

Unit 12
Reading C

Li Po and Tu Fu 《李白与杜甫》

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1 Li Po, the legend, was eight feet tall. Born in the year 701, he was, in early manhood, perhaps a knight errant, perhaps a brigand. He was initiated by a Taoist mystic, married for money, and was invited to Ch'ang-an, the capital of the world's brightest empire in that empire's brightest moment. He was to become its poet laureate, a laureate who drank, rode to the hunt with princes and ministers, and appeared at court, at the imperial command, to dash off masterpieces—or did not appear, instead informing the Brilliant Emperor that he, the God of Wine, could not be bothered to leave his tavern.

李白，这位传奇人物，身高八尺。他生于公元 701 年，在青年时期，或许是个游侠，或许是个强盗。他由一位道家神秘主义者启蒙，为了钱财而结婚，并且被邀请到长安——在那个世界上最辉煌的帝国最辉煌的时刻，这里是帝国的首都。他将成为这个帝国的桂冠诗人，一个爱喝酒的桂冠诗人，与王公大臣们一起骑马狩猎，奉皇帝之命在宫廷中挥笔创作杰作——或者不出现，反而告知明皇，他这位酒神可没工夫离开他的酒馆。

A wild man, he suffered exile for ten years after forcing the chief imperial eunuch, among the most powerful and most corrupt men in the realm, to remove his street-soiled boots. In 757, during the unsuccessful rebellion of the Turkish general An Lu-shan, Li Po supported the attempt of Prince Yung to overthrow his brother, by then the legitimate successor to the Brilliant Emperor under the title Su-tsung. In the aftermath, Li Po was reprieved from a death sentence and spent his last years in exile again. In 762, drunk, he was drowned when he tried to embrace the image of the moon in the water, or perhaps his own image in the image of the moon. Beyond facts, beyond legend, he was a man who wrote resounding heroic poems, whimsically humorous poems, and personal lyrics of a gently authentic delicacy unrivaled in his time, or any other. This was the spirit of poetry incarnate.

他是个狂放之人，曾强迫帝国中最有权势也最腐败的人物之一——首席太监为他脱下沾满街尘的靴子，之后他遭受了十年流放。公元 757 年，在突厥将领安禄山的叛乱失败期间，李白支持永王试图推翻他的兄长（当时已在肃宗的名号下成为明皇的合法继承人）。事后，李白被免除死刑，在再次流放中度过了他的最后岁月。公元 762 年，他在醉酒状态下试图拥抱水中月亮的倒影，或者也许是月亮倒影中的自己的影像时溺水而亡。超越事实，超越传说，他是一个写下了豪迈英雄诗篇、诙谐幽默诗篇以及有着温柔真挚的细腻情感的个人抒情诗的人，在他那个时代或任何其他时代都无人能及。这就是诗歌精神的化身。

2 Tu Fu, Li Po's junior by eleven years, sprang from a good, but not a wealthy, family. An early and lifelong student of the Classics and the classic arts, he was no mere pedant, and he bragged in several of his poems of his horsemanship and his prowess at the hunt. Though poetry was his life, official service in the imperial government — the ideal of the ethical Confucian as well as the pinnacle of worldly success in the T'ang period — attracted him strongly. He tried and tried again to pass the imperial civil service examinations. Compromising himself, he took, and passed, a second special examination, overseen by the most powerful and most corrupt official of the imperial court.

杜甫比李白小十一岁，出身于良好但并不富裕的家庭。他早年便终身研习经典和古典艺术，却绝非迂腐的学究，他在几首诗中吹嘘自己的骑术和狩猎技能。虽然诗歌是他的生命，但在朝廷为官——这既是有道德的儒家的理想，也是唐朝世俗成功的巅峰——对他有着强烈的吸引力。他一次又一次地尝试通过科举考试。他做出妥协，参加并通过了一场由朝廷中最有权势也最腐败的官员监督的特殊考试。

3 He was then appointed, certainly with gleeful irony, to a police position, which he refused. During the An Lu-shan rebellion, he spent a period of captivity among the rebels. After escaping, he finally achieved a responsible position in the new emperor's government-in-exile, only to find himself censured and threatened with death for nothing more than honesty. He went into more or less self-imposed exile with the family he treasured and raised as best he could through all this turmoil.

然后，他被任命了一个警察职位，这其中肯定带着令人欣喜的讽刺意味，而他拒绝了这个职位。在安禄山叛乱期间，他在叛军那里度过了一段被俘的日子。逃脱后，他终于在新皇帝的流亡政府中获得了一个重要职位，却仅仅因为诚实而遭到指责并面临死亡威胁。在经历了这一切动荡之后，他与他珍视的家人一起进入了或多或少是自我强加的流放生活，并尽他所能抚养他们。

He found some satisfaction in retirement, and some in later service in the provincial government. Tu Fu was an earthbound man, but one who struggled to produce a body of soaring poetry, poetry of love, honesty, and suffering, pointedly written in all the most difficult poetic forms of the period. It achieved for him, long after his death in 770, equal ranking with Li Po as China's greatest poet. 他在退隐中找到了一些满足，在后来为地方政府服务中也找到了一些满足。杜甫是一个脚踏实地的人，但他努力创作出一批气势恢宏的诗歌，充满爱、真诚和苦难的诗歌，刻意地用那个时期所有最具难度的诗歌形式来创作。在他于 770 年去世很久之后，这为他赢得了与李白同等的地位，成为中国最伟大的诗人。

4 The two poets were bound together, too, by a love of poetry and, though they express it so differently, by a monumental love of life. When their paths crossed, for less than two years in the 740s, a friendship was formed that has lasted, in the hearts of lovers of Chinese poetry, for twelve hundred years. It was a legendary friendship, immortal. It matters little that in real life the friendship may have been almost wholly one-sided. Tu Fu idolized the older poet; he drank wine, went riding, traveled, and passed on the story of Li Po's prowess as a bibber even as he complimented the spontaneity of his verse: "Li Po? Give him a jugful and he'll produce a hundred poems."

这两位诗人也因对诗歌的热爱而紧密相连，并且尽管他们的表达方式如此不同，但他们都对生活有着巨大的热爱。在 8 世纪 40 年代，他们的人生轨迹有不到两年的时间相交，一段友谊就此形成，在热爱中国诗歌的人们心中，这段友谊持续了一千二百年。这是一段传奇的友谊，不朽的友谊。在现实生活中，这段友谊可能几乎完全是单方面的，这一点并不重要。杜甫崇拜年长的诗人；他喝酒、骑马、旅行，并传颂李白作为酒徒的非凡才能，同时也称赞李白诗歌的自然天成：“李白？给他一满壶酒，他就能写出一百首诗。”

In later life, Tu Fu clearly saw Li Po as the embodiment of the spirit of poetry and the spirit of freedom itself, a bird caught in the net of the world. Li Po mocked the younger man's seriousness, his dedication to the disciplines of form. And if, as some scholars argue, the poem in which he does so is indeed a later forgery, it would only serve to prove the legendary nature of the

friendship. These two great men, these two great spirits, did meet, and the rest of us know they must have loved one another.

在杜甫的晚年，他显然将李白视为诗歌精神以及自由精神本身的化身，就像一只陷入尘世罗网的鸟儿。李白嘲笑这位年轻人的严肃认真以及他对诗歌形式规范的执着。如果像一些学者所争论的那样，李白嘲笑杜甫的那首诗确实是后来的伪作，那也只会证明这段友谊的传奇性质。这两位伟大的人物，这两种伟大的精神，确实相遇了，而我们其他人知道他们一定彼此相爱。

Li Po is in all men and women: the spirit of freedom, the genius of spontaneity, the power of creation as an imitation of God. Tu Fu, too, is in all men and women: the love of life, the love of all humankind, the passionate acceptance of the responsibility, the willing embrace of the disciplines that responsibility requires. The man Li Po was not always free, and the man Tu Fu was capable of ease, even frivolity; the legends are purer than either and more than both.

李白存在于所有人之中：自由的精神、自然天成的天赋、作为对上帝的模仿的创造力。杜甫也存在于所有人之中：对生活的热爱、对全人类的爱、对责任的热情担当、对责任所要求的规范的欣然接受。李白这个人并不总是自由的，而杜甫这个人也能够轻松自在，甚至有时显得轻佻；传说比他们两人中的任何一个都更纯粹，且超越了他们两人。