

More Common Lines in the Shī

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Abstract. As a supplement to my earlier study of five common lines, I here take up some further relations of poems there discussed, and the rest of the groups which consist of two Shī poems linked by one common line.

Extension of Three Previous Results

Three of my previous results involve common lines which are strands within more complex interpoem relationships. I here follow out some of those other relationships.

Shī 3C1 > 218D1 陟彼高岡. A poem of a soldier's hardships in traveling provides a line for a festive poem mentioning the travels of a wedding guest. The borrowed line occurs at the end of 218 (where all the other borrowed lines in that poem also occur), and it is not altogether comfortable in the second situation. So far my previous study. The other common lines at the end of Shī 218 are the following three:

Shī 218D4 ~ 214A2 其葉漚兮 “Their leaves, how thick!” Shī 214, which shares two common lines with Shī 218, expresses delight in virtuous gentlemen, a developed version of the happy bride poem. The abundance of the leaves better suits the flower image in 214 than the oaks which are cut for firewood in 218. Then Shī 214 > 218.¹

Shī 218D6 ~ 173A4 and 214A4-5 我心寫兮 “My heart is at peace.” This is natural enough in 173 (a bride for the first time beholds her virtuous husband) or in 214 (a more general praise of gentlemen), but less so in 218, as referring to a wedding guest. Of the other two poems, the general 214 is further removed than 173 from the common “I have seen my lord” 既見君子 new bride genre. Then probably Shī 173 > 214 > 218.

Shī 218E3 ~ Shī 162AB1 四牡駢駢 “My four steeds go on and on.” Shī 162, with 8 common lines, qualifies as promiscuous by the definition of my previous paper; unlike 218, the common lines in 162 are concentrated in its first two stanzas, this one being an example. Shī 162 is the lament of a soldier on campaign. The common line is natural in that context, but less so as describing the journey of the wedding guest. Then Shī 162 > 218. Combining this with the above, we have Shī 3, 162 > 218.

Shī 3D4 > 225E6 云何吁兮. A poem of a soldier's hardships on campaign provides a line for a later portrait of an officer and his decorous lady.

With the above, this completes the list of Shī 3 common lines, and Shī 225 has no other common-line relations than this one. It turns out that Shī 3 is always a source (that is, it is relatively early), and Shī 225 is only a borrower (and later than Shī 3).

¹So, on different grounds, P'ei 120. I diverge from her conclusion about Shī 173; see next.

Shī 77A1 > 78A1 叔于田. A simpler poem of feminine desire (77) contributes its first line to a structurally more complex poem of conventional wifely concern (78). There is a further common line in Shī 78, which leads to Shī 38 and thence to Shī 48:

Shī 78A3 ~ 38B2 執轡如組 “He holds the reins like ribbons.” Appropriately describes the Shī 78 hunter, but is dubious for the Wān 萬 dancer of 38, who (in the next stanza) has a flute in one hand and a feather in the other, leaving him nothing to hold reins with; this martial image must be an *attribute* of the dancer, not a description of his dancing. Elsewhere in the Shī, reins 轡 figure in descriptions of warriors or at least chariot drivers,² but the 38B2 male is not so engaged. Then Shī 78A3 > 38B2.

Shī 38D3 ~ 48ABC3 云誰之思 “Of whom do I think?” Shī 48 is a poem of longing for a lover (unfortunately for good morals, a different lover in each stanza). Shī 38D, with Waley, can only be the text of the preceding dance. It wishes to see the “fine men of the West” 西方美人, which here as elsewhere refers to the men of Jōu. Then a love song is here adapted to a political statement, and Shī 48DABC > 38D3.

It turns out that Shī 38, 48, 77, and 78 together make a closed four-poem group, in which the directionalities here assigned to individual lines are mutually consistent. If we put the two love songs at the same level, we have Shī 48 and 77 > 78 > 38.

The Seven Two-Poem Groups

I here repeat those discussed in my previous article; this is a complete list.

Shī 53ABC < 99AB2 彼姝者子. A poem describing a lover’s visit, and referring to his physical beauty (a situation with no moral dimensions) provides a line for a poem where a host welcomes a worthy guest, using the same words to imply moral excellence. As commentators remark, it is difficult to give a rational account of some of the lines in 53, which for that reason also is likely to be the later poem.

Shī 107A1-2 > 203B3-4 糾糾葛履，可以履霜. This is really a borrowed couplet, neither member of which occurs elsewhere in the Shī. 107 is an explicit satire 刺 of a lady (skilled in making delicate shoes) by her maid.³ 203 is a larger-scale complaint by the disadvantaged men of the East (who are forced by poverty to walk with delicate shoes in severe weather) against the privileged Westerners. The connection of the common lines with this larger theme is somewhat forced.⁴ Then Shī 107 > 203.

Shī 122AB1 > 133ABC1 豈曰無衣. Shī 122 is a suggestive courtship poem,⁵ in which one speaker first admits to seven wraps, then six . . . In Shī 133, an enthusiastic youth who has volunteered to serve in the King’s army offers to share his clothing with a less well provided friend. The Jōu theme in 133 is reminiscent of that in 203, above. In any case, the question of how many clothes one party has on is integral to 122 (where it is, in fact, the whole story) but incidental to 133. Then Shī 122 > 133.

²Shī 105B2 (an escort), 127A2, 128B2, 163BCDE2 (various travelers), 214C5, 218 E4, and 300C8 (Syī-gūng of Lü). Shī 300D7 mentions the Wān Dance, as taking place in a later season.

³So Waley; other interpretations are ultimately compatible.

⁴Notice the difficulty encountered by Legge (ad loc) in making sense of 203B.

⁵So Waley; the more traditional explanation of Legge is so tortured as to be self-refuting.

Shī 129ABC3 > 186AB5 所謂伊人. In Shī 129, a girl goes in search of her lover, “the one of whom she thinks” and suddenly finds him. The three stanzas are elaborate, but on the same plan: this is a developed template song, with rhyme variants the only difference between the stanzas. In 186, a host proposes to detain an admired guest (“the one of whom he thinks”) by tethering his colt. The “one thought of” better fits an absent lover (as in 129) than a present guest (in 186). Then Shī 129 > 186.

Shī 153D1-2 > 227A1-2 梵梵黍苗，陰雨膏之. This one is complicated. Shī 153, the last poem in the four-poem Tsáu section, has three stanzas linked by a repeating initial line, expressing admiration for the good government of Jōu in contrast to the wretched conditions of his own state, Tsáu. The fourth stanza invokes the Lord of Sywn (the future Jīn Wǎn-gūng, renowned as Hegemon under the Jōu) as an assurance of a better future. This stanza would be suspect as an interpolation, did not the same situation obtain in Shī 149, the last poem in the parallel Gwèi section, where two stanzas of lament for Jōu end in a third stanza in which the speaker offers to accompany any who will join in the service of Jōu. It is then the poems, not just their last stanzas, which have a late character. (Compare the volunteer in Shī 133, above, which also seemed to be the later of the two poems there considered). Within 153D, the first couplet (millet shoots nourished by rain) is less congruous, being followed by

153D3 四國有王 The States on all four borders have now their King,
153D4 郇伯勞之 The Lord of Sywn encourages them.

than is the completion of the same couplet at the beginning of 227:

227A1 悠悠南行 Long was their journey to the South,
227A2 召伯勞之 The Lord of Shàu encouraged them.

. . . followed by a first-person narrative of the fortunate campaign. My impression is that 227 is an intelligible poem, one stanza of which has been cryptically compressed in 153. The question is probably bound up with the formation of the problematic but evidently parallel Gwèi and Tsáu sections,⁶ a matter into which I will not here venture, but I suspect that these unimpressive sections were at some point touched up by adding a Jōu-supportive final poem to each of them. I tentatively conclude that Shī 227 > 153.

Shī 278:4 < 280:12 我客戾止. The guests are human (eminent persons) in 278; in 280 they are⁷ ancestral spirits attracted to a sacrifice at the end of an elaborately described musical performance. Both guest poems and sacrifice poems occur in this part of the Jōu Sùng, but the phrase 戾止, if construed with Kennedy as 戾之矣 “have come to it,” better suits the arrival of spirits at the sacrifice; the object pronoun 之 is hard to account for in the guest poem.⁸ Since this 之 construction was live for Shī 280 but seemingly unknown to the author of Shī 278, I conclude that Shī 280 > 278.

⁶Gwèi was early conquered by Jǐng; Tsáu later by Sùng. So problematic were these poems felt to be in the 04c that Jì Jǎ, the expert listener in the imaginary DJ Syāng 29 story, had no comment to make on them (自檜以下無譏焉). For that story, see further Brooks **Political**.

⁷Or in some perhaps less convincing readings, are paralleled with.

⁸It may be relevant that Shī 129 (see above) was also thought to have supplied a line to a later guest poem, Shī 186.

Shī 295:5 > 296:7 時周之命 . A conventional poem of gratitude to the Jōu founding ancestors (Shī 267) provides a line for a unique poem which depicts the Jou people spreading everywhere, gathering in all who respond to the Jōu Mandate. In this case and the preceding, it seems that a sacrificial poem, or one describing a sacrifice, is earlier than a poem of a somewhat different type which now shares a line with it.⁹

Conclusions

No relationship here considered involves generic common lines, in the sense that 之子于歸 is generic in marriage poems, or 既見君子 in poems about a new bride. They imply literary borrowing, and they permit plausible conclusions about the direction of the borrowing. The resulting directionalities suggest these observations.

1. Poems of feminine desire (Shī 77, 122) tend to be early; poems of proper wifely feeling (Shī 78) are later. Sexual or ritual irregularity gets tamed in the later Shī, chiefly by adding to the collection later poems of more conventional content.

2. Poems describing sacrifices to the Jōu ancestors (Shī 295) tend to be earlier than poems in praise of the Jōu Dynasty, or offering personal support for it (Shī 296, 38). The early ancestral cult broadens to become something like a national cult.

3. Not all the “promiscuous” poems are anthologies of lines from earlier poems; thus Shī 162, with 8 common lines, is nevertheless a source for Shī 38.

4. There seems to be a tendency for borrowing poems to be less than consistent, the two examples in the poems here considered being Shī 38 and especially 218, whereas no poem so far identified as relatively early shows that kind of internal incoherence.

5. Though the sequence Sùng > Yǎ > Fǎng has been asserted (eg, Dobson), I find that some Yǎ pieces use Fǎng material (Shī 3 > 224, Shī 107 > 203, Shī 129 > 181). It would go beyond the evidence to say that all elite poems are based on folk poems, but a tendency of that sort may be visible.

This further exploration of the analytical possibilities of the common line confirms previous findings by showing that literarily consistent and formally suggestive results can be obtained. The main conclusion of this paper, then, is that there *are* literary relationships in the Shī, and that they seem to be clues to the history of the Shī.

Works Cited

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⁹See further Brooks **Dance** 16.