



Universiteit  
Leiden  
The Netherlands

## **The shadow of prosperity: fake goods and anxiety in Song urban space**

Lin, F.

### **Citation**

Lin, F. (2019). The shadow of prosperity: fake goods and anxiety in Song urban space. *Journal Of Sung-Yuan Studies*, 48, 269-299. doi:10.1353/sys.2019.0008

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Licensed under Article 25fa Copyright Act/Law \(Amendment Taverne\)](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3199145>

**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).



PROJECT MUSE®

---

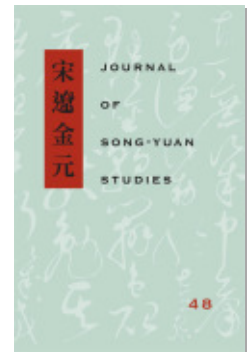
## The Shadow of Prosperity: Fake Goods and Anxiety in Song Urban Space

Fan Lin

Journal of Song-Yuan Studies, Volume 48, 2019, pp. 269-299 (Article)

Published by The Society for Song, Yuan, and Conquest Dynasty Studies

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/sys.2019.0008>



➡ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/737354>

# THE SHADOW OF PROSPERITY:

## FAKE GOODS AND ANXIETY

### IN SONG URBAN SPACE

Fan Lin 林凡 LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

In summer 2018, an exhibition at the National Palace Museum in Taipei, featuring paintings that had been forged in late Ming Suzhou 蘇州, provoked public interest with its playful touch.<sup>1</sup> Although it is certainly not a conventional practice for a museum to endorse the value of forged artworks, the exhibition echoed recent scholarly interest in the topic of forgery in this period of Chinese art history.<sup>2</sup> It is worth noting that the title of the exhibition, *Wei hao wu* 偽好物 (*Spurious Finery*), actually derives from the Song dynasty. Mi Fu 米芾 (1051–1107), the most refined calligrapher and connoisseur of the Northern Song, used this word to assess a few Tang-dynasty tracing copies of the calligraphy of earlier masters, including Zhong You 鍾繇 (151–230) and Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303–361).<sup>3</sup> This seemingly oxymoronic combination of *wei* 偽 and *hao* 好 best captures the complexity of producing and consuming forged artworks. As scholars across various cultural contexts have observed, setting aside the purpose of disguise, forgeries often reflect the same societal

---

This article was presented at the Second Conference on Middle Period Chinese Humanities in Leiden in September 2017 and at the Leiden University Chinese History Workshop in February 2018. I would like to thank the participants at both events, especially Monica Chen, Xiaolan Chen, Hilde De Weerd, Geng Li, Jeffrey Moser, and Daniel Stumm for their constructive feedback. Yijun Huang, Ching-Ling Wang, and Yong Zhao helped me with the preparation of illustrations. I am also deeply indebted to Ari Daniel Levine, Richard von Glahn, and the two anonymous readers for their suggestions. All errors, however, remain my own.

1. Shih-hua Chiu 邱士華, Li-jiang Lin 林麗江, and Yu-chih Lai 賴玉芝, eds., *Fineries of Forgery: "Suzhou Fakes" and Their Influence in the 16th to 18th Century* 偽好物: 16–18 世紀蘇州片及其影響 (Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 2018).

2. Zhang Yingyu, *The Book of Swindles: Selections from a Late Ming Collection*, trans. Christopher G. Rea and Bruce Rusk (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

3. Mi Fu 米芾 (1051–1107), *Shu shi* 書史, ed. Wu Xiaoqin 吳曉琴 and Tang Qinfu 湯勤福, *Quan Song biji* 全宋筆記 ed. (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2006), 2.4:246–47.

interests as authentic works. In other words, they are candid, yet paradoxical expressions of the materiality and value of the authentic.<sup>4</sup> To some extent, this is also true of the great magnitude of adulterated and counterfeited goods during the Song, which are pervasively recorded in official histories, government documents, notebooks (*biji* 筆記), and treatises (*pulu* 譜錄). Reducing this phenomenon to mere moral corruption would undermine the complexity of this issue. Rather, I consider that the counterfeit, as a simulacrum of the authentic and not necessarily its “evil twin,” constituted an undercurrent of Song material culture and provided momentum to the production of knowledge that was in opposition to fakes and fakery.

The Song witnessed an upsurge in discussions and debates about truth and falsehood. Chad Hansen was among the first scholars to identify this development in Chinese intellectual history, although his argument that the notion of “truth” was influenced by the arrival of Buddhism has since been disputed.<sup>5</sup> Stephen West saw the making and appreciation of mock food as a new aesthetic pursuit in the Song, which was parallel to performance art in its emulation of the “real” and “authentic.”<sup>6</sup> In the same vein, Robert Hymes contended that what was novel during the Song period was not the absolute and abstract “truth,” but a prevailing curiosity and urge to find out the factual status of narratives.<sup>7</sup> Both West and Hymes associated the realization of truth and falsehood with the larger context of the rise of urban and commercial culture. Guillaume Carré and Christian Lamouroux have made a welcome contribution to the study of fake goods in the premodern East Asian context and placed special focus on the role of moral rhetoric as well as government regulations and their constraints.<sup>8</sup> Built on these scholars’ observations, this

---

4. Jonathan Keats, *Forged: Why Fakes Are the Great Art of Our Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1–31; Christopher S. Wood, *Forgery, Replica, Fiction: Temporalities of German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Jonathan Hay, “The Value of Forgery,” *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 53/54 (Spring–Autumn 2008): 5–19.

5. Chad Hansen, *Language and Logic in Ancient China* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983). For an updated critique of Hansen’s methodology, see Chris Fraser, “Language and Ontology in Early Chinese Thought,” *Philosophy East and West* 57.4 (Oct. 2007), 420–56, especially 434–37.

6. Stephen H. West, “Playing with Food: Performance, Food, and the Aesthetics of Artificiality in the Sung and Yuan,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 57.1 (Jun. 1997): 67–106.

7. Robert Hymes, “Truth, Falsity, and Pretense in Song China: An Approach through the Anecdotes of Hong Mai,” *Studies in Chinese History* 15 (2005): 1–26, especially 7.

8. Guillaume Carré and Christian Lamouroux, “Faux produits et marchandises contrefaites

article focuses on the materiality and the practice of fake goods in particular, rather than on ideas revolving around the false during the Song dynasty.

Some key words appeared often in the reporting of forgery. The word *lan* 濫 (sometimes *hanglan* 行濫) was a term that had appeared in legal codes from the Tang onwards and referred to adulterated and unqualified goods.<sup>9</sup> During the Song period, three other terms were used to refer to forged goods. The word *yan* 贗 especially referred to forged writing in various formats, including poems, prose, calligraphy, and rubbings.<sup>10</sup> The words *jia* 假 and *wei* 偽 were used more interchangeably to refer to falsehood, deception, forgery, and pretense. In the context of forging objects, *wei* implies an inherent moral judgement, suggesting the intention to counterfeit. Deriving from its original meaning, “to rely on” or “to borrow,” *jia* has the connotation of simulating the authentic or original form, foregrounding the relationship between the original and the copy.<sup>11</sup> Being *jia* could be either artificial or deceptive, as in *jiashan* 假山 (“artificial hill”) made of rocks from Lake Tai 太湖 or *jiayu* 假玉 (“fake jade”) made of fired stones, lead, and other ingredients.<sup>12</sup> In this article, “fake” or “forged” goods will refer to things that not only were produced to defraud or deceive but also were sold for undue profit. Two other words, *mo* 模 (“to copy by tracing”) and *fang* 仿 (“imitation”), have an inherent relationship with forgeries in terms of production techniques, but they will not be considered fake goods if they were not made for profit, such as the paintings and ritual bronzes made by and for the Song court.<sup>13</sup>

---

dans la Chine et le Japon prémodernes: Reglementations, corps de métiers et constraints éthiques,” *Extrême-Orient Extrême-Occident* 32 (2010): 115–61.

9. According to the term’s definition in *Tanglü shuyi* 唐律疏義: “Not sturdy is called *hang*; not genuine is called *lan*. That is to say, when soft iron is used to make battle-knives and arrow-heads, [this is] also called *lan*” 不牢謂之行，不真謂之濫，即造橫刀及箭簇用柔鐵者亦爲濫。See Zhangsun Wuji 長孫無忌, compiler, *Tanglü shuyi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 26.498. For a discussion of *hanglan* in perceptions of copper metallurgy during the Song, see also Alexander Jost’s article in this volume of JSYS.

10. *Hanyu dacidian* 漢語大詞典 (Shanghai: Hanyu dacidian chubanshe, 1997), 3:6040.

11. Duan Yucai 段玉裁, *Shuowen jiezi zhu* 說文解字注 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1992), 374.

12. Du Wan 杜綰, *Yunlin shipu* 雲林石譜, Congshu jicheng chubian 叢書集成初編 ed. (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1936), 1.2, 2.17.

13. As for paintings, the word *mo* 模 was often used in *Xuanhe huapu* 宣和畫譜. As one of the Six Principles, transmission by imitating the models (*chuanyi moxie* 傳移模寫) was still an indisputable way to learn painting skills and transmit masterpieces. See Ginger Cheng-chi Hsü, “Imitation and Originality: Theory and Practice,” in *A Companion to Chinese Art*, ed. Martin

This article aims to understand the materiality, contexts, and cultural implications of fake goods that were made to be circulated in urban space during the Song, and especially the Southern Song. The direct impact of the state loosening its grip on markets and controls on geographic mobility in the early Song created an open, expanding urban space where forged goods became commodities in market exchanges. The expansion of the number as well as the increased status of the Song educated elite created a new aesthetic of consumption and material demand for objects that could fit into their living spaces. Forgery foregrounded the inherent connection of artworks and luxury objects as goods to be bought and sold on the market. Most importantly, observers' and consumers' mixed feelings and attitudes towards this new phenomenon became a new component of Song urban culture, as well as subjects of scholarly writing, popular literature, and religious narratives. The first part of this article covers counterfeited daily necessities such as food, medicine, and money, which permeated the material life of people across various social classes and backgrounds; the second part focuses on high-end commodities, including antiques, musical instruments, and other objects of scholarly interests, which were favored by scholar-connoisseurs; the third part examines the social and cultural reflections of the fake in everyday Song life. This article aims to bring scholarly attention to the understudied topic of fake goods in the Song dynasty, and to unpack the processes in which counterfeiting stimulated the production of knowledge and cultural reflections on the fake.

### *The Fake in Daily Life*

Since the late Tang dynasty, the tightly-controlled market system began to collapse for various reasons, the most important of which were population growth and the increasing variety of products for sale. Starting in the Song, officials collected taxes at tax stations, and businesses could be set up virtually

---

Powers and Katherine Tsiang (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 410–30. However, it should be noted that the *huapu* does not always distinguish emulations from original pieces in their imperial collections. As for ritual bronzes, during Gaozong's reign, local prefectures were ordered to make ritual vessels according to the model illustrations of the court, which caused the dispersion of styles of antique bronzes. See Hsu Ya-hui 許雅惠, "Nan Song 'zhongxing' de wuzhi wenhua guancha—Lun gutong fengge de liubu yu kuosan" 南宋「中興」的物質文化觀察——論古銅風格的流布與擴散, in *Zhongxing jisheng: Nan Song fengwu guanzhi xueshu yantaohui lunwen ji* 中興紀勝: 南宋風物觀止學術研討會論文集, ed. Zhejiang sheng bowuguan 浙江省博物館 (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian, 2017), 147–63, especially 149–54.

anywhere within a city or its suburbs.<sup>14</sup> With the influx of travelling officials, scholars, monks, merchants, and other itinerants into the cities, it is unlikely that buyers and sellers would have been as closely acquainted as they had been in the past. A general sense of uncertainty about the genuineness of one's purchases and the reliability of the vendor prevailed; recorded instances of the counterfeiting of daily necessities covered a broad range of goods, especially food items. This issue was especially pronounced in cosmopolitan cities like Kaifeng and Lin'an. The He (Family) Tower 何樓 (*He lou*) in Kaifeng was an ill-reputed marketplace where multiple vendors sold fake and poor-quality goods in the Northern Song and became a trope for deceit and fraudulence; the Northern Song poet Liu Ban 劉攽 (1022–1088) wrote: “The ‘He Tower’ is a common saying about ‘fakes,’ because everything sold in this tower was fake and of poor quality” 世語虛偽爲何樓，其下賣物，皆行濫者。<sup>15</sup> During the Ming dynasty, when the glorious days of Kaifeng had long ended and the He Tower probably no longer existed, its name was still remembered as a rhymed idiom in a children's book as a caution against the fake goods lurking on the market: “Things sold in the He Tower were all poor-quality goods” 何樓所市，皆濫惡之物。<sup>16</sup> In *Wulin jiushi* 武林舊事 (*Memoirs of Wulin*), Zhou Mi 周密 (1232–1298) offered detailed descriptions of multiple shady businesses in Lin'an:

In these lively neighborhoods there were many of those kinds of gangs and numerous crafty idlers. They used beautiful women (as bait to entice men), pawnshops, games of chance, and merit-making to make all kinds of swindles. I cannot list them all. There were also merchants who substituted fake goods for genuine, such as making clothes with paper, replacing gold and silver with copper and lead, and turning dirt and wood into incense and drugs. They were called “thieves who cheat in broad daylight,” because they could miraculously substitute one thing for another.<sup>17</sup>

14. Joseph P. McDermott and Shiba Yoshinobu, “Economic Change in China, 960–1279,” in *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 5, Part Two: *Sung China, 960–1279*, ed. John W. Chaffee and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 322–24.

15. Liu Ban 劉攽, *Zhongshan shihua* 中山詩話, Wenyuange Siku quanshu ed. (hereafter SKQS), 1.15a.

16. Cheng Dengji 程登吉, *Youxue qionglin* 幼學瓊林 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1989), 338.

17. Zhou Mi, *Wulin jiushi*, ed. Fan Ying 范瑩, *Quan Song biji* ed. (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2017), 8.2:6.83–84. For the translation of the complete passage, see Brian McKnight, *Law and Order in Sung China* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 289.

浩穰之區，人物盛伙，游手奸黠，實繁有徒。有所謂美人局，櫃坊賭局，水功德局，不一而足。又有賣買物貨，以偽易真，至以紙爲衣，銅鉛爲金銀，土木爲香藥，變換如神，謂之“白日賊。”

Here, the word *ju* 局 refers to a set of tricks that were designed to deceive the gullible. Zhou Mi also implies that these forms of swindles had already been developed into formularized practices and therefore were associated with certain communities in this bustling city.

Facing these emerging problems of urban growth and commercialization, the Song legal code, which to a large extent still followed the Tang code, did not seem to have provided effective, systematic regulation of genuine and fake goods. The main concerns of the *Song xing tong* 宋刑統 (*Song Penal Conspectus*) and the subsequent codes still aimed to maintain dynastic authority, security, and social order, so severe penalties—up to exile—were only imposed on those who counterfeited imperial regalia, weaponry, weighing scales, currency, and currency-equivalent silk.<sup>18</sup> Northern Song edicts repeatedly impugned such illicit behaviors as forging coins by scratching copper off coins (*guatong quqian* 刮銅取鉛), forging private money (*dao zhu gonghang* 盜鑄公行), or adding powder to increase the weight of silk (*tufen ruyao* 塗粉入藥).<sup>19</sup> Unlike fake paper money, fake coins were more or less accepted on the markets, although their value was debased.<sup>20</sup> During the Southern Song, fake paper money became a state concern after official notes went into wide circulation. Under the Qingyuan 慶元 (1195–1200) code, the quality of tea, salt, alum, and incense was mainly regulated under the framework of state monopolies.<sup>21</sup>

By comparison, those who sold poor-quality or fake goods in the marketplace

18. “Li lü” 例律, “Mingli lü” 名例律, “Zeidao lü” 賊盜律, and especially “Dou song lü” 鬥訟律, in *Song xing tong* (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1963), 1.9a, 4.14b, 6.24a–25a, 19.3b, and 24.1a–18a.

19. “Jin xin xiao qianla deng qian ji shue mianbo ru fenyao zhao” 禁新小鉛鐵等錢及疏惡綿帛入粉藥詔, in *Songchao da zhaoling ji* 宋朝大詔令集, Xuxiu siku quanshu ed., 456:198.2b (637); see also Wei Tianan 魏天安, “‘Hanglan’ zhi jin de shishi zhuangkuang” “行濫”之禁的實施狀況, in *Songdai hanghui zhidu shi* 宋代行會制度史 (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1997), 124–26.

20. See Alexander Jost’s article in this volume of *JSYS*. See also Jost, “From Secret Knowledge to Mass Production: The Wet Copper Industry of Song China (960–1279)” (Ph.D diss., Tübingen University, 2014), 305.

21. For examples of the state control of private productions, see Xie Shenfu 謝深甫, *Qingyuan tiaofa shilei* 慶元條法事類 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chubanshe, 1976), 28–29.252–89.



would receive less severe penalties, such as fines and whipping.<sup>22</sup> Across the broad spectrum of the Song legal system, fake and adulterated commodities were addressed as an issue that was separate and distinct from the government's concern about social order and stability in the cities. Zhou Mi recollected that in Lin'an, active law enforcement was targeted at fraud only when it was combined with theft and robbery, posing a threat to the urban social order. The Bureau of Military Affairs recruited a few thousand patrolling inspectors from amongst the strongest former gang members to take charge of the stability of the capital.<sup>23</sup>

In late imperial China and medieval Europe, merchant guilds counterbalanced the production of fake goods. However, the so-called *hang* 行 of the Song, although commonly translated as "guilds," were different, both conceptually and practically, from the systematically and consciously organized guilds that developed in China from the Ming onwards.<sup>24</sup> These earlier *hang* associations mainly served the government to undertake public works and to coordinate delivery of taxes, and they were highly restricted by the government and dominated by powerful members.<sup>25</sup> Mutually-supportive merchant communities and loosely formulated associations of traveling merchants participated in regular rituals to worship patron gods in order to nurture a sense of cooperation and networking among members, but there were no institutional protocols and regulations to govern the quality of the products they produced

22. "Zalü" 雜律, in *Song xing tong*, 26.2b–3b (861–64), 26.22b–24b (903–06); Tianyige bowuguan 天一閣博物館, Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan lishi yanjiu suo Tianshengling zhengli ketizu 中國社會科學院歷史研究所天聖令整理課題組, ed. *Tianyige cang Mingchao ben Tianshengling jiaozheng* 天一閣藏明朝本天聖令校證 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006), 14–16, 522.

23. *Wulin jiushi*, 6.84. In the Song, the most common severe penalty for the convicts was to register a fixed term of labor in provincial armies, and the young and able among them would have been selected to serve in the imperial army. See McKnight, *Law and Order in Sung China*, 284–85.

24. For a comparison of guilds between medieval and late imperial periods, see Christine Moll-Murata, "Chinese Guilds from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Centuries: An Overview," *International Review of Social History* 53, Supplement 16 (2008): 213–47, especially 217–19.

25. Wei Tianan, "'Hanglan' zhi jin de xingzhi" "行濫" 之禁的性質, in *Songdai hanghui zhi du shi*, 132–34; Peter J. Golas, "The Sung Fiscal Administration," in *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 5, Part Two: *Sung China, 960–1279*, 179. For earlier scholarship, see Shiba Yoshinobu, "Development of Commercial Organization," in *Commerce and Society in Sung China*, trans. Mark Elvin (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1970), 165–80; Katō Shigeshi, "On the Hang or Associations of Merchants in China, with Especial Reference to the Institution in the T'ang and Sung Periods," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Tōyō bunko* 8 (1936): 45–83.

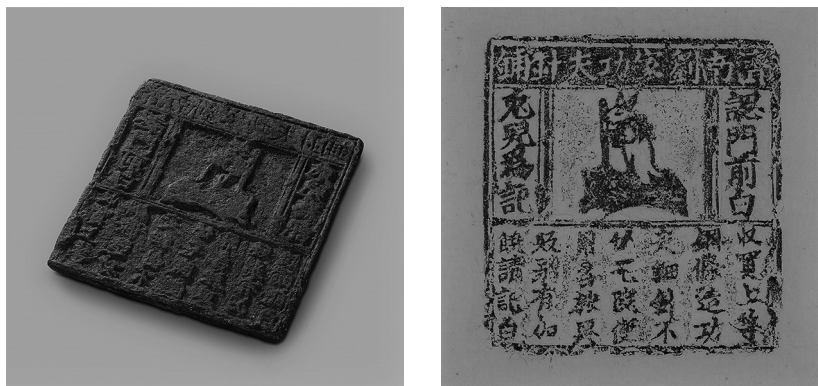


Figure 1. Copper printing plate for Ji'nan Liu Fine Needle Shop (*Ji'nan Liu jia gongfu zhenpu* 濟南劉家功夫針鋪), Song dynasty. 13.2 × 12.4 cm. From *Zhongguo guojia bowuguan* 中國國家博物館, *Gudai Zhongguo chenlie* 古代中國陳列 (Beijing: Zhongguo guojia bowuguan, 2010), 684–85.

or sold.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, earlier forms of Song merchant “guilds” were unable to effectively supervise the production and circulation of merchandise. In fact, scholars have noticed that Song craftsmen widely used commercial brands and logos in order to advertise their products. These practices of branding for the purpose of economic benefits were different from the traditional practice of “carving the name of the craftsman” (*wule gongming* 物勒工銘) for imperial quality control.<sup>27</sup> The well-crafted inscriptions and the self-evident use of the word *ren* 認 (“to distinguish”) were apparently used to prevent counterfeiting. For example, the well-known “trademark” of a needle shop in Ji'nan 濟南 (modern-day Shandong) bears an image of a white rabbit and text promoting its products (see Figure 1).

26. These organizations were widely documented in the Song records of urban life, especially *Dongjing menghua lu* 東京夢華錄 by Meng Yuanlao 孟元老, *Mengliang lu* 夢梁錄 by Wu Zimu 吳自牧, *Ducheng jisheng* 都城紀勝 by Naideweng 耐得翁, and *Xihu laoren fanshenglu* 西湖老人繁勝錄 by Xihu laoren 西湖老人. For a more detailed explanation, see Quan Hansheng 權漢昇, *Zhongguo hanghui zhidushi* 中國行會制度史 (Taipei: Shihuo chubanshe, 1978), 44–87, especially 44–55.

27. Giana M. Eckhardt and Anders Bengtsson, “A Brief History of Branding in China,” *Journal of Macromarketing* 30.3 (2010): 210–21; Dagmar Schäfer, “Inscribing the Artifact and Inspiring Trust: The Changing Role of Markings in the Ming Era,” *East Asian Science, Technology, and Society* 5.2 (Jun. 2011): 239–65; Shao Ke 邵科, “Jingji shi shiye xia de shangbiao fa: Zhongguo yu Ouzhou de dui bi” 經濟史視野下的商標法: 中國與歐洲的對比, *Qinghua faxue* 清華法學 5 (2010): 139–51.

Although we seldom encounter records about the effectiveness of legal injunctions and guild regulations during the Song, the writers of Song family manuals as well as notebooks often criticized scams and trickery with a moralizing tone. For instance, two cases in *Yuan shi shifan* 袁氏世範 (*Mr. Yuan's Precepts for Social Life*) show that Yuan Cai 袁采 (1140–1195) adopted two specific strategies to address this issue. In the first case, he deployed Confucian rhetoric to deliver a didactic message:

When an inferior person tries to sell things, he adorns worn or poor objects to look novel, and decorates fake ones to look genuine. They apply glue to satin (to make it look lustrous), moisten grain (to add weight), put water into meat, and substitute other things for medicine. . . . These are examples of their dishonesty. . . .

且如小人以物市於人，敝惡之物，飾爲新奇；假偽之物，飾爲眞實。如絹帛之用膠糊，米麥之增濕潤，肉食之灌以水，藥材之易以他物……其不忠也類如此……

Inferior people do this day in and day out without the slightest compunction. But superior men are frequently angered and offended. Wanting to immediately correct them, they will sometimes go so far as to beat them or sue them. A superior man should reflect on his own person, avoid all dishonest and insincere acts, and have pity on the ignorance of inferior people. He can calm down a little when an inferior person has no choice but to scheme for his own advantage.<sup>28</sup>

小人朝夕行之，略不之怪。爲君子者往往忿懣，直欲深治之，至於毆打論訟。若君子自省其身，不爲不忠不信之事，而憐小人之無知。及其間有不得已而爲自便之計，至於如此，可以少置之度外也。

The concepts that Yuan Cai deployed—such as self-reflection, good faith, and trust—immediately evoked Confucian virtues. Yuan's putative readers were educated literati with or without official positions (*shi* 士 or *shidafu* 士大夫), a socio-political elite that might not have had a fixed standard of its own economic status but did have a set of high ideals for normative behavior patterns in general.<sup>29</sup> Here, Yuan Cai turned the dichotomy of *junzi* 君子 and *xiaoren* 小人, originally associated with moral constitution, into markers of

28. Yuan Cai, *Yuan shi shifan*, SKQS ed., 2.16a–16b; translation based on Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Family and Property in Sung China: Yüan Ts'ai's Precepts for Social Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 255–56.

29. For a more detailed explanation, see Ebrey, *Family and Property in Sung China*, 21–26.

social groups. Therefore, Yuan would identify himself and his *shidafu* peers as *junzi*, and merchants of questionable moral behavior as *xiaoren*.

In the second case, Yuan quotes an official placard that Zhang Xiaoxiang 張孝祥 (1127–1170), the superior secretary of Fuzhou 撫州 (modern-day Jiangxi), issued to warn against counterfeit medicine sellers:

Recluse Tao [Hongjing 弘景, 502–556] and Sage Sun [Simiao 思邈, c. 7th century] benefited the people with their *Materia Medica* and *Thousand Golden Prescriptions*. Having accumulated many unobtrusive merits, their names are among the ranks of immortals . . . I have also with my own eyes seen people who sold counterfeit medicines. At first, they accumulated some modest property, which convinced them that their strategy was working. They were not aware that in the unseen world their family's apportioned happiness was being reduced or eliminated. Some later suffered repeated misfortunes, while in other cases it was their descendants who went bankrupt for no apparent reason. There were even some who were struck by Heaven's fire and thunder.

陶隱居、孫真人因《本草》、《千金方》濟物利生，多積陰德，名在列仙……又曾眼見貨賣假藥者，其初積得些小家業，自謂得計，不知冥冥之中，自家合得祿料都被減克。或自身多有橫禍，或子孫非理破蕩，致有遭天火、被雷震者。

When faced with a medical emergency, people often proffer their money and ask the pharmacist for a remedy. Filial sons and obedient grandsons hope for a medicine that will cure in one dose. However, when they are swindled into taking counterfeit medicine, it may not merely prove useless but may even do harm. If in everyday life a person accidentally kills a bird or beast, he still receives the karmic consequences. How much truer this must be for taking a man's life, since among the myriad beings men are the most valued!<sup>30</sup>

蓋緣贖藥之人多是疾病急切，將錢告求賣藥之家，孝子順孫只望一服見效，卻被假藥誤賺，非惟無益，反致損傷。尋常誤殺一飛禽走獸猶有果報，況萬物之中人命最重！

As opposed to the Confucian tropes and moral teachings in Yuan Cai's first example, Zhang Xiaoxiang was invoking vocabulary and concepts from popular religion, including Daoist immortality and Buddhist karma. Although government placards were supposed to be a form of state intervention, Zhang's notice was not a *bona fide* example of law enforcement. Adulterated medi-

30. *Yuan shi shifan*, 2.17a–18a; translation based on Ebrey, *Family and Property in Sung China*, 256–58.

cine had long been a problem in the Song dynasty. According to Su Song's 蘇頌 (1020–1101) preface to the court-commissioned *Bencao tujing* 本草圖經 (*Illustrated Treatise on the Materia Medica*), when merchants and “rustic people” (*shanye zhi ren* 山野之人) who were not experts in medicine became ingredient providers for doctors, it became “difficult to tease out the fake” (*yanwei nanbie* 贗偽難別).<sup>31</sup> Emperor Gaozong 高宗 (r. 1127–1162) also worried about the harm of processed medicines with problematic ingredients:

I have heard that the drug stores in the markets often sell processed medicines for profit, and they use fake medical ingredients. This has caused harm to the people taking the drugs. I am deeply concerned.<sup>32</sup>

訪聞街市貨賣熟藥之家，往往圖利多用假藥，致服者傷生，深爲惻然。

Paradoxically, these repeated warnings from the central government were a sign that there were no effective solutions to the concerns the emperor and the public raised about adulterated medicines. This issue remained a problem for the government until the late Southern Song. When Hu Ju 胡榘 (1164–1224) was appointed as Magistrate of Siming county 四明縣 (modern-day Ningbo 寧波, Zhejiang) in 1227, he found that counterfeited and adulterated medicines had caused serious damage to public health.<sup>33</sup> The last part of Zhang Xiaoxiang's placard almost went so far as to pronounce a curse upon counterfeiters. When state intervention failed to work on the market, karmic retribution might still have seemed a powerful disincentive to these kinds of wrongdoers. Following Zhang's lengthy notice, Yuan Cai noted that Zhang's words should not only apply to medicine counterfeiters but should also be extended to those in analogous situations. Although these were originally Buddhist concepts, by the time that *guobao* 果報 (“karma”) and *yinde* 陰德 (“unobtrusive merit”) appeared in Zhang's notice, these terms had been well-received and appropriated into the everyday lexicon.<sup>34</sup> The simple and

31. Su Song, “*Bencao tujing xu*” 本草圖經序, in *Su Wei gong ji* 蘇魏公集, SKQS ed., 65.7b.

32. Xu Song 徐松, *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1957), Xingfa 刑法 2.154b.

33. Qian Shuoyou 潛說友, *Xianchun Lin'an zhi* 咸淳臨安志, in *Song Yuan fangzhi congkan* 宋元方志叢刊 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), 4:35.4a–5a (3673); Fang Wanli 方萬里 and Luo Jun 羅澹, *Baoqing siming zhi* 寶慶四明志, in *Song Yuan fangzhi congkan*, 5:3.7b–8a (5023).

34. John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 215–19.

straightforward language that Zhang used would have been familiar to the general population of this period.

In his *Yijian zhi* 夷堅志 (*Record of the Listener*), Hong Mai 洪邁 (1123–1202) collected a story along the same lines, entitled “Butcher Wang on the Ancient Road” 古步王屠:

On the ancient road of Yugan (modern-day Shangrao 上饒, Jiangxi) where traders passed, there were a few hundred shops, and among them many were butchers. Butcher Wang’s family had made a profit for a few generations. Every time before slaughtering a pig, Wang first injected water to add weight. In this way, he made extra profit, but this type of meat would trigger chronic diseases. Wang had seven sons. After accumulating tremendous profits, he bought landed property and built houses.

餘千古步，有墟市數百家，爲商賈往來通道，屠宰者甚衆。王生擅其利數世，每將殺一豕，必先注水沃灌，使若充肥，因可剩獲利。人食其肉者痼疾輒發動。王有七子，積貲不勝多，至於買田作室。

However, in his later years, Wang suffered a strange illness: a hole appeared in his right palm, and from it several *dou* [1 *dou* = 7.021 liters] of blood flowed out every day.<sup>35</sup> Even worse, there was no cure. Wang was embarrassed and at a complete loss and screamed; he could not sleep day or night. He only wanted to die immediately but had to suffer a few more months before the end of his life. His sons, who were scared by this, changed their jobs. Nowadays, all the butchers still apply this trick to chickens and ducks.<sup>36</sup>

晚年得異疾，右手掌內生，血水從中流出，日殆數斗，更無藥可療。刮席叫呼，晝夜不得合眼。但求速死，踰月乃亡。諸子知戒懼者，即謀改業。今之屠兒用此法者，比戶皆然。至於鷄鵝魚鴨亦爾。

Like most of Hong Mai’s anecdotes, this story is site-specific, taking place in a vibrant market through which traveling merchants would pass. Wang’s fraudulent business had already run in his family for a few generations. The vivid description of Wang’s suffering serves as a hard karmic lesson to similar wrongdoers. At the end of the story, Hong Mai emphasizes that Wang’s wrongdoing was not an isolated case but took place in many other butcher

35. For the measurement of *dou* during the Song dynasty, see Qiu Guangming 丘光明, Qiu Long 邱隆, and Yang Ping 楊平, *Zhongguo kexue jishu shi: Du liang heng juan* 中國科學技術史: 度量衡卷 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 2001), 376–77.

36. Hong Mai, *Yijian zhi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006), Sanzhi 三志, ren 壬 4:9.1536–37.

shops. A similar narrative pattern is also found in Yuan Cai's *Yuan shi shifan*. Towards the end of the book, Yuan reminded his readers of the tricks that unscrupulous merchants used in adulterating food and medicine, such as mixing water in rice, ashes in salt, and oil in lacquer; and, unsurprisingly, he once again reprimanded counterfeiters that the Creator (*zaowuzhe* 造物者) would take away their illicit profits eventually.<sup>37</sup>

By the Southern Song, narrative formula had been established that selling phony and fraudulent goods on markets would cause karmic retribution. Lu Yinglong's 魯應龍 (fl. 13th century) *Xianchuang kuoyi zhi* 閑窗括異志 (*The Record of Strange Stories from the Leisure Window*) recorded a few such stories, in which merchants who made fraudulent sauces and incense were duly punished.<sup>38</sup> In one story, an incense maker from Huating 華亭 (modern-day Shanghai) moved to Lin'an, and he often bought scrap wood from the local market and mixed it with black ink to produce fake incense. One night, he was summoned and beaten by the local god, the King of Gold Mountain (Jinshan dawang 金山大王), and soon died. Subsequently, in a dream, his wife saw him being boiled in hot water. After waking up, she tried to counterbalance his bad karma by making donations to temples and monks and urged their sons to stop their shady business. After recording a few similar stories about sellers of fake incense, Lu Yinglong added his own timely comments:

People burn incense to make offering to the worthies and sages in the Three Realms and Ten Directions. . . . [However, these people] made incense with scrap wood to offend the deities. How can they not have been put to death?

世人焚香，誠欲供養三界十方賢聖……廢木爲真，觸穢神祇，豈得不遭誅戮哉！<sup>39</sup>

In another example, a couple who mixed their sauce with saline water, coal slag, and roof-tile scraps multiplied their profits by ten, but they were crushed to death by a collapsed roof in a rainstorm.<sup>40</sup> The author then quoted a poem composed by a certain Superintendent of Penal Affairs, surnamed He (He *tixing* 何提刑), who was supposedly familiar with such cases:

37. *Yuan shi shifan*, 3,25b; Ebrey, *Family and Property in Sung China*, 319–20.

38. Lu Yinglong, *Xianchuang kuoyi zhi*, ed. Chu Lingling 儲玲玲, *Quan Song biji* ed. (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2017), 8.4:37, 40–41.

39. *Xianchuang kuoyi zhi*, 40–41.

40. *Xianchuang kuoyi zhi*, 37.

萬僞何緣鬪一眞， How can it be that ten thousand fakes are  
 passed off as the one truth?  
 時間謾得面前人。 Maybe they can cheat others only for a  
 moment.  
 生男種女多啞啞， Their sons or daughters are often dumb,  
 果報元來必有因。 For such a consequence, there is always a  
 cause.<sup>41</sup>

Fake goods on the market became the shadow of the commercial prosperity of the Song, and their emergence seems to have been an unavoidable stage in the transformation of economic patterns. Every expansion of the new urban space during the Song—rising productivity, improved technology, the commercialization of agriculture, the increased use of ingots and paper money, and the growth of state-monopolized industries—was accompanied by the production and consumption of fake goods.<sup>42</sup> Neither the government nor the merchant “guilds” were able to take effective measures against counterfeiting, and this left space for morality tales to play a proactive role in engaging this pressing issue. Stories with Confucian, Buddhist, and popular religious undertones shaped the social discourse in opposition to the counterfeiting of daily necessities.

### *The Fake in the Material Life of Scholar-Connoisseurs*

In addition to goods that people consumed in their daily lives, the counterfeit also encroached upon the consumption patterns of Song elites. As a genre of guides for elite consumers, *pulu* pervasively documented the experience of encountering fake luxury products. For the first time in Chinese history, the Song dynasty witnessed the high-volume production of *pulu* that specialized in objects that were used in literati material life.<sup>43</sup> The rise of commercial printing, the localization of elite identities, and the emergence of an interregional

41. *Xianchuang kuoyi zhi*, 37.

42. For example, see Richard von Glahn, *The Economic History of China: From Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 208–78.

43. The Southern Song bibliophile You Mao 尤袤 (1127–1194) first created this category; see *Suichutang shumu* 遂初堂書目, SKQS ed., 1.35a–b; Ji Yun 紀昀, compiler, *Qinding Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 欽定四庫全書總目 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), 1525. See also Huang Chunyan 黃純燕 and Zhan Xiumei 戰秀梅, *Songdai jingji pulu* 宋代經濟譜錄 (Lanzhou: Gansu renmin chubanshe, 2008).



market economy all contributed to the popularization of this special literary form.<sup>44</sup> The authors, portraying themselves as “connoisseurs” (*haoshizhe* 好事者), had created not just a pastime or diversion, but also the means by which they could develop a collective identity as knowledgeable elite consumers. The nurturing of connoisseurship demanded time, experience, and a sophisticated palate. Some “things”—like fauna, flora, food, or the incense mentioned above—might not be expensive luxuries, but they were still objects of scholarly interest and meaningful components in elite material life. To know how to appreciate fine objects and develop a discourse about them was a marker of an individual literatus’s capability, his identity, and ultimately his social status. These *pulu* produced a sophisticated cultural practice that fulfilled a social function of legitimating social distinctions between elites and non-elites.<sup>45</sup> The marketplace provided an unexamined collection of material things that were waiting to be authenticated, appreciated, and interpreted. Therefore, fake things had to be identified and teased out, just as refined things had to be appreciated by trained eyes.

Although tea had become a daily beverage for commoners since the early Northern Song, the aesthetic appreciation of tea was still very much limited to elite circles. In *Daguan chalu* 大觀茶論 (*The Treatise on Tea from the Daguan Era*), Emperor Huizong’s 徽宗 (r. 1100–1126) court made comments on the quality of tea, vessels, and water, but he also expressed concerns about counterfeit tea. For example, the emperor noticed that persimmon leaves were used to make fake tea because of their similar taste and cautioned that these fake leaves would eventually hurt tea drinkers’ health.<sup>46</sup> In another case, he described in detail how to judge the adulterated tea:

... also, there are some people greedy for profit. They buy the already dried buds from non-official tea roasters to manufacture or grind the already finished tea

44. Martina Siebert, “Consuming and Possessing Things on Paper: Examples from Late Imperial China’s Natural Studies,” in *Living the Good Life: Consumption in the Qing and Ottoman Empires of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Elif Akçetin and Suraiya Faroqhi (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 384–85, 387–88.

45. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 2010), 467–70. *Pulu* later became a site for Ming scholars to debate cultural tastes and social identities; see Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things: Material Culture and Social Status in Early Modern China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2004), 72–74.

46. Attributed to Zhao Ji 趙佶, *Daguan chalu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2013), 60; Huang Ru 黃儒, “Ruza” 入雜, in *Pincha yaolu* 品茶要錄, SKQS ed., 3a–3b.

cakes and press [the powder] into different molds. Although they model them after the well-known brands, how can their [fake] surface, texture, color, and gloss escape the eyes of connoisseurs?<sup>47</sup>

……比又有貪利之民，購求外焙已采之芽，假以製造；碎已成之餅，易以範模。雖名氏採制似之，其膚理色澤，何所逃於鑒賞哉？

This passage is categorized under the entry of “Jianbian” 鑒辨 (“Appraisals”), which includes a set of complicated techniques to distinguish types of tea and rank their quality. Huizong was unlikely to have witnessed the counterfeiting process himself, but the detailed explanation added to the credibility and authority of the text.<sup>48</sup>

By the same token, fine objects in a scholar’s studio might have stood as indices and markers of his taste and quality. Although the ubiquitous counterfeiting of antiques and rarities posed potential threats to the space and identity of elite scholars who consumed them, knowing and writing about the forging process implies that authors of *pulu* assumed the authority to protect the scholarly cultural space from fakery. For instance, Zhao Xihu 趙希鵠 (1172–1250) presented detailed information about how to counterfeit cracking patterns on the surface of an antique zither:

The counterfeiter covers [the surface of the zither] with a piece of thin paper made in Xinzhou (modern-day Shangrao, Jiangxi), applies a layer of lacquer, and then adds ashes. Cracks will appear when the paper is stretched apart. Or, in winter, [he] places it over high flames until heated and immediately covers it with snow to create cracks. Or else [he] uses a small knife to carve cracks on it. [These tricks] may deceive untrained eyes, but the fake cracks do not have the “sword-edge” patterns [that the genuine ones do], so it is easy to distinguish them.<sup>49</sup>

僞作者，用信州薄連紙，先漆一層於上，加灰，紙斷則有紋。或於冬日以猛火烘琴極熱，用雪罨激烈之。或用小刀刻畫於上。雖可眩俗眼，然決無劍鋒，亦易辨。

What was at stake for Zhao was not the existence of the fake zithers on the

47. For tea culture in the Song dynasty, see James Benn, *Tea in China: A Religion and Cultural History* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2015), 121. See also *Daguan chalu*, 16.

48. Following Maggie Bickford, I posit that Huizong played a primary role in the compilation of *The Treatise on Tea from the Daguan Era*; see “Emperor Huizong and the Aesthetic of Agency,” *Archives of Asian Art* 53 (2002/2003): 89–94.

49. Zhao Xihu, *Dongtian qinglu ji* 洞天清祿集, ed. Zhong Chong 鍾翀, *Quan Song biji* ed. (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2015), 7.2:6.

marketplace, but whether his readers would know the tricks of counterfeiters or simply fall for them. Knowing the process of faking the antique zither would grant the reader a ubiquitous eye and confidence of knowing the fake, suggesting an epistemological victory over the counterfeit. The above entry appears in the section “Guqin bian” 古琴辨 (“Appraisal of the Antique Zither”), which comprises thirty other entries discussing styles of the zither, its various parts, wood components, sounds, instrument builders, players, and the venues and atmosphere of playing.<sup>50</sup> Zhao created an ideal lifestyle surrounding the antique zither and drew a boundary to mark off fakes from the genuine.

Forged works could appear in almost every aspect of elite material life. Therefore, many authors reported counterfeiters’ tricks, shared their experiences, and gave tips about how to tell the forged from the genuine article in their *pulu*. However, they did not necessarily reach a consensus on concrete issues, such as developing consistent criteria to identify fakes; so-called “rooftile inkstones” (*wa yan* 瓦硯) were a salient example of this. At the beginning of the Northern Song, the scholar Xu Xuan 徐鉉 (916–991) was obviously unimpressed with the Bronze Finch tile (*Tongque wa* 銅雀瓦) inkstone, because he found that ink seeped almost immediately through it. In comparison, Su Yijian 蘇易簡 (958–996), a contemporary of Xu, lauded the watertight quality of the inkstone, which he attributed to the manufacturing process of the rooftile:

At the relic site of the Bronze Finch Pavilion, many people went to unearth its rooftiles. After being carved into an inkstone, it looks very exquisite, and water does not permeate it even after a few days. According to transmitted knowledge, when this pavilion was built in the past, potters were asked to sieve the clay with hempen cloth, and then mix it with walnut oil, so these tiles look different from other tiles. Today, the locals in Daming (modern-day Handan 邯鄲, Hebei) and Xiangzhou (modern-day Anyang 安陽, Henan) and other places counterfeit inkstones according to the shape of antique roof tiles, and those who sell them to people are extremely numerous.<sup>51</sup>

魏銅雀臺遺址，人多發其古瓦，琢之爲硯，甚工，而貯水數日不滲。世傳云：昔人製此臺，其瓦俾陶人澄泥，以絺綌濾過，碎胡桃油，方埴埴之，故與衆瓦有異焉。卽今之大名、相州等處，土人有假作古瓦之狀硯，以市于人者甚衆。

50. *Dongtian qinglu ji*, 1–15.

51. Su Yijian, *Wenfang sipu* 文房四譜 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011), 155.

“Transmitted knowledge” and walnut oil added a legendary aura to the value of these roof tiles. The “locals” who sold the “counterfeit” inkstones were depicted as a structural counterpart to the “ancients” who crafted them. In the following decades, rooftile inkstones became fashionable objects that were sought after by leading scholars, including Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), Cai Xiang 蔡襄 (1012–1067), Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101), and Mi Fu.<sup>52</sup>

When Chief Councilor Han Qi 韓琦 (1008–1075) was demoted to Xiangzhou to serve as the controller-general of the prefecture, he received requests for Bronze Finch rooftiles from his friends. Han’s exchange of poems with Zhang Wangzhi 章望之 (active 1077) and Chen Shunyu 陳舜俞 (1026–1076) shows that it had become rare to find the tiles, so Han ordered the prefect of the county to excavate the site. Finally, Han sent Zhang a complete piece but could only find a damaged one for Chen. In his response to Zhang, he especially stressed the rarity of the genuine articles:

巧工進歲知眾寶，	Skilled craftsmen in recent years know that
	everyone treasures them,
雜以假僞規錢縉。	So they mixed them with forged ones to
	make a profit.
頭方面凸概難別，	As they all have square tops and bulging
	surfaces, they are difficult to distinguish;
千百未有三二真。	Among hundreds and thousands of them, no
	more than two or three are authentic. <sup>53</sup>

Among all Northern Song scholars, Mi Fu was probably the only one who did not completely dismiss the forgery of these rooftile inkstones from Xiangzhou. Just as he used the phrase “spurious finery” to comment on Tang copies of Zhong You’s and Wang Xizhi’s calligraphy, he believed that “the inkstones made by locals from Xiangzhou were even better than those made of the rooftiles of the Bronze Finch Pavilion” 相州土人自製陶硯，在銅雀上。Mi Fu also shared his experience with them:

The color of some inkstones is greenish like spring waves, and sometimes black and white strips are used to decorate these ripples. The texture is fine and smooth, and the brush can draw ink effortlessly, but it seeps slightly.<sup>54</sup>

52. Gao Sisun 高似孫, *Yan jian* 硯箋, SKQS ed., 3.10.

53. Han Qi, *Anyang jichao* 安陽集鈔, in Wu Zhizhen 吳之振, compiler, *Song shi chao* 宋詩鈔, SKQS ed., 3.8a–9a.

54. Mi Fu, *Yan shi* 硯史, SKQS ed., 7b.

有色綠如春波者，或以黑白填爲水紋，其理細滑，著墨不費筆，但微滲。

An inkstone collected at the National Palace Museum in Taipei, which bears Mi Fu's endorsement, "Genuine appraisal of the Baojin Studio" (*Baojin zhai zhenshang* 寶晉齋真賞), is perhaps such a case (see Figure 2). The year-mark was inscribed on the reverse side: "Fifteenth year of the Jian'an Era" 建安十五年 (210 CE), the year when the Bronze Finch Pavilion 銅雀臺 was built in Yecheng 鄴城 (modern-day Handan). In comparison with a rooftile from the Pavilion, this inkstone was clearly made of more refined sifted clay and was fired at a much higher temperature. This suggests that the inkstone was made in the Song if not later, and possibly crafted in Daming or Xiangzhou.<sup>55</sup> Mi Fu, who possessed a good knowledge about both the original rooftile from the Pavilion and the forged copies made in Xiangzhou, could probably tell them apart easily. His seal stamp was more an appraisal of another piece of "spurious finery" than an assessment of its authenticity.

The divergence of Xu Xuan, Su Yijian, Han Qi, and Mi Fu's stances on the authenticity of the Bronze Finch rooftile inkstones illustrates the complexity of knowledge formation about material objects. When each of them appraised this inkstone, their tacit and practical knowledge appeared to have been based on individual experience rather than any systematic knowledge. Yet such knowledge, when accumulated and aggregated to a certain extent, would allow connoisseurs to distinguish fake goods from the authentic, and on a discursive level, scholars' writing as a practice collectively contributed to building up the community and identity of scholar-connoisseurs against potential fraudsters, and, in Dorothy Ko's words, to "police the boundary of the scholar-literati group."<sup>56</sup>

In the above records of inkstones, it is self-evident that fake objects entered the material space of the scholars through the market. When this scholar-connoisseur community was being constituted and constructed, the market was an ambiguous gateway into the scholarly cultural space. It provided things necessary for a scholar's studio either directly or indirectly, but at the

55. The image of this inkstone is recorded in Yu Minzhong 于敏中, *Qinding xiqing yanpu* 欽定西清硯譜, SKQS ed., 1.15a–17b. I rely on the expertise of the National Palace Museum, which identifies it as a Song inkstone intentionally imitating the original Eastern Han style. See <http://catalog.digitalarchives.tw/item/001c/c4/do.html> (accessed January 12, 2019).

56. Dorothy Ko, *The Social Life of Inkstones: Artisans and Scholars in Early Qing China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2017), 67.

## 寶晉齋真賞

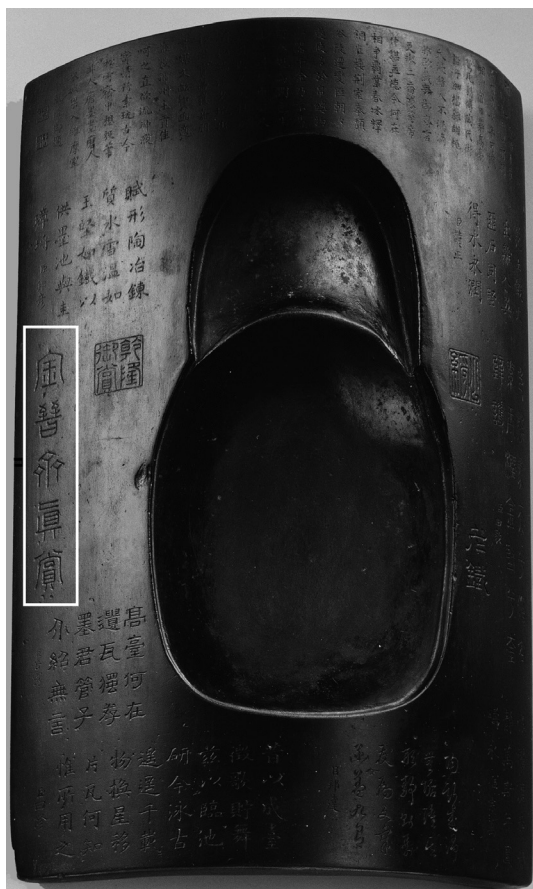


Figure 2. Roof-tile inkstone. Northern Song dynasty (960–1127).  
L: 20.5 cm, W: 15.4–16.0 cm, D: 5.1 cm. Sieved clay. National  
Palace Museum, Taipei.

same time was also considered a place of dispute, danger, and deceit. Written by an anonymous merchant from Lin'an, *Baibao zongzhen ji* 百寶總珍集 (*The Compendium of Treasures and Rarities*) is such an example. Given its vernacular language and mnemonic verses, it is safe to say the book was originally written to transmit mercantile knowledge.<sup>57</sup> It is very likely that both

57. According to the compilers of SKQS, the book was possibly written by a merchant from Lin'an; see *Qinding Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, 1:116.1549. With a careful comparison of this book and *Jujia biyong shilei beiyao* 居家必用事類備要, Dong Censhi 董岑仕 argues that the

its author and its putative readers were both merchants. Unlike the scholarly *pulu* that contain systematic, connoisseurial information about objects, this text is comprised only of individual entries on various objects, including the rooftile inkstone mentioned above. The entry under the title of “*Wa yan*” 瓦硯 (“Rooftile Inkstone”) offers us a lens with which we might view a scholarly object from the vantage point of a merchant:

曹操禁中含元殿， Near the Hanyuan Hall in Cao Cao’s (155–  
220) palace,<sup>58</sup>  
立名呼作銅雀臺。 A pavilion named Tongque was erected.  
上頭舊瓦今作硯， The old rooftiles from the palace are now  
made into inkstones,  
百個難淘一個堅。 But it is hard to find a solid one among a  
hundred.

The rooftile stones from the Bronze Finch Pavilion bear patterns colored with a greenish patina. Most of them sold in markets are fakes; the treasury in the palace has the genuine ones.<sup>59</sup>

銅雀臺瓦硯上有花兒，綠銅色。街市多是偽造者，禁中閣子庫有。

Although the author of this text might have shared similar opinions with Mi Fu and Han Qi about the features and rarity of authentic inkstones, what distinguishes this text from the above *pulu* is its simple, colloquial writing style and its market-oriented knowledge. The inkstone is primarily taken as a commodity on the market instead of an object to be used and appreciated by elites. A similar pattern can also be found in how the author of *Baibao zongzhen ji* describes other fake commodities. Among one hundred entries, the text identifies a broad range of fake goods in elite life: zithers, jades, bronzes,

---

author of *Baibao zongzhen ji* also had access to information from the officials who took charge of the state treasury; see “Songdai pulu yanjiu” 宋代譜錄研究 (Ph.D. diss., Peking University, 2017), 369–72. On the transmission of mercantile knowledge, see Chen Kaijun, “Learning about Precious Goods: Transmission of Mercantile Knowledge from the Southern Song to Early Ming Period,” *Rao Zongyi guoxueyuan yuankan* 饒宗頤國學院院刊 4 (May 2017): 291–327.

58. The Hanyuan Hall 含元殿, constructed in 663, was the main hall of the Daming Palace 大明宮 during the Tang dynasty. It is possible the author of *Baibao zongzhen ji* confused the Hanyuan Hall with the main hall in Cao Cao’s palace. Liu Xu 劉昫, ed., *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 1:4.84–85.

59. Anonymous, *Baibao zongzhen ji (wai sizhong)* 百寶總珍集 (外四種), ed. Li Yinhan 李音翰 and Zhu Xuebo 朱學博 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 2015), 3:41.

jewelry, precious stones, rose water, incense, coral, amber, fur, leather, paintings and inkstones, calligraphy by emperors, and porcelain from the imperial kiln.<sup>60</sup> Many of these items were also recorded in *pulu* and *biji* notebooks, and must have been displayed in scholars' studios. Therefore, *Baibao zongzhen ji* shows the figurative convergence of the marketplace and scholarly space.

However, unlike the market-minded *Baibao zongzhen ji*, in their *pulu* and notebooks, scholars were concerned about the fake objects that had intruded into their personal lives. For example, in his *Xinzuan xiangpu* 新纂香譜 (*Newly Compiled Treatises on Incense*), the scholar Chen Jing 陳敬 (fl. 13th century) provided detailed accounts about how to categorize, make, and use incense. Among the 120 types of incense in this book, Chen identifies six that could be counterfeited: rose water (*qiangwei shui* 薔薇水), ambergris (*longqian xiang* 龍涎香), camphor (*longnao* 龍腦), styrax (*suhe xiang* 蘇合香), frankincense (*ruxiang* 乳香), and benzoin resin (*anxi xiang* 安息香).<sup>61</sup> By way of comparison, *Baibao zongzhen ji* lists only six types of incense, which were probably the most profitable ones, and points out that counterfeiting could occur to four of them: rose water, ambergris, camphor (*naozi* 腦子), and agarwood (*chenxiang* 沉香).<sup>62</sup> Three types of counterfeit incense ingredients—rose water, ambergris, and camphor—appear in both texts. While *Baibao zongzhen ji* taught merchants how to observe the appearance of ambergris and agarwood and ask the origin of the rosewater, *Xinzuan xiangpu* often prescribed some hands-on tactics to distinguish counterfeit incense, such as burning the ambergris, frankincense, and benzoin resin to discern the counterfeit, or putting rosewater in a glass bottle to see through its air bubbles.<sup>63</sup> In *Suosui lu* 瑣碎錄 (*Records of Trivial Things*), the Northern Song scholar Wen Ge 溫革 (1006–1076) devoted a section of “Bian wei” 辨偽 (“Identifying Forgeries”) to various methods of distinguishing fake incense and medicine, such as burning it with fire, immersing it into water, grinding it to check its texture, and even testing it with a dog.<sup>64</sup> A comparison between *Baibao zongzhen ji* and

60. All these records were distributed throughout the short volume; see *Baibao zongzhen ji*, 1.32–34; 2.36–37; 3.38–41; 4.47; 6.51; 8.56–7; 9.60, 62.

61. Chen Jing, *Xinzuan xiangpu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2012), 14, 46, 50, 56, 83, 94.

62. The text also warns the reader that it is illegal to trade frankincense privately on the market, so the issue of counterfeiting it would be out of the question; see *Baibao zongzhen ji*, 8.55–58.

63. Chen Jing, *Xinzuan xiangpu*, 46, 50, 56, 83, 94.

64. Wen Ge, *Suosui lu*, in *Yifang leiju* 醫方類聚, ed. Zhejiang sheng zhongyi yanjiusuo 浙江省中醫研究所 and Huzhou zhongyiyuan 湖州中醫院 (Beijing: Renmin weisheng chubanshe, 1979), 1:1.17–18.



these *pulu* implies that merchants would try to catch fakes before the market transition, whereas elite consumers often had to tease out the forgery after the purchase. Therefore, the methods that the scholars developed might have been effective at home but not so practical in a market setting.

A demand for systematic knowledge can also be seen in scholars' writings about paintings. As portable formats of paintings—including hanging scrolls, hand scrolls, albums, and fans—became more popular during the Song, these artworks, and especially those attributed to famous painters, attracted both collectors and forgers. A lofty goal of Mi Fu's *Hua shi* 畫史 (*A History of Painting*) was to differentiate the massive number of forged reproductions from the very few authentic masterpieces in order to establish a “history” of genres, styles, and masters. He claimed to have seen two authentic paintings by Li Cheng 李成 (919–967) and five by Dong Yuan 董源 (active 10th century), but a few hundred fake ones.<sup>65</sup> Zhao Xihu's *Dongtian qinglu ji* 洞天清祿集 (*Record of the Pure Register of the Cavern Heaven*) also instructed his readers on how to distinguish fake paintings from the genuine.<sup>66</sup> Both Mi and Zhao wrote extensively about paintings, including authentication techniques, especially styles, stroke textures, and painting materials. For example, naturally-worn silk bore zigzag marks that looked like bites by crucian carp (*jiyukou* 鯽魚口) and refined snow-white threads (*xuesi* 雪絲), both of which looked completely different from artificial cracks.<sup>67</sup> Forged ancient paintings often used yellowish silk, but they did not have the greyish hue caused by the accretion of dirt and dust over the ages; on genuinely ancient paintings, the brushwork always appeared to be an integral part of the silk after the ink was absorbed into the fabric. To understand Mi and Zhao's jargon, a reader must have had access to a large pool of authentic paintings that were in the hands

65. Mi Fu, *Hua shi*, ed. Yan Yongcheng 燕永成, *Quan Song biji* ed. (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2006), 2.4:273.

66. Although Zhao Xihu was not very successful in his official career, with only a few low-ranking appointments, he was well-travelled and indulged in collecting and appreciating all “scholarly” objects, such as antique zithers, inkstones, bronze vessels, manuscripts, calligraphy, paintings, and curious rocks. Zhao was born into a literati-official's family in Zhuji 諸暨 (modern-day Zhejiang). He was also a descendent of the royal lineage, although by the Southern Song this status did not mean much for his upward social mobility. See Liang Lijun 梁麗君, “*Dongtian qinglu ji zhulu yu xiangguan yanjiu*” 《洞天清祿集》著錄與相關研究, *Meishu yanjiu* 美術研究 2015.4: 3–29; Yi Ruofen 衣若芬, “Zhao Xihu *Dongtian qinglu ji tanxi*” 趙希鵠《洞天清祿集》探悉, *Xin Songxue* 新宋學, vol. 2, ed. Wang Shuizhao 王水照 (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2003), 410–17.

67. Zhao Xihu, *Dongtian qinglu ji*, 43–44.

of individual collectors in order to learn the connoisseurial and technical qualities that distinguished them from fakes.

If Mi Fu's assessment of the vast quantities of forged paintings can be taken seriously, then it is not surprising that the forged works also were incorporated into court collections. During Mi Fu's lifetime, the imperial court-based compilers of *Xuanhe huapu* 宣和畫譜 (*The Painting Catalogue of the Xuanhe Period*) did not feel an immediate urge to distinguish reproductions from the authentic pieces in their imperial collections, since transmission by imitating models (*chuanyi moxie* 傳移模寫) was still an indisputable way to learn painting skills and transmit masterpieces.<sup>68</sup> However, by the late Southern Song, forged paintings had found their way into court collections. In 1275, when Zhou Mi was taken into the court depository to view paintings, he noticed that forgeries had already replaced the genuine ones, despite strict procedures for mounting and seals to prevent this from happening.<sup>69</sup>

### *The Fake, Mobility, and Anxiety*

People of various classes and social roles during the Song enjoyed unprecedented geographic mobility, but rapidly expanding cities and markets, where buyers and sellers were strangers who had not built up a relationship of mutual trust, could be precarious and unstable spaces for many potential consumers.<sup>70</sup> These new social changes underlay stories recorded in the Southern Song. Hong Mai's *Yijian zhi* recounts a well-planned hoax story in Hangzhou, in "The Pure Dark-Red Cat" ("Ganhong mao" 乾紅貓):

Commoner Sun San lived in a small alley west of the northern gate of Lin'an. Sun and his wife had no children. Every morning, when Sun left to sell cooked meat, he always cautioned his wife: "Watch the cat. There is no such breed in the capital, so don't let other people see it. If you let it out, it will surely be stolen. I am getting old and childless, so treat it as my own child. Watch it carefully." Sun repeated this to his wife every day. His neighbors did not interact with him,

68. *Xuanhe huapu*, ed. Yu Jianhua 俞劍華 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1964).

69. Zhou Mi 周密, *Yunyan guoyan lu* 雲煙過眼錄, SKQS ed., 3.20b; for a translation of this passage, see Ankeney Weitz, *Zhou Mi's Record of Clouds and Mists Passing Before One's Eyes: An Annotated Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 192–96.

70. See Cong Ellen Zhang, *Transformative Journeys: Travel and Culture in Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), 6–8; Wu Yating 吳雅婷, "Buan de xiehou: Songren yu lüsu changsuo de hudong yu qi kongjian yinxiang" 不安的邂逅——宋人於旅宿場所的互動與其空間印象, *Xin shixue* 新史學 21.4 (Dec. 2010): 141–202.

but they could hear his voice. Some neighbors said, "The cat is probably a tabby. It was rare in the past, but not anymore. It is funny that this old man holds on to it so stubbornly."

臨安內北門外西邊小巷民孫三者居之，一夫一妻無男女，每旦攜熟肉出售。常戒其妻曰：“照管貓兒，都城並無此種，莫要教外間見。若放出，必被人偷去。我老無子，撫惜他便與親生孩兒一般。切須掛意。”日日申言不已，鄰里未嘗相往還，但數聞其語。或云：“想只是虎斑，舊時罕有，如今亦不足貴。此翁忉忉護守，爲可笑也。”

Then one day, the cat ran out of the gate with a leash, and the wife immediately took it back. Everyone who had seen it was struck by its appearance and marveled: its color was pure dark-red, including its tail, paws, hair, and whiskers. When Sun came home, he whipped his wife badly. Later, the news slowly reached a eunuch who immediately sent someone to purchase the cat at a high price. However, Sun rejected it by telling the buyer, "I have been living a lonely and poor life. Food is already enough to feed me; money is useless. I love this cat as much as my own life. How can I sell it!"

一日，忽拽索出到門，妻急抱回，見者皆駭。貓乾紅深色，尾足毛須盡然，無不嘆羨。孫三歸，痛箠厥妻。已而浸浸達於內侍之耳，即遣人以厚直評買，而孫拒之曰：“我孤貧一世，有飯喫便了。無用錢處，愛此貓如性命。豈能割捨？”

However, the eunuch really wanted it, eventually offering 300,000 cash. Sun cried while giving the cat away and sighed the whole night. The eunuch was extremely excited about getting the cat and planned to tame and offer it to the inner court. After a few days, the color of the cat faded, turning into white within half a month. They sought after Sun, but only found that he had moved away. It is possible that Sun applied the method of dyeing horse tassel pendants to the cat, spending days faking it. Sun's cautioning and beating his wife were all a hoax. I heard this story from Grand Councillor Ma Mengzhang, who might have seen it in person.<sup>71</sup>

內侍求之甚力，竟以錢三百千取之。孫垂泣分付，復箠妻，仍終夕嗟悵。內侍得貓不勝喜，欲調馴安帖乃以進入，已而色澤漸淡，才及半月全成白貓。走訪孫氏，既徙居矣。蓋用染馬纓縛之法，積日爲僞。前之告戒箠怒，悉姦計也。馬相孟章說，蓋親見之。

As reflected in Southern Song court notebooks and paintings, buying cats of rare breeds had become a new pursuit for officials and wealthy people.<sup>72</sup>

71. *Yijian zhi*, Sanzhi, ji 己 3:9.1372.

72. Rare cats were treasured at court and among the elite during the Southern Song. In

A pure dark-red cat probably did not really exist, so this fake cat was not a “copy” of the genuine, but was made only to cater to the tastes of the palace and rich households. A necessary condition for the Sun couple to stage their scam was their geographic mobility. Cooking and selling meat, the Suns seemed to be leading a normal life in the city. They chose to settle near the northern gate of the Imperial Palace, the Hening Gate 和寧門 that faced the busy Imperial Avenue (*yujie* 御街) (see Figure 3). When they disappeared with the lucre from selling the cat, nobody questioned where they came from or where they went.

In the new urban space where most people were strangers, those who crossed physical and social space could experience and arouse a sense of uneasiness. In the story “Wang Li aoya” 王立爇鴨 (“Wang Li’s Roasted Ducks”), also from Hong Mai’s *Yijian zhi*, after completing his term of office as controller-general in Jiankang 建康 (modern-day Nanjing), Shi Min 史忞 returned to live in his former residence beside the Salt Bridge (Yanqiao 鹽橋) in Lin’an (Figure 3).<sup>73</sup> The bridge, built to cross the Yanqiao Canal, was a vibrant trading area.<sup>74</sup> One day, Shi ran into his former cook, Wang Li 王立. Knowing that Wang had died, Shi questioned him about this bizarre encounter. Wang answered that ghosts were prevalent in the capital:

... Now among all the people in Lin’an, three-tenths are of my kind. Some are officials, some are Buddhist monks, some are Daoist priests, some are merchants, some are singing girls. We are from all walks of life. In interacting with humans, we are not different. Most of us are not harmful, but ordinary people just cannot tell us apart.<sup>75</sup>

……今臨安城中人，以十分言之，三分皆我輩也。或官員、或僧、或道士、或商販、或倡女，色色有之。與人交關，往還不殊，略不爲人害，人自不能別耳。

---

*Mengliang lu*, Wu Zimu recorded that lion cats (*shimao* 獅貓) were favored by officials and elites simply because of their beautiful appearance but not for catching mice. See *Mengliang lu*, SKQS ed., 18.18a.

73. The Yanqiao Canal was connected to the Tianzong 天宗 and Yuhang 餘杭 Water Gates 水門 in the north of the capital. See Qian Shuoyou, *Xianchun Lin’an zhi* 35.4a–5a (3673).

74. Zhang Xiaohong 張曉虹, *Gudu yu chengshi* 古都與城市 (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 2014), 156.

75. *Yijian zhi*, Dingzhi 丁志, 2:4.571. Translation based on Ronald Egan, “Crime, Violence, and Ghosts in the Lin’an Stories in *Yijian zhi*,” in *Senses of the City: Perceptions of Hangzhou and Southern Song*, ed. Joseph Lam, Shuen-fu Lin, Christian de Pee, and Martin Powers (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2017), 171.

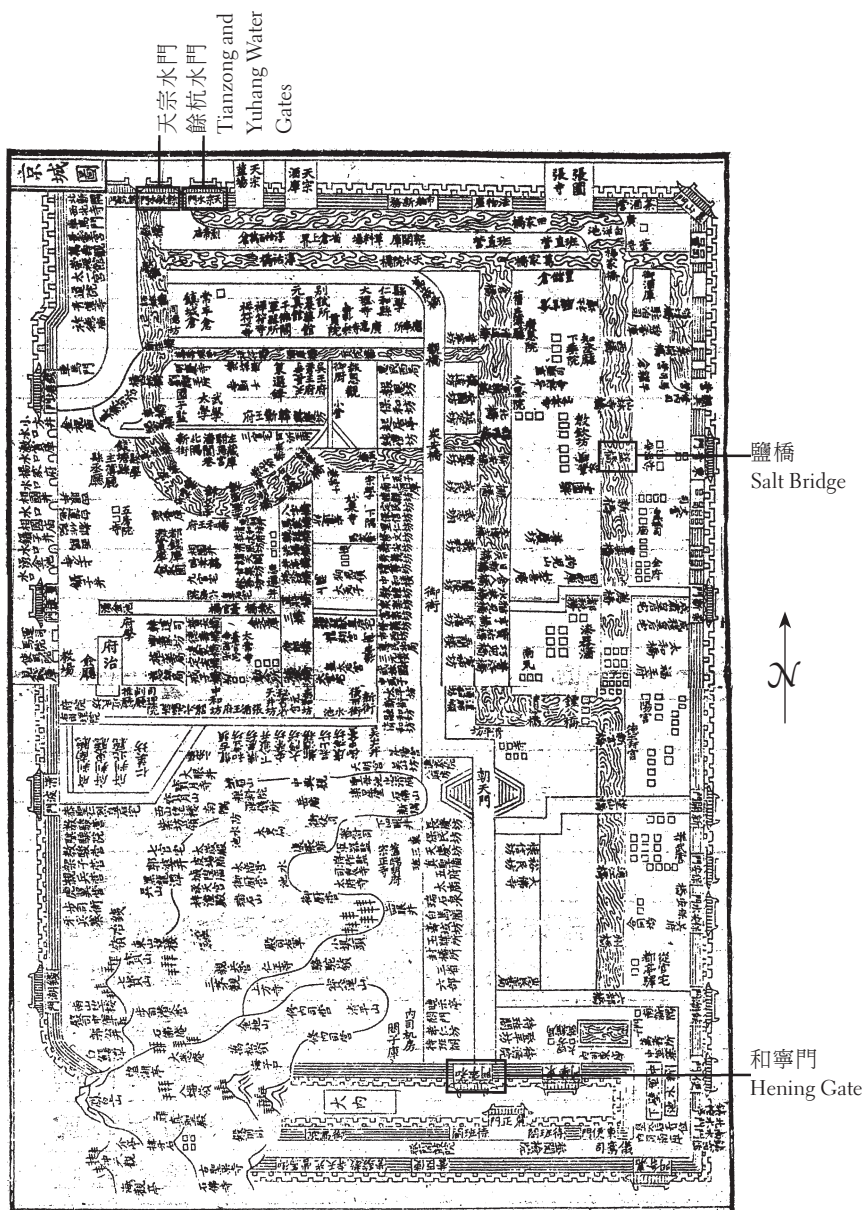


Figure 3. Map of Southern Song Hangzhou from the *Xianchun Lin'an zhi*, with places named in two stories from Hong Mai's *Yijian zhi*. From Qian Shuoyou 潛說友, *Xianchun Lin'an zhi* 咸淳臨安志, in *Song Yuan fangzhi congkan* 宋元方志叢刊 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), 4:1.6 (3354).

When Shi asked him if the roasted ducks that he made were real (*zhen* 真), Wang assured him that the ducks were from this world (*renjian wu* 人間物).<sup>76</sup> Another similar tale of a ghost selling roasted poultry, “Li Ji aoji” 李吉爇鷄 (“Li Ji’s Roasted Chicken”), was also collected in *Yijian zhi*. This story happened to Fan Yinbin, an official who had been recently transferred from Changsha to Lin’an. Hong Mai must have noticed that such a story had become a narrative formula: “[T]his story is very similar to those recorded in novels, and it is about the tricks played by ghosts” 此事與小說中所載者多同, 蓋鬼技等耳.<sup>77</sup>

This plot of trickery was turned into a more elaborate version in the vernacular story “Xishan yiku gui” 西山一窟鬼 (“A Den of Ghosts from the West Mountain”). The protagonist, Wu Hong 吳洪 from Fuzhou, was stranded in Lin’an after failing the civil service examination. As a stranger in the capital waiting for the next examination, he was caught in a liminal space.<sup>78</sup> It turned out that almost everyone in his life—including his wife, serving maid, match maker, and small merchants—was a ghost, and, like the chef in the above two stories, they all needed to have jobs to make ends meet.<sup>79</sup> All these stories are not about fake goods *per se* but show a lingering suspicion about the mobile population in the mindset of urbanites in Lin’an. The social roles that Wang Li listed in the first story include officials, monks, priests, merchants, and singing girls, all of whom were highly mobile and possible for strangers to impersonate. Indeed, Shi Min and Fan Yinbin from the first two stories were officials travelling from elsewhere to Lin’an, and Wu Hong from the third story was a scholar sojourning in the capital.

76. *Yijian zhi*, Dingzhi 2:4:571.

77. *Yijian zhi*, Bingzhi 丙志 2:9:443.

78. Linda Rui Feng characterizes the sojourn of the examination candidates in Chang’an as a liminal stage, which did not necessarily lead to the ultimate success in their official career paths; see *City of Marvel and Transformation: Chang’an and Narratives of Experience in Tang Dynasty China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2015), 34–42.

79. *Ying Yuanren xie Jingben tongshu xiaoshuo* 影元人寫京本通俗小說 (Ming dynasty ed., Harvard University Library), 12.1a–116b. A revised version, “Yi ku gui laidaoren chuguai” 一窟鬼癡道人除怪, is collected in Feng Menglong 馮夢龍, *Jingshi tongyan* 警世通言 (Haikou: Hainan chubanshe, 1993), 139–148; for an English translation, see Feng Menglong, *Stories to Caution the World: A Ming Dynasty Collection, Volume 2*, trans. Shuhui Yang and Yunqin Yang (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 212–25. Patrick Hanan dated this story as one of the “earliest” *huaben* 話本 vernacular stories, which was written down no later than the Yuan dynasty; see his *The Chinese Short Story: Studies in Dating, Authorship, and Composition* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1973), 153–64.

Markets and cities were like magnets, drawing people from all over the country, and generating a space that allowed people to redefine the distance between each other and even assume new roles in different contexts. This uncanny feeling is especially pronounced in the story of Wang Li. In the market, the identity of the former cook was changed into a hawker as well as a ghost, but strangely, he did not have any supernatural powers. He and other ghost hawkers all struggled to make a living. Wang's daily routine—working from before dawn until late at night—is rather like a vivid and real narration of the life of an ordinary petty hawker, which reminds us of the Sun couple, who disguised themselves as ordinary pre-cooked meat vendors in Hong Mai's story of the fake dark-red cat. With such a vast quantity of people and things constantly on the move, one could no longer trust his or her eyes about what was common, normal, or ordinary. In addition to fun and pleasure, a traveler's experience with the market and city were possibly unfamiliarity and distrust. Accompanying the excitement, affluence, and liveliness of urban space were the dangers of violence, crime, and swindles.<sup>80</sup> When the shrewd merchant author of *Baibao zongzhen ji* suggested selling low-quality objects to traveling provincial officials who did not have elegant taste, and also charging a substantial markup on temple objects to Buddhist monks and Daoist priests, such tactics could have provoked a feeling of instability, uncertainty, and mistrust in consumers.<sup>81</sup>

Although Hong Mai claims that his anecdotes are true stories, we should read all these stories on a metaphorical level. Edward Davis has found that, although Hong Mai did not participate in the stories recorded in his book, he created a strong sense of subjective experience.<sup>82</sup> The stories above can be read as an expression of the increased anxiety and uneasiness with urban growth, demographic mobility, and redefined relationships between sellers and consumers. The flux of goods and people in a commercial context alienated people's relationships and aroused deep distrust in goods that were uncertain and sellers who were potentially untrustworthy. The deep-seated distrust of the unknown was channeled through imaginings of ghostly urbanities in notebooks and popular literature.

80. Ronald Egan recently discussed the public disorder of Lin'an; see "Crime, Violence, and Ghosts," 149–78, especially 159–65.

81. *Baibao zongzhen ji*, 1.33, 2.37, 4.43, 8.58.

82. Edward L. Davis, *Society and the Supernatural in Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 17–18.



## Conclusion

Consumers were promised a cornucopia of commodities and pleasures by expanding urban spaces and markets during the Song, especially the Southern Song. Long lists of food items, festival activities, and street performances in such urban descriptions as *Dongjing menghua lu* and *Mengliang lu* present the new narrative strategies through which Song writers expressed their admiration and fascination with urban life and market transactions.<sup>83</sup> In this context, fake goods became an unignorable phenomenon, which followed the unprecedented prosperity of the age like a shadow. As shown in this article, a magnitude of adulterated, unqualified, and forged commodities that could be called “fake” (*lan*, *yan*, and most often *jia* and *wei*) were produced and sold to customers with various interests and from different social backgrounds. This issue was certainly not new to the Song, but it was during the Song that the amount and variety of fake goods far exceeded those that had been available in the past.

The Song central government had only limited control over the fake, and merchant organizations were also too weak to take collective action against counterfeiting. The forgery of state-monopolized goods was legally proscribed as a threat to the state's stability and authority. But from the perspective of consumers rather than the state, adulterated and forged daily necessities were often seen as being produced by immoral merchants and as harmful to public safety. Likewise, forged antiques and luxury objects provoked scholars to develop their knowledge to discern the genuine from the fake. Across this broad spectrum of goods, individuals' attitudes toward fakes ranged from frustration to amusement, and they resorted to moral teachings, religious retribution, and scholarly writing to interpret these violations of trust. It is worth pointing out that we, as contemporary readers, mostly hear their voices through the writings of male literati. Writing about the fake could be interpreted as a powerful means to overcome the fake and overpower malefactors, and this is particularly true in the case of morality tales and connoisseurial writings. It is clear that the educated elite made collective efforts and shared the goal of combating counterfeit goods, but as the case of the rooftop inkstone shows,

---

83. See Christian de Pee, “Purchase on Power: Imperial Space and Commercial Space in Song-dynasty Kaifeng, 960–1127,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 53 (2010): 149–84; Stephen H. West, “The Interpretation of a Dream: The Sources, Evaluation, and Influence of the *Dongjing meng Hua lu*,” *T'oung Pao* 71 (1985): 63–108.



they might sometimes differ in their knowledge about how to discern the fake from the genuine. In comparison with the market orientation in merchants' writings about fake goods, scholars tended to produce "holistic" knowledge about objects, including techniques to identify forgeries.

When fake goods were encountered in everyday urban life, the issue of the fake was more than just conceptual. The way that fakes were framed and presented in written texts should be understood as cultural reflections of the quotidian experiences of the writers themselves. To some extent, Mi Fu's rather open-minded comments about well-made forgeries was a sign of a more mature attitude towards the materiality of an artwork rather than a dogmatic value judgment in opposition to a fake commodity. To simply associate the emergence of a great deal of forgeries with the overall prosperity of the Song period would be a simplistic generalization. Among many factors that could have contributed to this complex phenomenon, geographic mobility and dispersed market space were the most significant. Travelers such as officials, scholars, merchants, monks, and itinerant performers gained freedom of movement through cities, and businesses and shops were no longer limited only to regulated marketplaces. The commercial efflorescence also produced both excitement and anxiety about purchased goods and markets. A sense of alienation and distrust of rapidly urbanizing spaces and purchased goods were woven into popular as well as elite culture. Indeed, the fake, like ghosts, were the simulacra of the real, the authentic, and the normal. In Song literati writings about fake goods, we see an inclination to hold onto an emerging collective identity, as well as a deep anxiety and distrust towards the marketplace.