

## Chinese Poetry Forms

**Chinese Poetry Forms:** Poetry is Shih. Prose is wen. Between them there are hundreds of strict forms Fu and more prose poems Ci. Many poems written for singing. Shih typically have 5-7 characters and rhyme. Fu is more refined than prose and close to poetry. Average Fu is ½ page but maybe 3 or 4 in English. Chinese children memorize poems and later encouraged to create their own. Mao was a good poet. In English it is hard to capture the tones in the Chinese. In the Ming period in the 13<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> century poems were painted on porcelain. Some of the words and themes were about landscape. The artisans who made the porcelain were also trained in basic writing and painting. Shi/Shih is the terms for different kinds of poetry. Also investigate jintishi, gushi and xinshi (new poetry)

**Lu'u shin** is a rigid rhythm poem which in Chinese each ideogram of character is monosyllable. The words correspond in each couplet and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> line rhyme.

Two	unit	yellow	oriole	singing	Green	willow			
one	row	white	egret	flying	clear	blue	air		
window	frame	west	mountain	or hill	one-thousand	autumn	year	snow.	
door	anchor	east	place		ten-thousand	mile	Boat.		

Example from Xingwu Liu. In English we could try to write parallel couplets that rhyme. a-b-c-b.

**Ci** is a prose poem with a very set pattern. The rhyme and tone makes a rolling correspondence of forms. Below is the pattern with the standard number of words per line.

Four words  
four words, four words  
five words, four words  
four words, four words  
four words, four words  
seven words.