



# Brocade River Poems: Selected Works of the Tang Dynasty Courtesan (Lockert Library of Poetry in Translation)

*Xue Tao*

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Xue Tao (A.D. 768-831) was well known as a poet in an age when all men of learning were poets--and almost all women were illiterate. As an entertainer and official government hostess, she met, and impressed, many of the most talented and powerful figures of her day. As a maker of beautiful paper and a Taoist churchwoman, she maintained a life of independence and aesthetic sensibility. As a writer, she created a body of work that is by turns deeply moving, amusing, and thought-provoking. Drawing knowledgeably on a rich literary tradition, she created images that here live again for the contemporary reader of English. This bilingual edition contains about two-thirds of Xue Tao's extant poems. The translations are based on accurate readings of the originals and extensive research in both Chinese and Japanese materials. The notes at the end of the book explain allusions and place the poems in the context of medieval Chinese culture and its great literary heritage, while the opening essay introduces Xue Tao's work and describes her unusual life history.

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