b-26a. Luo Liantian 羅聯添 holds that Fu did not accept Li's invitation because Li did not recommend him to a position in central government. See his "Lun Tangren shangshu yu xingjuan" 論唐人士書與行卷, in *Tangdai wenxue lunji* 唐代文學論集 (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1989), 54. Lu Yang 陸楊 follows Luo's view on this. See his "Cong Xichuan he Zhexi shijian lun Yuanhe zhengzhi geju de xingcheng" 從西川和浙西事件論元和政治格局的形成, *Tang yanjiu* 唐研究 8 (2002), 230 and 249, n. 24. This article is also published under the same title, with minor changes, in Zhou Zhiping & Willard Peterson, eds., *Guoshi fubai kaixin lu – Yu Yingshi jiaoshou rongtai lunwen ji* 國史浮海開新錄—余英時教授榮退論文集 (Taipei: Lianjing, 2002), 121–158. However, this is unlikely to be the case because Li Xun did offer to recommend Fu a position in the central government, and Fu did enter Li's Hongzhou government. For a discussion of these, see Pan-Lü Qichang, "Fu Zai shiji kaoshu," 117, n. 27.
- 81 See "Xunyang suimo song Xu shijiu Jingwei you Lufu xu," *QTW* 690:18b. See Pan-Lü Qichang, "Fu Zai shiji kaoshu," 117–118, n. 28 for a discussion of the time when Fu left Li Xun's government. However, her use of Fu's essay sending Xu to Luzhou does not really help to establish the time at all.
- 82 See "Xipu xianling Yang fujun muzhi ming" 犀浦縣令楊府君墓誌銘, *QTW* 691:4a-6b.
- 83 See "Zhonghe jie pei He dafu huiyan xu" 中和節陪何大夫會讌序, *QTW* 690:5b-7b.
- 84 See "Jizeng Yu shangshu shu" 寄贈于尚書書, *QTW* 688:21b-22b. See also Pan-Lü Qichang, "Fu Zai shiji kaoshu," 107.
- 85 Xiao Yinshi was a leader of a group of literati, including Li Hua 李華 (ca. 710 – ca. 767) and Dugu Ji 獨孤及 (725–777), who propounded on the centrality of Confucianism in politics and formulated influential ideas on *wen* 文 that would shape the intellectual discourse for the rest of the mid-Tang period. For a study of this group, see David McMullen, "Historical and Literary Theory in the Mid-Eighth Century," in Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Perspectives on the Tang* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 307–342.
- 86 See "Shangshu bibu langzhong Xiao fujun muzhi ming" 尚書比部郎中蕭府君墓誌銘, *QTW* 691:6a-9a.

In the spring of 801, Fu visited Li Xun at Zhongling 鍾陵.⁸⁷ Soon after that, he traveled to Jiangxia to visit He Shigan,⁸⁸ and stayed there for about a year until the spring of 802 when He passed away.⁸⁹ Fu stayed there only shortly, perhaps in order to help taking care of He’s funeral. Zheng Shen 鄭伸 was appointed to replace He, and Fu composed the “Qizhou xin chengmen song” 鄆州新城門頌, praising Zheng’s achievement in defending against Wu Shaocheng’s 吳少誠 (750–809) revolt earlier in Huaixi 淮西 when Zheng served as prefect of Qizhou.⁹⁰ Fu probably returned to Sanjian feng after taking care of He’s funeral. Later in the seventh month, he arrived at Yangzhou 揚州.⁹¹ On his way there, he might have made a short stop by Xuancheng 宣城, received by Cui Yan 崔衍, Surveillance Commissioner of Xuanshe 宣歙.⁹²

When he arrived in Yangzhou, he entered service in the Huainan 淮南 government under the patronage of the chief minister Du You 杜佑 (735–812). Fu composed a number of memorials for Du. However, he only stayed there for about nine months because Du was transferred back to the capital in the third month of 803. Fu left Yangzhou in the fourth

87 See “Zhongling Donghu ting ji” 鍾陵東湖亭記, *QTW* 689:12b-14b. This essay clearly states that Li had served there for five years, thus it was composed in 801.

88 See “Song Cui fushi gui Hongzhou mufu xu” 送崔副使歸洪州幕府序, *QTW* 690:11b. This Cui fushi is known by the name Sui 稅 (style-name Wenyue 文約), who likely replaced Fu after he had left Li Xun’s government in late 799. Another piece, “Song Yuan jiaoshu gui mishu sheng xu” 送袁校書歸秘書省序, *QTW* 690:10a-b, was probably written in early 802 in Jiangxia. It notes that this “Yuan jiaoshu” had received support from the mayor of Jingzhao 京兆 (Chang’an), so that he was regarded highly in the capital. As a result, he passed the *jinshi* examination with high distinction, and received the appointment of Editor in the Palace Library (*mishu*). This mayor is identified as a Han from Changli (Han Changli 韓昌黎). He should be Han Gao 韓皋 (744–822), who served as mayor of Chang’an around this time. He was removed from the position in the summer of 799. See *XTS* 159:4955. The *Dengke jikao* records no *jinshi* graduate during this period with the surname Yuan. However, the preface does mention that Yuan came to visit his elder brother. It is interesting to note that Yuan Zi 袁滋, who began his career also as Editor and was recruited to He Shigan’s government in Wuchang 武昌. However, Zi did not sit for the examinations. He got his first assignment as Editor through the recommendation of Zhao Zhan 趙贊. See Yuan Zi’s biography in *JTS* 185b:4830. One suspects if Zi was the “elder brother” of this Yuan mishu.

89 See “Ji He dafu wen,” *QTW* 691:15a-16a. This funeral prayer unequivocally discloses that Fu was still in Jiangxia when He died. That was probably the reason why he also composed funeral prayers for others. See “Wei Yang tingping ji He dafu wen” 為楊廷評祭何大夫文, *QTW* 691:16a-b, and “Wei Cuishi mei ji dafu Helang wen” 為崔氏妹祭大夫何郎文, *QTW* 691:20a-b. This last prayer is of particular interest. While we are unable to identify this “younger sister,” it is quite possible that this “Helang” was He Shigan. The descriptions of the achievement of this “Helang” and his position: 「才盛道貴，為唐碩臣。擁旄樹羽，夏水之濱。」 is similar to Fu’s praise of He Shigan in his own prayer. 「建社擁旄，於鄂之渚。自公之來，法舉令行。鋤姦翦暴，振獨蘇惛。疆理封域，繕完甲兵。十五餘年，夏水潦清。」 If this was the case, then Fu and He were related to each other through family ties. This may also explain the reason why He was involved in Fu’s second marriage after Fu’s wife died in 795. On this issue, see Pan-Lü Qichang, “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 105.

90 See *QTW* 688:3b-5a. See also Pan-Lü Qichang, “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 108.

91 See “Song Xue pingshi huan Jinzhou xu” 送薛評事還晉州序, *QTW* 690:9b.

92 The preface “Xuancheng song Li shanren gui Xushang Langye shanju xu” 宣城送黎山人歸滁上瑯琊山居序, *QTW* 690:21b-23a, testifies that Fu was a guest of Cui in Xuancheng. Cui Yan was Surveillance Commissioner of Xuanshe between 796 and 805. See Wang Shouan 王壽南, *Tangdai fazheng yu zhongyuan guanxi zhi yanjiu* 唐代藩鎮與中央關係之研究 (Taipei: Jiaxin shuini gongsi wenhua jijin hui, 1969), vol. 2, 850. Xuancheng is not too far from Yangzhou. He might have stopped there before arriving at Yangzhou. Of course, it is also possible that he stopped at Xuancheng after leaving Yangzhou in 803.

month, moved along the Yellow River and stopped by Shangyuan 上元, southwest of Yangzhou, on his way back home. There, he was received by the magistrate Zhang Ji 張集.⁹³ After a short stay, he returned to Xunyang. He wrote to Wei Gao expressing his hope to work in his government, but this did not work out.⁹⁴

In the sixth month of 804, Fu went to Changsha 長沙, entering the office of Yang Ping 楊憑 (ca. 750–815), Surveillance Commissioner of Hunan between 802 and 805.⁹⁵ This was probably because of Fu's earlier acquaintance with Yang.⁹⁶ Unfortunately, his stay there was once again short, probably because Yang was unable to offer him anything more stable. Fu then wrote to Wei Gao again to seek employment or financial supports. This worked out because he was in Wei's government by the summer of 805.⁹⁷ He served Wei for just a few months because the latter died in the eighth month of 805.⁹⁸ Liu Pi 劉闢 (d. 806), a subordinate officer, assumed the position as Wei's substitute without getting any official recognition.

At this point, Emperor Xianzong 憲宗 (r. 806–820) had just ascended the throne, and the court was embroiled in fractional politics. Uncertain about the situation and unwilling to risk a major military confrontation in the Xichuan area, the court appointed Liu as assistant governor of Xichuan at the end of the year. However, the ambitious Liu wanted to take over the whole of Sanchuan 三川 region. In defiance of the court's order, Liu revolted and launched attacks in neighboring areas at the beginning of 806. The court thus appointed Gao Congwen 高崇文 (746–809), a commander of the Shence 神策 army, in charge of suppressing the rebel force. It took about eight months for the court to put down the unrest. Liu was captured and brought to the capital, where he was executed.⁹⁹

Fu and others who served in the Xichuan government could easily be charged for their complicity in Liu's revolt. However, Gao not only trusted that they were not involved in Liu's treasonous acts, but treated them with great respect. He even commanded them for government posts in his memorial to the central government. At the end, he rewarded them with monetary gifts handsomely before letting them go.¹⁰⁰ Despite the fact that Fu escaped the

93 See "Ganlu ji" 甘露記, *QTW* 689:19b-20b. This was composed a year later in 804, and nothing can be found about Zhang.

94 See "Shang Xichuan Wei linggong shu" 上西川韋令公書, *QTW* 688:12a-13a. Pan-Lü Qichang thinks that Fu traveled to Sichuan after leaving the Huinan government. However, there is no evidence supporting this. See "Fu Zai shiji kaoshu," 109.

95 「甲申歲夏六月，中丞楊公下車長沙之三年也。余自故山，扁舟一葉，主人舍我於東館。」 "Fengsong Liangying shangren you Luofu shan xu" 奉送良郢上人遊羅浮山序, *QTW* 690:23a. It is explicitly stated there that Fu traveled to Changsha directly from mount Lu (*gushan* 故山).

96 See "Changsa Dongchi ji" 長沙東池記, *QTW* 689:14a-16b. This piece states that it was written in the third year when Yang took up the position, so 804. See *JTS* 13:397. It is also noteworthy that Yang was the father-in-law of Liu Zhongyuan.

97 See "Song Lu duangong gui Hengzhou xu" 送盧端公歸恆州序, *QTW* 690:13a-14b. See also Pan-Lü Qichang, "Fu Zai shiji kaoshu," 110.

98 *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (Sima Guang 司馬光. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987; hereafter cited as *ZZTJ*), 236:7620.

99 For a discussion of this campaign, see Lu Yang, "Cong Xichuan he Zhexi shijian lun Yuanhe zhengzhi geju di xingcheng," *Tang yanjiu* 8 (2002), 225–256.

100 *ZZTJ* 237:7636. The other literati include: Fang Shi 房式, Wei Qian 韋乾度, Dugu Mi 獨孤密, Xi Shimai, and Duan Wenchang. Fu was acquainted with Xi Shimai earlier, and Duan Wenchang would compose a tomb inscription for Fu later.

serious crime of complicity in treason, it must be a very disappointing experience to him. He was about fifty at this time.

He was in the Fan’ge 梵閣 temple in the first month of 807,¹⁰¹ perhaps to find peace in mind after the chaotic and uncertain period in Chengdu. It is noteworthy that Fu was still in his official capacity with the titles of *Taichang xielü lang* and *Jiancha yushi* 監察御史 at this time. Fan’ge temple is close to Xipu prefecture, which was northwest of Chengdu. He was probably waiting for the government’s decision on his fate. An entry in *Bu guoshi* 補國史 notes that because of Gao Congwen’s recommendation, Fu was appointed *mishu lang* 秘書郎, and the order was sent down before Fu arrived in the capital.¹⁰² However, there is no other source to corroborate this piece of information.

Soon after that, the court probably decided that Fu was not involved in Liu Pi’s affairs. Fu thus left Chengdu and returned to Sanjian feng. He was in Jingzhou in the fourth month where he composed a tomb inscription for the famous Buddhist monk Tianhuang Daowu 天皇道悟 (748–807).¹⁰³ There is no information pertaining to Fu’s earlier association with this monk. However, Daowu was active in areas such as Zhongling and Jingzhou between the Jianzhong and Yuanhe periods. Since these are also places where Fu frequented during the same period, it is quite likely that Fu was acquainted with Daowu at that time.

Fu’s writings provide little information about his activities after this incident. It is quite possible that he was back in Sanjian feng during much of 807 and 808. In around 809 or a bit later, Fu accepted – according to Liu Zongyuan – an invitation from Zhao Zongru, military governor of Jingnan, to join his government as secretary (*shuji* 書記).¹⁰⁴ His stay in this office cannot have been long, because Zhao was soon transferred to the post of Director of the Ministry of Punishment (*Xingbu shangshu* 刑部尚書).¹⁰⁵ In the eighth month of 812, Fu moved the caskets of his father and wife from Xunyang to the family burial ground in Fengxiang.¹⁰⁶ It is probably around this time that Fu buried his close friend Li Yuanxiang, who died some time earlier in 789.¹⁰⁷

If *Junzhai dushu zhi* is correct about Fu’s service in Xi Shimei’s government, then Fu would be in Luzhou not long after he buried his father and wife, for Xi served as governor of Zhaoyi

101 See “Fan’ge si Changzhun shangren jingyuan ji” 梵閣寺常準上人精院記, *QTW* 689:8a-9a.

102 Cited in *Tang yulin jiaozheng* 唐語林校證 (Zhou Xunchu 周勛初 collates and annotates. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), 1:64.

103 See “Jingzhou chengdong Tianhuang Daowu chanshi bei” 荊州城東天皇道悟禪師碑, *QTW* 691:1a-b. Koichi Shinohara has discussed the transmission of Daowu’s biography and provides an English translation of this tomb inscription by Fu. See his “Passages and Transmission in Tianhuang Daowu’s Biographies,” in Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara, eds., *Other Selves: Autobiography & Biography in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Buffalo: Mosaic Press, 1994), 132–149.

104 This is explicitly stated in Liu Zongyuan’s letter to Zhao Zongru: 「及受署之日 …」 See “He Zhao Jiangling Zongru pi Fu Zai qi,” *Liu Hedong quanji* 35:269.

105 Zhao served in this position between 808 and 811. It is in the fourth month of 811 that Zhao was called back to the capital to take up the new appointment. See Wu Tingxie 吳廷燮, *Tang fanzhen nianbiao* 唐方鎮年表 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 689.

106 See “Wangqi Lishi muzhi ming,” *Tangwen shiji* 28:1b-2b. Fu’s wife, as noted earlier, died in 795. This inscription also notes that Fu’s father died on the seventh day of the eighth month in Yuanhe seventh year (812). Fu probably decided to bury his father back in Fengxiang that he moved his wife’s casket together.

107 According to Fu’s funeral prayer to Li, it was twenty some years after Li’s death that Fu finally buried Li. See “Ji chushi Lisheng wen,” *QTW* 691:17b.

昭義 between 811 and 817.¹⁰⁸ This seems to have been the last position that Fu held before he died, since the *Junzhai dushu zhi* notes that Fu died in the “mid-Yuanhe” period.¹⁰⁹

Fu Zai the Official-Hermit: A Split Personality

The above reconstruction of Fu’s life provides the basis upon which we can make some observations about the different strands in Fu’s thought that might have influenced the ways he chose his career path. He unequivocally shows the desire to realize himself in real politics. Of course, to talk about political activism of a *yinshi* may seem contradictory; yet, there is no lack of examples of *yinshi* with this outlook during the Tang. The case of Fu Zai helps to reveal some of the values that underpinned such attitudes, which can be seen as a dualistic worldview.¹¹⁰

Fu was living at a time of recovery. Born during the years of the An Lushan Rebellion (755–763), he was ten to twenty years senior than most leading mid-Tang literati such as Han Yu, Liu Zongyuan, and Bai Juyi. However, his career path was distinctively different from most of theirs. One most notable difference is his “insistence” in not taking the examinations. Although there is no evidence showing that he had consciously refused to sit for the examinations, there is also no sign whatsoever that he had ever considered such an option while he was arduously searching for a government post to make his political dream come true. An entry in *Beimeng suoyan* is particularly revealing in this respect, noting that because Fu was a man who took great pride in his ambition to realize kingly and hegemonic rule (*wangba* 王霸),

108 See Yu Xianhao, *Tang cishi kao quanbian* 86:1240; Wu Tingxie, *Tang fanzhen nianbiao*, 481–482. Fu, of course, worked together with Xi in Wei Gao’s government in 805, but the two were acquainted with each other much earlier. According to the preface to a poem sending Xu Jingwei to Luzhou in 799 to work for Xi, Fu noted that he knew Xi earlier through their mutual friend Xiao Yijian 蕭易簡. See “Xunyang suimo song Xu shijiu Jingwei you Lufu xu,” *QITW* 690:19b.

109 An entry in *Beimeng suoyan* gives an account of Fu’s activity since he joined Wei Gao’s government in Sichuan. Fu was invited by the military governor of Nanchang to join his government in the official capacity of *fengli lang*. However, Fu turned down the offer. He then wrote Yu Di asking for a fund of a million cash so that he could buy some lands for retirement. This account, however, raises some problems. The invitation of the governor of Nanchang should be that of Li Xun’s. As we have noted earlier, Fu accepted the offer. But this took place before Fu served Wei Gao in Xichuan. As to Fu’s request for financial support from Yu Di, Wang Tang’s 王讜 *Tang yulin* 唐語林 also makes mention of this event, but it adds that Yu granted the money that Fu had asked for, and sent clothes and paper to Fu. See *Tang yulin jiaozheng* 4:334. However, it is not clear if this happened after 806. The entry in *Tang yulin* is actually taken from Zhao Lin’s 趙璘 *Yunxi youyi* 雲谿友議, probably the earliest source of this piece of information. See *Yunxi youyi*, in *Tang guoshi bu deng bazu* 唐國史補等八種 (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1962), *juan* shang 上, 7. The entry in *Beimeng suoyan* is likely to be based on *Yunxi youyi*, too. As has been noted already, Fu was associated with Yu earlier, possibly through Fan Ze. By the Yuanhe period, Yu had amassed great power, and was notorious “for cruelty and violence, for avarice, for extravagant expenditure . . .” For a study of Yu, see Denis Twitchett, “The Seamy Side of Late T’ang Political Life: Yu Ti and His Family,” *Asia Major*, 3rd series, 1:2 (1988), 29–63. It is therefore not impossible that Fu would solicit financial support from Yu. It is also noteworthy that Yu was addressed as Yu Xiangyang 于襄陽. Yu was then prefect of Xiangzhou 襄州 and governor of Shannandong 山南東 between 798 and 808, and Fu was either serving in various local governments or visiting patrons mostly between 798 and 806. If he did ask for money, this would probably have occurred between 807 and 808 when Fu returned to mount Lu, soon after he had left the Xichuan government.

110 See Li Chi, “The Changing Concept of The Recluse in Chinese Literature,” 235.

he sneered at the path of the regular channel to officialdom, i.e. the civil service examinations.¹¹¹ Such an attitude likely accounts for his lack of interest in taking the examinations.

Degree holding certainly played a role in shaping the intellectual circle of a Tang literatus, and there are many examples of those who failed to obtain the *jinsshi* degree, but, nonetheless, would occupy leading positions in the literary and intellectual arenas. Meng Haoran¹¹² and the late-Tang poet Luo Yin 羅隱 (833–909)¹¹³ are two such examples who failed to obtain the *jinsshi* degree but nonetheless became renowned as a result of their participation in the examinations. Besides sitting for the examinations, they participated in the literary-intellectual circle in the capital areas – Chang’an and Luoyang 洛陽. The difference between them and Fu is not merely that of degree holding, but more in terms of culture and worldview.

A candidate would enter or even create a world of well-knitted network very early on. He did not just learn the Confucian classics, philosophers, and literary skills, but also the proper manners in the daily interactions with fellow candidates, scholar-officials, and examiners. Such interactions would be most intense in the capitals where over a thousand examinees would gather as early as in the summer to prepare for the examinations held in the winter. Banquet gatherings, which were not unusually held in the gay quarters, visits to high officials, particularly those involved in the examinations, and the presentation of scrolls (*xingjuan* 行卷 and *wenjuan* 濫卷) are routine activities demanded of these candidates.¹¹⁴ These activities are themselves transformed into the very symbolism of the examination discourse. Although Fu was also exposed to this culture, probably through his association with those in the entourage of local governments, he did not personally participate in any of them.

We are uncertain about Fu’s family background, but it also played a role in shaping his circle of friends.¹¹⁵ There is no evidence for any close connection between Fu and leading literati of the

111 「唯公以王霸自許，恥於常調懷會之望。」 *Beimeng suoyan* 5:118.

112 Fu certainly considered Meng admirable and certainly looked upon him as a fellow *yinshi*. In a letter to Fan Ze he asked him for his assistance to repair the damages in Meng’s tomb. See his “Cong Fan Hannan wei Lumen chushi qiu xiumu jian,” *QJTW* 688:27b-28a. Meng’s biography in *Xin Tang shu* 203:5779–5780 notes that he was much respected by high officials and leading literati such as Zhang Jiuling 張九齡 and Wang Wei 王維 for his literary talent at the time when he was in the capital to take the *jinsshi* examination.

113 Luo’s name was originally Heng 橫. After failing the *jinsshi* examination for ten times, he changed his name to Yin, signifying his disappointment and the decision to end his attempts to take the examination. For his biography, see *Wuyue beishi* 吳越備史 *juan* 1, in *Luo Yin ji* 羅隱集 (Yong Wenhua 雍文華, comp. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), appendix, 325–326. See also Lin Qixing 林啟興, “Luo Yin de ‘shiju budi’ yu wan-Tang keju” 羅隱的‘十舉不第’與晚唐科舉, *Beijing shifan daxue xuebao* 北京師範大學學報 1994:2, 97–102.

114 A large number of primary and secondary sources can be found on this subject. The Five Dynasties work *Tang zhiyan* 唐摭言 by Wang Dingbao 王定保 provides a wealth of information about various aspects of the examination culture. For a general study of this work in English, see Oliver Moore, *Rituals of Recruitment in Tang China: Reading an Annual Programme in the Collected Statements by Wang Dingbao (870–940)*. Leiden: Brill, 2004. See also Fu Xuancong 傅璇琮, *Tangdai keju yu wenxue* 唐代科舉與文學. Xi’an: Shaanxi ren min, 2003; Seo Tatsuhiko 妹尾達彦, “Tōdai no kakyō seido to Chōan no gōkaku girei” 唐代的科舉制度和長安の合格儀禮, in *Ritsuryōsei —Chūgoku Chōsen no hō to kokka* 律令制—中國朝鮮の法と國家 (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1986), 239–274; Victor H. Mair, “Scroll Presentation in the T’ang Dynasty,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 38:1 (1978), 35–60.

115 The majority of the leading literati in mid-Tang were descendents of prominent families. See Chen Ruoshui [Chen Jo-shui] 陳弱水, “Lun zhong Tang guwen yundong de yige shehui wenhua beijing” 論中唐古文運動的一個社會文化背景, in *Zheng Qianren jiaoshou rongxiu jinian lunwen ji* 鄭欽仁教授榮休紀念論文集 (Taipei: Daoxiang, 1999), 217–246.

time. Besides his “hermit” friends, he was associated mostly with officials in local governments, noted more for their administrative skills than their literary talents. It is very likely that he had met Liu Yuxi 劉禹錫 (772–842) at the end of the Zhenyuan period because both were serving in the Huainan government under the patronage of Du You some time between 802 and 803, and were both involved in drafting up memorials.¹¹⁶ However, the two do not seem to have been close friends, since there is no reference to each other in their writings. Although Fu befriended with Yang Ping and Yang Ning 凝 (d. 803),¹¹⁷ it is unclear if Fu and Liu Zongyuan had ever met each other. When Liu was young, he stayed mostly in the capital Chang’an until the beginning of the Yuanhe period.¹¹⁸ After his downfall following the abortive 805 reform, Liu was sent into exile until he died in 819.¹¹⁹

Fu clearly selected a different path to exert himself in achieving a political career. The biographical sketch given above reveals that his activities were largely confined to the mid-Yangtze River valley area (see Map). There is no indication that he had ever stayed in Chang’an. In fact, none of his extant writings provides any evidence showing that he had ever traveled to any one of the two capitals. The closest is perhaps Fengxiang when he brought the caskets of his father and wife to the ancestral burial ground not long before he died.

Chang’an was an exciting place to be, politically, socially, and culturally.¹²⁰ Yet, it is quite puzzling that Fu hardly ever traveled to this important city. His “insistence” of not taking the examinations does not quite explain this satisfactorily. Unlike the scions of prominent families who had more options in finding their ways to enter government, Fu does not seem to be a man of much resource. Drifting between local governments, his political career was by-and-large a disappointing one.¹²¹ Certainly, he could have chosen a more direct route to bring about a political career – through the *jinsbi* examination. Giving his literary talents and the reputation that he already enjoyed in early Zhenyuan period, and his connections with influential politicians and potential patrons such as Bao Ji, a *jinsbi* degree was not an unrealistic op-

116 See Bian Xiaoxuan 卞孝萱, *Liu Yuxi congkao* 劉禹錫叢考 (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 1988), 83.

117 Yang Ning had composed a preface to a poem sending Fu off. See *Liu Hedong quanji* 21:251.

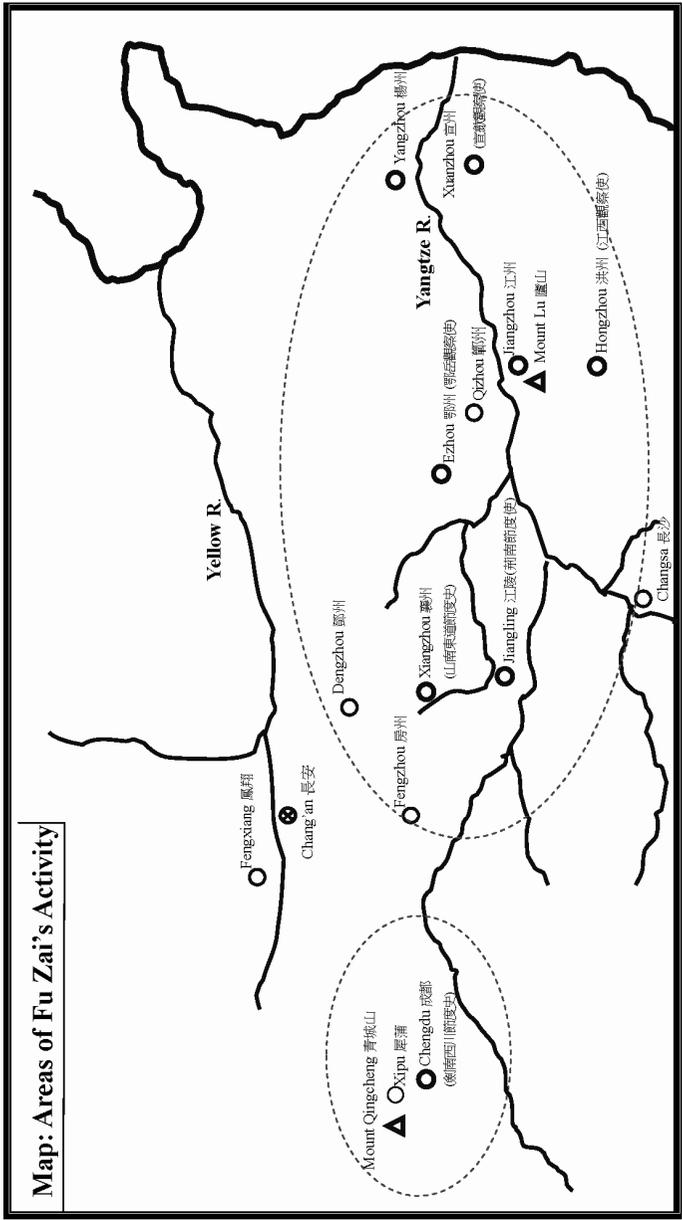
118 Liu was in Xiakou 夏口 with his father around 784 to escape the havoc caused by the Zhu Ci’s 朱泚 rebellion, and moved to Jiangxi with his father briefly. Fu was just about leaving mount Lu at the time searching for patrons, but they were in different places. At any rate, Liu was only in his early teens. See Jo-shui Chen, *Liu Tsung-yuan and Intellectual Change in T’ang China, 773–819* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 47. David McMullen mentions in passing that Fu and Liu were friends, but he does not provide any evidence on this point. See his *State and Scholars in T’ang China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 355, n. 249. There is a chance that Bai Juyi came to hear about Fu in the early 790s when he stayed with his father, Jigeng 季庚 (730–794), who served as Vice Prefect of Xiangzhou 襄州 under Fan Ze. Although Fu just left Fan and returned to mount Lu, he was still communicating with Fan frequently. See Zhu Jincheng 朱金城, *Bai Juyi nianpu* 白居易年譜 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982), 16. Also see Denis Twitchett, “The Seamy Side of Late T’ang Political Life: Yü Ti and His Family,” 45, n. 53.

119 See Shi Ziyu 施子愉, *Liu Zongyuan nianpu* 柳宗元年譜. Wuhan: Hubei renmin, 1958.

120 For a discussion of the political, ritual, economic, and religious functions of the Chang’an city, see Victor Cunrui Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang’an: A Study in the Urban History of Medieval China*. Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, the University of Michigan, 1992. This is by far the most comprehensive study of Chang’an during the Tang in English, but its important function in the examination discourse is unfortunately not examined there.

121 His “Chou fu” 愁賦, assumedly written during the last phase of his life, clearly reveals such a sentiment. See *QITW* 688:1a-2b.

tion. For example, his close “hermit” friend Yang Heng eventually sat for the *jinsbi* examination and successfully obtained the degree after just one or two trials.



Moreover, it is important to note that Fu was well aware that the *jinsbi* degree is *the* way to high office, as he stated most explicitly in the preface to a *Yuan jiaoshu* 袁校書 that the *jinsbi* degree is the ladder for climbing up the officialdom with a

ninth rank position, for those who have such credential and talents in literature, if they did not make serious mistakes or suffered from ill health, they will gradually rise to top-ranking positions in less than twenty years.¹²² So, why did Fu refuse to consider such an option after years of frustration? The answer to the question has to be sought in the realm of ideas.

Mount Lu is a place that brought the Three Teachings (*sanjiao* 三教) together, and Fu, despite his strong Confucian outlook, was also interested in both the Buddhist and Daoist religions. However, they remained subordinate to his ambitions to participate in real politics – to achieve good government through Confucian learning. He did not demonstrate particular interest in classical learning or speculative thinking. He studied the Confucian classics for the purpose of applying them in immediate politics. The notion *dazhong* 大中 (Great Centrality), in particular, captures his political activism, and he propounded it in a number of occasions to characterize the Confucian ideal of ordering the world, transforming social mores, and nourishing the people.

Far from being a hermit who practiced reclusion for life and who wholly withdrew from politics, Fu was keen on getting into government to realize himself in political terms. His acceptance of Li Xun's invitation was probably due to Li's promise to get Fu a position in the central government.¹²³ However, despite his lofty ideal of bringing good government to the world, which he repeatedly emphasized in his writings, his position remained ambivalent, for he often proffered such ambition in the position of a *yinshi*. His letter to Fan Ze clearly displays this inner tendency:

載頃與友生數人，隱居廬山。其所學者，不獨文章名數而已。意根於皇極大中之道，用在於佐王治國之術。常欲致君於堯舜，馳俗於中古。此乃小子夙夜孜孜不息也。… 意者欲開故山草堂，拂舊帙編簡，晨昏之暇，終竟前志。… 移公盈月之俸，為小子度世衣食之業，使隱不遺親。

Previously, I retired to mount Lu with a few friends. What I studied was not merely the arts of composition (*wenzhang*) and institutions (*mingshi*). I focused my attention on the way of Great Centrality (*huangji dazhong*), [so that] it can be applied as the techniques to assist the emperor to govern the state. My intention was to elevate my sovereign to the positions of [the sage-kings] Yao and Shun, and to bring worldly customs back to that of mid-antiquity. This is what I have untiringly toiled myself in ... I would like to reopen my thatch hut in mount [Lu], and to clear my books of dust during my free time in morning and dawn so that I can fulfill my earlier ambition ... [I wish] you could donate a month of your salary to me so that I could take care of the needs of clothing and food. In this way, the recluse would not need to abandon his parents.¹²⁴

Two points relevant to our present discussion are discernible here. The most notable one is the affirmation of the canonical view of *wen*'s didactic function: *Wenzhang* serves as the essential means to realize government policy and to inculcate Confucian moral-ethic. That is all! The act of composing should not be seen as an end in itself and it certainly should not serve merely as a form of artistic expression. Such a literary view was propounded repeatedly in his

122 「國朝以進士擢第為入官千仞之梯，以蘭臺校書為黃綬者九品之英。其有折桂枝，坐藝閣，非名聲衰落，體命轉軻，不十數歲公卿之府，媛步而登之。」“Song Yuan jiaoshu gui mishu sheng xu,” *QITW* 690:10a. Also see “Jingzhou song Yang Heng shuojiu yinsong you Nanyue xu,” *QITW* 690:21a.

123 This is expressed quite explicitly in the second letter that Li wrote to Fu: 「僕素高山仰之，豈不能薦足下於朝，立可觀之地。矯翼霄漢，躍鱗清流，以成雅志哉。」See “Zaiqing shu” 再請書, *QITW* 526:7a-b.

124 “Shang Xiangyang Chu dafu shu,” *QITW* 688:15a-b.

other writings.¹²⁵ While often articulated in “formal” writings composed for the purpose of seeking employment or soliciting financial supports from high officials, it also appeared in a more private context, e.g. in a preface which he wrote when sending Yang Heng off to Nanyue for a position in Qi Yin’s government. It is a piece that Fu recalled the “good old days” when the two retired in mount Qingcheng and mount Lu, striving to master Confucian learning. Hence, the distinction drawn to separate the means and the end of *wenzhang* 文章 (composition) can be seen as a highly internalized endeavor. It was a recurring theme that firmly establishes his stance on *wen*. In view of the above biographical sketch, these statements on his intellectual outlook or literary view should not be taken lightly. More specifically, his tendency to de-emphasize literary value suggests a likely explanation for his “refusal” to take the *jinsbi* examination, for this examination precisely placed great stress on the candidates’ literary skills, as testified by the importance put on the genres *shi* 詩 poetry and *fu* 賦.

Such a literary view was not unique because many leading literati in the eighth century’s intellectual arena shared a similar sentiment. However, it is difficult to firmly establish any intellectual link between Fu and these literati.¹²⁶ Nonetheless, his view on *wen* would soon find echoes in the Yuanhe intellectual realm. Lü Wen 呂溫 (772–811), for example, would certainly find this de-emphasis of literary value (*wenzzi* 文字) attractive.¹²⁷ Moreover, the desire to revive the culture of mid-antiquity was shared by many writers at the turn of the ninth century, particularly those *gumen* advocates. While a few contemporary literati in the Zhenyuan period had also propounded on the notion *dazhong*,¹²⁸ Fu was more serious and specific in using it to promote Confucian learning in real politics.¹²⁹ Liu Zongyuan, later in the Yuanhe period,

125 The more explicit statements include: 「其所務者，不專文字，亦嘗有意窺佐王治國之術，思樹勳不朽之事。」“Shang Xichuan Wei linggong shu,” *QITW* 688:12a-b; 「況乎屬一詞，屯一事，上不陳教化，次不敘志意，皆遊言也。豈曰文為？」“Ji Xusi Zhang dafu shu,” *QITW* 688:19b; 「夫詩之所主，大者存諷刺，備勸戒。觀風俗之美惡，細者眇江山，采雲物，導性情之幽滯。」“Song Xue pingshi huan Jinzhou xu” 送薛評事還晉州序, *QITW* 690:9b; 「俱務佐王之學。初載未知書，其所覽誦，章句而已。中師發明大體，擊去疵離，誘我於疏通廣博之地，示我精淳元顯之際，偃德之道，實有力焉。」“Jingzhou yu Yang Heng shuojiu yinsong you Nanyue xu,” *QITW* 690:20a. For other statements that reveal a similar view, see “Yu Liu pingshi Bozhou shu” 與劉評事伯芻書, *QITW* 688:16b; “Da Zelu Wang shangshu shu” 答澤潞王尚書書, *QITW* 688:18b; “Huainan jiedushi Baling gong Du You xiezhen zan,” *QITW* 690:27a.

126 Pan-Lü Qichang holds that Fu owed intellectual debts to leading *gumen* 古文 advocates in the mid-eighth century because they shared similar view on *wen*. She further argues for her case by pointing out that Fu was closely associated with Zhao Zongru, Xiao Cun, and Xi Shimei, all were sons of key *gumen* advocates. See “Fu Zai shiji kaoshu,” 95–97. Although this is not impossible, her arguments are largely speculative in nature. Fu’s association with Zhao Zongru, as far as we can tell, occurred late in his life, and the nature of that between Fu friendship with Xiao and Xi was largely unclear. It is, therefore, at best speculative to talk about any intellectual debt that Fu owed to these figures. In my view, it would be more appropriate to talk about his literary view in relation with the prevailing intellectual atmosphere of the time.

127 See Liu Yuxi’s “Tang gu Hengzhou cishi Lüjun jiji” 唐故衡州刺史呂君集紀, *Liu Yuxi ji*, 19:235.

128 For examples, see Cui Yuanhan 崔元翰 (ca. 735 – ca. 805), *QITW* 523:19b and Quan Deyu 權德輿 (759–818), *Quan Zai zhi wenji* 權載之文集 in *Zhongguo xibei wenxian congshu* 中國西北文獻叢書, 11:6a, 13:6a, 31:6a.

129 See *QITW* 688:7a, 688:15a, 689:3b, 690:7a, 690:17a.

would repeatedly propound the centrality of Confucianism using the same notion.¹³⁰ Although there is no clear evidence for any intellectual debt that Liu owed to Fu, Liu's high regards for Fu's talents and political ambition (*yishu zhiqi* 藝術志氣)¹³¹ suggest that he had probably read some of Fu's writings.

While there is no strong evidence for an inner link between Fu's literary view and his not taking the *jinsbi* examinations, this, nonetheless, was quite likely a possible explanation. A couple of examples may help to illustrate such a possible connection. The example of Li Xi-yun 李栖筠 (719–776), grandfather of the powerful chief minister Li Deyu during Emperor Wuzong's reign, provides some hints to Fu's attitude toward the examinations. Li, like Fu, lived as a recluse before the age of twenty in a mountain in Gongcheng 共城. He first refused to sit for the examinations in order to cultivate the *dao* 道, but was later persuaded by his nephew Li Hua to take the *jinsbi* examinations. Eventually, he obtained his *jinsbi* degree and moved on to become a high official.¹³² It is obvious that the *dao* he pursued was in great conflict with the examination culture, suggesting that his reluctance to take the examination was a consequence of his dislike of the emphasis on literary skills in the examinations. In particular, the growing trend in euphemistic literature was identified with decadence in government. Therefore, the very act of sitting for the examination can be seen as taking a stance on values. Indeed, Li's grandson Deyu used this precisely as the reason to distinguish *jinsbi* graduates from those who entered office through the *yin* protection (*zidi* 子弟).¹³³ Although it is unlikely that Fu would have agreed with such a preference for *zidi* in high office, he probably shared a similar rejection of the stress on literary skills in the examinations.

Another revealing example is the case of Li Kan 李戡 (d. 837), whose "refusal" to take the *jinsbi* examination and vehement attack of euphemistic literature are recorded in much detail in his tomb inscription composed by Du Mu 杜牧 (803–852). Li, from Jiangxi, traveled to the capital in 812 for the *jinsbi* examination. However, he found it a great insult because of the way government clerks checked the candidate's credentials. As a result, he refused to take the examination and returned home. Many scholars perceived this as an upright act of refusing to compromise one's principles. Due to this event, Li Kan soon attained a legendary status. As Du reported, fifteen years later, when it was his turn to sit for the *jinsbi* examination, candidates in the two capitals still talked about Li's remarkable story. Moreover, he was also known for his vehement criticism of the unrestrained and dexterous literature as exemplified by the works of Yuan Zhen 元稹 (779–831) and Bai Juyi, the so-called *Yuan Bai ti* 元白體, vowing that he would have punished those who practiced such decadent literature if he had the authority to do so.¹³⁴ Both of these examples show the tension between the prevalent euphemis-

130 See Sun Changwu 孫昌武, *Liu Zongyuan zhuannan* 柳宗元傳論 (Beijing: Renmin wenzue, 1982), 86–117; Chen Ruoshui, "Liu Zongyuan yu zhong Tang ruxue fuxing" 柳宗元與中唐儒學復興, *Xin shixue* 新史學 5:1 (1994), 18–21.

131 See *Liu Hedong quanji*, 35:369.

132 「初未弱冠隱于潞郡共城山下，營道抗志不苟於時。」 See Quan Deyu, "Tang gu yinqing guanglu dafu yushi dafu zeng situ Zanhuan Wenxian gong Ligong wenji xu" 唐故銀青光祿大夫御史大夫贈司徒贊皇文獻公李文公文集序, *Quan Zaizhi wenji* 33:3a. Li obtained his *jinsbi* degree in 748, see *Dengke jikao buzheng*, 9:365.

133 See *JTS* 18a:602–603.

134 See "Tang gu Pinglu jun jiedu xunguan Longxi Li fujun muzhi ming" 唐故平盧軍節度巡官隴西李府君墓誌銘, in *Fanchuan wenji* 樊川文集 (Du Mu. Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1978), 9:137. The late-Tang

tic literary trend and the traditional didactic role that literature should have. One may surmise that Fu’s strong adherence to a canonical view might have influenced his decision whether or not to sit for the *jinsbi* examination.

The second noteworthy and even more interesting point about the passage cited above is the seemingly ambivalent position that Fu maintained in terms of his identity. On the one hand, he repeatedly and solemnly proclaimed his political ambition. On the other hand, the real purpose of writing Fan was indeed to solicit financial support so that he could maintain his reclusive lifestyle. The same can also be seen in a letter that he wrote to Wei Gao, where Fu reminded the governor of Xichuan that he had previously visited or wrote him five times, but failed to impress him. This was clearly another attempt to find employment in the Xichuan government. However, at the end of this letter, he told Wei that his intention was to travel along the Yangtze to return to mount Lu, obviously a return to reclusion. For this, he needed financial support from high officials.¹³⁵ As we have seen in the biographical sketch, he also obtained money from Li Kang in Jiangzhou that allowed him to build his dwelling in Sanjian feng, and one cannot rule out the possibility that Fu received financial support from Yu Di near the end of his career.

One can certainly see the paradoxical nature of Fu’s career choice. He was drifting not just between local governments and patrons, but also between two diametrically opposite identities. Yet, this seems not to have bothered Fu at all. To him, the two were really perceived as being one – two aspects of the same worldview. Perhaps one may even say that any attempt to draw a distinction between the two was meaningless to Fu. The paradox reveals the values that shaped his actions.

A revealing example to attest such an attitude is the way he identified himself in the praise (*zan* 贊) that he composed for Du You’s portrait. Written in 803 when he was serving in Du’s Huainan government, he first addressed himself in the official position of Gentleman of Ceremonials at the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (*Taichang si fengli lang*), a post he was originally appointed to when he served in Li Xun’s government in Jiangxi.¹³⁶ However, it is interesting to read at the end of the piece when he described himself as a “wild and lowly man from the mountains and forests,”¹³⁷ clearly in the image of a recluse rather than one serving with official title. It shows a “split personality,” albeit certainly revealed subconsciously.

Reclusion and political activism thus coexisted in Fu’s thought without any clear sign of tension. Such a seemingly contradictory worldview, however, was not uncommon. Even from the state’s perspective, the paradoxical attitude was considered totally acceptable as it was most readily seen in the decree examinations (*zhike* 制科)¹³⁸ that aimed at recruiting those “with cultivated virtues and talents, but refused to serve” (*Yunde buaicai yinju bushi* 蘊德懷才隱居不

scholar Huang Tao 黃滔 (*jinsbi* 895) also noted about Li’s complaint. See *Tang Huang yushi gong ji* 唐黃御史公集 (*Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊 edition), 7:85a.

135 See “Shang Wei shangshu shu,” *QTW* 688:13a-14a.

136 The post of *fengli lang* is an upper ninth rank position (*cong jiu ping shang* 從九品上), see *JTS* 42:1802.

Despite the low rank, this was nonetheless a regular entry position that allows later promotion to high ranks.

137 「載山林野賤之士」 See “Huainan jiedushi Baling gong Du You xiezhen zan,” *QTW* 690:27b.

138 For some discussions of the decree examinations, see Wu Zongguo 吳宗國, *Tangdai keju zhidu* 唐代科舉制度 (Shenyang: Liaoning daxue, 1997), 66–95; P. A. Herbert, “Decree Examinations in Tang China,” *Tang studies* 10/11 (1992–1993), 1–40.

仕).¹³⁹ Despite the obvious oxymoronic nature,¹⁴⁰ examinations of a similar nature were not uncommon during the eighth century. The fact that they were offered and that candidates (recluses?) did come forward to sit for them testifies that a reclusive lifestyle and a political career were not necessarily unreconcilable with each other.

Undoubtedly, many of them had strategically chosen a reclusive lifestyle as the “shortcut of mount Zhongnan” (*Zhongnan jiejing* 終南捷徑), because the hermit identity was an important asset. In his exchanges with high officials, mainly for the purposes of getting employment or financial support, Fu consistently stressed his identity as a recluse.¹⁴¹ He repeatedly reminded his potential patrons of this because hermits were seen as exemplars of great moral integrity. It characterizes those who upheld great virtue, whether they be Confucian, Daoist, or Buddhist, and not being “contaminated” by decadent trends. Fu highlighted this identity likely because it helped to strengthen his plea for support, and, at the same time, provided a way to justify his desire to maintain such a lifestyle. It was therefore a double-edged sword.

However, the dilemma remained – he could not have them both at the same time. Nonetheless, he did try to reconcile the inner tensions of his personality and justify his rather ambivalent attitude toward serving the state and retreating to the mountains.

The Jade and the Pine Tree – Theorization and Justification

A choice for a reclusive lifestyle or an active political career was not always an either-or question. While Fu’s passion to realize himself in politics is unequivocal, the calling for a reclusive living, at the end, out-weighed his political activism. The above discussion of his “split personality” clearly illustrates this tendency. So, he was continuously attracted to his mountain dwelling where he felt totally at ease. The reason behind his drifting between a life of a mountain dweller and that of an official in local governments was the result of a seemingly conflicting set of values that he adhered to. He solicited gifts of money from high-officials and local governors but also turned down numerous offers of jobs from others. His decisions to accept or turn down these offers do not merely reflect his personality, but also that of a worldview which helps to reconcile the tensions of his “split personality.”

He tried to theorize, and thus to justify, such a worldview in his writings by using the metaphors of jade and pine tree. Among his extant writings, there is only one piece that belongs to the sub-genre of discourse (*lun* 論), a kind of writing that often reflects the writer’s stance on topics such as politics, philosophy, or history. This is the kind of writing that may reveal his reflection on his reclusive lifestyle. Indeed, this work is valuable in its way of providing insight

139 See Chen Fei 陳飛, *Tangdai shice kaoshu* 唐代試策考述 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002), 383.

140 The oft-cited reference in Zhao Lin’s 趙璘 *Yin hua lu* 因話錄 that sarcastically mocks at those “hermits” who hurried to the capital for these decree examinations most readily testifies this. See *Yin hua lu*, in *Tang guoshi bu deng baizhong*, 28 (section *jue* 角). 「有似昔歲，德宗搜訪懷才抱器不求聞達者。有人於昭應縣逢一書生，奔馳入京，問求何事。答云：『將應不求聞達科。』此科亦豈可應耶！號欺聾俗，皆此類也。」

141 See “Shang Xichuan Wei linggong shu,” *QITW* 688:12a-b, “Shang Wei shangshu shu,” *QITW* 688:13b, “Shang Xiangyang Chu dafu shu,” *QITW* 688:15a, “Ji Nanhai Wang shangshu shu,” *QITW* 688:17a, “Da Zelu Wang shangshu shu,” *QITW* 688:18b, “Zeng Qizhou Lu yuanwai shu,” *QITW* 688:21a, “Jizeng Yu shangshu shu,” *QITW* 688:22a, “Xie Li Xun changshi shu,” *QITW* 688:23a-b, “Da Lu dafu shu,” *QITW* 688:26b.

into this dimension of his life. Entitled “Zhisong lun” 植松論 (On Planting the Pine Tree), this essay uses the pine tree as a metaphor to elaborate on the importance of nourishing one’s potential in order to prepare oneself for an eminent political career in the future. It clearly shows a link between a political career and a reclusive lifestyle.

The essay describes, in a fictitious way, an official of Chu 楚 who planted a small pine tree in his courtyard. Though reaching the height of just a few feet with circumference only slightly bigger than that of a bamboo tree, it readily shows an elegant form. Upon inspecting the tree, the official decided that it was time to cut it down, perhaps for the making of utensils. When it was about to be chopped down by the axe, a visitor tried to stop him by elaborating on its great potential:

是木有戛雲之姿，有構廈之材。繩墨太速，恐夭其理。今植於庭除之間，克耳目之翫，尚見狎近，氣色不振。若徒於嵩岱之間，沆瀣之華注於內，日月之光薄於外，祥鸞嗷嗷戲於上，流泉湯湯鳴其下。巖岫重複，漠漠然清淨。靈風四起，聲掩箏籟。是時也，當境勝神王，拔地千丈，根實黃泉，枝摩青天。則可以柱明堂而棟大廈也。¹⁴²

This tree has the demeanor of reaching the clouds and the potential for the construction of a great mansion. If you place restraints on it too early, I am afraid that this would only damage its potentials. Now it is planted in the courtyard, serving the purpose of entertaining the viewers, it is affected by its surroundings, thus showing withering signs. If you move it to areas around mount Song and Tai, then the essence of the water fills within, and it is exposed to the brilliance of the sun and the moon. The auspicious Luan bird is trilling away on top of it while the running spring is echoing below. With the protruding peaks lying on top of one another, calmly it is at ease. With the spirited winds from the four directions, it is surrounded by the sounds of the Yu and Lai pipe instruments. At this point, with the surrounding conditions unsurpassed and the spirit in master, it can rise up to a thousand yards, with roots penetrating deep down and branches touching the blue sky. It can then serve as the pillar of the Mingtang¹⁴³ or as the beam of a great mansion.

This essay metaphorically dwells on the need for man to properly cultivate his potentials for a future brilliant political career. Such a program of cultivation should involve a standard curriculum of Confucian learning, just as he had mentioned it in quite a number of instances. However, he said nothing of the sort in the above quoted passage. Instead, he put much emphasis on the proper surroundings, the proximity to nature that is needed in nurturing one’s potentials. In this sense, this piece can also be read more literally. The clear implication is that a life in the mountain does not preclude a political career. To the contrary, it provides the best environment for one to cultivate his virtues and allow the future statesman to develop his potentials. Hence, a reclusive lifestyle does not contradict a political career. It is the essential stage for the ultimate goal of serving the state.

This is the expression of an attitude, also an attempt to justify his early and prolonged retirement to mount Qingcheng and mount Lu. Moreover, it is possible that he perceived his long-term reclusive lifestyle as a continuous process of cultivation. Nonetheless, such an act of justification reveals a sign of tension. In reality, when he finally entered the next phase of asserting himself in politics, to fulfill the dream of bringing order to the world, his preference for a reclusive lifestyle continuously guided him to the opposite direction. A consequence is that he was often prevented from fully asserting himself in real politics. He probably felt that

142 *QTW* 690:25b.

143 See David McMullen, *State and Scholars in Tang China*, 124–128.

his mountain dwelling was a place where he could fall back to. With gifts of money from officials, he could live out his life in simplicity.

Another reason that helps to explain his rather unsuccessful political career is that he was not given the chance to apply himself in politics. As seen in the biographical sketch, his terms of service in local governments were often cut short because his patrons were transferred to other positions or died shortly after Fu took up his position. Perhaps because of the short stays, Fu was unable to demonstrate his ability to handle important administrative duty. The writings that he composed during his stays in Jiangxi and Xichuan, for example, were often written for banquet gatherings or gatherings of a commemorative nature, having little to do with the practical matters of government. Nonetheless, despite this external factor, Fu was far from being aggressive in climbing up the official ladder for he held the belief of waiting for the right time, and for the right patron who would come along to lift him up from seclusion.

This is another key feature of his politico-intellectual outlook — the expectation of an official-patron, an understanding friend (*zhīyīn* 知音), who appreciates his talents and would recommend him to an important position in the central government. Such an attitude helps to account for the largely passive role that he took in bringing about a political career. This is consistent with his view on the relevance of a reclusive lifestyle to a successful political career, and he articulated this by using the metaphor of a precious jade, one that needs to be polished and discovered by a patron who recognizes its worth. This basically alludes to the story of the Jade of Bian He 卞和 (a.k.a. *Hesbi bi* 和氏璧).

According to *Han Feizi* 韓非子, the earliest source that records this story, Bian was a native of Jingzhou in the state of Chu 楚 during the Spring and Autumn period (722–481 BCE). He once discovered a piece of unpolished jade in mount Jing 荆 and offered it to the court. King Li 厲 of Chu had a jade specialist to inspect it. The specialist reported that it was no jade but simply a stone. So, considered of being deceitful, He was punished by having his left foot chopped off. Later, He offered the jade to the court again when King Wu 武 came to the throne. Once again, the result of the inspection was the same. Therefore, King Wu had his remaining right foot cut off as well. Finally, when King Wen 文 came to rule, Bian He for three days and nights miserably wept in mount Jing with his jade to the point of weeping blood. Upon hearing this, King Wen sent an official to inquire about it. Bian He replied by saying that “I’m weeping not for having lost my feet. I am sad because of the fact that people call this precious jade a mere stone, and because the upright person is looked upon as being deceitful. It is for this reason that I wept.” The king then had the stone cut open, and this finally revealed the perfect jade hidden inside.¹⁴⁴

Both used as a metaphor and an allusion, Fu articulated his view on how a worthy person should expect to have his political ideal realized. This is most explicitly developed in a preface to a poem to send his friend Xiao Yijian away on a tour along the Three Gorges (Sanxia 三峡). After dwelling on the *hidden* quality of the jade and invoking the allusion of Bian He, he moved on to liken it to the case of a man who possesses *hidden* virtues. Like the jade of Bian He, he also needs to wait for the right time when his worthiness would be discovered and appreciated by an understanding patron who would elevate him to the position of governing:

144 See the chapter “Bian He” in *Han Feizi jijie* 韓非子集解 (Wang Xianshen 王先慎, annotations. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003), 4:95–97.

及其乘時運之會，遭知己之顧，鬱起耕釣，作時功勳。上以戴君，下以福生人。澤流萬世，聲塞九寓。¹⁴⁵

When he rides at the point when time and situation match, with the support of an understanding patron, he would be raised from [a life of] farming and fishing, and establish his merits and ranks. Assisting the ruler above, and bringing prosperity to the populace below, his achievements benefit ten thousand generations, and his reputation spread to the nine directions.

Literally, Fu was using this to offer comfort to Xiao Yijian, who was likely agonizing over a frustrated political career, too. However, it can likewise be read as a self-reflection. It is also a statement of self-consolation and self-assurance to reconfirm his dream of bringing order to the world. At the same time, such an attitude is consistent with his reclusive tendency.

Fu identified himself as a jade elsewhere in his other writings. In the rhapsody “Chou fu,” he expressed his melancholy over his unfulfilled life goal of a successful political career. Of the long concatenation of allusions that he used to articulate his frustration is the jade of Bian He where he invoked in particular on the point of those who suspected the jade as merely a piece of worthless stone, thus likens them to those who distrusted his worthiness.¹⁴⁶

A more lucid example in which Fu revealed this expectation or desire of a *zhiyin* to facilitate his transformation into a “refined jade” (a successful official) appears in the funeral prayer that he composed for Fan Ze. Fu came to associate closely with Fan in the late 780s, spending up to three years in Jingzhou. They remained in good terms until Fan died in 798. Fu was in Xiangyang just the year before. The act of composing the funeral prayer clearly attests their cordial relationship, and its content further confirms Fu’s gratitude to Fan’s recognition of his ability. It states clearly that just the year before his death, Fan was planning to invite him to serve in his government, with the intention to recommend him to a position in the central government. To this, Fu described Fan as one who helped to transform him from a jade-like stone (*min* 珉) into a refined jade (*yu* 瑜).¹⁴⁷

Conclusion

A reclusive life style is a mode of thinking, which is amply reflected in Tang sources. Many young scholars spent years in mountains to prepare for the examinations. Indeed, there were many reasons for them to do so. A more serene environment, the opportunity to meet other scholars and teachers, and the availability of good libraries in the monasteries, these are some of the reasons that attracted bright young man to dwell for years in the mountains.¹⁴⁸ They either resided in the monasteries, or visited these religious sites in their mountain dwellings. Hence, they were exposed to a variety of values and lifestyles, particularly that of the recluse. This accounts for many of those who exhibited a pendant for a life of hermit. However, as the

145 “Shuo yu zeng Langling Xiao Yijian you Sanxia xu” 說玉贈蘭陵蕭易簡遊三峽序, *QITW* 690:24b.

146 「疑卞和之美玉」 *QITW* 688:2a. This piece must have been written at a later stage of his life, since he ends by stating quite explicitly that he failed “half-way” in his attempts to get a position in the government: 「愁兮愁兮，羈志杳而無伴，鴻漸於陸，層霄未半。懷戴君與利物，每行吟而坐歎。」 *QITW* 688:2a-b.

147 「載本諸生，器識孱愚。猥辱拂拭，化珉為瑜。昔歲渚宮，灌澗濡枯。前年南擁，顧重禮殊。將致賓僚，將貢國都。」, *QITW* 691:18a.

148 See Yan Gengwang 嚴耕望, “Tangren xiye shanlin siyuan zhi fengshang” 唐人習業山林寺院之風尚, in *Tangshi yanjiu congkao* 唐史研究叢考 (Hong Kong: Xinya yanjiusuo, 1969), 367–424.

main purpose for many was political success, they had to choose between an active political career and a reclusive lifestyle at a certain point in their life. Our discussion here examines the life of Fu Zai, a literatus *yinshi* in mid-Tang. While there are quite a few examples of such figures in Tang, most of them were silent about their desire to involve in government. Unlike the more narrowly defined religious figures, or those hermits who simply disliked or rejected politics, they were Confucian scholars keen on learning the skills of government. The case of Fu Zai allows us to learn about this particular group of Tang intellectuals.

Active during the time of political and intellectual changes, Fu did not choose a more direct path to enter politics. The decision in choosing his career path was guided by a value system that was quite opposite to that stressed by the recruitment system of his days. The examinations recruited cultured man talented in the skill of literature. Fu, who endeavored to apply himself in real politics, likely saw the examinations as something that undermines his political idealism. His interest is in the way of kingly and hegemonic rulership. Despite such an intellectual orientation, Fu was at the same time profoundly shaped by his early experience as a *yinshi*.

His stays in mount Qingcheng and mount Lu were perhaps too long a period. Not only did he spend twelve years in these serene environments, mount Lu remained his home base for the rest of his life. He kept returning to his dwelling there throughout those years when he was moving from one local government to another. For example, in his letter to Yu Di in 801, he stressed that he had stayed in mount Lu for twenty years. Certainly, he had been serving in various local governments during the last couple of years. Yet, in his own mind, he was a mountain dweller, always a *yinshi*. It was such a mindset that affected his political decision. Despite his enthusiasm in politics, he was always pulled back.

Was Fu Zai an isolated case of a frustrated *yinshi* who tried to assert himself in politics? Some aspects of his life, his career choice in particular, are indeed the result of his personality. In this sense, they are unique. However, his career choice reveals certain patterns that were likely shared by many. This applies in particular for his drifting between the two poles of serving and not serving. Just like Fu Zai, many scholars would have liked to integrate both poles into their lives.¹⁴⁹ Fu's position in Li Xun's Jiangxi government seems promising at first. The probationary office of Chief Musician is a typical appointment for those who were first recruited into a local government. Ample examples show that some of those who entered government service through a similar path would gain more authority in local administrations, and eventually moved on to take up positions in the central government. Two such examples should suffice to illustrate this. Deng Yu 鄧禹 (755–810), a contemporary of Fu, with a very similar employment history of serving in the local governments of Jiangxi and Xichuan, began his career as Court Gentleman for Ceremonials (*fengli lang*) of the *Taichang si*, exactly the same official title that Fu had in Xichuan. In the case of Deng, however, he moved on to administer legal matters in local governments. Eventually, he rose to the position of prefect of Guizhou 貴州.¹⁵⁰

149 The case of Zhu Wan 朱灣, a contemporary of Fu, shows a similar pattern. Living a life of a recluse during the Dali period, he eventually served in local governments. Like Fu, he also turned down many offers. However, he did not leave behind enough writings that would allow us to get further insight into his worldview. The same can be said about most *yinshi*. See *Tang caizi zhuan jiaojian*, vol. 1, 3:681–686.

150 See Liu Zongyuan, “Tang gu Yong Guan zhaotao fushi shi dali sizhi jian Guizhou cishi Dengjun muzhi ming” 唐故邕管招討副使試大理司直兼貴州刺史鄧君墓志, *Liu Hedong quan ji* 10:106. For a discussion of various administrative duties a scholar recruited in local government may be given, see Shi Yuntao 石雲濤, *Tangdai mufu zhidu yanjiu* 唐代幕府制度研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue, 2003), 331–352.

Kong Shurui 孔述睿 (730–800), whose biography is in the “Yinyi” section in the two Tang histories, retired to mount Song 嵩 together with his brothers during the Dali period. Recommended by the chief minister Liu Yan 劉晏 (?–780), he was appointed by Emperor Daizong 代宗 (r. 762–779) as the Chief Musician of the *Taichang si*. Gradually, he was promoted to a number of positions in central government before choosing a path of reclusion again. When Emperor Dezong came to the throne, he invited Shurui to serve in his court. Though reluctant, he served and stayed until 788 when he was allowed to retire.¹⁵¹

One can find numerous examples of this sort throughout mid- and late-Tang. Hence, it was not unrealistic for Fu to expect a similar career. However, he was not given any such opportunity to serve in any stable administrative post. Moreover, he must be disappointed that Li Xun’s earlier promise of helping him to secure a position in central government was not redeemed. He spent just about a year in Jiangxi and resigned due to health problems. Within a year after he returned to Xunyang in 801, he found a position in the Huainan government. One suspects that either his health problem was not so serious or that he was simply using it as an excuse. The latter seems to be quite likely the case as the *Tang zhiyan* notes that Fu left Jiangxi in disappointment, apparently being disillusion with the future prospect of his job in Li Xun’s government.¹⁵²

A position in local government would have provided Fu with a relatively secured living, but he did not accept the position merely for making a living. Despite his love for a reclusive life style, he was nonetheless highly serious in fulfilling a political career. Unfortunately, his dream never came true. His oscillation between local government service and reclusive living in mount Lu is symptomatic for his final disappointment. The effort to rationalize his highly ambivalent position did not help to resolve the tension. He played the “Hide-and-Seek” game in a more passive way that instead of asserting himself more aggressively to seek for a career, he waited in vain for being discovered by an understanding patron. Thus, at the end, it is not surprising to hear his agonizing voice echoed in the rhapsody “Chou fu”: “My dream for ranks and merits is remote. Aged, my hair turned gray.”¹⁵³

Table: A Chronology of Fu Zai’s Life

Date	Place	Age (≤)	Activities & Other Information
756	Shu 蜀?		Born?
756–774	Shu		Grew up in the Shu area.
774 (Jiayin 甲寅) Dali 大曆 9 th year	Mount Qingcheng 青城山	19	Fu traveled to mount Qingcheng with Yang Heng 楊衡, Wang Jianyan 王簡言, and Li Yuanxiang 李元象. They studied the way of government.
775 (Yimao 乙卯) Dali 10 th year	Mount Qingcheng	20	In mount Qingcheng.
776 (Bingchen 丙辰) Dali 11 th year	Mount Qingcheng	21	In mount Qingcheng.
777 (Dingsi 丁巳) Dali 12 th year	Mount Qingcheng	22	In mount Qingcheng.

151 See *JTS* 192:5130–5131; *XTS* 196:5609–5610.

152 「符載後佐李騫為江西副使，失意去從劉闢。」 See *Tang zhiyan jiaozhu* 2:36. Cen Zhongmian had pointed out that Li Zhi 李騫 should be Li Xun.” See his “Ba *Tang zhiyan*,” 689.

153 「功名慨其緬邈，鬢髮颯以斑白。」 “Chou fu,” *QTW* 688:1b.

778 (Maowu 戊午) Dali 13 th year	Mount Qingcheng	23	In mount Qingcheng.
779 (Jiwei 己未) Dali 14 th year	Mount Qingcheng Jiangling 江陵	24	Moved to Mount Lu from mount Qingcheng near the end of the year. Stopped at Jiangling. Acquainted with the painter Zhang Zao 張瑑, monk Xuanlang 玄覽, Lu Li 陸澧 and his brothers Ba 灞, Run 潤, and Huai 淮.
			<u>Works:</u> *“Jiangling Lu shiyu zhai yanji guan Zhang yuanwai hua songshi tu” 江陵陸侍御宅讌集觀張員外畫松石圖 *“Jiangling fu Zhiqi si Yun shangren yuanbi Zhang Zao yuanwai hua shuangsong zan” 江陵府陟岷寺雲上人院壁張瑑員外畫雙松讚
780 (Gengshen 庚申) Jianzhong 建中 1 st year	Mount Lu 廬山	25	In Mount Lu. Acquainted with monk Xuanyan 玄晏 and the Daoist priest Wang Dongyuan 王洞元. Studied the Five Classics and various philosophers. *Wrote letter to Bao Ji 包佶, prefect of Jiangzhou.
781 (Xinyou 辛酉) Jianzhong 2 nd year	Mount Lu	26	In mount Lu.
782 (Renxu 壬戌) Jianzhong 3 rd year	Mount Lu	27	In mount Lu. *Befriended with a Cui Qun 崔群 who served in Jiangxi 江西.
783 (Guihai 癸亥) Jianzhong 4 th year	Mount Lu	28	In mount Lu. *Befriended with Wang E 王鏐, prefect of Jiangzhou.
784 (Jiazi 甲子) Xingyuan 興元 1 st year	Mount Lu	29	In mount Lu.
785 (Yichou 乙丑) Zhenyuan 貞元 1 st year	*Chengdu 成都 *Fangzhou 房州 *Langzhou 朗州 *Qizhou 鄴州	30	Left mount Lu in the ninth month and returned home to see his parents. *Cui Qun composed a poem with a preface sending Fu back to Su: “Song Luyue chushi Fu Zai gui Shu jinsheng xu” 送廬嶽處士符載歸蜀觀省序. *Met Li Cheng 李暹 (in Fangzhou?), and married his daughter. *In Langzhou in the eighth month. *Traveled to Qizhou. Invitation from Lu Yuanqing 盧元卿, but Fu turned down the offer. <u>Works:</u> “Da Lu dafu shu” 答盧大夫書 “Huang xianshi Qutong ji” 黃仙師瞿童記 “Baoan zhen zhengtū jì” 保安鎮陣圖記
786 (Bingyin 丙寅) Zhenyuan 2 nd year	Jingzhou 荊州 Zitong 梓潼	31	In the seventh month, Fu was in Li Gao's 李臯 Jingnan 荊南 government as guest. *Went to Zitong with Yang Heng and Xu Jingwei 徐景威. Received support from Li Shuming 李叔明, military governor of Jian'nan dongchuan 劍南東川. <u>Works:</u> “Tufu zhen baoning ji” 土汭鎮保寧記 *“Xiari Lu dafu song Jing shiyu zhi Nanhai xu” 夏日廬大夫送敬侍御之南海序

787 (Dingmao 丁卯) Zhenyuan 3 rd year	?	32	?
788 (Wuchen 戊辰) Zhenyuan 4 th year	Chengdu	33	In Chengdu, associated with Wei Gao. <u>Works:</u> “Jian’nan Xichuan mufu zhugong xiezhen zan bingxu” 劍南西川幕府諸公寫真讚并序 *“Shang Xiangyang Chu dafu shu” 上襄陽楚大夫書
789 (Jisi 己巳) Zhenyuan 5 th year	Jingzhou Xiangyang 襄陽 Dengzhou 鄧州	34	Arrived in Jingzhou from Chengdu. Traveled to Xiangyang and Dengzhou. Yang Heng obtained the <i>yinshi</i> degree, and joined Fu in Jingzhou from Chang’an. <u>Works:</u> “Xiangyang Beilou ji” 襄陽北樓記 (六月十五日) “Dengzhou cishi ting biji” 鄧州刺史廳壁記 (八月十五日)
790 (Gengwu 庚午) Zhenyuan 6 th year	Jingzhou	35	In Jingzhou. *Wang Jianyan and Li Yuanxiang died about this time. <u>Works:</u> “He Fangong tian huohu song” 賀樊公收獲虎頤 (六年冬)
791 (Xinwei 辛未) Zhenyuan 7 th year	Jingzhou Mount Lu	36	In Jingzhou. Yang Heng left Jingzhou and traveled to Nanyue in the summer. <u>Works:</u> “Jingzhou yu Yang Heng shuojiu yin songyou Nanyue xu” 荊州與楊衡說舊因送遊南越序 *“Cong Fan Hannan wei Lumen chushi qiu xiumu jian” 從樊漢南為鹿門處士求修墓牋
792 (Ren Shen 壬申) Zhenyuan 8 th year	Mount Lu	37	In mount Lu.
793 (Guiyou 癸酉) Zhenyuan 9 th year	Mount Lu	38	In mount Lu.
794 (Jiaxu 甲戌) Zhenyuan 10 th year	Mount Lu	39	In mount Lu. *Acquainted with Xiao Cun 蕭存, who moved to Zixiao feng 紫霄峰 around this time.
795 (Yihai 乙亥) Zhenyuan 11 th year	Mount Lu Nankang 南康 Jingzhou	40	In mount Lu. Visited Yan Shiliang 嚴士良 in Jingzhou in the third month. Fu’s wife passed away in the same month. Set out to travel to Guangzhou 廣州 in the fifth month with an invitation from Wang E, but stopped at Nankang due to illness. Fu returned to mount Lu in the tenth month. *Invitation from Wang Qianxiu 王虔休, governor of Zelu. Fu turned down the offer. <u>Works:</u> “Jiqi Lishi wen” 祭妻李氏文 “Ji Nanhai Wang shangshu shu” 寄南海王尚書書 “Da Zelu Wang shangshu shu” 答澤潞王尚書書
796 (Bingzi 丙子) Zhenyuan 12 th year	Mount Lu	41	General Li Yuan 李圓 came to visit. They discussed swordsmanship. <u>Works:</u> “Zeng Qizhou Lu yuanwai shu” 贈蘄州盧員外書 *“Jiangzhou lushi canjun ting biji” 江州錄事參軍廳壁記

797 (Dingchou 丁丑) Zhenyuan 13 th year	*Jiangzhou 江州 Xiangyang	42	In Xiangyang. Fu wrote Zhang Jianfeng 張建封, military governor of Xusi 除泗, for employment. It was sent together with a copy of “Gexi jianming” 葛溪劍銘. <u>Works:</u> “Ji Xuxi Zhang dafu shu” 寄除泗張大夫書 “Xiangyang Zhang duangong Xiyuan ji” 襄陽張端公西園記
798 (Wuyin 戊寅) Zhenyuan 14 th year	Mount Lu Sanjian feng 三澗峰 Zhongling 鍾陵	43	Fan Ze died. Received a sum of forty thousand cash from Li Kang 李康, prefect of Jiangzhou. He used it to purchase some land in Sanjian feng 三澗峰. Visited Li Xun 李巽, Surveillance Commissioner of Jiangnan xi 江南西, in Zhongling. Later, Fu accepted invitation from Li to join his government. Fu likely moved to Zhongling later this year. <u>Works:</u> “Ganzi tang gefu yiwu shi xu” 甘子堂各賦一物詩序 **“Xie Li Xun changshi shu” 謝李異常待書 **“Da Li Xun zaiqing shu” 答李巽再請書 **“Da Li Xun disan shu” 答李巽第三書 “Xin guang shuang chengmen song” 新廣雙城門頌 “Ji Fan sikong wen” 祭樊司空文 **“Ezhou He dafu chuangzhi Xiating shi xu” 鄂州何大夫創製夏亭詩序
799 (Jimao 己卯) Zhenyuan 15 th year	Zhongling Sanjian feng	44	Fu served Li Xun in Jiangxi, and resigned at the end of the year due to illness. Xu Jingwei came to Zhongling to join Fu, and the two returned to Sanjian feng together. Xu would soon left for Zelu. <u>Works:</u> “Song Lu duangong gui Baling jianwang Jiangxia ye He dafu xu” 送盧端公歸巴陵兼往江夏謁何大夫序 ¹⁵⁴ **“Xunyang suimu song Xu shijiu Jingwei you Lufu xu” 潯陽歲暮送徐十九景威遊潯府序
800 (Gengchen 庚辰) Zhenyuan 16 th year	Sanjian feng Jiangxia 江夏	45	In Jiangxia in the second month, celebrating the Zhonghe 中和 festival with He Shigan 何士幹. Invitation from Yu Di 于頔, but Fu turned it down. Yang Heng’s father died. He requested Fu to compose a tomb inscription for his father. Xiao Cun died. <u>Works:</u> “Zhonghe jie pei He dafu huiyan xu” 中和節陪何大夫會譙序 “Song Cui fushi gui Hongzhou mufu xu” 送崔副使歸洪州幕府序

154 「乙卯歲 … 主君以清淨之理，治洪州之三年也。… 顧謂部從事符載序而導之云 … 」 Fu was still in Jiangxi. However, “Yimao” 乙卯 corresponds to 775 or 834. Fu would be too young in 775, and died already in 834. So “Yimao” cannot be correct. Since Fu served Li Xun sometime between 795 and 800, the year 799 is a “Jimao” 己卯 year. One suspects that “Jimao” was mistakened as “Yimao.” See Cen Zhongmian, “Xu Lu Ge du *Quan Tang wen* za ji,” 28.

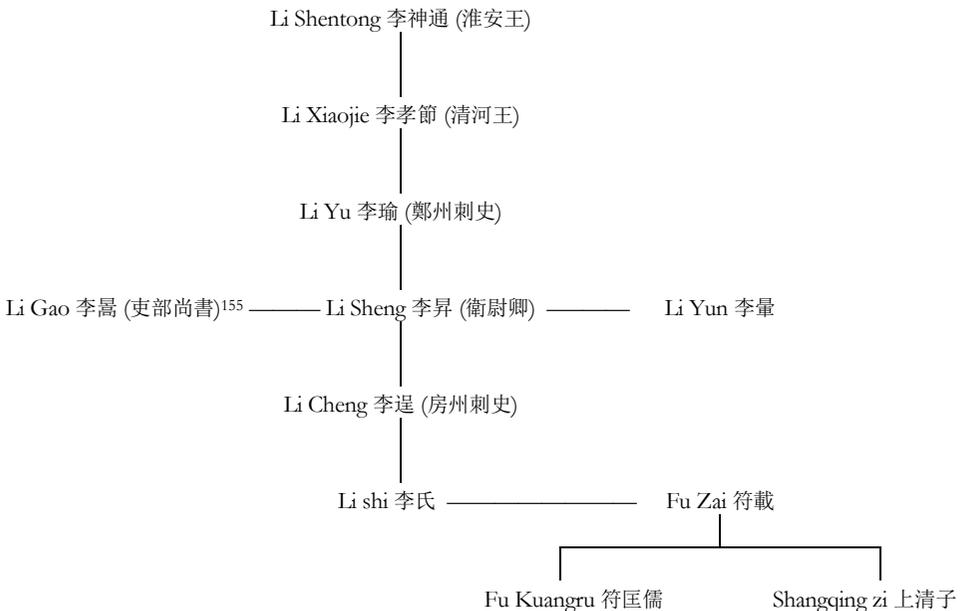
		<p>“Xipu xianling Yang fujun muzhi ming” 犀蒲縣令楊府君墓誌銘</p> <p>“Shangshu bibu langzhong Xiao fujun muzhi ming” 尚書比部郎中蕭府君墓誌銘</p> <p>“Jizeng Yu shangshu shu” 寄贈于尚書書</p> <p>*“Song Lu shi yushi fu Wang linggong mu xu” 送盧侍御史赴王令公幕序</p> <p>*“Zhongling xiazhong song Pei panguan gui Zhexi xu” 鍾陵夏中送裴判官歸浙西序</p> <p>*“Wei Jiangxi Li changshi ji Kai heshang wen” 為江西李常侍祭顛和尚文</p>
801 (Xinsi 辛巳) Zhenyuan 17 th year	Sanjian feng Zhongling Jiangxia	46 Visited Li Xun in Zhongling. Traveled to Jiangxia to stay with He Shigan. <u>Works:</u> “Zhongling Donghu ting ji” 鍾陵東湖亭記
802 (Renwu 壬午) Zhenyuan 18 th year	Sanjian feng Yangzhou 揚州 Xuancheng 宣城	47 Stayed with He Shigan in Jiangxia. He Shigan died in the spring this year. Zheng Shen 鄭伸 was appointed to replace He, and Fu stayed with him briefly after he arrived to take up the new position. Traveled to Yangzhou in the seventh month. Served Du You in the Huainan government. *Stopped in Xuancheng on his way to Yangzhou. <u>Works:</u> “Ji He dafu wen” 祭何大夫文 “Wei Yang tingping ji He dafu wen” 為楊廷評祭何大夫文 “Wei Cuishi mei ji dafu Helang wen” 為崔氏妹祭大夫何郎文 “Song Xue pingshi huan Jinzhou xu” 送薛評事還晉州序 “Qizhou xin chengmen song” 蕪州新城門頌 “Wei Du xianggong he enci Huaixi shubo biao” 為杜相公賀恩賜淮西粟帛表 “Luzhou jin jiahe biao” 廬州進嘉禾表 “Xie chaojing biao” 謝朝覲表 “Xie ci dongyi biao” 謝賜冬衣表 “Xie ci yaofang biao” 謝賜藥方表 “Xie shouzhao biao” 謝手詔表 “Di'er biao” 第二表 “Wei Du xianggong ji Yidi Zhang xianggong taifuren wen” 為杜相公祭易棣張相公太夫人文 “Wei Du xianggong ji Cui zhongcheng wen” 為杜相公祭崔中丞文 *“Song Yuan jiaoshu gui mishu sheng xu” 送袁校書歸秘書省序 *“Xuancheng song Li shanren gui Xushang Langya shanju xu” 宣城送黎山人歸滁上瑯琊山居序
803 (Guiwei 癸未) Zhenyuan 19 th year	Yangzhou Shangyuan 上元 Sanjian feng	48 Left Yangzhou in the fourth month. Met Zhang Ji 張集 in Shangyuan 上元. Back in Sanjian feng. <u>Works:</u>

			<p>“Huainan jiedushi Baling gong Du You xiezhen zan” 淮南節度使瀾陵公杜佑寫真讚</p> <p>“Hezhou cihshi Wu fujun muzhi ming” 賀州刺史武府君墓誌銘</p>
804 (Jiashen 甲申) Zhenyuan 20 th year	Sanjian feng Changsa 長沙	49	<p>Traveled to Changsa from mount Lu. Stayed with Yang Peng 楊憑, Surveillance Commissioner of Hunan 湖南. Back in Shu visiting his parents.</p> <p>Wrote Wei Gao to find employment or financial support.</p> <p><u>Works:</u></p> <p>“Changsa Dongchi ji” 長沙東池記</p> <p>“Ganlu ji” 甘露記 (十月一日)</p> <p>“Fengsong Liangying shangren you Luofu shan xu” 奉送良郢上人遊羅浮山序</p> <p>*“Shang Xichuan Wei linggong shu” 上西川韋令公書</p>
805 (Yiyou 乙酉) Yongzhen 永貞 1 st year	Chengdu	50	<p>Served in the Xichuan 西川 government.</p> <p>Wei Gao died in eighth month.</p> <p>Liu Pi 劉闢 usurped power after Wei's death.</p> <p>Fu served under Liu Pi.</p> <p><u>Works:</u></p> <p>“Juri pei Liu zhongcheng Jia changshi yan Hejiang ting xu” 九日陪劉中丞賈常侍宴合江亭序</p> <p>“Wei Jia changshi ji Wei taiwei wen” 為賈常侍祭韋太尉文</p> <p>“Wei Xichuan mufu ji Wei taiwei wen” 為西川幕府祭韋太尉文</p>
806 (Bingxu 丙戌) Yuanhe 元和 1 st year	Chengdu	51	<p>Liu Pi defied court order, and launched attacks in neighboring areas.</p> <p>The court sent Gao Congwen 高崇文 to suppress Liu's rebel force. Liu was defeated in the eighth month of the year.</p> <p>Fu and other literati were pardoned. Gao recommended them to the court and presented them gifts of money before letting them go.</p> <p><u>Works:</u></p> <p>“Wufu lou ji” 五福樓記</p> <p>“Wei Liu shangshu ji Wang yuanwai wen” 為劉尚書祭王員外文</p> <p>“Wei Liu shangshu ji Wei taiwei wen” 為劉尚書祭韋太尉文</p> <p>“Wei Liu shangshu ji Zhang zhongcheng wen” 為劉尚書祭張中丞文</p> <p>“Shangsi ri pei Liu shangshu yanji Beici xu” 上己日陪劉尚書宴集北池序</p>
807 (Dinghai 丁亥) Yuanhe 2 nd year	Xipu 犀蒲 Mount Lu	52	<p>Visited Fan'ge 梵閣 temple in the first month</p> <p>In Jiangling in the fourth month</p> <p>*Retired to mount Lu</p> <p>*Wrote Yu Di to solicit a fund of a million <i>qian</i> for retirement.</p> <p><u>Works:</u></p> <p>“Fan'ge si Changzhun shangren jingyuan ji” 梵閣寺常準上人精院記</p> <p>“Jingzhou chengdong Tianhuang si Daowu chanshi bei” 荊州城東天皇寺道悟禪師碑 (四月十三日).</p>

808 (Wuzi 戊子) Yuanhe 3 rd year	Mount Lu?	53	In mount Lu?
809 (Jichou 己丑) Yuanhe 4 th year	Mount Lu?	54	In mount Lu?
810 (Gengyin 庚寅) Yuanhe 5 th year	Mount Lu?	55	In mount Lu?
811 (Xinmao 辛卯) Yuanhe 6 th year	Jiangling	56	*Zhao Zongru, governor of Jingnan, invited Fu to join his government in Jiangling. Fu accepted the offer. Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 sent Zhao a letter on his invitation of Fu, “He Zhao Jiangling Zongru pi Fu Zai qi” 賀趙江陵宗儒辟符載啟.
812 (Renchen 壬辰) Yuanhe 7 th year	Fengxiang 鳳翔	57	Traveled to Fengxiang, in Qizhou 岐州 to bury the caskets of his father and wife in the ancestral burial ground. <u>Work:</u> “Wangqi Lishi muzhi ming” 亡妻李氏墓誌銘
813 (Guisi 癸巳) Yuanhe 8 th year	Luzhou 潞州	58	*Joined Xi Shimer’s 鄒士美 government in Luzhou. Fu probably died soon.

The (*) sign indicates tentative dating for events, works, or Fu’s whereabouts.

Diagram: A Family Tree of Fu Zai’s Wife



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