

# Identity and Narrative: A Special Female Case of Chinese Ancient Autobiography

Wang Ying<sup>1</sup> and Wang Ying<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Literature, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

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## Abstract

Li Qingzhao(???,1084-1155) is one of the most excellent and most famous female scholars in Chinese literature history, whose Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone (Jin Shi Lu Houxu,?????), as a rare female autobiography in Chinese ancient literature, has made many unique creative contributions to the development of Chinese biographic literature. As a female autobiography, Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone has covered three identities of Li Qingzhao - a daughter of a noble family, a wife of a civil official and a female scholar - and the self-recognition of the three identities constitutes the triple female perspective of her autobiography. As a lament work, Epilog to Record on Metal and Stone has integrated three dimensional narration spaces - autobiographic facts, lament for her deceased husband; biographical facts, lament for her collected objects; and historical facts, lament for the perished country. The richness, appropriateness and exquisiteness of the discourse structure for three dimensional lament under a triple female perspective have made Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone a milestone in Chinese biographical history. It has not only filled the blank of female authors in ancient Chinese biography, but also provided a narrative spatial model of three dimensional interactions, laying the solid foundation for Li Qingzhao to be a landmark figure in Chinese biographic history.

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**Index terms**— li qingzhao, epilog to records on metal and stone, autobiography, female perspective, lament.

## 1 Introduction

s the most excellent female poet in Chinese history, Li Qingzhao has also left a striking page in Chinese biographic literary creation, filling the blank of female authors in this field. The Epilog she wrote to Records on Metal and Stone, a book composed by her deceased husband, is widely recognized as a masterpiece in Chinese literary history. In nearly one thousand years, the Epilog has been included in many anthologies. Lin Yutang ( ? ? ? , 1895-1976) has selected several dozen ancient Chinese classics into *The Importance of Understanding 2* , and paintings; they discussed and appreciated their collections at night under candlelight; they quoted classics while drinking tea, and interspersed with laughter; they were separated on a journey and then into two worlds. The country was captured and she left her home for a long and lonely journey, during which most of their collection was lost. This story of the assembly and subsequent dispersal of both people and objects, including the Epilog. From a triple female perspective of a noble family daughter, a civil official's wife and a female scholar, Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone 3 , as an autobiography, incorporates Li Qingzhao's grief of losing her husband, sorrow of losing her collections, and pain of losing her country, into vivid description of their harmonious married life before her husband died. They painstakingly and frugally collected inscriptions following the tides of history, had terribly tortured Li Qingzhao.

"The lonely inner world of Li Qingzhao in later life contained most heavy things of a tragic destiny: a subjugated country, a broken family, the loss of a husband and roving in strange places: all life's misfortunes

### 3 AUTOBIOGRAPHIC POSITIONING IN EPILOG TO RECORDS ON METAL AND STONE

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43 befell her. Loss of both hometown and love, of her survival space and spiritual space, had ruthlessly driven her  
44 into an unprecedented lonely world. Therefore, her homesick yearning and widowed grief integrated and were  
45 hard to separate...As a result, the later life of Li Qingzhao contained the psychological and emotional experiences  
46 of a woman facing the overwhelming disasters of the era, which reflected her intense concerns for the time and  
47 constituted the most brilliant page of aesthetic awareness of a tragic woman." 1 Epilog to Records on Metal and  
48 Stone is a condensed work comprehensively reflecting those aspects; its uniqueness and value as an autobiography  
49 should also not be disregarded.

## 2 II.

### 3 Autobiographic Positioning in Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone

53 Before we probe into the specific text of Epilog to Record on Metal and Stone, we should take a brief ) to  
54 Sui(?589-618), Tang(â?" ,618-907) and the Five dynasties ( ä?" ? ,907-960). Zhao Mingcheng is a renowned  
55 epigraphist and a relic collector. He was born in the fourth year of the Yuanfeng ?? reign of Emperor Shenzong  
56 (??) of the Song Dynasty (1081), and died in the third year of the Jianyan ?? reign of Emperor Gaozong ? ?  
57 (1129), at the age of 48. Therefore, Records on Metal and Stone was a book to which he devoted his whole life. In  
58 the Northern Song Dynasty, Ouyang Xiu(???,1007-1072) laid the foundation for epigraphy, and was subsequently  
59 imitated by numerous scholars, making it a very popular hobby. Inspired by Records on Ancient Collections (Ji  
60 Gu Lu,???) of Ouyang Xiu, Zhao Mingcheng devoted himself to this field, and accomplished Records on Metal  
61 and Stone with 2,000 volumes 2 in 20 years, twice the scale of Ouyang Xiu's Records on Ancient Collections. In  
62 his Preface to Records on Metal and Stone, Zhao Mingcheng wrote, "Since I was young, I liked viewing metal  
63 and stone inscriptions of former dynasties by following famous scholars and officials to broaden my horizons.  
64 Later, I got Records on Ancient Collections by Ouyang Xiu, and cherished it much, thinking that it could correct  
65 former errors and help subsequent scholars. However, it has some omissions, and is not arranged chronologically.  
66 Therefore, I decided to expand it to a new book for the benefit of other scholars." 3 These words suggested that  
67 Ouyang Xiu contributed much to the advocacy and leadership of epigraphy, and Records on Metal and Stone by  
68 Zhao Mingcheng was a conscious imitation and transcendence of Records on Ancient Collections.

69 As Zhao Mingcheng had composed a foreword to the book, Li Qingzhao had to place her afterword at the  
70 end, hence epilog, corresponding to the preface at the beginning of the book. It was a tradition to use preface or  
71 epilog as a form of autobiography since Autobiography of Taishigong ( Pu Jiangqing (???, 1904-1957) commented  
72 on Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone, "This work detailed the couple's early life and hobby, experience and  
73 separation, collection and dispersion of metal and stone inscriptions, books and paintings, which is full of life  
74 incidents and is excellent both in style and sentiment. The life story of Zhao and Li was brief in History of Song  
75 (Song Shi, ??), but this work can very well supplement the former account. Therefore, in style, this work is an  
76 epilog, but in content, it is an autobiography. Qingzhao was good at verse as well as prose, but she wrote it in  
77 prose. She narrated her experience in an easy-going way. As her late years were lonely and sorrowful, she didn't  
78 intend to stir up emotions. Therefore, the style was natural and neat." 1 From the above analysis, we can confirm  
79 that Epilog to Records of Metal and Stone is indeed an autobiography.

80 Zhao Baisheng( ? ? ç?"? ,1964-), a well-known biographic expert, once concluded, "Simply put, the main task  
81 for autobiographers is to present two relations: first, the relation between me and others; second, the relation  
82 between me and the times. In presenting the two relations, the ego is continuously disclosed. To manifest the  
83 relation between me and others, biographic facts are needed; to manifest the relation between me and the times,  
84 historic facts are needed. As a matter of fact, an autobiography is a trinity centering on autobiographic facts. 2  
85 "In the Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone, the specific reference to Records on Metal and Stone focuses on the  
86 first paragraph at the beginning: "What are the proceeding chapters of Records on Metal and Stone?-The work  
87 of the governor Zhao De-fu 3 . In it he took inscriptions on bells, tripods, steamers, kettles, washbasins, ladles,  
88 goblets, and bowls from the Three Dynasties of high 2 Each volume as compared to modern books, just occupied  
89 around 10-20 pages of a modern book. antiquity all the way to the Five Dynasties [immediately preceding our  
90 Song]; here also he took the surviving traces of acts by eminent men and obscure scholars inscribed on large steles  
91 and stone disks. In all there were two thousand sections of what appeared on metal and stone. Through all these  
92 inscriptions one might be able to correct historical errors, make historical judgments, and mete out praise and  
93 blame. It contains things which, on the highest level, correspond to the Way of the Sages, and on a lower level,  
94 supplement the omissions of historians. It is, indeed, a great amount of material." 4 Then, the second paragraph  
95 from the end reads, "Of those two thousand inscriptions, colophons were written of five hundred of two." 5 All  
96 these inscriptions were made by Zhao Mingcheng. The rest of the work, of course, develops by following the  
97 collection and dispersal of objects in Records on Metal and Stone. It has clearly presented these two relations  
98 -the relation between "me" and "others", namely, the relation between Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng; the  
99 relation between "me" and "the times", namely, the relation between Li Qingzhao and the turmoil at the turning  
100 point of the Northern Song( ? ? ,960-1127) and Southern Song(??,1127-1279) Dynasties. During the unfolding  
101 of the two relations, Li Qingzhao continuously disclosed her ego.

102 The end of Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone notes that Li Qingzhao finished this work in the second

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103 year of the Shaoxing ?? Reign (1132AD), or three years after Zhao Mingcheng died. Given the content of  
104 the epilog, it should fall into the category of "commemorative biography" "?????" defined by Zhao Baisheng,  
105 "Many commemorative biographies are composed by kith and kin: a narration by a widowed wife of her deceased  
106 husband; a memorial article by a husband for his deceased wife; a work by children recalling their parents.?The  
107 common point of these biographies is that biographers try to construct a lofty monument for the deceased so that  
108 the living are encouraged by their greatness." 6 The first half of this epilog is a work of this type, but the second  
109 half relates facts which occurred after the death of Zhao Mingcheng. Therefore, if the first half is regarded as a  
110 biography for the couple, the second half is undoubtedly the autobiography of Li Qingzhao. If the two parts are  
111 placed together, Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone is an autobiography that relates significant experiences  
112 of the author during her narration to commemorate her deceased husband and her deceased husband's life.

## 113 4 III.

## 114 5 Formation of the Triple Female Perspective in Epilog to 115 Records on Metal and Stone

116 The epilog is written from the perspective of a woman, the style of which can be found in ancient times. In the  
117 whole process of Chinese ancient female literature, this is certainly a monumental work of boudoir literature.  
118 Li Ciming( ? ? é" ,1830-1894) of the Qing Dynasty( ? ? ,1636-1911) commented in Yuemantang Reading  
119 Notes(Yuemantang Dushu Ji, ??????): "When I read Records on Metal and Stone by Zhao Mingcheng, I found  
120 an epilog written by Li Qingzhao. It related the intricate experiences of the couple with vigorous strokes and  
121 beyond any restrictions. I always like to read it, and think that it is the most excellent boudoir article from the  
122 Song Dynasty." 1 It is thus clear that people in earlier times had regarded this as a model work from the genre  
123 of boudoir writings. Now, we will start from this aspect to discuss the three identities of Li Qingzhao and their  
124 presentation in Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone as a noble family daughter, a civil official's wife and a  
125 female scholar, and how these three identities are interwoven to form a triple female perspective.

## 126 6 a) The identity as a noble family daughter/daughter-in-law

127 The identity as a noble family daughter and a daughter-in-law is clearly displayed by Li Qingzhao when she  
128 tells us her family background: "In 1101, the first year of the Jian-zhong reign, I came as a bride to the Zhao  
129 household. At that time my father was a division head in the Ministry of Rites, and my father-in-law, later a  
130 Grand Councilor, was an executive in the Ministry of Personnel. My husband was then twenty-one and a student  
131 in the Imperial Academy. 2 When his father, the Grand Councilor, was in office, various friends and relations  
132 held positions in the Imperial Libraries. 3 ?I recall that in the Chong-ning reign, a man came with a painting  
133 of peonies by Xu Xi(??) and asked twenty thousand cash for it, In those days twenty thousand was a hard sum  
134 to raise, even for children of the nobility." 4 The introduction of her maiden family and her husband's family  
135 suggests her identities as a noble family daughter and a noble daughter-in-law.

136 "My father" is Li Gefei ( ? ? ? ,1045-1105), father of Li Qingzhao, who is a famous litterateur in the Northern  
137 Song Dynasty and writes a masterpiece Record of Famous Gardens in Luoyang(Luoyang Ming Yuan Ji,?????).  
138 History of Song(Song Shi,??) introduces him like this, "Li Gefei wrote a book named as Luoyang Ming Yuan  
139 Ji, he said in it 'the rise and fall Volume XVI Issue I Version I of Luo-yang is a sign of the empire's order or  
140 chaos.' Later Jin forces sacked Luo-yang, and people realized his words were wise words." 5 In the first year of the  
141 Jianzhong Jingguo ? ? ? ? Reign (1101AD), Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng got married, when Li Gefei was  
142 the vice minister of the Ministry of Rites. He "was appreciated by Su Shi 6 (??,1037-1101) because of his articles"  
143 7 , and worked with Liao Zhengyi(??), Li Xi(??), and Dong Rongtong(??) in the library, who were collectively  
144 named "The Later Four Scholars ??????" of Su's disciples for their literary grace. Li Qingzhao and her mother  
145 were also included into the biography of Li Gefei in History of Song: "His wife is the granddaughter of Wang  
146 Gongchen(???,1012-1085), and is also good at literature. His daughter is named Qingzhao, who is well known for  
147 her poems and articles. Qingzhao was married to Zhao Mingcheng, son of Zhao Tingzhi( ? ? ? ,1040-1107). Li  
148 Qingzhao assumes for herself the art-name Yian Jushi (Hermit Yi'an, æ??"???,)." 1 Li Qingzhao's mother is the  
149 granddaughter of Wang Gongchen, a famous civil official of the Northern Song, and is also good at poems and  
150 articles. Wang Gongchen was ranked the first in the imperial examination in the eighth year of the Tiansheng  
151 ?? Reign of Emperor Renzong ?? of the Northern Song Dynasty (1030AD). The emperor appreciated him very  
152 much, and granted him a name, Gongshou ?? . He was promoted to be vice minister of the Ministry of Supervision  
153 ? ? ? ? . From this we can see, the scholarly family background had contributed much to Li Qingzhao's sublime  
154 personal pursuit and excellent literacy.

155 "Grand Councilor" ?? is Zhao Tingzhi, father of Zhao Mingcheng, who entered officialdom as a "Palace  
156 Graduate" ????? 2 . He is a critical minister in the Northern Song period, and was the vice minister of the  
157 Ministry of Civil Office ????? at the time. These backgrounds constitute true noble families. Therefore, Li  
158 Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng were matched for marriage, which laid a solid foundation for their congenial  
159 interests and harmonious relationship. "When his father, the Grand Councilor, was in office, various friends and  
160 relations held positons in the Imperial Libraries." 3 This implied the petticoat influence of their eminent family,

## 7 B) A CIVIL OFFICIAL'S WIFE

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161 creating favorable conditions for their relic collection. "Although we were descendants of noble families" suggests  
162 that Li Qingzhao clearly confirmed their acknowledgement and positioning as members of the upper social class.  
163 Therefore, the first female perspective of Li Qingzhao in Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone is directly  
164 positioned through a concise introduction of her family background. In other words, she is a daughter and a  
165 daughter-in-law from scholarly and noble families, but her identity is presented through human relations.

### 166 7 b) A Civil Official's Wife

167 The female perspective with the identity as a civil official's wife comes mainly from direct description, particularly  
168 of the couple's inner household and the resolution of Li Qingzhao to "follow" her husband's will.

169 The civil official status of Zhao Mingcheng is evidently stated in many sections of the work, "When two years  
170 later, he went to take up a post, we lived on rice and vegetables and dressed in common cloth; but he would  
171 search out the most remote spots and out-of-the-way places to fulfill his interest in the world's most ancient  
172 writings and unusual script." 4 "Later we lived privately at home for ten years, gathering what we could here  
173 and there to have enough food and clothing. Afterward, my husband governed two prefectures in succession,  
174 and he used up all his salary on 'lead and wooden tablets' for scholarly work." 5 "In 1126, the first year of the  
175 Jingkang ? ? reign, my husband was governing Zi-chuan ???". 6 "The next autumn, the ninth month of 1128,  
176 my husband took charge of Jian-kang Prefecture ??? but relinquished the position in the spring of the following  
177 year. Again we put everything in boats and went up to Wu-hu ?? and Gu-shu ??, intending to take up lodging  
178 on the river Gan ?? . That summer in the fifth month we reached Chi-yang ?? . At that point an imperial decree  
179 arrived, ordering my husband to take charge of Hu-zhou ? ? and to proceed to an audience with the Emperor  
180 before he took up the office. Therefore he had the household stop at Chi-yang, from which he went off alone to  
181 answer the summons." 1 The identity of Li Qingzhao as a civil official's wife is displayed in her autobiography  
182 through interactive pleasure between husband and wife, which is rare in male works. For instance, "We would  
183 sit facing one another, rolling them out before us, examining and munching. And we thought ourselves persons  
184 of the age of Ge-tian ?? could purchase it, we returned it. For several days afterward my husband and I faced  
185 one another in deep depression." 4 "When he got hold of a piece of calligraphy, a painting, a goblet, or a tripod,  
186 we would go over it at our leisure, pointing out faults and flaws, setting for our nightly limit the time it took  
187 one candle to burn down." 5 "I happen to have an excellent memory, and every evening after we finished eating,  
188 we would sit in the hall called 'Return Home' ??? and make tea. Pointing to the heaps of books and histories,  
189 we would guess on which line of which page in which chapter of which book a certain passage could be found.  
190 Success in guessing determined who got to drink his or her tea first. Whenever I got it right, I would raise the  
191 teacup, laughing so hard that the tea would spill in my lap, and I would get up, not having to be able to drink  
192 any of it all. I would have been glad to grow old in such a world. Thus, even though we were living in anxiety,  
193 hardships, and poverty, our wills were not broken." 6 "Books lay ranged on tables and desks, scattered on top of  
194 one another on pillows and bedding. This was what took his fancy and what occupied his mind, what drew his  
195 eyes and what his spirit inclined to; and his joy was greater than the pleasures others had in dancing girls, dogs,  
196 or horses." 7 These touching and private elegant pleasures in the boudoir between husband and wife are rarely  
197 seen in works by male writers, but these vivid plots and psychological states under Li Qingzhao's description are  
198 full of a woman's soft emotions, and her ideal of putting love first in her life.

199 The civil official's wife identity of Li Qingzhao is also reflected in her cordial love to her husband, and her firm  
200 compliance with and implementation of the feudal concept of "following one's husband ???".

201 Her profound love for her husband is reflected in the description when she heard that her husband was seriously  
202 ill on the journey to his new post. "As he was hurrying on his journey, he suffered sunstroke from the intense heat,  
203 and by the time he reached imperial headquarters, he had contracted a malarial fever. At the end of September,  
204 I received a letter that he was sick in bed. I was very alarmed, considering my husband's excitable nature and  
205 how nothing had been able to prevent the illness from deteriorating into fever; his temperature might rise even  
206 higher, and in that case he would have to take chilled medicines; then the sickness would really be something  
207 to worry about. Thereupon I set out by boat and traveled three hundred leagues in one day and one night. At  
208 the point when I arrived he was to be done after his death." 8 The tone of this paragraph is full of concerns,  
209 affections and rebukes of a wife to her husband. She knows very well that her husband is impatient, and that  
210 he would mistake medicines to worsen his illness. She set off immediately after she received the letter, "traveled  
211 three hundred leagues in one day and one night" 9 . As expected, her husband was mortally ill, and finally died.  
212 She was so heart-stricken that she didn't bring herself to ask him what was to be done after his death. Her deep  
213 affection was also reflected in her mourning for Zhao Mingcheng after he had died for three years. When she  
214 recalled him, his lovely voice and expression were so vivid that it seemed to have occurred yesterday: "Nowadays  
215 when I chance to look over these books, it's like meeting old friends. And I recall when my husband was in the  
216 hall called 'Calm Governance' ??? in Lai-zhou ?? : He had first finished binding the volumes, making title slips  
217 of rue leaves to keep out insects and tie ribbons of blue silk, binding ten juan into one volume. Every day in the  
218 evening when the office clerks had gone home, he would do editorial collations on two juan and write a colophon  
219 for one inscription." 2 Endless nostalgia and depression were expressed under her pen, making people sigh deeply  
220 even after one thousand years.

221 Her virtue in "following her husband" is reflected in her firm attitude towards maintaining their collections  
222 despite her eternal separation from her husband and even after she had to face a homeless and terrible experience.

223 Before Zhao Mingcheng died, for the separation when her husband set off for his new post, Li Qingzhao wrote:  
224 "On June 13, he set off to carry out his duty. He had the boats pulled up onto the shore, and he sat there on  
225 the bank, in summer clothes with his headband high on his forehead, his spirit like a tiger's, his eyes gleaming  
226 as though they would shoot into a person, while he gazed towards the boat and took his leave. I was terribly  
227 upset. I shouted to him, 'If I hear the city is in danger, what should I do?' He answered from after, hands on his  
228 hips: "Follow the crowd. If you can't do otherwise, abandon the household goods first, then the clothes, then the  
229 books and scrolls, then the old bronze-but carry the sacrificial vessels for the ancestral temple yourself. Live or  
230 die with them; don't give them up!" 3 The advice given by Zhao Mingcheng is ridiculous 4 Ibid., pp. 779. 5 Ibid.,  
231 pp. 779. 6 Ibid., pp. 779-81. 7 Ibid., pp. 781. 8 Ibid., pp. 785. 9 Ibid., pp. 785. 1 A juan, originally a "scroll,"  
232 came to be something like a chapter. The size of a library was measured not in volumes but in juan.-Cited from  
233 Selections of Tang and Song Dynasties, pp. 873. 2 Selections of the Tang and Song Dynasties, pp. 789. 3 Ibid.,  
234 pp. 783-85.

235 was taking large doses of chai-hu ?? and yellow-qin ??; he had a recurring fever with dysentery, and the  
236 illness appeared mortal. I was weeping and in such a home if the country was occupied by invaders. Personal  
237 necessity and safety shall be placed after hobbies! It's evident that a journey for refuge would be full of risks. If  
238 she meets storm and snow, clothing can save her life. At critical moments, clothing can be exchanged for food.  
239 However, collections are not easy to take, and increased hugely the difficulty of her journey. Furthermore, at  
240 critical moments, they don't have practical value but may be sources of disasters. At his last moment, Zhao  
241 Mingcheng still cherished his collections very much. "He took a brush and wrote a poem. When he finished it,  
242 he passed away, with no thought at all for the future provision of his family." 4 What was the political situation  
243 then? "His Majesty had already sent the palace ladies elsewhere, and I heard that future crossings of the Yangtze  
244 ?? were to be prohibited." 5 Zhao Mingcheng neither told his wife where she could go, nor requested her to  
245 abandon the collections. To most people, his will was foolish, or even ruthless.

246 The rest of the work indicated that Li Qingzhao had always followed the instructions of her husband to  
247 maintain their collections without caring about risks. She would not give up one piece until her last resort.  
248 She practiced the Ancient Chinese traditional female's virtue of "following one's husband" with her life. In the  
249 whole work, we can't find one complaint from her about protecting the relics, but just helplessness and sighs  
250 whenever her efforts are in vain. It is very clear, that in the female perspective of Li Qingzhao, her behavior  
251 was unquestionably correct and just, as it complied with feudal behavioral rules and regulations for a wife. Her  
252 resolution and conviction in observing the sacred "following one's husband" principle, as a civil official's wife,  
253 constitutes the second female perspective in Li Qingzhao's autobiography.

## 254 8 c) Female Scholar

255 In the first half of the article, the female scholarly identity of Li Qingzhao mostly coincides with her identity as  
256 a civil official's wife. For instance, she wrote this about Zhao Mingcheng's life, before his entering officialdom:  
257 "On the first and fifteenth days of every month, my husband would get a short vacation from the Academy; he  
258 would 'pawn some clothes' for five hundred cash and go to the market at Xiang-guo Temple ???, where he would  
259 buy fruit and rubbings of inscriptions." 1 And after he became an civil official, "There one might find many  
260 ancient poems omitted from the Classic of Poetry (Shi Jing, ??), unofficial histories, and writings never before  
261 seen, works hidden in walls and recovered from tombs. My husband would work hard at copying such things,  
262 drawing ever more pleasure from the activity, until he was unable to stop himself. Later, if he happened to see  
263 a work of painting or calligraphy by some person of ancient or modern times, or unusual vessels of the Three  
264 Dynasties of high antiquity, he would still pawn our clothes to buy them." 2 "Thus our collection came to surpass  
265 all others in fineness of paper and the perfection of the characters." 3 "When the book collection was complete,  
266 we set up a library in 'Return Home' Hall ? ? ? , with huge bookcases where the books were cataloged in order.  
267 There we put the books. Whenever I wanted to read, I would ask for the key, make a note in the ledger, then  
268 take out the books. If one of them was a bit damaged or soiled, it would be my responsibility to repair the spot  
269 and copy it out in a neat hand. There was no longer the same ease and casualness as before. This attempt to  
270 make things convenient led instead to nervousness and anxiety. I couldn't bear it. I began to plan how to make  
271 do with only one meat dish in our meals and how to do away with all the finery in my dress. For my hair there  
272 were no ornaments of gilding or embroidery. Whenever he came upon a history or the work of a major writer,  
273 if there was nothing wrong with the printing and no errors in the edition, he would buy it on the spot to have  
274 as a second copy." 4 Combined with the foregoing plots to cite books and taste tea, these words create a vivid  
275 image of a woman who has elegant hobbies, profound knowledge and doesn't long for vanity. In such a feudal  
276 society, when a talentless woman could generally be treated as virtuous, Li Qingzhao could love the collection of  
277 relics with her husband, and could appreciate them as well as her husband. In the plot to cite books and taste  
278 tea, they played a game that one asked questions and the other answered. When one raised a historical incident,  
279 the other had to tell the particular page, volume and book the answer lay in. The one who gave the correct  
280 answer could drink tea first. This game can only be played by experts who have been well read and who have  
281 known relevant knowledge extremely well. Their boudoir game stressed profound knowledge, and their hobby is  
282 as refined as possible. Her female scholarly identity has integrated her natural gender and scholarly personality,  
283 a combination which produces a special image of Li Qingzhao within the grand historical background, and a  
284 colorful taste for her autobiography with an unusual female perspective.

After Zhao Mingcheng died, the Jin invasion threw the Southern Song Dynasty into violent storms, and people suffered much from fluctuating political situations. Li Qingzhao had to leave her home and lodge in houses belonging to others. The mental tendency of her work at this time reveals the female perspective even better. In the second half of the epilog, what Li Qingzhao cared about is how to try her best to maintain their collection. At the turning moment between the Northern Song and Southern Song, many male scholars expressed their intense patriotism and transformed themselves from civil officials to military officers, which we can't find in Li Qingzhao's autobiography (unsurprisingly, given her gender).

As we have discussed above, Li Qingzhao wrote this article in the second year of the Shaoxing ?? Reign (1132AD), when Emperor Zhao Gou ruled the country. "Zhu Xi ( ? ? , 1130-1200) 5 said, 'At the beginning of the Shaoxing ? ? reign, the country contains talented people, but their works are coarse, not mentioning grievance and tenderness. Therefore, an appropriate academic spirit should be fostered.' Undoubtedly, the spirit fostered and advocated by literature is patriotism, which supplies courage, strength and confidence to people in wars." 1 If compared with Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone, this paragraph seems to exhibit some differences. Li Qingzhao's article is refined and touching, and the second half is full of grievance and tenderness. At the end, she quotes ancient stories of Xiao Yi(??, an emperor of the Liang dynasty, 508-555AD, reigned in 552-554AD) and Yang Guang(??, the second and also the last emperor of the Sui Dynasty, 569-618AD, reigned in 604-618AD), and inquires into historical and cosmic space and time. It has a bleak tone full of laments, but patriotism has not been clearly advocated. In the period's wider literary background, its uniqueness is manifested.

"The invasion of Jin ? overthrew the The Northern Song Dynasty, and people in central China were pushed to wars. Consequently, scholars who had long enjoyed peaceful and abundant life were also driven to battlefields. As the Northern Song had long valued civil officials, they controlled the wand of the imperial court. In this case, decisions from civil officials would not only influence their own promotion or demotion, but also determine the life and death of the country and its people." 2 "In such a background, at the end of The Northern Song, many scholars united to advocate armed force. Some of them led troops, and some determined to join the army. The former gossiping and coward spirit of The Northern Song scholars changed to a new social and political ideal to protect the country and defeat the enemy. As a result, a martial spirit came into being with characteristics of bravery, resolution and fortitude." 3 As a woman, Li Qingzhao didn't have opportunities to fight on battlefields. Therefore, she didn't express such great patriotic ambitions in her autobiography as Lu You(??,1125-1210) and Xin Qiji(???,1140-1207) did. 4 At the turning point between the Northern Song and the Southern Song dynasties when the country was conquered and families were ruined, her aspiration displayed in the autobiography was to maintain their collections as much as possible. Is it that Li Qingzhao didn't have patriotism? No. Her universally appreciated Xiari Jueju(????, Quatrains in Summer) are a good case in point, "Living, one should be an outstanding man; Dead, one should be an outstanding ghost. Even today, I forget not Xiang Yu(??), 5 Who refused to flee to the east side of the Wu River(??)." 6 The commentary below this poem in Reselection of Li Qingzhao's Poems (Chongji Li Qingzhao Ji, ??????) says, "Through carefully chewing over its sentiment, we conclude that this poem would have been written in the Jianyan( ? ? ) Reign when northern troops fled southward in panic." 7 In the poem, she yelled for the conquered territory and ruined country, effectively exposing her righteous patriotism. By quoting the old story of Xiang Yu, she satirized the muddleheaded and incompetent ruling class of the Southern Song, and her intense patriotism jumped out of the lines. So, why wasn't her intense patriotism clearly expressed in Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone? 5 Zhu Xi ? ? , one of the most great thinkers, philosophers and educators of the Song Dynasty. 1 Wang Xiaoshu ?æ???, Chinese Literature Spirit, Volume Song and Yuan(Zhongguo Wenxue Jingshen?Song Yuan Juan,???????? ??) ??M]. Ji Nan, Shandong Education Press, 2003. pp. 147-48. 177. 3 Ibid., pp. 179. 4 Lu You and Xin Qiji are the two most famous patriotic poets of the Southern Song Dynasty,both of them not only wrote a great deal of patriotic poems,but also experienced military career to defend the country. 5 Xiang Yu(??,ca.232-ca.202 BC) was a well-known political figure in Chinese history. He was also a prominent military leader in the late Qin dynasty.When he was defeated in Gai Xia(ã???),he felt discredited see Koto elders who lived in the east side of the Wu River, his homeland, so he refused to go across the river, and then he committed suicide with his sword on the shore of the Wu River.Although he failed, his moral integrity and heroism has been admired by the later generations of China for over 2000 years. 6 Li Qingzhao ??? comp. Huang Mogu ??? rv., Recollection of Li Qingzhao Works(Chongji Li Qingzhao Ji,???????). Beijing:Zhonghua Book Company, 2012. pp. 86. 7 Ibid.

Instead, the central themes were her endeavors to protect their collection and the sheer grief after some objects got lost. Why?

The reason is that protecting the collection was her husband's will, and also a behavior that she persisted in, being faithful to their love. The collection was the evidence for their love. In the second volume of his Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art, Hegel wrote, "It is especially in female characters that love is supremely beautiful, since for them this surrender, this sacrifice, is Volume XVI Issue I Version I the acme of their life, because they draw and expand the whole of their actual and spiritual life into this feeling, find a support for their existence in it alone, and, if they are touched by a misfortune in connection with it, dwindle away like a candle put out by the first unkind breeze." 1 Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone is the afterword Li Qingzhao wrote for Zhao Mingcheng's book, but the latter died. Therefore, as a lament article, it is under the lonely, grievous and desperate mood of a widow that her autobiography develops an explicit theme. A weak, helpless and sad woman relates her private story, and other personal characteristics such as lofty patriotism are placed behind, so that an implicit theme can

348 be formed for the author to express her grief in a turbulent historical period. This tender quality, with integration  
349 of explicit and implicit themes, and a combination of evident and hidden lines is just the most distinct feature of  
350 the female perspective in the autobiography. This is the third female perspective of Li Qingzhao's autobiography.

351 In conclusion, the female perspective of Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone is comprehensively unfolded  
352 with three identities of Li Qingzhao, i.e., a daughter and daughter-in-law of noble families, a wife of a civil official,  
353 and a female scholar. These three identities coincided or crossed over each other in the work, to develop a special  
354 kind of lament work with a triple female perspective.

## 355 9 IV.

356 Narrative Space for Three Dimensional Lament in Epilog to

## 357 10 Records on Metal and Stone

358 As a lament work from a female perspective, Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone is also special in its  
359 development of its lament theme layer by layer in the whole narrative space. In other words, it is an autobiography  
360 presented in a narrative space with a three dimensional lament. The reason for threedimensional lament is that  
361 "the core of an autobiography is autobiographic facts, but neither biographic facts nor historic facts can be  
362 dispensable. Actually, they are a harmonious trinity, and constitute the threedimensionality of autobiographic  
363 facts." 2 The three dimensional laments in Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone are lament for her husband,  
364 lament for collected objects and lament for the country. The three dimensions are interwoven in the work,  
365 corresponding respectively to autobiographic facts, biographic facts and historic facts. Now, let's probe into the  
366 text and analyze Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone in these three dimensions:

### 367 11 a) Autobiographic facts -lament for her husband

368 This section focuses on real description of Li Qingzhao's emotions and psychological activities. It contains the  
369 most personal content and private feelings, things which others can't know. Therefore, it is the part that can  
370 best present "the self's" inner world in the autobiography. These feelings are almost all related to the objects  
371 collected by the couple.

372 When she described the happy scene, how she and her husband collected objects, quoted books and tasted  
373 tea, Li Qingzhao concluded, "I would have been glad to grow old in such a world. Thus, even though we were  
374 living in anxiety, hardships, and poverty, our wills were not broken." 3 When they had frugally collected so many  
375 items, that objects were piled in rooms and scattered on tables and beds, Li Qingzhao wrote, "This was what  
376 took his fancy and what occupied his mind, what drew his eyes and what his spirit inclined to; and his joy was  
377 greater than the pleasures others had in dancing girls, dogs, or horses." 1 When she parted from her husband on  
378 the boat, she described "I was terribly upset" 2 , and her husband's words were not an expression of love, but  
379 placed the collection in the first place. When she heard that her husband was ill abed due to summer-heat and  
380 wrong medication, she wrote, "I was very alarmed, considering my husband's excitable nature and how nothing  
381 had been able to prevent the illness from deteriorating into fever." 3 Hurriedly, she came to her husband who was  
382 incurable so that she had to witness the death of her beloved. "I was weeping and in such a desperate state I could  
383 not bring myself to ask him what was to be done after his death." 4 When she came to Guiji and the collection  
384 was stolen by the landlord, she sighed, "I was terribly upset" 5 . With a conquered country, broken family,  
385 and her homeless life, their collection was reduced dramatically in size, and the remainder was incomplete and  
386 worthless. Li Qingzhao mocked herself, "Yet I treasure them as if I were protecting my own headfoolish person  
387 that I am!" 6 Three years after her husband 1 G.W.F.Hegel:Hegel's Aesthetics:Lectures on Fine Art,translated  
388 by T.M. Knox,Oxford:Clarendon Press,1998. Vol.I, pp. 563. 2 A Theory on Autobiography Literature, pp.32. 3  
389 Selections of the Tang and Song Dynasties, pp.779-81. 1 Ibid., pp.781. 2 Ibid., pp.783. 3 Ibid., pp.785. 4 Ibid.,  
390 pp.785. 5 Ibid., pp.789. 6 Ibid., pp.789. died, when she read Records on Metal and Stone again, Li Qingzhao  
391 had a myriad of feelings, "Nowadays when I chance to look over these books, it's like meeting old friends." 7  
392 She recalled scenes when her husband sorted out their collection in Jingzhi Hall of Donglai ????. Back to reality  
393 and comparing with the past, as a widow, she felt extremely depressed, "It is so sad-today the ink of his writing  
394 seems still fresh, but the trees on his grave have grown to an armspan in girth." 8 At the end of the work, she  
395 made a serious interrogation and contemplation of destiny that had been long hidden in her heart, "It must be  
396 that the passions of human nature cannot be forgotten, even standing between life and death. Or perhaps it is  
397 Heaven's will that beings as insignificant as ourselves are not fit to enjoy such superb creatures. 9 Or perhaps the  
398 dead too have consciousness, and they still treasure such things and give them their devoted attention, unwilling  
399 to leave them in the world of the living. How hard they are to obtain and how easy to lose!" 10 "A span of more  
400 than thirty years-how much calamity, how much gain and loss have I witnessed! When there is possession, there  
401 must be loss of possession; when there is a gathering together, there must be a scattering-this is the constant  
402 principle in things. Someone loses a bow; another person finds a bow; what's so special in that?

403 The reason why I have recorded this story from beginning to end in such detail is to let it serve as a warning  
404 for scholars and collectors in later generations." 11 Her lamentations include grief for the collection and grief  
405 for her husband, and even lament for uncertain fate. The collection was the common interest of her husband  
406 and her. All details of relic collection, appreciation, fondling and protection were evidences of their love. The

## 12 B) BIOGRAPHICAL FACT -LAMENT FOR THE COLLECTION

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407 collection was not only their hobby to pursue ancient culture, but also a part of their life that was the most  
408 important and glorious so that the collection had been infused into her blood and whole life. The sincere, detailed  
409 and undisguised psychological description centering on the collection has incorporated her love to her husband  
410 and affection to inscriptions, books and paintings, which constitutes the first narrative dimension of the article,  
411 autobiographic fact.

### 412 12 b) Biographical fact -lament for the collection

413 The purpose of biographic facts is to manifest the relation between me and others, which is also the main line  
414 for the autobiography of Li Qingzhao. In the epilog, the ties to connect Li Qingzhao and her husband as well as  
415 others that she dealt with after her husband died are objects listed in Records on Metal and Stone.

416 The evolving process of the collection from few to many, from many to few, from dispersion to collection, and  
417 from collection to dispersion is cleverly correlated to the relations between her and her husband, and is also a  
418 critical ploy to demonstrate that Li Qingzhao is closely linked to the birth of Record on Metal and Stone.

419 The first half of the epilog, namely, the part from when the author was married to Zhao Mingcheng until  
420 Zhao Mingcheng's death, focuses on their indulgence in relic collection. In the foregoing discussion, we saw  
421 that they went to Xiangguo Temple ???, buying relics with all of their savings. Collection was their common  
422 interest, ideal and pursuit, and their love increased as the collection grew. Biographic facts also told readers the  
423 starting time and deep ideas for their collection, main sources and economic foundations for collection acquisition,  
424 spiritual happiness and mental satisfaction that the collection brought about, and financial embarrassment and  
425 dissatisfaction with the collection. Furthermore, her creation of a literary image of Zhao Mingcheng was closely  
426 related to their collection.

427 The most touching part of Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone is the spiritual pleasure and mental satisfaction  
428 that relics bring to their marriage, which have been presented in the foregoing discussion of their collation, night  
429 appreciation, book citing and tea tasting. These extremely touching details tell readers what overwhelming and  
430 incomparable pleasure and emotional experience the relics described in Records on Metal and Stone have given  
431 to the author. In this sense, Records on Metal and Stone has infused into her life so that she couldn't give up  
432 and forget. These facts are "the most pregnant moments" I elaborated on the collection during their marriage,  
433 and the facts are exceptionally representative and suggestive.

434 The foregoing details on their relic compilation, maintenance and frugal collection have clearly demonstrated  
435 their common interest and relic acquisition without paying attention to cost. For the sake of their hobby, they  
436 would live in poverty but with much joy. Their extraordinary aesthetic interest and their profound love are  
437 vividly presented. They sorted their books, and Li Qingzhao lived with plain clothes and simple meals but she  
438 was spiritually satisfied in the private world of their collection.

439 After the impressive description of pleasure gained from the collection, Li Qingzhao turned to narration of  
440 their life's tragedy after the Jingkang 7 Ibid., pp.789. 8 Ibid., pp.791. 9 "Superb creatures," you-wu ??, here  
441 figuratively applied to books and antiques, usually refers to dangerously beautiful women, who inspire destructive  
442 passion in those attracted to them.-Cited from Selections of Tang and Song Dynasties, pp. 873. 10 Selections of  
443 the Tang and Song Dynasties, pp.791. 11 Ibid., pp.791. year. Again we put everything in boats and went up to  
444 Wu-hu ? ? and Gu-shu ??, intending to take up lodging on the river Gan ?? . That summer in the fifth month we  
445 reached Chi-yang ? ? . At that point an imperial decree arrived, ordering my husband to take charge of Hu-zhou  
446 ?? and to proceed to an audience with the Emperor before he took up the office. Therefore he had the household  
447 stop at Chi-yang ??, from which he went off alone to answer the summons." 2 We have seen their conversation  
448 about what should be done to the collection in dangers. This exceptionally impressive and reminiscent part is  
449 the core of the whole article. After the riverside farewell, when they met again, "He took a brush and wrote a  
450 poem. When he finished it, he passed away, with no thought at all for the future provision of his family." 3 At  
451 the time when the country was conquered and the family was ruined, he told his wife that she must stay with  
452 their collection, and he had never expressed any idea to abandon the relics. Therefore, he treasured the collection  
453 more than his own life. His will sanctified Li Qingzhao's behavior in seeking to protect their collection during  
454 her life as a refugee.

455 In the epilog, Li Qingzhao also recorded her relation with other people, which supplies biographic facts after  
456 the death of Zhao Mingcheng. Without her husband, Li Qingzhao was extremely lone and helpless, and didn't  
457 know where to settle herself. "The situation was getting more serious by the day. I thought of my husband's  
458 brother-in-law, an official in the Ministry of War on garrison duty ???? in Hong-zhou ??, and dispatched two  
459 former employees of my husband to go ahead to my brother-in-law, taking the baggage." 1 "At Gui-ji ??, I chose  
460 lodging in a cottage belonging to a local named Zhong ?. Suddenly one night someone made off with five of the  
461 baskets through a hole in the wall. I was terribly upset and offered a substantial reward to get them back. Two  
462 days later, Zhong Fu-hao ???" next door produced eighteen of the scrolls and asked for a reward. By that I  
463 knew that the thief was not far away. I tried every means I could, but I still couldn't get hold of the rest." 2  
464 Other details such as seeking shelter among noble relatives of her late husband, and the stealing of relics by the  
465 landlord suggest the hardship she faced during her attempts to find refuge and the efforts she made.

466 The arrangement of biographic facts in Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone is seamless. The facts are  
467 interwoven with collected objects, and appropriately illustrated the relations between the author and her husband  
468 and other people. This is the second narrative space -biographic facts.

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469 **13 c) Historical facts -lament for the country**

470 Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone indicated many historical facts about the Song Dynasty, which were closely  
471 related to the fates of Li Qingzhao and their collection. It can be said that these facts are hidden traces and  
472 historical backgrounds for Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone, and constitute the historical element of the  
473 work. The miserable experience of Li Qingzhao and their collection in the historical turmoil of a subjugated  
474 country and broken family stands as the epitome of the experiences of Song scholars in wars and vagrancy after  
475 the invasion of Jin troops.

476 "Autobiographers often present themselves with particular identities, and identity recognition is an essential  
477 principle for them to arrange autobiographic facts, biographic facts and historical facts." 3 "Biography neither  
478 relates pure history, nor complete literary fabrication; it should be a cohesion, and an account that is based on  
479 history but perfects in writing. The relation between history and article is neither one or the other, nor barriers  
480 one another. Instead, they complement each other and are interrelated." 4 Li Qingzhao used her female scholarly  
481 identity to treat historical facts in the autobiography. At the turning point of the Northern and Southern Song  
482 dynasties, the Jingkang Incident 1127 became the critical transition of Li Qingzhao's fate, and also the division  
483 line between her life statuses. In the Northern Song period, her father and father-in-law were both senior officials,  
484 and her husband was promoted gradually. She was brilliantly talented, and enjoyed the graceful life of the literati  
485 class. She had a pleasant family atmosphere, and a harmonious marriage, all contributing to an idyllic life for her.  
486 Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone has manifested many happy details between her and her husband. After  
487 southward migration, her personal destiny was tightly related to the country's fate. If the nest is overthrown,  
488 how can you find an intact egg? Disasters of individual scholars are illustrated through the gradual reduction of  
489 the collection. Loss of the collection brought heavy sorrow and grief to Li Qingzhao, and reflected in microcosm  
490 the national calamities and traumas of the age.

491 "In 1126, the first year of the Jing-kang reign, my husband was governing Zi-chuan ?? when we heard that the  
492 Jin Tartars were moving against the capital. He was in a daze, realizing that all those full trunks and overflowing  
493 chests, which he contemplated so lovingly and mournfully, would surely soon be his possessions no longer. In the  
494 third month of spring in 1127, the first year of the Jian-yan reign, we hurried 2 Selections of the Tang and Song  
495 Dynasties, pp.783. 3 Ibid., pp.785. 1 Ibid., pp.785-87. 2 Ibid., pp.789. 3 A Theory on Autobiography Literature,  
496 pp. 83. 4 Ibid., pp. 44. south for the funeral of his mother. Since we could not take the overabundance of  
497 our possessions with us, we first gave up the bulky printed volumes, the albums of paintings, and the most  
498 cumbersome of the vessels. Thus we reduced the size of the collection several times, and still we had fifteen  
499 cartloads of books. When we reached Dong-hai, it took a string of boats to ferry them all across the Huai ??,  
500 and again across the Yangtze ?? to Jian-kang ??. In our old mansion in Qing-zhou ?? we still had more than ten  
501 rooms of books and various items locked away, and we planned to have them all brought by boat the next year.  
502 But in the twelfth month Jin forces sacked Qing-zhou, and those ten or so rooms I spoke of were all reduced to  
503 ashes." 1 Historical facts are closely related to the size of the collection. As the national calamities got worse, the  
504 collection became smaller, and her life was increasingly miserable. The collection's reduction implies that the  
505 author couldn't protect the relics she treasured. It is evident that the nation weakened and the political situation  
506 became turbulent.

507 The disintegration of the country and the upheaval of the political situation are also manifested in the reduction  
508 of the collection. Let's see how rapidly the collection was reduced to one or two tenths of its former size: "After  
509 the funeral was over, I had nowhere to go. His Majesty had already sent the palace ladies elsewhere, and I heard  
510 that future crossings of the Yangtze were to be prohibited. At the time I still had twenty thousand juan of  
511 books, two thousand copies of inscriptions on metal and stone with colophons, table services and mats enough to  
512 entertain a hundred guests, along with other possessions equaling those already mentioned. I also became very  
513 sick, to the point where my only vital sign was a rasping breath." 2 "In February that winter, the Jin invaders  
514 sacked Hong-zhou ?? and all was lost. Those books which, as I said, it took a string of boats to ferry across  
515 the Yangtze ?? were scattered into clouds of smoke. What remained were a few light scrolls and calligraphy  
516 pieces; manuscript copies of the collections of Li Bo ??, Du Fu ??" «, Han Yu ??, and Liu Zong-yuan ???; a copy  
517 of Current Tales and Recent Bons Mots(Shi Shuo Xin Yu,????); a copy of Discourses on Salt and Iron(Yan Tie  
518 Lun,?é? ?); a few dozen rubbings of stone inscriptions from the Han ? and Tang ?"; ten or so ancient tripods  
519 and cauldrons; and a few boxes of Southern Tang ??" manuscript editions-all of which I happened to have had  
520 removed to my chambers to pass time during my illness, now a solitary pile of leftovers. Since I could no longer  
521 go upriver, and since the movements of the invaders were unpredictable, I was going to stay with my younger  
522 brother Li Hang ?? , a reviser of edicts. By the time I reached Tai-zhou ?? , the governor of the place had  
523 already fled. Proceeding on to Shan ? through Mu-zhou ??, we left the clothing and linen behind. Hurrying  
524 to Yellow Cliff ??, we hired a boat to take us toward the sea, following the fleeing court. The court halted a  
525 while in Zhang-an ??, then we followed the imperial barge on the sea route to Wenzhou ?? and Yue-zhou ??.  
526 In February, during the fourth year of the Jian-yan ?? reign, early in 1131, all the officials of the government  
527 were released from their posts. We went to Qu-zhou ??, and then that May, now the first year of the Shao-xing  
528 ? ? reign, we returned to Yue-zhou ??, and in 1132 back again to Hang-zhou ??" 3 Furthermore, the collection  
529 made Li Qingzhao a suspect of treason and she experienced a near escape, "When my husband had been gravely  
530 ill, a certain academician, Zhang Fei-qing ???, had visited him with a jade pot-actually it wasn't really jade  
531 but alabaster. I have no idea who started the story, but there was a false rumor that they had been discussing

### 13 C) HISTORICAL FACTS -LAMENT FOR THE COUNTRY

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532 presenting it to the Jin ? as a tribute gift. I also learned that someone had made formal charges in the matter.  
533 I was terrified and dared say nothing, but I took all the bronze vessels and such things in the household and was  
534 ready to turn them over to the imperial court. But by the time I reached Yue-zhou ??, the court had already  
535 gone on to Si-ming ??. I didn't dare keep these things in the household any longer, so I sent them along with the  
536 manuscripts to Shan ?. Later when the imperial army was rounding up defeated enemy troops, I heard that these  
537 had all been taken into the household of General Li ??? . That 'solitary pile of leftovers,' of which I spoke, had  
538 now been reduced by about fifty or sixty percent. All that remained were six or so baskets of books, paintings,  
539 ink and inkstones that I hadn't been able to part with. I always kept these under my bed and opened them only  
540 with my own hands." 1 Up to now, less than a half collection was left. Although she tried her best to maintain  
541 the collection, her bad luck was far from its end. When she lodged in a certain Zhong's household, the collection  
542 was stolen, and she couldn't purchase the objects back, "Two days later, Zhong Fuhao ???" next door produced  
543 eighteen of the scrolls and asked for a reward. By that I knew that the thief was not far away. I tried every  
544 means I could, but I still couldn't get hold of the rest. I have now learned that they were all purchased by the  
545 Circuit Fiscal Supervisor ?? Wu Yue ??. Now seventy or eighty percent of that 'solitary pile of leftovers' is gone.  
546 I still have a few volumes from three or four sets, none complete, and some very ordinary pieces of calligraphy"  
547 . 2 1 Selections of the Tang and Song Dynasties, pp. 783. 2 Ibid., pp. 785. 3 Ibid., pp.787. 1 Ibid., pp.787-89. 2  
548 Ibid., pp.789. It is very obvious that the political situation led to the dramatic reduction of the collection from an  
549 immense number to one or two tenths with little value. The direct causal relationship between the two perfectly  
550 manifested the restrictive effect of historical facts on the personal fate of individuals. Implicitly, Li Qingzhao  
551 described, under national turmoil, the fact that scholars can't control their fates, but end up being bullied and  
552 tortured in a "big panic ???".

553 The beginning of Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone reads, "Yet catastrophe fell on Wang Ya ?? and Yuan  
554 Zai ?? alike: What did it matter that the one hoarded books and paintings while the other merely hoarded  
555 pepper? Chang-yu ?? and Yuan-kai ? ? both had a disease-it made no difference that the disease of one was  
556 a passion for money, and of the other, a passion for the transmission of knowledge and commentary. Although  
557 their reputations differed, they were the same in being deluded." 3 At the end of the work, she sighed, "Long  
558 ago when the city of Jiang-ling ?? fell, Xiao Yi ??, Emperor Yuan of the Liang ?? ?, did not regret the fall of  
559 his kingdom, yet destroyed his books and paintings [unwilling to see them fall into the hands of his conquerors].  
560 When his capital at Jiangdu was sacked, Yang Guang ??, Emperor Yang of the Sui ???, wasn't concerned with his  
561 own death, only with recovering his books [demonstrated when his spirit overturned the boat in which they were  
562 being transported so that he could have his library in the land of the dead] 4 ." 5 The two paragraphs correspond  
563 to each other, where Li Qingzhao integrated historical facts, legends and personal opinions. The first paragraph  
564 tells us that Li Qingzhao was extremely sad and disappointed at the degeneration of the current spiritual and  
565 cultural situation, and the depreciated value of worldly ideas. Therefore, she made severe mocking comments to  
566 show the great upheaval of her life. The second paragraph relates that she compared her collection to the special  
567 behavior of Xiao Yi and Yang Guang when they were confronted with national crises and life-and-death disasters,  
568 even after death, which suggests massive lamentation and serious interrogation. By contrasting the will of Zhao  
569 Mingcheng at the riverside, at the conclusion of Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone, Li Qingzhao related their  
570 collection to this life-and-death theme. In discourse about Zhao Mingcheng, his seemingly foolish and illiberal  
571 hobby as an epigraphist has illustrated great historical values and issues of the meaning of cultural heritage,  
572 transcending an individual's times and (one might say metaphorically) moving heaven and earth. At the same  
573 time, the recall of two former emperors who treasured their relics over their live when their capitals were being  
574 sacked has effectively displayed her grief and anger for a conquered country and ruined families. In this way,  
575 she incorporated her lament for the country when South Song was in turbulence. She also expressed her longing  
576 for the peaceful, comfortable and scholarly-oriented life in the The Northern Song period. Consequently, she  
577 announced her resolution for the collection's spiritual value, and "never-give-up" mentality, even if the country  
578 and family faced devastating calamities. These facts constitute the third dimension of the three-dimensional  
579 narrative space -lament for history.

580 "Although biography and history are different in narrative object and writing purpose, they have one essential  
581 point, that is, both of them have to be constructed on facts. Faithfully following facts is a fundamental principle  
582 that both of them shall comply with." 1 "In historical works, most that we read show a temporal spiral progress  
583 (a historical outlook), the cause and effect of events and rise and fall of dynasties, so that we can understand  
584 inner logics that drive the historical train forward. The other way round, biography will not take a panoramic  
585 view and grasp vital veins, but focus on particular events. The focus is always placed on meaningful details  
586 -biographic facts and autobiographic facts. Fluctuating emotions, elusive ideas and impending disasters are all  
587 carefully edited so that a movie with individuality is presented to the readers. For this reason, the difference of  
588 writing purposes leads to different styles of biography and history." 2 For the lament autobiography, Li Qingzhao  
589 clearly introduced historical facts into the Epilog, and cleverly demonstrated the causal relations to her personal  
590 fate with an implicit narrative method. This constitutes the third dimensional narration for Li Qingzhao's  
591 autobiography, historical facts -lament for the country.

592 In short, with her unique female perspective, in Epilog to Records on Metal and Stone, Li Qingzhao integrated  
593 three narrative spaces, namely, autobiographic facts -lament for her husband, biographic facts -lament for the  
594 collection, and historical facts -lament for the country, which constitute a special autobiographic style with three

595 lament spaces. It has contributed much to ancient autobiographic writing, with a compositional structure that is  
 596 rich and appropriately selected. 3 Ibid., pp.777. 4 This story about Yang Guang is in The Record of the Emperor  
 597 Yang of the Sui's life in the twelfth year of Daye ? ? Reign of the Sui Dynasty(616) (Nanbu Yanhua Lu, ? ?  
 598 ? ? ? ,in fact it is a novel described Yang Gaung's life in 616).Normally the author of it was regarded as Yan  
 599 Shigu ???(581-645,a famous historian and linguist of Tang), but another opinion of later generations regarded it  
 as a novel of the Song Dynasty. 5 Selections of the Tang and Song Dynasties, pp.791. <sup>1 2 3 4</sup>



Figure 1: A

Taishigong Zixu,????  
 ?) by Sima Qian (???,B.C.145-B.C.90), followed by  
 Ban Gu(??,32-92)'s Autobiography in Han Shu(Han

[Note: Shu?Xu Zhuan, ? ? ? ? ? ), Cao Pi( ? ? ,187-226)'s]

Figure 2:

600

<sup>1</sup>© 2016 Global Journals Inc. (US)

<sup>2</sup>Tuo Tuo ??, et al. History of Song(Song Shi,??) .Beijing:Zhonghua Book Company, 1977. pp. 13121.6 Su Shi was the literary arena leader of the Northern Song, imultaneously was also a profound scholar in his time.7 History of Song, pp. 13121.1 Ibid., pp. 13122.2 Ibid., pp. 11093.3 Selections of the Tang and Song Dynasties, pp. 779.4 Ibid., pp. 779.5 Ibid., pp. 779.6 Ibid., pp. 783.1 Ibid., pp. 783.2 Ge-tian ?? was a mythical ruler of high antiquity, when everyone lived in a state of perfect contentment. -Cited from Selections of the Tang and Song Dynasties, pp. 873.3 Selections of the Tang and Song Dynasties, pp. 779. few days, and having thought of no plan by which we

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 785.5 Ibid., pp. 785.1 Ibid., pp. 787-79.2 Ibid., pp.779.3 Ibid., pp.779.4 Ibid., pp. 781.

<sup>4</sup>A Theory on Autobiography Literature, pp. 46.2 Ibid., pp. 45.



601 Complicated plots and sentimental tones continuously expose the ego of the author through relations between  
 602 me and others, between me and the times. The whole work is full of ups and downs, offering amazing impressions  
 603 to the reader. The massive amount of information contained in the epilog also provides traceable, genuine  
 604 and reliable materials for later generations. Incontrovertibly, this is an autobiography with refined conceptions,  
 605 complex constructions, and profound meanings. It has not only filled the blank of female writers in the Chinese  
 606 autobiographical field, but also provided a quite special narrative structure with three dimensional interactions.  
 607 It has added much value to the original book, and has an irreplaceable status as a literary model. It is a great  
 608 milestone in Chinese autobiographic history. As a result, Li Qingzhao becomes a landmark figure in Chinese  
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