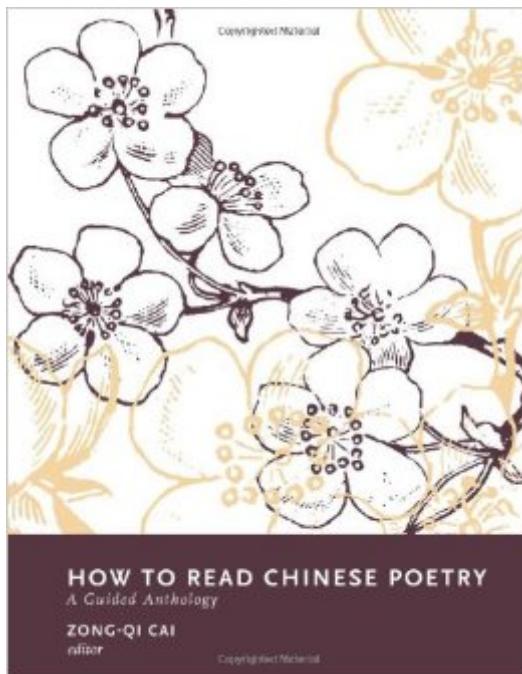


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How To Read Chinese Poetry: A Guided Anthology



Synopsis

In this "guided" anthology, experts lead students through the major genres and eras of Chinese poetry from antiquity to the modern time. The volume is divided into 6 chronological sections and features more than 140 examples of the best shi, sao, fu, ci, and qu poems. A comprehensive introduction and extensive thematic table of contents highlight the thematic, formal, and prosodic features of Chinese poetry, and each chapter is written by a scholar who specializes in a particular period or genre. Poems are presented in Chinese and English and are accompanied by a tone-marked romanized version, an explanation of Chinese linguistic and poetic conventions, and recommended reading strategies. Sound recordings of the poems are available online free of charge. These unique features facilitate an intense engagement with Chinese poetical texts and help the reader derive aesthetic pleasure and insight from these works as one could from the original. The companion volume *How to Read Chinese Poetry Workbook* presents 100 famous poems (56 are new selections) in Chinese, English, and romanization, accompanied by prose translation, textual notes, commentaries, and recordings. Contributors: Robert Ashmore (Univ. of California, Berkeley); Zong-qi Cai; Charles Egan (San Francisco State); Ronald Egan (Univ. of California, Santa Barbara); Grace Fong (McGill); David R. Knechtges (Univ. of Washington); Xinda Lian (Denison); Shuen-fu Lin (Univ. of Michigan); William H. Nienhauser Jr. (Univ. of Wisconsin); Maija Bell Samei; Jui-lung Su (National Univ. of Singapore); Wendy Swartz (Columbia); Xiaofei Tian (Harvard); Paula Varsano (Univ. of California, Berkeley); Fusheng Wu (Univ. of Utah)

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Customer Reviews

I took a long time to read this book, about 8 or 9 months. I kept being blown away and then coming back to it. There's also the frustration of wanting to be able to appreciate this material MUCH better, but I can't imagine a better introduction. Columbia University Press also hosts a web page with mp3 files of dozens and dozens of these poems being recited. I did a few years of mandarin with traditional characters decades ago back in college but have been brushing up on it again the last few years with simplified characters, so some frustration was caused by not recognizing more of the book's traditional characters, but traditional characters and toneless pinyin are an academic convention so it's not really a shortcoming that this book follows the academic convention. I've communicated with the editor and he's planning a workbook with simplified characters which I will definitely eat up. If you don't follow Chinese and have any interest at all, you are bound to love this book. The translations do justice to the original much more than most of what's out there and the text is uniformly interesting. The book even offers many word-by-word grids with translation to help any readers appreciate the prosody of how each syllable is loaded with meaning so their sequence has a semantic rhythm used by the master poets with power and elegance. Chinese culture is vast and varied and this book offers a revealing introduction to why poetry has such a leading, treasured role in the high culture. As an opportunity for individual expression, its status is very unique and offers endless personally touching insights.

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