

On the Core Identifying Function of Naming Collected Works in the Song and Yuan Dynasties*

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The primary function of naming ancient books and records lies in the differentiated identification of documents. In the communication context characterized by paper documents and block printing, book titles served as pivotal symbols for documents to enter the circulation field, undertaking three core functions: identifying authorial attribution, locating textual content, and distinguishing the origin and evolution of versions. This constituted the fundamental basis for the continuous development of naming conventions for the collected works of Song scholars during the Song and Yuan Dynasties.

Keywords: Song and Yuan Dynasties, collected works, naming convention, identifying function

The most fundamental role of a book title is to establish a strong correlation between a text and its author, enabling the rapid identification of the author's identity.

Identity Identification of Authorial Attribution

Prior to the Song Dynasty, the naming of collected works was mostly directly based on the author's personal information, such as given name, courtesy name, official tenure location, official title, and posthumous title.

Dong Jiaoxi Ji (Collected Works of Dong of Jiaoxi) by Dong Zhongshu (179-104 BCE) of the Western Han Dynasty was compiled by scholars from the Sui and Tang Dynasties by extracting and compiling materials from such ancient classics as *Han Shu* (Book of Han) and *Guwen Yuan* (Ancient Prose Garden). As Dong Zhongshu once served as the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Jiaoxi, later generations named his collected works after this official post when compiling it. Also known as *Dongzi Wenji* (Collected Works of Master Dong), the anthology was directly titled after his honorific title. Wang Ji (585-644), at the end of the Sui Dynasty and the beginning of the Tang Dynasty, whose courtesy name was Wugong and art name was Donggaozi, composed more than 20 volumes of poems, fu, essays and miscellaneous works, most of which were scattered and lost after his death. His friend Lü Cai collected and compiled his surviving works into five volumes of *Wang Wugong Wenji* (Collected Works of Wang Wugong); in the Mid-Tang Dynasty, Lu Chun abridged the collection into two

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volumes of *Donggaozi Jilüe* (Abridged Collected Works of Donggaozi), both of which were named after Wang Ji's courtesy name and art name. *Wang Youcheng Ji* (Collected Works of Minister Wang of the Right) by Wang Wei of the Tang Dynasty was initially compiled by his younger brother Wang Jin by imperial order of Emperor Daizong of the Tang Dynasty. This fact is recorded in *Jiu Tang Shu Biography of Wang Wei* (Old Book of Tang Biography of Wang Wei) and *Wang Jin's Jin Wang Youcheng Ji Biao* (Memorial Presenting the Collected Works of Minister Wang of the Right), which fully demonstrates that the collection was named after his official title "Minister of the Right of the Ministry of Rites" from its very compilation.

Du Fu (712-770) left Sichuan with his family during the Dali reign period and died in exile in Leiyang, Hunan Province. Yuan Zhen of the Tang Dynasty stated in *Tang Gu Gongbu Yuanwai Lang Du Jun Muxi Ming* (Epitaph of Du Jun, the Late Gentleman of the Ministry of Works):

Yan Wu, Military Governor of Jiannan, nominated Du Fu as a Gentleman of the Ministry of Works to serve as a military advisor. He soon resigned, however, and sailed down to the Jingchu region on a small boat, eventually dying in exile and being temporarily buried in Yueyang.

The title "Honorary Gentleman of the Ministry of Works" nominated by Yan Wu was Du Fu's last official post. Fan Huang (c.700-c.773), Inspector of Runzhou in the Tang Dynasty, was the earliest compiler of Du Fu's poems, and his *Du Gongbu Xiao Ji* (Selected Collected Works of Gentleman Du of the Ministry of Works) was the first anthology of Du Fu's poems. Though this book has been lost, it established the basic naming convention of titling Du Fu's collected works after his "last official post".

The core objective of this naming method based on the author's personal information is to enable readers to directly identify the author through the book title and rapidly form an associative cognition between the author and their works. During the Song and Yuan Dynasties, this identifying function was not only inherited but also expanded into more diverse dimensions of author identity identification. It extended from external elements such as official titles and native places to internal ones including courtesy names, study names, and art names, thus forming a multi-level system for author identity recognition.

Positioning Identification of Textual Content and Genre

A book title is a high condensation of a text's content, genre, and compiling purpose, undertaking the function of providing readers with textual expectations. The naming of general anthologies, poetic, and prose criticisms, as well as ci and qu works during the Song and Yuan Dynasties particularly highlighted this function. For example, *Shiren Yuxie* (Jade Fragments from Poets) compiled by Wei Qingzhi (2018) collects and categorizes poetic talks of Song scholars, and the recorded Song poetic theories hold important reference value. Volumes 1 to 11 discuss poetic art, genres, metrical patterns, and expressive methods, while Volumes 12 onwards comment on specific writers and works from the Western and Eastern Han Dynasties onwards. Although rich in details, the content is well-structured, allowing readers to trace the development context of poetry and the evolutionary process of poetic genres. The term "jade fragments" derives from the Taoist belief that taking crushed jade can lead to immortality. It is metaphorically used to describe the methods and approaches of poetic creation, just as jade fragments are the substances assisting in immortality. The "Shiren Yuxie Menmu (Table of Contents of Jade Fragments from Poets)" at the beginning of the book even includes corresponding subheadings such as "koujue (formulas)", "chuxue xijing (initial learning paths)", "duanlian (polishing)", "duotai huangu (reincarnating the spirit of ancient works)", and "dianhua (refining)", all of which imply that poetic creation is analogous to Taoist

cultivation, requiring subtle prescriptions and immortal methods.

The same term “Yuefu (Music Bureau)” was adopted in book titles, yet the perspectives of distinguishing and naming literary genres varied among compilers. *Guo Maoqian's Yuefu Shi Ji* (Anthology of Yuefu Poetry) is a general anthology of poems and prose. Guo Maoqian pointed out:

The name “Yuefu” originated in the Han and Wei Dynasties. When Emperor Xiaohui of the Han Dynasty reigned, Xiahou Kuan served as the Director of the Yuefu, and the term first became an official title. It was not until Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty that the Yuefu was formally established to collect poems and recite them at night, including ballads from the Zhao, Dai, Qin and Chu regions. Thus, the practice of collecting folk ballads and setting them to music has a long historical origin.

By tracing the origin of the name, official positions, and institutions of the Yuefu, Guo Maoqian incorporated all the collected “folk ballads” into the category of “Yuefu poetry”. Therefore, he compiled and recorded Yuefu poems and songs from the Han, Wei to the Tang and Five Dynasties, as well as pre-Qin folk ballads, devoting great efforts to annotation and textual research to ensure that the collected Yuefu poems were as complete and accurate as possible. Titled *Yuefu Shi Ji* (Anthology of Yuefu Poetry), the collection adopted the broad definition of “Yuefu poetry” as its selection criterion.

Shen Yifu's Yuefu Zhimi (Guidelines for Yuefu Ci) is a critical work on ci poetry in the Southern Song Dynasty. This book proposes the criteria for commenting on and creating ci poetry: “Metrical patterns should be harmonious”, “word choice should be elegant”, “words should not be overly explicit”, and “the conception should not be too lofty”. These criteria provide certain guidance for the creation and appreciation of ci poetry, hence the title “Zhimi (Guidelines for Perplexity)”. Its literary genre focuses on “ci poetry”, and the term “Yuefu” is used metaphorically to refer to “ci poetry”. Shen Yifu noted:

I have loved composing poems since I was a child. In the autumn of the Renyin year, I first met Master Jing by the Ze River. In the Guimao year, I met Mengchuang. In my spare time, we exchanged poems and mostly composed ci poetry, thus discussing the methods of writing ci poetry. Only then did I realize that writing ci poetry is more difficult than writing shi poetry.

This fully demonstrates that scholars in the Southern Song Dynasty had a clear distinction between “ci poetry” and “shi poetry”, and the reference to ci poetry as “Yuefu” was indeed a metaphor.

Such naming conventions broke through the simple identification of the author, realizing the accurate positioning of textual content, genre, and stylistic rules, which represents the deepening of the identifying function of documents.

Distinguishing Identification of Version Circulation

The prosperity of block printing in the Song Dynasty led to multiple engraving and the evolution of versions of ancient books and records, and book titles thus became an important symbol for distinguishing versions, engraving subjects, and additions and deletions of content. The collected works of the same author often had different titles in different engraved editions.

The compilation of Ouyang Xiu's collected works serves as a typical example. *Jushi Ji* (Collected Works of the Lay Buddhist) was personally compiled and edited by Ouyang Xiu in his later years. Ma Duanlin quoted Ye Mengde in Volume 234 of *Wenxian Tongkao* (Comprehensive Examination of Literature and History):

In his later years, Ouyang Xiu, Lord Wenzhong, personally compiled and arranged the articles he had written throughout

his life. For the now well-known *Jushi Ji* (Collected Works of the Lay Buddhist), he often revised a single article dozens of times, and there were even times when he could not decide whether to include or exclude a piece after days of deliberation.

Ouyang Xiu died in the fifth year of the Xining reign period of the Northern Song Dynasty (1072), and the engraving of *Jushi Ji* (Collected Works of the Lay Buddhist) probably commenced in the sixth year of the Yuanyou reign period (1091). At that time, Su Shi served as Academician of the Hanlin Academy, and he stated in his “*Jushi Ji Xu*” (Preface to the Collected Works of the Lay Buddhist):

I obtained 766 of his poems and articles from his son Ouyang Fei... Master Ouyang, whose given name was Xiu and courtesy name was Yongshu, called himself the Six-One Lay Buddhist in his old age. Preface written on the 15th day of the sixth lunar month in the sixth year of the Yuanyou reign period.

It is evident that the title *Jushi Ji* (Collected Works of the Lay Buddhist) was chosen by Ouyang Xiu himself, after his later art name “the Six-One Lay Buddhist”. The earliest existing engraved edition of *Jushi Ji* (Collected Works of the Lay Buddhist) is the five-volume *Ouyang Wenzhong Liuyi Jushi Ji* (Collected Works of Ouyang Wenzhong, the Six-One Lay Buddhist) engraved by the Jizhou Government Office in the fourth year of the Xuanhe reign period of the Northern Song Dynasty (1122), which was later expanded to 50 volumes with the posthumous title added before the original title.

In the Southern Song Dynasty, important engraved editions of *Jushi Ji* (Collected Works of the Lay Buddhist) circulated widely: One was the edition engraved in Quzhou during the Shaoxing reign period; the other was *Ouyang Wenzhong Gong Ji* (Complete Collected Works of Ouyang Wenzhong) compiled and collated under the auspices of Zhou Bida during the Qingyuan reign period. In addition to the 50 volumes of *Jushi Ji* (Collected Works of the Lay Buddhist), this edition also included nine other collections such as *Wai Ji* (Additional Works), with a total of 153 volumes. It contains various genres of Ouyang Xiu’s works including fu, prose, poems, ci poetry, prefaces and postscripts, letters, treatises, and sacrificial odes, and thus became the popular complete edition for later generations. *Ouyang Wenzhong Gong Ji* (Complete Collected Works of Ouyang Wenzhong) adopted the title structure of “posthumous title + honorific title Lord (Gong)”.

Another example is Su Xun. He went to the capital to present his works to the imperial court during the Jiayou reign period (1056-1063), and his collected works were compiled at that time, hence named *Jiayou Ji* (Collected Works of the Jiayou Reign Period) after the reign title. There is also *Donglai Biaozhu Laoquan Xiansheng Wenji* (Annotated Collected Works of Master Laoquan by Donglai), which was named after Su Xun’s art name “Laoquan” and annotated by Lü Zuqian (Master Donglai), adopting the title form of “art name + honorific title of the annotator”. This edition was engraved and published under the auspices of Wu Yan in the fourth year of the Shaoxi reign period of the Southern Song Dynasty (1193). In addition, the series editions, separate editions, family engraved editions, and commercial engraved editions of the Song and Yuan Dynasties often achieved version distinction through subtle differences in book titles, which thus became one of the core clues in the study of bibliography.

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