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CHINA CLASSICA

中國古典

Classics of Chinese literature and thought
in facing-page bilingual editions



THE FIRST SIX VOLUMES · 2026

WELIT BOOKS

ABOUT THE SERIES

Chinese classics that English readers have never had

China Classica · 中國古典

China Classica publishes complete, annotated English translations of Chinese books that have never before appeared whole in English: city chronicles, festival calendars, travel accounts, brewing manuals, memoirs, and word lists that are among the most quoted sources in the study of China and East Asia, and among the least available to readers without Classical Chinese.

Each volume sets the Classical Chinese text and a new English translation on facing pages, so that the reader can follow the original line by line. Translations are made from a collated base text, with every emendation recorded, and are accompanied by notes on the people, places, institutions, and allusions that the original author could take for granted.

The books range across the whole of premodern China, from a sixth-century calendar of the Yangzi valley to the memories of a ruined Ming connoisseur, and include a strand of Chinese writings on Korea: the first-hand accounts of envoys who travelled to Goryeo and Joseon and recorded what they saw and heard.

All translations are by the East Asian Textual Heritage Association. The series is published by Welit Books in hardcover and as Kindle ebooks.

Complete texts
Whole works, not selections, including prefaces, commentaries, appendices, and colophons.

Facing-page bilingual
Classical Chinese on the left, English on the right, aligned passage by passage.

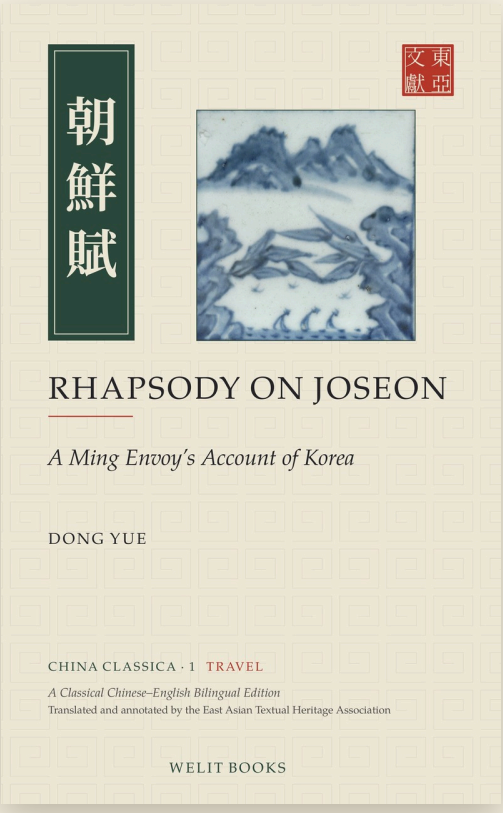
Scholarly apparatus
Introduction, note on the text, glossary, bibliography, index, and full annotation.

Maps, plans, and images
Newly drawn maps, plans, calendars, and chronologies, with museum photographs.

A collated text
Corrections to the base edition are marked in the notes and listed in full.

Library-grade hardcover
Case-laminate hardcover, 5.5 × 8.5 in, printed in colour on white paper.

TRAVEL | CUSTOMS | FOOD AND DRINK | LITERATURE | LANGUAGE



朝鮮賦

Rhapsody on Joseon

A Ming Envoy's Account of Korea

Dong Yue 董越

Ming dynasty · written 1488

In 1488 a Ming envoy rode from the Yalu to Seoul and wrote down everything he saw: the fullest picture of early Joseon by a foreign eyewitness, in English for the first time.

In the spring of 1488 the Ming court sent the Hanlin scholar Dong Yue to Korea to proclaim the accession of a new emperor. He crossed the Yalu, rode the old road through Pyongyang and Gaeseong to Hanyang, and was received by King Seongjong in the Gyeongbok Palace. On the way home he wrote a rhapsody of everything he had seen.

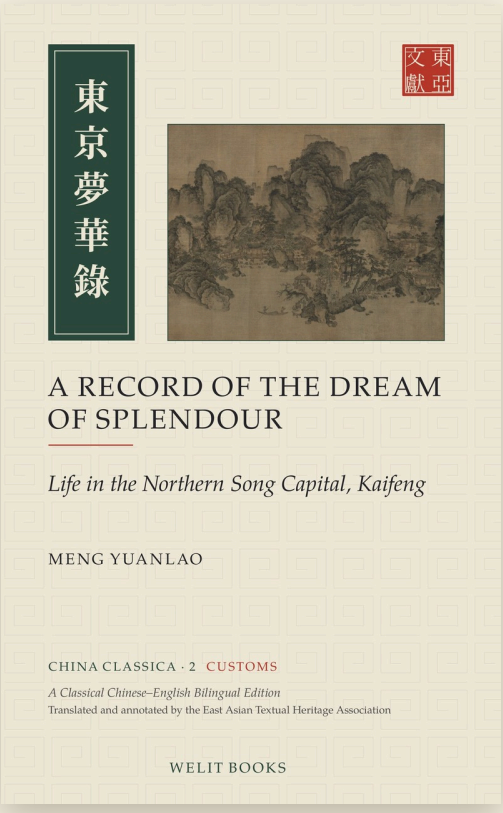
Its long lines move from the guesthouses of the road to the palace banquets, from the streets and houses of the capital to the dress, food, birds, and goods of the country, while Dong Yue's own prose notes record what verse could not hold. Printed in China, reprinted in Joseon, and carried to Japan, it is one of the earliest eye-witness descriptions of Seoul, written less than a century after it became the capital.

EDITION DETAILS

FORMAT	Hardcover, case laminate
TRIM	5.5 × 8.5 in (140 × 216 mm)
PAGES	126
ISBN	979-8-90900-116-7
PRICE	US $49.99
EBOOK	Kindle edition
TRANSLATOR	East Asian Textual Heritage Association

IN THIS EDITION

- Classical Chinese and English on facing pages, with Dong Yue's own notes
- Introduction, note on the text, glossary, bibliography, index
- Maps of the envoys' road and of Hanyang, a seating plan of the royal banquet, a chronology
- Pages of an early Japanese edition and museum photographs



東京夢華錄

A Record of the Dream of Splendour

Life in the Northern Song Capital, Kaifeng

Meng Yuanlao 孟元老

Song dynasty · preface dated 1147

A refugee's memory of one of the great cities of the medieval world: markets, wine houses, theatres, festivals, and the pageant of the Song court in Kaifeng before its fall.

In 1127 the Jurchen armies took Kaifeng, the capital of the Song, and carried its emperors off into captivity. Twenty years later a refugee in the south who called himself Meng Yuanlao wrote down everything he remembered of the city where he had grown up: its walls and canals, its markets and wine houses, its theatres and street food, its weddings and festivals, and the great processions of the court.

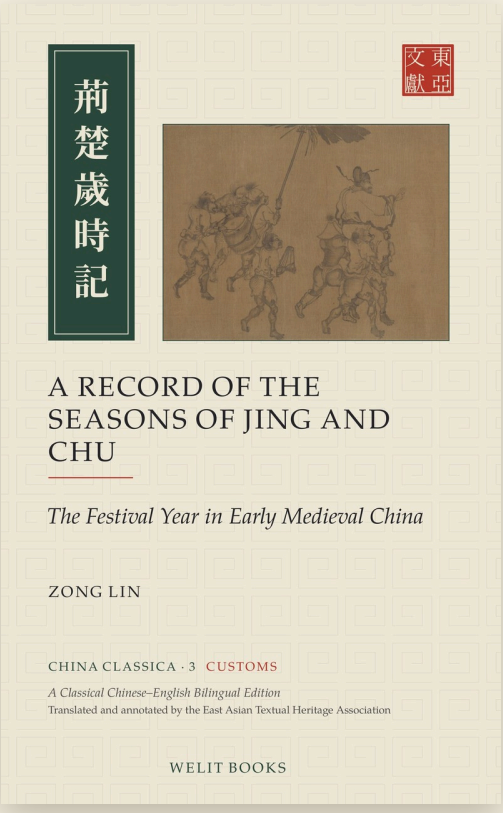
Walking the reader from gate to gate and month to month, Meng names the shops, the dishes, the performers, and the prices of a city of perhaps a million people. His book is the most vivid portrait of a Chinese city before modern times, a companion to the famous scroll *Along the River at Qingming*, and the model for every later record of Chinese city life.

EDITION DETAILS

FORMAT	Hardcover, case laminate
TRIM	5.5 × 8.5 in (140 × 216 mm)
PAGES	328
ISBN	979-8-90900-118-1
PRICE	US $59.99
EBOOK	Kindle edition
TRANSLATOR	East Asian Textual Heritage Association

IN THIS EDITION

- The complete text, Classical Chinese and English on facing pages, with Meng Yuanlao's own notes
- Introduction, note on the text, glossary, bibliography, index
- A plan of Kaifeng, the Rainbow Bridge, a calendar of the Kaifeng year, a chronology
- Museum photographs



荊楚歲時記

A Record of the Seasons of Jing and Chu

The Festival Year in Early Medieval China

Zong Lin 宗懍

Liang dynasty · sixth century
with the commentary of Du Gongzhan 杜公瞻

Firecrackers and door gods, cold food and dragon boats, the Weaving Girl and the Herdboy: the oldest record of the Chinese festival year.

In the sixth century Zong Lin, a minister of the Liang dynasty, set down the customs of his home on the middle Yangzi from the first day of the year to the last: bamboo burst in the fire to scare away the mountain goblin, pepper wine drunk from the youngest to the eldest, the boat race for the drowned poet Qu Yuan, the women begging for skill on the Seventh Night, and the masked exorcists of the year's end.

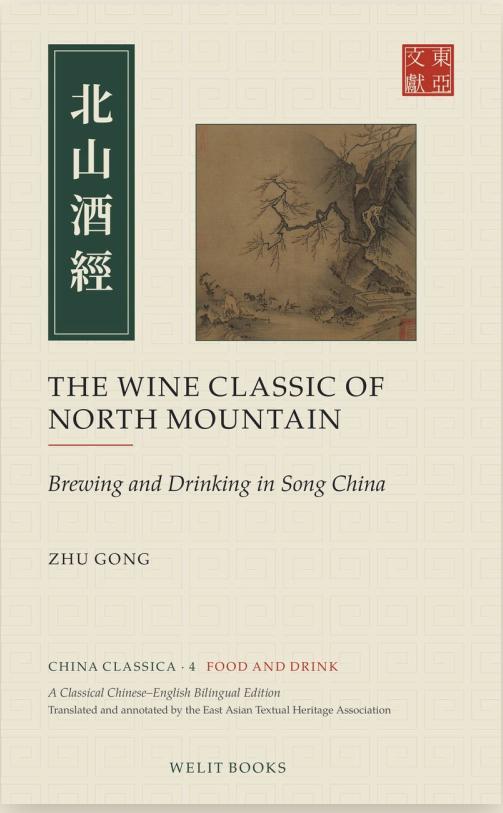
A generation later Du Gongzhan traced each custom to its sources in the classics, histories, tales of marvels, medical books, and Buddhist sutras, many of them now lost. Their little book became the model for the records of the seasons of Korea and Japan.

EDITION DETAILS

FORMAT	Hardcover, case laminate
TRIM	5.5 × 8.5 in (140 × 216 mm)
PAGES	110
ISBN	979-8-90900-120-4
PRICE	US $49.99
EBOOK	Kindle edition
TRANSLATOR	East Asian Textual Heritage Association

IN THIS EDITION

- The complete text and commentary, Classical Chinese and English on facing pages
- Introduction, note on the text, glossary, bibliography, index
- A map of the Jing-Chu region, a calendar of the festival year, a chronology
- Museum photographs



北山酒經

The Wine Classic of North Mountain

Brewing and Drinking in Song China

Zhu Gong 朱肱

Northern Song dynasty · before 1117

The first Chinese book devoted entirely to brewing: ferment cakes, sour stock, mash, and press, written by a physician and exile who made wine with his own hands.

Ferment cakes cured under straw and hung in the wind, rice soured for days in a stock kept from the summer before, a mash fed again and again with fresh rice, wine heated in sealed bottles to keep through the summer: Zhu Gong's classic is the fullest account of Chinese brewing before modern times.

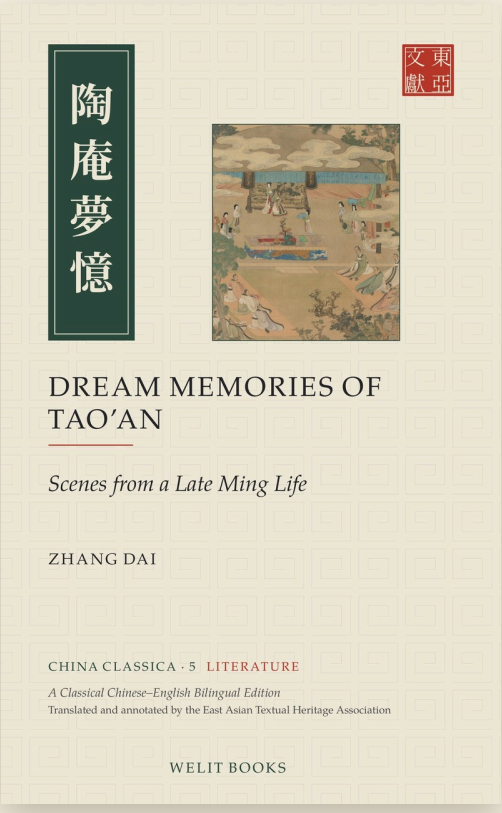
He begins with an essay on wine in history, ritual, and the consolation of the exile, then gives recipes for thirteen ferment cakes, among them Su Shi's own, and describes step by step how the brewers of the Northern Song made wine from glutinous rice. His method is the ancestor of the yellow wines of Shaoxing and a cousin of Korean *yakju* and Japanese sake.

EDITION DETAILS

FORMAT	Hardcover, case laminate
TRIM	5.5 × 8.5 in (140 × 216 mm)
PAGES	166
ISBN	979-8-90900-122-8
PRICE	US $49.99
EBOOK	Kindle edition
TRANSLATOR	East Asian Textual Heritage Association

IN THIS EDITION

- The complete text with the "Wines of the Immortals" and Li Bao's postface of 1117
- Introduction, note on the text, measures, glossary, bibliography, index
- A chronology, a map of Northern Song China, a diagram of the brewing process
- A displaced passage of the *Siku quanshu* text restored to its place



陶庵夢憶

Dream Memories of Tao'an

Scenes from a Late Ming Life

Zhang Dai 張岱

1597–1689 · late Ming and early Qing

The most famous book of late Ming prose: a ruined connoisseur's memories of the lanterns, theatres, gardens, tea houses, and friends of a world that vanished with the Ming.

Lanterns on every street of Shaoxing, a thousand people falling silent at Tiger Hill for a single voice, a tea master in Nanjing who could name the spring his water came from, a snowfall on West Lake seen from a little boat at midnight: after the fall of the Ming in 1644, Zhang Dai wrote down, "like walking an old path or meeting an old friend," the world he had lost.

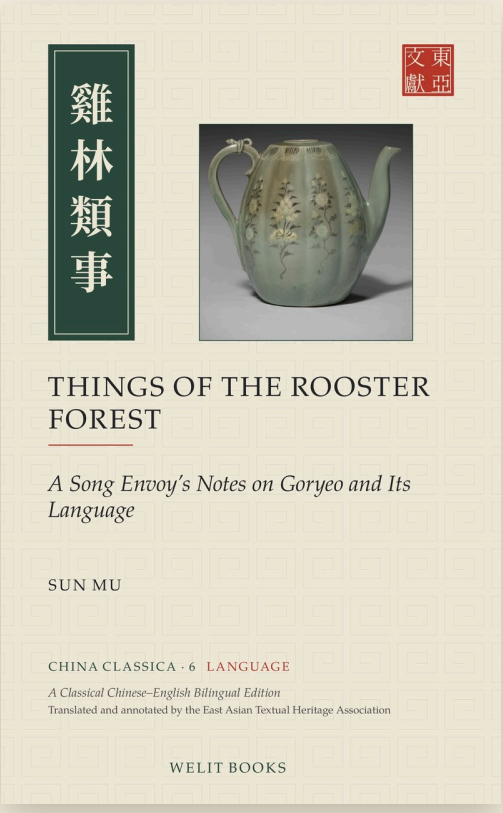
Its 123 short pieces in eight books, written in the vivid "little pieces" style of the late Ming, range over festivals and pilgrimages, actors and courtesans, painters, storytellers, and craftsmen, the author's eccentric family, and the last days of the Ming regency at Shaoxing.

EDITION DETAILS

FORMAT	Hardcover, case laminate
TRIM	5.5 × 8.5 in (140 × 216 mm)
PAGES	446
ISBN	979-8-90900-123-5
PRICE	US $59.99
EBOOK	Kindle edition
TRANSLATOR	East Asian Textual Heritage Association

IN THIS EDITION

- The complete text with both prefaces, the supplement, and the 1852 colophon
- Introduction, note on the text, guide to names, dates, and measures, glossary, bibliography, index
- A chronology of Zhang Dai's life and a map of the Yangzi delta
- Museum photograph



雞林類事

Things of the Rooster Forest

A Song Envoy's Notes on Goryeo and Its Language

Sun Mu 孫穆

Northern Song dynasty · 1103

The oldest substantial record of the Korean language: a Song envoy's notes on Goryeo in 1103, with some 350 Korean words written in Chinese characters.

In 1103 a Song embassy sailed from Mingzhou to the Goryeo capital at Gaegyeong. One of its members, Sun Mu, came home with notes on the royal house, the city, the court, the law, and the markets, and with something no Chinese visitor had made before: a list of Korean words and phrases, written down in Chinese characters for their sounds.

Made three and a half centuries before the Korean alphabet, it is the only direct witness to the everyday speech of the Goryeo capital. Its words for sky and water, wine and rice, father and mother are the starting point of every history of Korean.

EDITION DETAILS

FORMAT	Hardcover, case laminate
TRIM	5.5 × 8.5 in (140 × 216 mm)
PAGES	80
ISBN	979-8-90900-124-2
PRICE	US $49.99
EBOOK	Kindle edition
TRANSLATOR	East Asian Textual Heritage Association

IN THIS EDITION

- The complete surviving text, Classical Chinese and English on facing pages
- Every word identified with its Middle Korean form (Yale) and modern Korean in Hangul
- Korean and English word finders, glossary, bibliography, index
- A chronology of Goryeo and Song and a map of the embassies' sea route

ORDER INFORMATION

The series at a glance

	TITLE	AUTHOR · PERIOD	FIELD	PAGES	HARDCOVER ISBN	US$
1	Rhapsody on Joseon *A Ming Envoy's Account of Korea* 朝鮮賦	Dong Yue Ming dynasty · written 1488	Travel	126	979-8-90900-116-7	49.99
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5	Dream Memories of Tao'an *Scenes from a Late Ming Life* 陶庵夢憶	Zhang Dai 1597–1689 · late Ming and early Qing	Literature	446	979-8-90900-123-5	59.99
6	Things of the Rooster Forest *A Song Envoy's Notes on Goryeo and Its Language* 雞林類事	Sun Mu Northern Song dynasty · 1103	Language	80	979-8-90900-124-2	49.99

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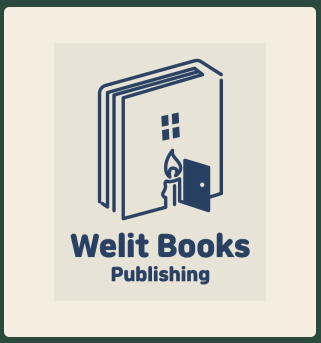
溫故而知新

"Keep warm the old, and come to know the new."

ANALECTS 2.11

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