宋诗

WANG ANSHI

REDUCING THE NUMBER OF SOLDIERS

Someone here says we must reduce the number of soldiers,

I say to do this straight away should not be our first step.

Today our generals are not properly chosen,

It is with the size of our armies that we guard our borders.

If the first line of assault is defeated in an attack,

The troops behind them remain strong and intact.

By sending our larger numbers against the smaller enemy

We prevail even when caught in a crisis.

Our generals are of insufficient talent,

Their strategies are second-guessed by subordinates.

If troops are reduced, there will be no reinforcements in case of a defeat,

The barbarians will advance to drink from the Qin river.

If you say this reasoning is incorrect,

Then by what criteria would you have us reduce the troops?

Our soldiers are accustomed to being arrogant and lazy,

Send them home: do you think they will farm the land?

Not farming nor producing silk either,

Their need for food and clothing will be the same as active troops.

The right time will come to reduce the number of soldiers,

But it must be done in the proper sequence of steps.

SU SHI

Tuizhi [Han Yu] said that draft-script calligraphy

Is capable of reflecting all worldly affairs.

Worry, sadness, and all other disquietudes

May be lodged in the darting of the brush.

But he wondered about the Buddhist monk

Who looks upon his body as an empty well.

Meekly, he gives himself to the mild and plain,

Who will elicit boldness and fury from him?

When I consider this I see it is incorrect.

True ingenuity requires no illusion.

If you want your poetic phrases to be marvelous

You need not be averse to emptiness and quietude.

With quietude you comprehend all movement,

With emptiness you take in ten thousand scenes.

You observe the world as you go among men,

You examine yourself reclining on a cloudy peak.

The salty and sour mix with all other tastes,

Between them there is a perfect flavor that endures.

Poetry and Buddhist are not incompatible,

I submit this view for your consideration.

***Xi er* 洗儿 (*Lavando il figlio*)**

人皆养子望聪明

我被聪明误一生

惟愿孩儿愚且鲁

无灾无难到公卿

宋词

LI YU (937-978)

**Sull’aria *Yu meiren* 虞美人 (*La bella Yu*) Bertuccioli, p. 213**

春花秋月何时了,

往事知多少。

小楼昨夜又东风,

故国不堪回首月明中。

雕阑玉砌应犹在,

只是朱颜改。

问君能有几多愁,

恰似一江春水向东流。