

## ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF LI ZHI'S WORKS

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*Abstract: Li Zhi was one of Wang Yangming's followers, belonging to Taizhou School. He had more than 50 extant books, but just Fengshu 焚书 and Changshu 藏书 have been partially translated into English so far. In comparison with his prose, only about 50 items of his poems have been translated into English. The thesis deals with different English renderings of such book titles as Fengshu 焚书, Changshu 藏书, and Tongxinshuo 童心说. In the meantime, the thesis deals with the improper renderings in current English translations of Li Zhi's poems due to language and cultural barriers. Li Zhi is regarded as a figure of Chinese enlightenment whose thoughts enjoy international cultural significance; thus, more translations and research are due to appear.*

The family name of Li Zhi 李贽 (1527-1602) was originally Lin 林, whose birth name was Zaizhi 载贽, with courtesy names, Hongfu 宏甫 (父) or Sizhai 思斋, style names, Zhuowu 卓吾 and also Duwu 笃吾, as well as other various literary cognomens and sobriquets, like The Layman of Wenling 温陵居士, The Layman of Baiquan 百泉居士, The Bald Old Man 秃翁, The Old Man of the Dragon Lake 龙湖叟, and Father of Vastness 宏父, etc, as is explained in his commentary autobiography, "A Sketch of Zhuowu: Written in Yunnan" 卓吾论略:滇中作. (Li, 2000a,78-81) As an eccentric, individual and heterodox intellectual and thinker, Li Zhi referred to Wang Gen's son Wang Bi (1511-1587) as his teacher and thus he was the third generation of School of Wang Yangming, belonging to the most free-spirited Taizhou School 泰州学派, a radical, independent, populist and eccentric faction of Learning of the Heart-Mind 心学, which is often characterized as "wild Channist" 狂禅, with both literati and commoners as their members. His theory of Childlike Heart-mind 童心说 is the legacy of Wang Yangming's School of Mind and heralds the theory of "natural sensibility" 性灵说, an avant-garde system of new standards of such aesthetic and literary tastes as pure, spontaneous, natural, innocent, and uncensored feelings and emotions, advocated by the three Yuan brothers' Gong'an School 公安派 of literary thought, whose inclination is to rediscover the charm, comfort, and pleasure in the triviality of civilian life, a major theme of the *lsiao-p'in* 小品, and the struggle for originality and spontaneity in artistic and literary expression, which were integral parts of the late Ming zeitgeist. (Ye,1999, xxii)

As one of the most central, celebrated and creative thinkers of the late Ming "cult of feelings" 情教, Li Zhi's original and organic advocacy of literature and art has profound impact on his followers of playwrights, critics, editors or publishers as Tang Xianzhu 汤显祖 (1550-1616), Xu Wei 徐渭 (1521-1593), Jin Shengtian 金圣叹(1608-1661) and Feng Menglong 冯梦龙 (1574-1646) , etc. With an unconventional, original personality and lifelong prolific writings, Li Zhi was a renowned litterateur, thinker, and historiographer in the classical Chinese literature, religions, and intellectual history of the Ming Dynasty, whose voluminous works cover broad genres with eclectic tastes, ranging from essays,

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letters, commentaries, poetry, historiographies, and philosophy, such as *A Book to Burn* 焚书, *Another Book to Burn* 续焚书, *A Book to Keep/Hidden* 藏书, *Another Book to Keep/Hidden* 续藏书, *Collection of Essays Begun at the Lake* 初潭集 and *Commentary and Summary of Historiographical Survey* 史纲评要. Nowadays, we can still see his annotations of *Heroes of the Marshes* 水浒传, *Romance of the Western Chamber* 西厢记, and *Moon Prayer Pavilion* 拜月亭, etc. Actually, Li Zhi was not a systematic thinker, “Fearlessly irreverent and unremittingly creative, he embraced paradox and, oscillating between sincerity and irony, charted a zigzag course strewn with self-contradictions. His writings in many genres—essays, letters, poems, aesthetic criticism, historical annotation, and philosophical commentary—showcase his keen powers of observation and his incisive interpretations of popular and classical texts spanning the Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist traditions.” (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 3)

As a provocative and eccentric writer, Li Zhi flouted and challenged Chinese ethical and aesthetical conventions and authorities of all kinds and championed individual judgments and personal desires in his writings, weaving together divergent religious-philosophical traditions, including the three teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism and other schools of thought. In his actual autobiography, “Reflections on My Life” 感慨平生, the last section of “the Rules Agreed upon in Advance” 豫约, Li Zhi summarized his own life, “In fact, throughout my life, I have never liked the idea of having to take orders from another person.” (Li, 2016, 185) His decision to tonsure originated entirely from his pragmatic desire to be free from the control of others. However, he discouraged Zeng Jiquan from shaving his hair and becoming a monk in the letter, “To Zeng Jiquan” 与曾继泉, in which he explained, “The reason why I shave my hair was that various people at home always expected me to return and often actually traveled a thousand *li* to pressure me to return and to bother me with trivial, worldly affairs. So I shaved my hair to show them that I had no intention of returning. Also, the ignorant people down here eyed me as a heretic, so I let myself behave as such to satisfy them. And yet was my sudden decision to shave my hair based primarily on these reasons? In addition, I knew I was getting old and would not stay in this world of men for long; that was the true reason.” (Ebrey, 1993, 214) Li Zhi is not a radical thinker who jettisons tradition, but rather, he is “a thinker who has mastered the traditional canon of literature and passionately strives to reform, amend, and embellish upon what is given.” (Lee, 2012a, 34) Li Zhi has been labeled in various ways, like a Confucian, Mengzian, Buddhist, legalist, iconoclast, progressive, nihilist, populist, individualist, relativist, particularist, uncodifiabilist, liberal humanist, proto-Marxist, proto-legalist, proto-capitalist, and the list can move on as time goes by. (Peterson, 1998, 745-746) However, Li Zhi is a Confucian, for he transforms but does not depart from Confucianism, which is the essential purpose of his collecting Confucian texts in the “Preface to Writings from Collection of Essays Begun at the Lake” 初潭集序.

Li gave various reasons for his decisions to shave his head and dress like a monk, among others, a desire to signal his break from family responsibilities, to gain some relief from the intense summer heat, to confound those who thought he was unconventional and to be a free individual, (Peterson, 1998, 745-747) for which he noted, “Although I have shaved my head and become a monk, in fact, I am a Confucian. Therefore, I have primarily collected Confucian texts [for my book]. I have made my first task that of collecting Confucian texts and through virtuous actions completed this

task. As for those who are good at reading Confucian texts and are good at speaking about virtuous actions, in fact there is none who is better at this than Zhuo Wu.” (Lee, 2002, 252) Ethics, aesthetics, and history comprise a seamless whole in Li Zhi’s works, with multiple dimensions of his thoughts and feelings. His ethics celebrates complexity, diversity, and the inner world of each distinctive individual. Pauline C. Lee posits, “Li’s refusal to return home, his adoption of the tonsure, his suicide—we can see these as some of the methods Li used to free himself from the conventional expectations and traditional obligations to family and society at large.” (Lee, 2012a, 41) Willard Peterson holds that Li Zhi sought individual moral autonomy, which has been an ongoing concern for over a century. Li Zhi is not an amoral or anti-intellectual philosophical skeptic because he makes judgments about right and wrong. (Peterson, 1998, 751-753)

Li Zhi has been studied within an evolutionary or historically reductionist framework with merits and demerits. Pauline C. Lee states that much of the extant scholarship on Li can be divided into two general approaches. One places Li within an evolutionary framework and sheds light on his work by examining his ideas within the larger framework of intellectual and literary developments. (Lee, 2012a, 9) She holds that Li Zhi is not a revolutionary but a reformer who works within the Confucian fold and skillfully and arduously strives to reclaim and amend—and at times to reject—traditional Confucian ideals in his effort to articulate and envision an ethics of genuine expression. (Lee, 2012a, 60)

### I. The Overview of English Translations of Li Zhi’s Works

Scholars approached him with renewed interest in the twentieth century, regarding him as a harbinger of the Chinese Enlightenment. Based on the twenty-first century’s discoveries of new aspects of his writings, more research has been done about the complexity and continued relevance of Li Zhi’s thought. (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 13) The Italian Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) was the first Westerner to get to know Li Zhi. It introduced the latter to the Western world with the publication of *De Christiana expeditione apud Sinas* in 1615. Still, Li Zhi’s thoughts were unknown in the English-language world until the 1930s. Before 1980, the translation was primarily secondary to or an offshoot of the principal goal of producing scholarly studies of Li Zhi. (Wu, 2019, 80) In 1938, Hsiao Kung—chuan 萧公权’s article, “Li Chih: An Iconoclast of the Sixteenth Century” initially introduced Li Zhi to the United States in the form of monograph, translating parts of “Li Shih Fenshu” 李贽焚书, “Chu Tan Chi” 初潭集, “Tsang Shu” 藏书, “Hsu Tsang Shu” 续藏书, and “Li Wen Ling Chi” 李温陵集. (Hsiao, 1938, 317-341) His student, F. W. Mote rendered Hsiao’s masterpiece into English, *A History of Chinese Political Thought: from the Beginnings to the Sixth Century A.D.* in 1979, which promotes Li Zhi’s thoughts in the United States. (Hsiao, 1979) Besides, K.C. Hsiao translated 7 items of Li Zhi’s poems: “Tonsure” 薙发 3 items and “Mourning Madame Huang” 哭黄宜人 4 items respectively in 1976. (Hsiao, 1976, 807-818)

Since the 1980s, English translations of Li Zhi’s works have achieved substantial progress, while the previous renderings are just partial ones for academic quotations. In 1991, in his article, “Interpretations of Li Chih: An Anti-Traditional Thinker of Late China,” Gong-Way Lee rendered the earliest version of “Childlike Heart-mind” in *A Book to Burn*. (Lee, 1991, 67-82) In 1993, Tobie Meyer-Fong also rendered “On the Childlike Mind” in *A Book to Burn*, but it has not been published yet. (Meyer-Fong, 1993) In 1996, Stephen Owen rendered the third version, “On the

Child-Mind” in *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginning to 1911*. (Owen, 1996,808-811) In 1999, Yang Ye translated and annotated *Vignettes from the Late Ming: A Hsiao-pin Anthology*, including “Three Fools”三蠢记, “In Praise of Liu Hsieh”赞刘谐, “A Lament for the Passing”伤逝, “Inscription on a Portrait of Confucius at the Iris Buddhist Shrine”题孔子像于芝佛院 和 “On the Mind of a Child”童心说, among which, “On the Mind of a Child”童心说 is the fourth version of its kind. (Ye,1999)The last three versions are “Views on the Child-mind” by Pauline C. Lee, “Explanation of the Childlike Heart-Mind ” and “On the Childlike Mind ” by Rivi Handler-Spitz. In 1993, Clara Yu translated five letters by Li Zhi, including “Letter to Zhuang Chunfu”与庄纯夫, “To Zeng Jiquan” 与曾继泉, “On Reading the Letter to Ruowu from His Mother”读若无母寄书, “To Liu Xiaochuan” 复刘肖川书 和 “Final Testament”李卓吾先生遗言, which were parts of the widely used *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook* by Patricia Buckley Ebrey. (Ebrey,1993,279-283) In 2010, Ying Zhang translated Li Zhi’s poems: “Peonies (*Shaoyao*) in a Temple in Yunzhong”云中僧舍芍药 2 items, “Ode to Song-mei (Pine trees and plum flowers)” 赋松梅 two items, and “Queji”却寄 three items respectively. (Zhang,2010, 93-99) More extensive translation works have been published in the new millennium. In 2002, in her doctoral dissertation, *Li Zhi (1527—1602): a Confucian Feminist of Late-ming China*, Pauline C. Lee selectively translated and annotated in her appendixes Li Zhi’s letters, poems, historical commentaries and preface concerning Li’s conception of women, which are central to his work or deal with the subject of gender, including *A Book to Burn* 焚书 (“Author’s Preface”自序,“In Response to Deng Siyang” 答邓石阳,“In Response to the Vice Censor-in-Chief Geng”答耿中丞, “To Yang Dingjian”与杨定见, “To Zhuang Chunfu”与庄纯夫, “A Letter in Response to the Claim that Women Cannot Understand the Dao Because They are Shortsighted”答以女人学道为见短书, “Discussion on Husband and Wife: Reflections After Long Contemplation”夫妇论, “On Miscellaneous Matters”杂说,“Views on the Child-mind”童心说,“Mourning for the Precious Son”哭贵儿, “Remembering Madame Huang”忆黄宜人, “In Praise of Liuxie”赞刘谐, “Mourning Madame Huang”哭黄宜人), *Addendum to A Book To Burn* 续焚书 (“To Ma Lishan”与马历山, “Commenting on Confucius’ Image While in the Temple of the Flourishing Buddha”题孔子像于芝佛院), *A Book to Hide* 藏书(“Introduction to the Table of Contents of the Historical Annals and Biographies in the Cangshu” 藏书世纪列传总目前论, and “An Afterword on Virtuous Scholar Officials”德业儒臣后论), and *Collection of Essays Begun at the Lake* 初潭集 (“Preface to Writings from Collection of Essays Begun at the Lake”初潭集序, “An Additional Discussion”又述) .

Pauline C. Lee states, “The essays have been selected to give the reader an introduction to Li’s views on topics central to his works, ranging from the context-sensitive nature of truths, Li’s novel concept of the mind, to his disputations with the Neo-Confucian preoccupation with abstract metaphysics.” (Lee,2002,177) In 2012,

in her monograph, *Li Zhi, Confucianism, and the Virtue of Desire*, Pauline C. Lee translated three Li Zhi's essays as Appendix A, B, and C, including "A Sketch of Zhuowu: Written in Yunnan" 卓吾论略:滇中作, "On the Childlike Heart-Mind" 童心说, and "Miscellaneous Matters" 杂说.(Lee,2012a,115-129) In 2016, twelve American scholars, including Rivi Handler-Spitz, Pauline C. Lee, and Haun Saussy spent five years translating sections of Li Zhi's *A Book to Burn* 焚书, *Another Book to Burn* 续焚书, *A Book to Hide(Hidden)* 藏书 and *The Historical Record* 史料, which is named *A BOOK TO BURN AND A BOOK TO KEEP(HIDDEN)*, whose poems are co-translated by Timothy Billings and Yan Zinan. This version is the biggest rendering of Li Zhi's works so far. (Li, 2016) Among these, three earlier versions of Li Zhi's essays here titled "A Sketch of Zhuowu: Written in Yunnan," "On Miscellaneous Matters," and "Explanation of the Childlike Heart-Mind" were first published in Pauline C. Lee's monograph, *Li Zhi 李贽, Confucianism, and the Virtue of Desire*.

## II. English Translations of Li Zhi's Works

Hans J. Vermeer, a German translation theorist, is one of the most influential in the translating world, who initiated one of the essential functionary translation theories, Skopos Theory, in the 1970s. He holds that Skopos is the ultimate translation principle, which decides the choice of strategy and methods. (Vermeer, 1996) Li Zhi was a prolific and controversial writer with fifty extant books, abundant with tensions and apparent contradictions of innovative ideas. In 2016, Rivi Handler-Spitz and her team published their translation, *A BOOK TO BURN AND A BOOK TO KEEP(HIDDEN)*, as a result of extensive reworkings of material over five years, including seventeen letters, forty-four miscellaneous writings, two historical records, and thirty items of poems, among which, texts in *A Book to Burn* and *Another Book to Burn* are the focus because they are Li Zhi's masterpieces and enjoy the highest authenticity. This volume marks the first time more significant portions of Li Zhi's writings have been rendered into English. In graduate school, David (Bert) Westbrook sowed the seed of this book by asking, "Where can I find out more about the Chinese Mandarin who abjured officialdom?" In "Acknowledgements," they identify their potential readers, "This book is dedicated to intellectuals everywhere who have the courage to speak their convictions." (Li, 2016, XI-XII) Most pre-twentieth-century editions of Li's texts are preserved in rare book libraries in Asia, Europe, and the United States, making it hard to access common readers, especially in the English-language world. In "Introduction," they further specify their translation purpose: "By making these works available in English translation, we hope that they will stimulate interest in the history of resistance in China and dispel any misconception that premodern China was static or monolithic. Li's writings reveal beyond a doubt that some bold individuals did indeed stand up to authority; they also illustrate the complex and polyvocal literary and philosophical world of late Ming China." (Li, 2016, XXXI) They encounter challenges such as Li's ironic styles, his propensity for wordplay, and the dazzling internal diversity of Li's writings with a great range of linguistic registers and the elusive classical Chinese allusions. As a collaborative work, various translation styles can be envisaged. Still, they share the same overriding goal, "to render Li's texts maximally accessible to English language readers who will have varying degrees of familiarity with the canons of Chinese literature, history, religion, and philosophy.

In the main, we have endeavored to stay as close as possible to the original but have added footnotes to provide essential historical and cultural information. Occasionally, we have paraphrased the original text or added contextual information directly into the body of the text. In every case, the reason motivating these changes has been the desire to ensure comprehensibility in English...we hope that the partial image evoked in these pages will nonetheless convey a sense of the multifaceted, irrepressibly creative, slyly humorous, and relentlessly critical personality of our erudite and irascible author (Li, 2016, XXXV) Their presentation of entries is largely based on the organization of essays, letters and poems in the twenty six-volume collected works of Li Zhi edited and annotated by Zhang Jianye 张建业, which is based on the format of early editions of Li's works. Besides Zhang's careful annotations, they supplemented them whenever necessary with their own investigations. Moreover, for aesthetic and historical reasons, they adhere as strictly as possible to the presentation style of early Chinese editions to preserve something of the disorienting experience that Ming-dynasty readers would likely have had if they attempted to read such books as these from cover to cover. Li Zhi does not systemize but seizes on chance material to criticize and denounce falsity, artificiality, and hypocrisy and to eulogize spontaneity and equality. Therefore, Rivi and her collaborators have pointed out in the headnotes the year and location as well as thematic connections among essays, "In the headnotes that precede each entry of the translation, we have attempted to guide readers across these gaps in the original texts and help them to forge connections among entries." (Li, 2016, XXXIV) Thus, their translations are heavily annotated. In her monograph, Pauline Chen Lee continues, "In this way, the student, whatever his or her degree of familiarity with China studies, is able to wrestle with the primary material at hand in translation. With this study of a heretofore unfairly neglected thinker in English language scholarship who surely falls far outside the stereotyped view of the cramped and pedantic Confucian gentleman, my hope is that students will come to see, even more clearly and vividly than perhaps they already do, just how truly diverse, varied, and fascinating 'Confucian,' or *Ru*, thought is, and to appreciate the real relevance to our contemporary lives of Li's ideas on genuineness, self-expression, and feelings." (Lee, 2012a, 14)

Li Zhi writes in a range of genres, and, whatever his intentions, in this way, he intends to express different truths about the world and set up different activities for the reader to wrestle with different aspects of moral life. (Lee, 2012a,19) Like the Zhuangzi, Li Zhi's writings present ever-shifting perspectives, often in bewildering contradiction with each other in multiple genres and a variety of tones, "push and prod, gesture toward new horizons, shift us away from our conventional ways of viewing the world, and nudge us into loosening our ever-tightening grip on narrow, stifling, and enervating views of living life." (Lee, 2012a, 4) Li Zhi's vision of living a good life is based on the spontaneous expression of genuine feelings and thoughts, with the child-like heart-mind as the morally intuitive source, which is important to our contemporary ethical, moral, and aesthetical discourse and orientation. The titles of Li Zhi's major works reveal much about his bold and iconoclastic character. We will analyze the book title and poem translations to understand the differences between Sino-western languages and cultures and make some translation comparisons based on different versions available in chronological order.

## 1. Book Title Translations

In “Conventions and Abbreviations” of *A BOOK TO BURN AND A BOOK TO KEEP (HIDDEN)*, we can see that the dynamic translating methods of domestication and foreignization are adapted accordingly. “Chinese names and terms are transliterated according to the pinyin system. Exceptions are made for names that have become familiar in another style. Chinese characters are given in their traditional (full) form.” (Li, 2016, XV) Li Zhi’s non-fictional prose falls into the casual, original, and spontaneous category of vignettes and anecdotal essays, *Hsiao-p’in wen* 小品文, including travel notes, life sketches, prefaces, and colophons and personal letters, etc, which focuses on life’s sensual pleasures and triviality in a casual and subjective style. The titles of Li Zhi’s major works reveal much about his bold and iconoclastic character, participating actively in a wide and passionate discourse of his time centered on a cluster of self-expressing notions, including desire, feeling, and genuineness. (Lee, 2012a, 1-2) Li Zhi is a controversial figure, just like Pauline Chen Lee mentioned, “While many literati such as the Yuan brothers found inspiration in Li Zhi’s life and works, many others were vexed or even outraged by both.” (Lee, 2012a, 5)

In “Author’s Preface” of *A Book to Burn*, Li Zhi classifies his works into four categories that are *A Book to Burn* 焚书, *A Book to Keep* 藏书, *The Suffering of Old Age* 老苦(or *An Addendum to A Book to Burn* 续焚书), and *On the Four Books* 说书. *A Book to Burn* is also known as Li-shih Fen-shu (Mr. Li’s “A Book to Burn”) 李氏焚书, which was first engraved at Ma-cheng in 1590 with essays and letters and later expanded with essays, letters and poems in 1600, which is Li Zhi’s most famous anthology in large part of his letters, encapsulating many of the salient stylistic features of his text: classical allusions, hyperbole, and self-contradiction, as well as many themes prominent throughout his writings, including authenticity, friendship, and the quest for sagehood. (Li, 2016, 6) The titles of his books and the many unmarked contradictions within the texts place challenging demands on readers and compel them to judge and interpret for themselves. (Handler-Spitz, 2009, 346)

### 1.1 *Fengshu* 焚书

There exist reproductions of various editions of *A Book to Burn*, but neither the original manuscript nor the first printed Macheng edition (1590) of *A Book to Burn* is extant. In the “Author’s Preface” of *A Book to Burn*, Li Zhi presaged the destination of himself and his book, as he stated, “The reason to burn it is that [some claim] the book is grating to people’s ears... I fear that those who find my work grating to the ear will most certainly kill me.” (Li, 2016, 5) It happened that in 1602, Li Zhi was indicted by the imperial Chief Supervising Secretary in the Ministry of Rites, Zhang Wenda 张问达 for his seditious works, “threw men’s minds into confusion,” “dared to disrupt the Dao, to muddle a generation and to deceive the people” with his “mad, flagitious, aberrant, and willful theses.” (Li, 2016, 335-336) In the end, he committed suicide by slitting his throat with a razor and his works were proscribed and burned. The title, *A Book to Burn*, alludes to the historical event of the First Emperor of Qin’s burning books and burying Confucian scholars alive. Whereas the book stirred up anger and fear among many literati, charged for deviant views, sexual promiscuity, and confusing Buddhism for Confucianism, many others got inspiration from it and thus circulated broadly among the populace even with imperial prohibition. Actually, a substantial portion of *A Book to Burn* consists of letters in response to Geng Dingxiang 耿定向, who was incensed by the critical exasperation.

The book can most illuminatingly be read simply as a set of sharply critical and personal comments on Geng Dingxiang's views and way of life. (Lee, 2012a, 6)

Year	Translator	<i>Fengshu</i> 焚书
1970	William Theodore De Bary	Fen-shu (A book to burn) (De Bary, 1970, 192)
1973	Eng Chew Cheang	Fen Shu (Cheang, 1973, 5)
1974	Ching Szu	Book Burning (Szu, 1974, 213)
1976	K.C. Hsiao	Fen-shu (焚书) (Hsiao, 1976, 809)
1980	Kok-Lam Cham	Fen-shu 焚书 (Chan, 1980, 7)
1980	Wang Ch'ing-Cheng	Fen-shu [A Book to Burn] (Chan, 1980, 87)
1980	Julia Ching	Feng-shu (Book to Burn) (Ching, 1980, 95)
1981	Ray Huang	The Book to Be Burned (Huang, 1981, 205)
1982	Wolfgang Franke	The Book to Burn (Fen-shu) (Huang, 1982, 141)
1983	Pei-Kai Cheng	Fenshu 焚书 (The Book to be Burnt) (Cheng, 1983, 4)
1987	Andrew H. Plaks	<i>Fen shu</i> (Plaks, 1987, 513)
1988	Willard Peterson	A Book to Burn (Peterson, 1998, 748)
1990	David L. Rolston	Fen-shu 焚书 (Book for Burning) (Rolston, 1990, 356)
1991	Wm. Theordore de Bary	<i>Fen-shu</i> (A book to burn) (De Bary, 1991, 208)
1993	John H. Berthrong	Book to be Burned (Fen-shu) (Berthrong, 1993, 104)
1998	John H. Berthrong	A Book to Burn (Berthrong, 1998, 134)
1999	Qingliang Chen	Fenshu (A Book to Be Burned) (Chen, 1999, 72)
2001	Jin Jiang	A Book to Burn (Fenshu) (Jiang, 2001, 18)
2002	Pauline Chen Lee	A Book to Burn (Lee, 2002, 177)
2005	Kathryn A. Lowry	Books for Burning (Lowry, 2005, 333)
2005	Kathryn A. Lowry	<i>Fen shu</i> (Lowry, 2005, 333)
2007	Martin W. Huang	<i>Fenshu</i> 焚书 (Huang, 2007, 14)
2010	Kai-Wing Chow	A Book to Burn (Hnadler-Spitz, 2021, 148)
2011	Pauline Chen Lee	A Book to Burn (fenshu 《焚书》) (Lee, 2021, 117)
2013	Rivi Handler-Spitz	A Book to Burn (Fenshu 焚书) (Handler-Spitz, 2013, 124)
2016	Rivi Handler-Spitz	A Book to Burn (Li, 2016, 4)
2017	Nikolai Rudenko	A Book to Burn (焚书, Fenshu) (Rudenko, 2017, 21)
2018	Jingjing Li	Fenshu 焚书 (A Book to Burn) (Li, 2018, 15)
2021	Timothy Brook	A Book to Burn (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 76)
2021	Ying Zhang	A Book to Burn (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 76)
2010	Ying Zhang	Fenshu 焚书 (A Book to Burn) (Zhang, 2010, 83)
2021	Jiang Wu	Book to Burn (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 174)
2021	Robert E. Hegel	A Book to Burn (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 191)
2021	Miaw-Fen Lu	A Book to Burn (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 224)
2021	Benjamin Michael Coles	A Book to Burn (Fenshu 焚书) (Zhang, 2021, 432)
2022	Frederico Mina	A Book to Burn (Mina, 2022, 87)



Li Zhi embraced discrepancies and contradictions in his works, which had such social and economic fields and contexts as the late Ming, a time of rising class mobility and economic uncertainty. The title of *A Book to Burn* is tinged with the irony of printing and burning the book at once. Linguistically speaking, “to burn” 焚 is ambiguous and provocative, which can mean negative “destroying by fire” 焚毀, and positive “enlightening” 发光 as beacon lights for followers as well, which is in line with what Li Zhi means by his Chinese title *Fengshu* 焚书. Various editions of *A Book to Burn* exist, but unluckily, neither the original manuscript nor copies of the first printed editions remain. The first edition was carved on wood blocks, likely from the pear tree, and printed on what was most probably bamboo paper. (Lee, 2012a, 3) The chart shows that the most common translation of 焚书 is “A Book to Burn,” with the supreme denotation of the Chinese character, and some with Pinyin and Chinese characters as supplementary translations.

### 1.2 *Cangshu* 藏书

*A Book to Keep/Hide* is Li Zhi’s most renowned historiography with unconventional opinions as one of the most innovative historiographers of his day, which is based on the anthology, *The Left Scribes’ Record of Deeds and Personalities through the Ages* 历代史籍左编, by a Ming literatus, *Tang Shunzhi* 唐顺之(1507-1560). It is a historical work modeled on the chronology-biographical form of traditional histories, with two different categories of annals and biographies, ranging from the Spring and Autumn periods through the Song and Yuan dynasties. Representing the opinion of one individual, *A Book to Keep/Hidden* was initially called “Li-shih ts’ang-shu” (Mr. Li’s “Concealed Book”) 李氏藏书, and before its publication in Nanking in 1599, it had its preliminary draft, “Li Shih chi-chuan” (Mr. Li’s Annals and Biographies) 李氏纪传, with Li Zhi’s manuscript notes of comments in vermilion. (Chan, 1980,104)

Year	Translator	<i>Cangshu</i> 藏书
1970	William Theodore De Bary	Ts’ang-sh(A book to be hidden away) (De Bary, 1970, 193)
1973	Eng Chew Cheang	Ts’ang Shu (Cheang, 1973, 5)
1974	Ching Szu	Tsang Shu (Szu, 1974, 218)
1976	K.C. Hsiao	Ts’ang-shu 藏书 (Hsiao, 1976, 811)
1980	F.W. Mote	Ts’ang-shu (Chan, 1980, X)
1980	Kok-Lam Cham	Ts’ang-shu (Chan, 1980, XVI)
1980	Wang Ch’ing-Cheng	Ts’ang-shu[A Book to Conceal] (Chan, 1980, 87)
1980	Jao Tsung-I	Ts’ang-shu[TS] (Chan, 1980, 100)
1980	Julia Ching	Ts’ang-shu (Book to Hide) (Ching, 1980, 95)
1981	Ray Huang	The Book to Be Stored Away (Huang, 1981, 205)
1982	Wolfgang Franke	Cangshu (Franke, 1982, 138)
1983	Pei-Kai Cheng	Changshu 藏书 (The Book to be Hidden Away) (Cheng, 1983, 4)
1991	Wm.Theodore de Bary	<i>T’sang-shu</i> (A book to be hidden away) (De Bary, 1991, 208)
1998	Willard Peterson	A Book to Conceal (Peterson, 1998, 748)
1998	John H. Berthrong	A Book to Hide (Berthrong, 1998, 134)
1999	Qingliang Chen	Cangshu (A Book to Be Hidden Away) (Chen, 1999,

		72)
2000	Pauline Chen Lee	A Book to Hide 藏书 (Cang shu) (Lee, 2000, 123)
2001	Jin Jiang	A Book to hide away(Cangshu) (Jiang, 2001, 2)
2002	Pauline Chen Lee	A Book to Hide (Lee, 2002, 177)
2005	Kathryn A. Lowry	Books to keep (Lowry, 2005, 333)
2005	Kathryn A. Lowry	<i>Cang shu</i> (Lowry, 2005, 334)
2010	Ying Zhang	Cangshu 藏书(A Book to Hide) (Zhang, 2010, 57)
2013	Rivi Handler-Spitz	A Book to Keep[Hidden](Cang shu 藏书) (Handler-Spitz, 2013, 139)
2016	Rivi Handler-Spitz	A Book to Keep(Hidden) (Handler-Spitz, 2016, 4)
2017	Nikolai Rudenko	A Book to Keep Hidden (藏书, Cangshu) (Rudenko, 2017, 21)
2018	Jingjing Li	Cangshu 藏书 (A Book to Hide) (Li, 2018,16)
2021	Ying Zhang	A Book to Keep(Hidden) (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 121)
2021	Kai-Wing Chow	A Book to Keep(Hidden)(Cangshu) (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 148)
2021	Benjamin Michael Coles	A Book to Keep(Hidden) (Cangshu 藏书) (Zhang, 2021, 432)

The title alludes to the letter attributed to the Han historian Sima Qian 司马迁, which was written to his close friend, Ren An 任安 and preserved in Chapter 62, “Biography of Sima Qian” of *The History of the Han Dynasty* 汉书·报任安书, which stated, “The book is finished finally, which will be kept in the renowned mountains and passed on from generation to generation, and even to the metropolis, and thus my previous disgrace will be compensated. I will not regret whatever disgraces will be. However, I can only talk with the wise but not the layman.” (Ban, 2007, 622) Whereas Li Zhi writes solely for his own pleasure of expressing feelings, Sima Qian mainly for literary immortality and fame because at the heart of Li Zhi’s philosophy, consistently and adamantly, he insisted that writing and life itself, at its best, was genuine self-expression for the sake of itself. (Lee, 2012a, 99) The Chinese character “藏” is ambiguous, which can mean “to keep”收藏 and “to hide”埋藏 at once. In “Author’s Preface,” Li Zhi notes that *A Book to Hide* “is about the rights and wrongs of the past thousands of years. This book is not easy for the common person to understand and so I desire to hide it. I say that I must hide it in the mountains until later generations of people like Zi Yun find it.” (Lee, 2002, 183) In “Introduction to the Table of Contents of Historical Annals and Biographies in the *Cangshu*” 藏书世纪列传总目前论, Li Zhi reiterated his purpose of the book, “This book is for my own pleasure. I have entitled it *A Book to Hide*. What meaning does this title, *A Book to Hide*, hold? The title refers to the fact that it can only be read for my own pleasure and should not be shown to others. Therefore, it is entitled *A Book to Hide*. But what am I to do if a few meddlesome friends insistently ask to borrow this book? How can I able to stop them? I only say as a warning, if you read this, judge it based on your own opinions. As long as you do not use Confucius’ *Spring and Autumn Annals* to dispense of punishments and rewards, then it will be fine.” (Lee, 2002, 238-239) With some irony, Li Zhi suggested that his *A Book to Hide* be used in the Classics Mat lectures for the emperor and in the examination essays for officials. (Peterson, 1998,750) From the chart, we can see that the most common translation of 藏书 is “A Book to Hide,” and some with Pinyin and Chinese characters like the rendering way of 焚书.

1.3 *Tongxin Shuo* 童心说

*Tongxin Shuo* 童心说 was originally Li Zhi's preface of *Romance of the Western Chamber* 西厢记 re-carved by his friend *Jiao Hong* 焦竑, who was called *Mountain Farmer of Dragon Cavern* 龙洞山农 by Li Zhi. In his poem, "My Heart Leaps Up when I behold", William Wordsworth said, "The Child is father of the Man." Li Zhi's "Childlike heart-mind" comes from Mencian and Lu Luofang 罗汝芳's "innate mind of the infant" 赤子之心. Childlike heart-mind symbolizes one's inner world, which runs through Li Zhi's writings and is tinged with Daoism. Like Mengzi, Li Zhi grounded his ethical views on human nature, especially the four sprouts of virtue 四端, i.e., compassion, shame, courtesy, and modesty, and right and wrong. *Tongxin Shuo* 童心说 is Li Zhi's most famous essay written around 1592, included in "On Miscellaneous Matters" of *A Book to Burn*, which epitomizes his aesthetic and ethical idea of genuineness and authenticity of feelings and desires, setting a cardinal value for writers and critics of the following century. For Li Zhi, a childlike heart-mind lies at the foundation of everything true and utterly central to all spheres of life. "The childlike heart-mind is the genuine heart-mind. If one considers the childlike heart-mind unacceptable, then he considers the genuine heart-mind unacceptable. As for the childlike heart-mind, free from all falsehood and entirely genuine, it is the original mind at the beginning of the first thought. If one loses one's childlike heart-mind, one loses the genuine heart-mind. Losing the genuine mind is losing the genuine self. A person who is not genuine will never regain that with which he began." (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 107). Childlike heart-mind is essentially Wang Yangming's innate good knowledge 良知, with independent personality and equality.

Year	Translator	<i>Tongxin Shuo</i> 童心说
1973	Eng Chew Cheang	T'ung-hsin shuo (Cheang, 1973, 59)
1974	Ching Szu	On Childish Heart (Szu, 1974, 219)
1976	K.C. Hsiao	On the Infant's Heart 童心说 (Hsiao, 1976, 811)
1980	Pei-kai Cheng	On the Mind of the Child(T'ung-hsin shuo 童心说) (Cheng, 1980, 135)
1980	Wang Ch'ing-Cheng	"T'ung-hsin shuo"童心说[On the Childlike Mind] (Chan, 1980, 97)
1991	Yang Ye	On the Mind of a Child (Ye, 1991, 26)
1993	Tobie Meyer-Fong	On the Child-like Mind (Meyer-Fong, 1993)
1995	Wai-yee Li	Essay on the Childlike Mind(T'ung-hsin shuo) (Li, 1995, 37)
1998	Martin W. Huang	On the Child-like Mind( <i>tongxin shuo</i> 童心说) (Huang, 1998, 164)
1999	Qingliang Chen	" <i>Tongxin shuo</i> "童心说 (Chen, 1999, 9)
2000	Pauline Chen Lee	On the Child-like Heart (Lee, 2000, 125)

2001	Jin Jiang	On the Child-like Mind (Jiang, 2001, 20)
2002	Pauline Chen Lee	Views on the Child-mind (Lee, 2002, 180)
2005	Kathryn A. Lowry	Child's mind (Lowry, 2005, 332)
2011	Pauline Chen Lee	On the Child-like Heart-Mind(Tongxin Shuo 《童心说》) (Lee, 2011, 130)
2012	Pauline Chen Lee	Explanation of the Childlike Heart-Mind (Lee, 2012a, 45)
2012	Pauline Chen Lee	On the Child-like Heart-Mind (Lee,2012a, 123-125)
2014	Hilde De Weerd	On the Child-like Heart-Mind (Weerd, 2014, 1109)
2014	Kenneth J.Hammond	On the Child-like Heart-Mind(Tongxin shuo) (Hammond, 2014, 1110)
2016	Haun Saussy	On the Childlike Mind (Li, 2016, 111)
2016	Rivi Handler-Spitz	Explanation of the Childlike Heart-Mind (Li, 2016, 106)
2017	Nikolai Rudenko	On the Child-like Heart-Mind(童心说 Tongxin shuo) (Rudenko, 2017, 31)
2018	Li,Jingjing	Tongxin shuo 童心说 (On the Childlike Heart-Mind) (Li, 2018, 40)
2019	Bonnet Tyler James	Explanation of the Childlike Heartmind(Tongxin shuo 童心说) (Bonnet, 2019, 19)
2019	Tyler James Bonnet	Explanation of the Childlike Heartmind (Bonnet, 2019, 43)
2021	Benjamin Michael Coles	Explanation of the childlike mind ( <i>tongxin shuo</i> 童心说) (Zhang, 2021, 432)
2021	Kai-Wing Chow	On the Childlike Mind(Tongxin shuo) (Handler-Spitz,2021, 148)
2021	Rivi Handler-Spitz	On the Childlike Mind(Tongxin shuo) (Handler-Spitz,2021, 101)
2021	Robert E. Hegel	On the Childlike Mind(Tongxin Shuo) (Handler-Spitz,2021, 191)
2021	Stephen Owen	On the Child-Mind (Owen, 2021, 808-811)
2021	Wai yee Li	On the Childlike Mind (Handler-Spitz,2021, 18)
2022	Federico Mina	Explanation of the Child-like Mind( <i>Tongxin shuo</i> 童心说) (Mina, 2022, 89)

So far, there are eight renderings of Li Zhi's essay 童心说. In the spirit of the experiment of different translating styles, "Explanation of the Childlike Heart-Mind" by Rivi Handler-Spitz aims at scholarly precision with more meticulous annotations, while "On the Childlike Mind" by Haun Saussy targets fluency in a more accessible style, as is also shown in their difference in title translations: the former renders 说"explanation" and the latter just a preposition "on." Besides, the former "Heart-Mind" is more

comprehensive than “Mind” regarding emotional and rational tinges. Pauline Chen Lee notes, “The term *xin* 心 is best literally translated as the ‘heart-mind.’ However, when the context allows, although also a dissatisfactory choice I opt for the less clumsy translation of ‘heart’ or ‘mind.’” (Lee, 2012a, 131) Lee goes further to say that about the translation of *zhen* 真, “ I translate the term as ‘genuine,’ rather than ‘true’ or ‘authentic,’ to capture Li’s emphasis that the *zhen* derives from the right source—the childlike heart-mind—and expresses sincerity. ” (Lee, 2012a, 132) The locus classicus for the negative and derogatory use of this term is Duke of Xian, Year 31 of *Commentary of Zuo* 左传, “He still keeps the childlike heart-mind of playing, from which the gentleman can infer his ominous end.” (Zhu, 2012,1514) Here, the connotation of child-mind is infantile, naive, immature, inexperienced, and undeveloped, whose owners are doomed to a wrong end, while in Mencius, child-mind connotes purity and uncorruptedness, “Gentlemen are those who have not lost their child-mind.” (Mengzi,2010,155) Thus, in Chinese culture, Childlike Heart-Mind 童心 can be interpreted at two levels: Naive and pure. Li Zhi accepts the original and genuine heart-mind in the commentary on the *Western Chamber* by “The Farmer of Dragon Ravine” 龙洞山人. Pauline C. Lee holds that Li Zhi’s conception of the heart-mind is similar to the genuine heart-mind in the *Platform Sutra* 坛经. (Lee, 2012b,63-81) Stephen Owen notes that child-mind is spontaneous, natural, and innocent, but “the Way” (Dao) and “Inherent Pattern” (li), the two critical concepts in Neo-Confucianism were “inauthentic” (jia), which means both “false” and “borrowed” in literary Chinese 假, “Li’s argument hinges on that range of meaning: what comes from the outside is ‘borrowed,’ not essentially one’s own, and to represent oneself through such a borrowed medium is to be ‘false.’” (Owen, 1996, 808) Li Zhi’s imagery of Childlike heart-mind is akin to Lao Tzu’s nature. (Cheang, 1973, 60) From the chart, we can see that the most common translation of 童心说 is “On the Childlike Heart-mind,” and some with Pinyin and Chinese characters.

## 2. Poem Translations

In Li Zhi’s opinion, the Childlike heart-mind is the sole source of all the most exquisite literature, with literary emphasis on originality and genuineness, as he noted, “All the most exquisite literature in the world flows directly from the childlike heart-mind. As long as the childlike heart-mind is preserved, the Principles of the Way will not be endlessly perpetuated, what one hears and sees will have no authority, no period will lack great literature, no person will lack literary talent, and not a single pattern, genre, or word will fail to be genuine.” ( Handler-Spitz,2021,108) Li Zhi advocated the poetic theory of spontaneity 自然 with heavy philosophical flavor, “Therefore spontaneity originates from feelings and temperaments, and ends up in the propriety 礼. There is no propriety outside the feelings and temperaments. Artificiality loses propriety, and thus only spontaneity is beauty. ” (Li, 2000b, 123). Like his character, his poems tend to be simple, frank, emotional, slightly irregular, and highly personal with touching and grab-you-by-the-collar quality, which are not exquisite and valuable more for their biographical contents than their literary merits. About one-fifth of his poems concern Buddhism, with pervasive melancholy, and friendship is his commonest theme. (Li, 2016,2090210) Like Wang Yangming 王阳明, Li Zhi adopted free patterns of poems, unrestricted by regulated rhythm schemes or patterns, to express his free thoughts and

emotions. He prefers vernacular and daily language, with common themes like personal thoughts, feelings, and attachment to friends and relatives. His theory of Childlike Heart-mind is consummately manifested in his poems, which have often and aptly been described as deeply expressive of feelings, free in form, and simple in language. (Lee, 2012a,76) Whereas Li Zhi's letters, short essays, and historical and literary commentaries have been much studied, his poetry has been relatively neglected. Li Zhi boasted about 300 extant poems, 147 items in *A Book to Burn*, 145 items in *Addendum to A Book to Burn*, and the rest are posthumous. His resignation from the official office in Yunan at age 54 demarcated his poetic creations into preliminary and mature ones, and more than 70% of his poems were composed more than twenty years after his resignation.

In his "The Life of Li Wenling" 李温陵传, Yuan Zhongdao 袁中道 commended Li Zhi's poetic creation, "He wrote poetry only rarely, but always with spirit." (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 92) It was also during this period that he wrote his such famous essays on literary theories as "On the Childlike Heart-mind" 童心说, "On Miscellaneous Matters" 杂说, and "Shallow Comments on Regulated Poems" 读律肤说, which posit that literature is the Dao 道 and learning of heart-mind 心学. Li Zhi opined that talking about poetry was paramount to talking about Buddhism in that both transcend the world, and in "A Reply to Master Danran" 答澹然师, he said, "You regard talking about poetry and Buddhism as two objects, but actually, they are the same case. If you know such, it will be ok to talk about poetry all day long." (Li, 2000b, 158) He had many flower poems, most of which evoked plum blossoms. Rivi Handler-Spitz states, "These poems, with their conventional tropes, often situated him in a textually romantic relationship with plum flowers. Considering that the Chinese name for plum flowers, *mei* 梅, is the family name of Mei Danran, these poems undoubtedly sent a mixed message." (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 124)

Compared with Li Zhi's prose, his poems are less known, translated, or even less studied. So far, *A Book to Burn & A Book to Keep (Hidden)* has translated the most poems by Li Zhi, with 30 items, among which 13 are from *A Book to Burn* and 17 from *Another Book to Burn*. We will discuss doubtful renderings of allusions, technical terms, and lines.

Poem's Title	Translator	Chinese	English	Comment
Ballad of the North Wind 朔风谣	Timothy Billings & Yan Zinan	同歌帝力乐康衢 (Li, 2000b, 216)	In singing together the emperor's praise, Rejoicing in our great ways. (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 216)	This poem was probably composed sometime in 1596 or 1597 while Li Zhi was traveling in Shanxi province in the north, for which the wind is called North Wind 朔风. Here, "帝力" and "康衢" should be the names of two ancient Chinese ballads from the Tang and Yao eras. "帝力" refers to "Ballad of

				<p>Beating the Earth” 击壤歌 sung by an old farmer while beating the earth, “We rise with the sunrise and rest with the sunset, drink from the dug well and eat from the tilled field, which has nothing to do with the emperor or king 日出而作,日入而息,凿井而饮,耕田而食. 帝力于我何有哉! “康衢” means “Ballad of Kangqu” 康衢谣, “Establish the subject all with natural equanimity. Without knowledge, follow the heaven only 立我臣民,莫匪尔极,不识不知,顺帝之则.” It is said that the Yao Emperor visited Kangqu and overheard this ballad, which made him happy, and thus resigned his throne to the Shun Emperor.</p>
<p>Encountering Troops Marching East during a Morning Walk, I Send a Poem to Vice-Censor-in-Chief Mei 晓行逢征东将士却寄梅中丞</p>	<p>Haun Saussy</p>	<p>绝塞将军早闭门 (Li, 2000b, 242)</p>	<p>And the brave generals in their fortresses shut their gates before dusk. (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 225)</p>	<p>This poem, composed in 1597 while Li Zhi was traveling from Datong to Beijing, was dedicated to Mei Guozhen, the father of Li's female student, Mei Danran. The poem describes the troops heading out to defend the Korean Peninsula against the second major Japanese invasion of the decade. Here, the generals in Li Zhi's description are not brave but ironically timid because they are not conscientious and shut their barracks gates very early, before dusk. In</p>

				contrast, “Even now, in Yunzhong, there awaits a true Po and Mu—” compares Mei Guozhen 梅国桢 to Lian Po 廉颇 and Li Mu 李牧, who can be called brave generals.
The Glazed Temple 琉璃寺	Timothy Bilings & Yan Zinan	琉璃道上日初西 (Li, 2000b,244)	On the shining road to the Glazed Temple, the sun comes out of the west. (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 229 )	The poem was composed in Uang’an, modern-day Hubei Province, in 1584. Here, “日初西” should be “the sun begins to set down on the west” at dusk rather than “the sun comes out of the west.”
On Reading Du Fu(Two Poems)读杜少陵二首	Timothy Bilings & Yan Zinan	少陵原自解传神 (Li, 2000b, 108 )	Du Fu was the first to understand how to express the spirit. (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 295 )	Here, “原自” should be “originally or essentially” rather than “the first”.
Eight Quatrains from Prison: No Hero 系中八绝·不是好汉	Timothy Bilings & Yan Zinan	志士不忘在沟壑，勇士不忘丧其元。(Li, 2000b, 116 )	The man of high ideals never forgets he may end up in the ditch; The man of great valor never forgets he may forfeit his head. (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 304 )	This series of quatrains was written in 1602, just before Li committed suicide in prison, but only seven of the eight poems survive. These two lines are quoted from “Mencius: Duke of Tengwen, Latter Part”(《孟子·滕文公下》). Here, “不忘” should be “never



				fear” rather than “never forget”.
Sitting Alone in Meditation 独坐	Timothy ilings & Yan Zinan	有客开青眼, 无人问落花。 (Li, 2000b, 123 )	There’s a guest here whose eyes are wide open. No one is questioning the falling blossoms. (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 309 )	The poem was composed in 1589. Here, “青眼” (black eye) is in contrast with “白眼”(white eye), and black eye means respect while white eye means disrespect. So these should be rendered: “With guests, I will show respect; without guests, I will enjoy flowers.”
A Sudden Chill 乍寒	Timothy ilings &Yan Zinan	婷婷坪上柏 (Li, 2000b, 124 )	The upright cypress on the plain. (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 310 )	The poem was composed in 1596. Actually, “坪上” is the home village name of Liu Dongxing 刘东星, which Li Zhi was invited to visit as a guest by a former. Thus it should be rendered “The upright cypress at Pingshang”.
Drifting on East Lake with Li Jiantian 李见田 遨游东湖	Timothy ilings &Yan Zinan	隔溪渔火宿芦洲 (Li, 2000b, 128 )	Lights from the vessels in the distant channel are fishermen mooring for the night at Luzhou. (Handler-Spitz, 2021, 316 )	The poem, composed in Wuchang in 1584, is the first of two heptasyllabic egulated verses with this title. Here, “芦洲” is “reedy islets,” not the name of a place.

From the previous narration, it can be concluded that the 1980s witnessed substantial development in the English translation of Li Zhi’s works. However, compared with the volume of Li Zhi’s works, the English translations are minimal, especially his poetic translations, which are about 50 items. The current translations focus on his *A Book to Burn* and *Another Book to Burn*, but the other 50 extant books have not been translated yet. The more translations of Li Zhi’s works there are, the better academic research will ensue, and thus, Li Zhi’s works and thoughts can be of more access to the English-language world. As part of the post-Wang Yangming School of Heart-mind, the studies of Li Zhi can boost the publicity of Wang Yangming in the English-language world too, and thus the comparison of Sino-western culture can be achieved accordingly.

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