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Fan Writing

Lu Ji, Lu Yun and the Cultural Transactions between North and South

Xiaofei Tian

In 280, the Western Jin (265–317) army conquered the southern Kingdom of Wu and brought China under a single unified empire once again. In the following decade, objects and people from the Wu region flowed into Luoyang, the Jin capital in the north, attracted by the glittering court life and the power of the center. One object in particular caught the fancy of the northerners: the fan made of bird feathers, often those of a crane. Fans commonly used in the north were either square or round, made of bamboo and silk. In contrast, the white feather fan from Wu had a different shape and texture, and became a fashionable accessory among members of the Luoyang elite.¹

Several poetic expositions (*fu*) on the feather fan written by northerners attest to its popularity. In these writings we can often detect a sense of condescension toward the novel object coming from the conquered state. Ji Han's 嵇含 (262–306) preface to his poetic exposition, for instance, has an explicitly patronizing tone:²

The gentlemen of Wu and Chu often use a fan made of feathers from a crane's wings. Although such a fan comes from the outlying southern borders, it can nevertheless shade one from the sun and dispel heat. In the past, when Qin conquered the domain of Zhao, it brought back Zhao's official attires to . . . its courtiers. After the great Jin subjugated Wu, it likewise took Wu's feather fan and put it to use in the upper domain.

吳楚之士多執鶴翼以為扇。雖曰出自南鄙，而可以遏陽隔暑。昔秦之兼趙，寫其冕服，以□侍臣。大晉附吳，亦遷其羽扇，御於上國。

Pan Ni's 潘尼 (ca. 250–311) piece contains the following lines: "At first, it demonstrated its usefulness in the barbarian wasteland; / But eventually it manifests its wonder in the upper domain" 始顯用於荒蠻，終表奇於上國.³ The feather fan, created from a bird, travels

1. Fu Xian's 傅咸 (239–294) preface to his "Fu on the Feather Fan" (Yushan fu 羽扇賦) states, "The Wu folk take the plumes from a bird's wings to produce wind. It is superior to the square and round fans, but no one in the Central Kingdom was interested in it. After the conquest of Wu, however, it suddenly becomes a prized thing" 吳人截鳥翼而搖風，既勝于方圓二扇，而中國莫有生意。滅吳之後，翕然貴之。Yan Kejun, comp., *Quan Jin wen*, S1.1752, in *Quan shanggu sandai Qin Han sanguo liuchao wen*. For a detailed discussion of the feather fan used in this period and the rhapsodic writings on it, see David R. Knechtges's paper in this volume.

2. Yan Kejun, *Quan Jin wen*, 65.1830.

3. *Ibid.*, 94.2000. It is simply entitled "Fu on the Fan," but it is clearly focused on the feather fan.

like a bird from the “barbarian wasteland” to the “upper domain” and gains recognition there; its ascension through the social hierarchy mimics the bird’s soaring flight into the air.

The trajectory of the feather fan outlined by Pan Ni can be easily associated with that of the southern elite who came to serve in the Jin court. In the mid-280s, Hua Tan 華譚 (ca. 250s–324), the descendant of a Wu official family, was nominated as a “Cultivated Talent” (*xiuca*) and arrived at Luoyang to take the examination. Emperor Wu of the Jin (236–290) designed the examination questions himself. One question stated that, after the Jin conquest of Shu and Wu, the Shu people were submissive but the Wu people frequently made trouble. The emperor wondered if this was because the Wu people were frivolous and impetuous; he also asked how Hua Tan proposed to pacify them. Hua Tan acknowledged that the Wu folk were an “agile, brave and tough” bunch, and one of his suggestions was to “make plans for its gentry so that they may soar into the clouds and get to the heavenly gate,” referring to their admission into the court.⁴ The bird metaphor finds a nice counterpart in the feather fan, which has become a synecdoche for the crane.

Among those who soared to the heavenly gate were two brothers, Lu Ji 陸機 (261–303) and Lu Yun 陸雲 (262–303), scions of a prominent southern noble family and famous writers who left a lasting impact on early medieval Chinese literature. After the Wu was conquered, they lived in reclusion for ten years before accepting Jin’s employment and going north in 289. Just like the feather fan, they were met with a mixed welcome at Luoyang: there was genuine admiration for their talent, and there were also barely disguised hostility and contempt for “remnants of a fallen country.”⁵ Much has been written about the Lu brothers’ confrontation with the northern elite, the North/South conflict, and the regional consciousness exemplified in Lu Ji’s writings;⁶ these articles and chapters shed light on the issue of regional identity in a newly unified empire where many divergent social forces competed and contended with one another. And yet, the emphasis on the cultural tension between the North and the South in the third century tends to obscure the fact that the Lu brothers were also intensely fascinated with the northern culture: its history, architecture, and music. While the northern elite regarded them as “foreigners,” in *their* eyes the North was also a foreign country, and like all foreign countries, both alienating and exotic, providing endless inspiration and excitement.

4. *Jin shu* 52.1450.

5. Examples of both attitudes can be found in Lu Ji’s biography in the *Jin History*. While Zhang Hua 張華 (232–300), an eminent writer and senior statesman, regarded the Lu brothers highly, Wang Ji 王濟 (d. before 297), the imperial son-in-law, treated Lu Ji with arrogance. *Jin shu* 54.1472–73. The same Wang Ji called Hua Tan “the remnant of a fallen country” (*wangguo zhi yu* 亡國之餘) to his face. *Jin shu* 52.1452. Wang Ji’s father Wang Hun 王渾 (223–297), a Jin general who participated in the military campaign against Wu, also addressed the Wu people thus at a drinking party held at the Wu royal palace after the conquest. *Jin shu* 58.1570.

6. For instance, see Lin Wenye, “Pan Yue Lu Ji shi zhong de nanfang yishi”; Satō Toshiyuki, *Seishin bungaku kenkyū: Riku Ki o chūshin to shite*; Tang Zhangru, “Du Baopuzi tuilun nanbei xuefeng de yitong”; and David R. Knechtges, “Sweet-peel Orange or Southern Gold? Regional Identity in Western Jin Literature.”

Lu Ji, the more outspoken of the brothers, had a strong sense of pride about his southern heritage. Among his many works produced after his arrival at Luoyang was a “*Fu* on the Feather Fan,” in which he retaliates against the northern lords’ disdain for the southern object and defends its value. It is not difficult to see the feather fan as a figure for the poet himself. But as a great admirer of the northern culture, Lu Ji was a *fan* in another sense, as he soared into the “upper domain” and was captivated by what he saw and heard there, and his poetry demonstrates many characteristics of modern fan writing. While Lu Ji certainly did have a southern consciousness, as scholars have convincingly argued, in this paper I wish to call attention to the Lu brothers’ enthrallment with the north, with a special focus on Lu Ji’s poetic writing that reflects his nuanced fascination with the northern culture. Regional and cultural displacement leads to textual displacement, manifested in Lu Ji’s reworking of northern musical material into a “better” version in formal and ideological terms. This paper ends with a discussion of how Lu Ji’s refashioning of the north in turn influences the creation of the cultural South during the period of disunion known as the Northern and Southern Dynasties (317–589).

1. A Tale of Two Cities

“Who are more ignorant about Roman affairs than the Roman citizens?
Sadly do I say that nowhere is Rome less known than in Rome.”

—Petrarch

The southern elite, including the Lu brothers, claimed to have descended from venerable northern ancestors.⁷ Far more important than this fantastic lineage, however, was the common cultural heritage they shared with the North, with its locus in the Eastern Zhou and Eastern Han capital, Luoyang.

Few other Chinese cities at the time, perhaps with the only exception of Chang’an, could arouse as much wonder, admiration, and melancholy nostalgia as the great metropolis Luoyang, about which the Lu brothers must have read and heard so much long before they saw the physical place. Edward Gibbon reminisced about his first visit to Rome: “At the distance of twenty-five years I can neither forget nor express the strong emotions which agitated my mind as I first approached and entered the eternal City. After a sleepless night I trod with lofty step the ruins of the forum; each memorable spot where Romulus stood, or Tully spoke or Caesar fell was at once present to my eye.”⁸ Gibbon’s remarks nicely summarize a reader’s response to the subject of his readings that has finally materialized in front of him, and it is a pity that we do not have any record of the Lu brothers’ first impressions upon entering Luoyang. Lu Ji’s couplet—“the capital Luoyang has much wind and dust, / my pure clothes have turned into black” 京洛多風塵，素衣化為緇—is often quoted to

7. Shi ji 31.1445; Lu Yun, “Zukao song” 祖考頌, in *Lu Shilong wenji jiaozhu*, 881–85. For a discussion of this claim, see Knechtges, “Sweet-peel Orange or Southern Gold,” 42–45.

8. *The Autobiographies of Edward Gibbon*, 267.

demonstrate his distaste for the world of vanity and power at the center of the Jin empire.⁹ In a *yuefu* poem entitled “The Gentleman Longs for Someone” (Junzi yousuosi xing 君子有所思行), he has the speaker looking out upon the hustle and bustle of the great city from the top of a hill:¹⁰

I ordered my carriage and climbed the northern hills,
There I stood long, gazing at the metropolis.
How abundant were the dwellings,
With numerous streets and lanes densely arrayed.
The great mansions raised their tall gates;
Recessed chambers intertwined in towers with eave-drains all around.
Deep and limpid were the winding pools,
Clear rivers were lined with flowering bushes.
Spacious halls had rows of latticework windows,
Perfumed rooms were strung with gauze curtains. . . .

命駕登北山，延佇望城郭。廛裏一何盛，街巷紛漠漠。甲第崇高閭，洞房結阿閣。曲池何湛湛，清川帶華薄。邃宇列綺窗，蘭室接羅幕。

The hill to the north of Luoyang was the famous Bei Mang 北邙 or North Mang, where the noble lords of the Eastern Han, Wei and Jin dynasties were buried. This viewing point casts an ironic shadow over the scene of opulence and luxury of city life, and paves the way for the dark warning offered in the second half of the *yuefu* poem that “the bloom of a visage falls away with the years” and that “revelry and ease melt away one’s soul.”

The opening of the above *yuefu* poem echoes two earlier poetic texts. One is Liang Hong’s 梁鴻 (fl. 1st century) “Song of Five Alases” 五噫之歌.¹¹

I climb the North Mang, alas!
I turn back to look at the imperial capital, alas!
Tall and majestic are the royal palaces, alas!
The common folk are suffering from hardship, alas!
On and on, with no end in sight, alas!
陟彼北芒兮，噫！顧覽帝京兮，噫！宮室崔嵬兮，噫！人之劬勞兮，噫！
遼遼未央兮，噫！

The other text echoed by Lu Ji is Cao Zhi’s 曹植 (192–232) “Sending off Mr. Ying” 送應氏, No. 1, which also begins by climbing and looking, albeit at a devastated Luoyang:¹²

9. The poem is entitled “Presented to the Wife on Behalf of Gu Yanxian” 為顧彥先贈婦. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 682.

10. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 662.

11. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 166.

12. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 454.

I walked up the slopes of North Mang,
 And gazed at the hill of Luoyang afar.
 How desolate Luoyang is!—
 Its palaces have all been burned down. . . .
 步登北芒阪，遙望洛陽山。洛陽何寂寞，宮室盡燒焚。

Lu Ji's echoes of the earlier poems demonstrate his familiarity with the northern literary tradition as well as his innovative approach to the motif of "Luoyang seen from North Mang."

As much as a city of the living, Lu Ji's Luoyang was a city of words and images drawn from literary works, a resonant physical place where traces of cultural memories shared by southerners and northerners alike were seen everywhere. It was this Luoyang that Lu Ji attempts to immortalize in *An Account of Luoyang* (*Luoyang ji* 洛陽記), a work he authored after he was appointed editorial director of the Imperial Library in 298.¹³ It has survived only in fragments, preserved in sources such as commentaries and encyclopedias.¹⁴ Even in such a fragmented form, we can still catch a glimpse of the scope of the original work. It might have begun with a statement about the origin of the city in the classical period and about its current scale: "The city of Luoyang was designed and created by the Duke of Zhou. It spans ten leagues long from east to west, and thirteen leagues from south to north" 洛陽城，周公所制，東西十里，南北十三里。¹⁵

Lu Ji gives an account of the city gates, noting points of interest;¹⁶ he describes the two large imperial palace complexes in the city with their many soaring towers and terraces, which use micain window construction.¹⁷ He writes about important cultural landmarks such as the Numinous Terrace (Ling tai 靈臺), which was the astronomical observatory, or the National University (Taixue 太學). He records the Stone Classics erected in 175 at the National University with a loving precision: "There are altogether forty-six original steles. In the western row, of the steles on which were carved *Shangshu*, *Zhou Yi* and *Gongyang zhuan*, sixteen are still standing, but twelve have been damaged. . . ."¹⁸ Impressed with the broad avenues of Luoyang lined with elms and locust trees, he observes how the avenues were all divided into three lanes; the center lane was used by the imperial procession while all others entered the city on the left lane and departed from the city on the

13. The dating is based on a statement in *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜: "After Lu Ji became editorial director of the Imperial Library, he compiled *Luoyang ji* in one scroll" 陸機為著作郎，撰洛陽記一卷。 *Cefu yuangui*, 560.6730. Also see Lu Ji's chronology in *Lu Shiheng wenji jiaozhu*, 1416.

14. For a collection of the fragments, see Jin Taosheng, *Lu Ji ji*, 183–85; Liu Yunhao, *Lu Shiheng wenji jiaozhu*, 1287–94. Neither collection, however, is complete. For citations in this paper I give early rather than modern sources.

15. *Yiwen leiju* 63.1133. Shi Weile 史為樂 argues that the size of the city as recorded here shows that Lu Ji has included the surrounding areas of Luoyang rather than just the walled city itself. See "Lu Ji *Luoyang ji* de liuchuan guocheng yu lishi jiazhi," 29.

16. See, for instance, the description of the Xuanyang Gate and an i-ce storage located there, in *Taiping yulan*, 68.452.

17. *Yiwen leiju* 63.1134.

18. Cited in Li Xian's 李賢 (654–684) commentary to *Hou Han shu*, 60.1990.

right.¹⁹ The width of the avenues almost certainly would have surpassed that of the Wu capital Jianye 建鄴 (modern Nanjing), a city of a much smaller scale at this time.²⁰ Lu Ji also makes note of public spaces such as the flourishing markets or the famous Bronze Camel Boulevard, where Luoyang's fashionable young men gathered.²¹ He writes about the city's residential quarters known as "wards" (*li* 里), such as Buguang Ward 步廣里 where the prefectural liaison offices were located.²² His account seems to have extended beyond the city proper to include sites in the vicinity, such as the Songgao 嵩高 Mountain fifty leagues to the southeast of Luoyang.²³

It is particularly fascinating to see Lu Ji measure the material city against the written city, again testifying to Lu Ji's familiarity with the northern literature:

I always wondered about "We greeted the emperor at the Chengming Lodge," and asked Lord Zhang about it. His Lordship said, "When Emperor Ming of the Wei presided at the Jianshi Hall, people went to all court meetings through the Chengming Gate." So the lodge where the officials on night duty stayed over was beside the Chengming Gate.²⁴

吾常怪謁帝承明廬，問張公，張公云魏明帝在建始殿，朝會皆由承明門。
然直廬在承明門側。

"We greeted the emperor" is the opening line of Cao Zhi's poem, "Presented to Biao, Prince of Baima" 贈白馬王彪;²⁵ Lord Zhang refers to none other than Zhang Hua, the eminent writer and statesman who acted as the Lu brothers' patron.

An Account of Luoyang might not have been a massive tome,²⁶ but it is the first extant account of Luoyang, written at a time when people were primarily writing geographical accounts of the writer's native region or of faraway places with a focus on their exotic products.²⁷ Lu Ji certainly could not claim a native's knowledge of Luoyang. His interest in

19. *Taiping yulan* 195.1070.

20. Jianye served as the Eastern Jin capital and its name was changed to Jiankang 建康. Even after it was rebuilt under the Eastern Jin minister Wang Dao 王導 (276–339), it was accused of manifesting poor urban design because its streets were too winding. See *Shishuo xinyu jianshu*, 2.156.

21. *Taiping yulan* 191.1054, 158.899.

22. *Taiping yulan* 181.1009.

23. Cited in Li Shan's 李善 (630–689) commentary to *Wen xuan*, 16.731.

24. Cited in Li Shan's commentary in *Wen xuan* 21.1016 and 24.1123. The latter citation reads: "Emperor Ming of the Wei constructed the Jianshi Hall" 魏明帝作建始殿. This must be a transcription error, since the Jianshi Hall was already in use during the reign of Emperor Wen (r. 220–226), father of Emperor Ming (r. 226–239). See Pei Songzhi's (372–451) commentary in *Sanguo zhi*, 2.76. The Jianshi Hall was in the northern palace complex at Luoyang.

25. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 453.

26. It is recorded as consisting of "one scroll" in the "Bibliography" of the *Sui shu* (Sui history), 33.982.

27. See *Sui shu* 33.982–87. One anonymous *Luoyang ji* in four scrolls is recorded in the *Sui shu* "Bibliography" right before Lu Ji's *Luoyang ji*. Although the *Sui shu* usually arranges the book titles in a chronological order, anonymous works tend to be placed at the beginning of a list of works on the same subject. In this case, however, it is quite possible that the anonymous *Luoyang ji* was the very one authored by an otherwise obscure man named Hua Yanjun 華延儁. His *Luoyang ji* is cited a number of times in commentary and encyclopedia sources, and was probably lost in the Southern Song. Since a fragment mentions Emperor

Luoyang was that of an outsider and a visitor attracted to a city that was at once strange and strangely familiar through his reading. We know Lu Ji had planned to write a poetic exposition on each of the capitals of the former three kingdoms, but he reportedly gave up the idea after Zuo Si 左思 (ca. 250–ca. 305), a “[northern] lout” (*cang fu* 儻父) whom he had held in contempt, had completed a set of poetic expositions on the three capitals first, which Lu Ji found remarkable.²⁸ Could *An Account of Luoyang* have been a by-product of the aborted writing plan? Or was it just a loving record of a city that had fascinated Lu Ji, who repeatedly talked about its wonders in an admiring tone in his letters to his brother Lu Yun?²⁹ In any case, he might not have declared, like the Augustan writer Propertius, “in loyal verse would I seek to set forth these walls,” but he had certainly, as Horace would say, “built a monument more lasting than bronze.” The bronze camels on the Luoyang thoroughfare are long gone. Although the textual city created by Lu Ji has also crumbled, its fragments have survived, illuminating a southerner’s fascination with the northern metropolis.

Another northern city with which the Lu brothers were deeply engaged was the city of Ye. For them Ye embodied a more recent past, as it was the headquarters of the powerful warlord Cao Cao 曹操 (155–220), whose son Cao Pi 曹丕 (187–226) founded the Wei 魏 dynasty (220–265) that was eventually replaced by the Sima 司馬 family of the Western Jin. Cao Cao was already a legendary figure while alive: friends and foes alike were awed by his political and military genius and by his powerful personality.³⁰ A biography of Cao Cao known as *The Story of Cao the Trickster* (*Cao Man zhuan* 曹瞞傳), written by an anonymous Wu author, portrays him as a cunning, ruthless man who was nevertheless incredibly charismatic.³¹ Lu Ji and Lu Yun were both fans of Cao Cao.

At about the same time that he wrote *An Account of Luoyang*, Lu Ji, working in the Imperial Library, had an opportunity to go through the archives, and chanced upon Cao Cao’s last will and testament. Moved by its pathos, Lu Ji composed an elegy on Cao Cao, which was to be included in the *Wen xuan*, the canonical pre-Tang literary anthology compiled by a latter-day fan of the Cao family, Xiao Tong.³² However, Lu Ji’s prose preface to the elegy, especially the part that quotes from Cao Cao’s will, has become better known than the elegy itself. Framing the preface in a dialogue between himself and a fictional interlocutor, Lu Ji expresses sympathy and regret at the way in which Cao Cao succumbed to sentimentality at the end of a heroic life.

Yuan of the Jin 晉元帝 (r. 317–323) crossing the Yangtze River to the south, Hua Yanjun must have lived during, or after, the Eastern Jin. This fragment is cited in an anonymous Yuan local gazetteer *Henan zhi* 河南志, which scholars speculate is largely based on Song Minqiu’s 宋敏求 (1019–1079) *Henan zhi*. See Zhang Baojian, “Song Minqiu *Henan zhi* kao.”

28. *Jin shu* 92.2377. “Cang fu” was used by southerners to refer to northerners in this period.

29. See *Lu Ji ji*, 179.

30. It was said that during one of Cao Cao’s military campaigns, even the enemy generals bowed to him when they saw him on the battlefield, and Han and non-Han soldiers all vied to take a look at him. See Wang Shen’s 王沈 (d. 266) *Wei shu* 魏書, cited in Pei Songzhi’s commentary to *Sanguo zhi* 1.35.

31. Yan Kejun, ed. *Quan Sanguo wen*, 75.1455–56.

32. *Wen xuan* 60.2594–2601.

As I observe how he gave his last orders to his heir and offered parental advice to his four sons, I find his plan for managing the country grand, and his instructions for glorifying the family extensive. He said, "My upholding of the law in the army was justified. As for those minor instances of anger and the grave errors I have committed, you should not emulate them." These are the upright remarks of an enlightened man. Holding his young daughter in his arms and pointing to his little boy Bao, he said to his four grown-up sons: "I will have to burden you with them now." At this point his tears fell. How sad! Once he had taken the entire world upon himself, but now he had to entrust his beloved children to others. . . . Nevertheless, to be so sentimental about life within the inner quarters and so intimately concerned with the affairs of his family members seems to border on fastidiousness. He also said, "My concubines and entertainers should all be accommodated on Copper Bird Terrace. A couch of eight foot long enclosed with fine hemp curtains should be set up in the hall on the terrace. Every day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon, dried meat and other kinds of food should be offered to my spirit. On the first day and fifteen day every month, the entertainers should give musical performance in front of the curtains. You should all go up Copper Bird Terrace from time to time and gaze at my tomb on the western mound." Then again he said, "The remaining incense should be divided up among my consorts. Since they have nothing else to do, they may learn how to make decorated shoes and sell them. The silk bands that I have obtained in my various offices should all be put away in the storage. . . ."

Lu Ji comments on every part of Cao Cao's will that touches him, and ends the preface with a statement that "virtuous and talented people" should "discard attachment to external things and dismiss concerns with the inner quarters." Throughout the preface and the elegy, Lu Ji constantly employs spatial metaphors to convey a poignant contrast between the largeness of a grand life ("How lofty and expansive was his broad mind, / his great enterprise was truly prosperous" 咨宏度之峻邈, 壯大業之允昌) and the "narrowness" of death in terms of both the dying man's concern with an intimate interior space (*mi*, "fastidiousness," also means closed, private, or secretive) and the small physical space of the body's resting place, indicated by "a small wooden coffin" (*ququ zhi mu* 區區之木) and "a tiny piece of earth" (*zui'er zhi tu* 蕞爾之土).

In the elegy Lu Ji responds to the past through reading a text that is Cao Cao's will and testament, but his reading is animated by a vivid visualization of historical events, not just the dying scene of Cao Cao, but also an imagined scene of the women of Cao Cao's household gazing out to his grave. In the sentence "You should all go up Copper Bird Terrace from time to time and gaze at my tomb on the western mound," it is not immediately clear whom Cao Cao is addressing. He may very well be speaking to his sons, the executors of his will. Lu Ji deliberately takes the addressees as Cao Cao's concubines, and conjures up a poignant scene of longing and emptiness that would become one of the most famous in classical Chinese literature and engender an entire poetic tradition of its own:

They tuned the clear strings, playing music in solitude;
They presented food offerings, but who would taste them?

They lamented the quiet emptiness of the hemp soul-curtains;

They resented the hazy distance of the western mound.

Going up the Copper Bird Terrace, they mourned together;

Their beautiful eyes gazed afar, but what could they see?

徽清絃而獨奏，進脯糲而誰嘗。悼總帳之冥漠，怨西陵之茫茫。登爵臺而群悲，貯美目其何望。

In envisioning the women on the Copper Bird Terrace, Lu Ji's historical imagination turns spatial, with the terrace as the locus of the foolishness of human desires and the pathos of mortality. He also extends the largeness of Cao Cao's grand life, stressed throughout the preface and the elegy, into the "emptiness" of the soul-curtains and the "hazy distance" of the western mound. Through the mouth of the imaginary interlocutor, Lu Ji uses the figure of space to describe human life: "To live and then die define the territories of a life" 死生者性命之區域. Here death acquires a concrete embodiment in the Copper Bird Terrace.

The imaginary interlocutor questions the intensity of Lu Ji's emotional response to a text, saying, "We feel grieved when setting eyes on the coffin at a funeral, but when we see plants growing for over a year on the grave, we no longer burst into tears" 臨喪殯而後悲，觀陳根而絕哭. For the interlocutor, the sight of physical reality is an essential stimulus of emotion. Lu Ji, however, demonstrates that for an imaginative reader, a text makes visible both time and space, and it does so much more vividly than any actual object:

Reviewing the writing he left behind, I feel stirred,

And I offer this piece to his soul with sorrow.

覽遺籍以慷慨，獻茲文而悽傷。

While Lu Ji responded to the past through reading a text, Lu Yun did so through reading a place. In 302, Lu Yun was appointed to the staff of Sima Ying 司馬穎 (279–306), the Prince of Chengdu. His office took him to Ye, where Sima Ying had been stationed since 299.³³ In contrast with Lu Ji, who examines Cao Cao's will and testament (*yi ling* 遺令), Lu Yun examines Cao Cao's "past deeds" (*yi shi* 遺事) in an architectural structure:

As I review the past deeds of Lord Cao, I feel that only the most thoughtful and talented in the world could be his match. He had had a rather ordinary residence constructed, which, however, is still standing even after almost a hundred years. The small hall attached to it was indestructible,³⁴ and had to be taken down with axes. From this, one

33. According to Lu Yun's biography, he became Sima Ying's Right Commander 右司馬 after the Prince of Qi 齊 was killed in early 303 (*Jin shu* 54.1484). However, according to Lu Yun's preface to his "Suimu fu" 歲暮賦, the appointment was made in the summer of the second year of the Yongning era (302) (*Quan Jin wen* 100.2031).

34. *Yi tang* 夷塘 has a variant: 謬 (also written as 謬) 塘 or 謬堂. A variant version of the letter is cited in Xu Kai's 徐鍇 (920–974) notes to the entry on "謬" in *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字: "People tried to demolish the small hall attached to the building constructed by Lord Cao but could not, so they had to take it down with axes" 曹公所為屋，圻其謬塘不可壞，直以斧斫之而已. Xu Kai, *Shuowen jiezi xizhuan*, 5.47.

knows that his officials must have been competent and his people content with their professions.

省曹公遺事。天下多意長才乃當爾。作樊屋向百年。於今正平。夷塘乃不可得壞。便以斧斫之耳。爾定以知吏稱其職。民安其業也。

At Ye, Lu Yun visited the Wei palace complex, especially the three terraces built by Cao Cao: the Copper Bird, the Golden Tiger 金虎, and the Ice Well 冰井. Several letters he wrote to Lu Ji attest to his fascination with these sites.

One day, as I was on the inspection tour, I took the opportunity to examine Lord Cao's personal effects. There were cushions, mats, seven sets of quilts for winter and summer, and a headband with "long ears" that looked like the kind of headband we had in Wu. His royal crown and Far Roaming Hat were both there. There was a cosmetics box, which was about seven to eight inches long and over four inches tall, with no shelves or layers inside, just like the kind used by Wu commoners. One could still make out the grease on the hairbrush. His comb and toothpick were all there. There were two pieces of yellow cotton he used to wipe clean his eyes; they had some dark smudges, which were tearstains. His hand warmer, bamboo recliner, straw mat, chessboard and bookcase were also there. There were five large and small reading desks; in a book cart there was a reclining pillow, which he used for reading when lying down. He had a fan like Wu fans; his folding fans were also there. There were five bookcases. I assume you know Yangao's bookcase—they look very much like that. His writing brushes were also just like Wu brushes; so was his ink-stone. There were five paring knives. There was a writing brush made of lapis lazuli, which is very rare. On the seventh day of the seventh month in the third year of the Jingchu era [July 24, 239], Lady Liu broke it in half. Seeing it filled my heart with melancholy feelings. All these objects were quite plain.

Now I am sending you several large writing tablets from the Ye palace.³⁵ Previously I have told you about the hemp soul-curtains and the place of gazing at Lord Cao's tomb. That was when I was still Administrator at Qinghe.³⁶

On the terrace remarkable transformations in architectural design are endless. But I have always wanted to ask Lord Cao: "Suppose the rebels were to manage to go up the terrace, and Your Lordship only used your clever schemes moving back and forth to avoid them; what would Your Lordship do if they set fire to the terrace?" In that case, I am afraid even His Lordship would not be able to stop them.

To the north of Wenchang Palace there is a sky passageway, which is about ten feet away from the palace. The inner chambers are in the eastern section of the Palace. The residence to the east of the Wenchang Palace belongs to Prince Chenliu, so I was unable to go in and take a look.³⁷

The first part of the letter, which reads like an inventory, conveys a palpable sense of the aura of Cao Cao's personal effects. All these objects were intimate items of daily life that had been well used by their owner. Lu Yun was clearly struck by the stains on the hairbrush

35. This sentence (今送鄴宮大尺閒數) is ambiguous. I take 尺閒 to be 尺簡.

36. Lu Yun was at Qinghe (in modern Hebei). This sentence (是清河時) may be textually corrupted.

37. The last Wei emperor, Cao Huan 曹奂 (246–303), was enfeoffed as Prince of Chenliu and resided in the Ye palace complex (*Sanguo zhi* 4.154).

and on the cotton pads: they were “traces” (*ji* 跡), not the kind of grand, intangible deeds (*shi ji* 事跡) of a ruler, but physical marks left behind by a historical person made real by his corporeality. Lu Yun examined the objects closely, and by doing so, implicitly obtained direct access to the person of the past without the mediation of text.

Throughout his description of Cao Cao's personal effects, Lu Yun constantly evokes similar objects from Wu as points of comparison, apparently trying to make Lu Ji “see” the objects as well. The appeal to familiarity and modesty (e.g., the cosmetic box looked like those “used by Wu commoners”) brings attention to the one object that he claims to be “rare,” a writing brush made of lapis lazuli, which was preserved in the palace collection in its damaged state. The exact date on which the brush was broken—the seventh day of the seventh month—is a traditional festival celebrating the reunion of the separated heavenly lovers, the Cowherd and the Weaver Stars. We do not know how Lu Yun learned of the date and of the identity of the palace lady who broke the brush, but such intimate details point to a story that is tantalizingly withheld and to a past visibly concealed, embodied in a broken writing brush whose function, ironically, is to record and transmit. The fragmented lapis lazuli becomes a physical symbol of a past at once exceedingly close and irreparably fractured, a fact also manifested in the contemporary spatial arrangement of the palace complex: Lu Yun was unable to access the eastern quarters of the Wenchang Palace because they were being used as the residence of the abdicated Wei emperor.

At the time Lu Yun was writing, Wei had ended merely a few decades earlier, and many members of the Wei royal family provided him with living connections to the past. He befriended an aspiring writer Cui Junmiao 崔君苗, the son-in-law of Cao Cao's grandson, Cao Zhi 曹志 (d. 288). Cui admired Lu Ji's writings so much that, according to Lu Yun, every time he saw a new composition by Lu Ji, he would declare that he wanted to destroy his ink-stone and brush and never write again.³⁸ He also engaged in a sort of friendly competition with Lu Yun. In the summer of 302, Lu Yun composed a “*Fu* on Ascending the Terrace” (Dengtai fu 登臺賦),³⁹ the very topic that Cao Cao himself had taken up and commissioned his sons, Cao Pi and Cao Zhi, to write on when they went up the newly constructed Copper Bird Terrace in 212.⁴⁰ Lu Yun writes in his letter to Lu Ji:

I went up the city gate the other day and was moved to compose a “*Fu* on Ascending the Terrace.” I racked my brain but still could not finish it. Then Cui Junmiao wrote a piece on the same topic. Now I have more or less brought it to an end. I could not make it good, and yet I was exhausted for days. Nevertheless, I say it is better than the two poetic expositions I sent you earlier. I wonder what you think of it though. I hope you could edit it somewhat. Just change a word or two here and there—I do not dare wish

38. *Quan Jin wen* 102.2045.

39. *Ibid.*, 100.2032–33.

40. *Sanguo zhi* 19.557. Only two short lines have survived from Cao Cao's “*Fu* on Ascending the Terrace,” but longer fragments from Cao Pi and Cao Zhi's compositions are still extant.

for more. I am afraid it contains some southern pronunciations, and hope you could fix it as you see fit.⁴¹

Later he forwarded Cui's piece to Lu Ji: "I am enclosing Junmiao's 'Fu on Ascending the Terrace.' It is a nice piece. He said he would revise it further and make it even better. I wonder if his revised version could actually surpass this."

It is interesting to note how the idea of laboring over and revising one's writing is foregrounded in both letters. The fatigue and exhaustion mentioned with regard to Lu Yun's attempt to complete his poetic exposition are evocative of the physical efforts required by the ascension of the terrace or by the construction of the terrace itself. Writing a terrace into being turns out to be no less tiring than climbing or building a terrace.

Cui Junmiao's *fu* is no longer extant, but Lu Yun's has survived. It forms an interesting contrast with Cao Zhi's piece written ninety years before, which sings the praises of Cao Cao for his great service to the Han dynasty and expresses the wish that his glory and life last forever. Lu Yun writes in his *fu*: "I am moved by the existence of the old objects, / and feel saddened by the absence of the former inhabitants" 感舊物之咸存兮，悲昔人之云亡。He ends the *fu* by commending the last Wei emperor for understanding heaven's mandate and abdicating to the house of Jin:

Having purified the provisional Palace of Literary Glory,
He vacated the Purple Tenuity as an offering,⁴²
Relinquished the grand residence under heaven,
And pledged all the worthy men within the realm.
With respect and care, our Emperor carries out the way of heaven,
As heaven concentrates its favor of the north in Him alone.⁴³
We expect the prosperous dynastic fortunes to endure
And enjoy the longevity of ten thousand years.

清文昌之離宮兮，虛紫微而為獻。委普天之光宅兮，質率土之黎彥。欽哉
皇之承天，集北顧於乃眷。誕洪祚之遠期兮，則斯年於有萬。

The Western Jin collapsed fourteen years later, but Lu Yun would not live to see it, for he and his brother were both executed by the Prince of Chengdu in 303, the year after he wrote the "Fu on Ascending the Terrace."

Lu Yun's enthrallment with the north and the northern personages, especially Cao Cao, is palpable in his writings at Ye. The various literary connections with the Cao family, formed in reading and in reality, seem to have only intensified his desire to bridge the gap between the present and the past. Several times Lu Yun took some of the things left behind by Cao Cao and sent them to Lu Ji as gifts, so that Lu Ji might also partake in the aura of

41. *Quan Jin wen* 102.2043.

42. The Purple Tenuity is the seventh star of the North Pole and represents the imperial palace.

43. This rewrites a line from a *Shi jing* poem "Huang yi" 皇矣: "[Heaven] looks to the west with favor" 乃眷西顧 (*Mao shi* 241/1).

the objects. On one occasion he sent Lu Ji two cases of “ink coal” from Cao Cao’s storage, which was to be used as ink.⁴⁴ On another occasion he gave Lu Ji a much more intimate item from Cao Cao’s belongings, and one could only hope that Lu Ji had the good sense not to put the gift to actual use: “Lately I again inspected Lord Cao’s personal effects, and took one of his tooth-picks. Now I am sending it to you.”⁴⁵ These letters reflect on both brothers as avid devotees to Cao Cao. Lu Yun’s report about the “hemp soul-curtain” and the “place of gazing at Lord Cao’s tomb” might very well have been in response to Lu Ji’s elegy.

It seems a universal human foible to, as Cao Pi puts it, “cherish what is far away and scorn what is close at hand” (*gui yuan jian jin* 貴遠賤近).⁴⁶ Visiting Rome in 1337, Petrarch lamented: “Who are more ignorant about Roman affairs than the Roman citizens? Sadly do I say that nowhere is Rome less known than in Rome.”⁴⁷ Similarly, it takes a southerner to lovingly scrutinize the great northern cities and their famous former inhabitants, and to read and write about them. The native residents of a place, ironically, are turned into foreigners by a foreigner, who has, through his reading and writing, come to inhabit the place like home.

2. Fan Writing

We were sojourners, as it were, in our own city, and wandering about like strangers, your books have conducted us, as it were, home again, so as to enable us to at last recognize who and where we were.⁴⁸

—Cicero

One thing that connected Lu Ji and the Cao Wei rulers was Lu Ji’s intense interest in the northern court music. Cao Cao was a music connoisseur: he was said to have musicians play in the background constantly, and composed many song lyrics (*yuefu*) and set them to music himself.⁴⁹ Almost all of Cao Cao’s extant poems are *yuefu*, preserved in the “Monograph on Music” (*Yue zhi* 樂志) in the *Song History* (*Song shu* 宋書) that aims to conserve court music repertoire. Cao Cao’s son Cao Pi, the founder of the Wei dynasty, and Cao Pi’s successor, Cao Rui 曹睿 (204–239), Emperor Ming, were both avid music lovers who actively concerned themselves with the making and performing of Wei court music, which after necessary adjustments and revisions continued to be performed in the Jin court.⁵⁰ The sort

44. *Quan Jin wen* 102.2041.

45. *Ibid.*, 102.2045.

46. “Lun wen” 論文 in *Dian lun* 典論. *Quan Sanguo wen* 8.1097.

47. Francesco Petrarch, *Rerum familiarum libri* (*Letters on familiar matters*), 293.

48. *Academica*, Book I, p. 7.

49. *Sanguo zhi* 1.54.

50. Cao Pi and Cao Rui both composed many *yuefu* for court performance. For various court music reforms during Cao Pi and Cao Rui’s reigns, see *Song shu*, 19.534–539. For the Western Jin’s continuation and reform of Wei court music, see *Jin shu*, 12.676, 679, 684–85, 702–3. While the songs or at least the song lyrics for state rituals must be revised to fit the needs of a new dynasty, this is not necessarily the case with the “lighter” entertainment music.

of music with which the Caos were enamored, in contrast with “serious” ritual music, was of the more informal kind, known as the harmony tunes (*xianghe qu* 相和曲) or the clear *shang* music (*qingshang yue* 清商樂), with the songs accompanied by a string orchestra.⁵¹ Lu Ji’s poetry collection contains a large number of poems under *yuefu* titles; he also wrote a series of poems that are “imitations” (*ni* 擬) of “old poems” (*gushi* 古詩), that is, anonymous poems of uncertain date from the second or early third century. In its early phase, the *yuefu* song had not yet developed its later generic specificities, and the distinction between “old poems” and “*yuefu*” is largely the function of sources—that is, if a poem happens to be preserved in a musical source, then it is known as a *yuefu*, often under the *yuefu* title “The Song [*xing* 行] of X,” but the same text may appear elsewhere under the appellation “old poem.” Together, Lu Ji’s “imitations of ‘old poems’” and his poems under *yuefu* titles constitute a corpus of texts largely inspired by the northern court music tradition.

It should be mentioned at the outset that there is no internal or external evidence for the dating of these pieces. While some scholars assign the “imitations of ‘old poems’” to Lu Ji’s Wu period, others prefer a post-Wu date; I agree, however, with C. M. Lai that these poems should be simply treated as “undatable.”⁵² Because of the special nature of Lu Ji’s imitation, which will be discussed below, I do not side with the theory that these “imitations” are to hone his writing skills; nor do I subscribe to the view that the *ur*-texts are “folk” literature, since none of the *ur*-texts would have been passed down to us if they had not been transmitted as part of the court music repertoire. In other words, whatever their “original origin,” the *ur*-texts became part of the “harmony tunes” or “clear *shang* music” performed in a court setting from the Eastern Han through the Western Jin, and it is for this reason that I suspect that Lu Ji most likely had had access to those songs *en masse* only after he came to Luoyang.

Lu Ji’s “imitations of ‘old poems’” are characterized by a restricted sense of *ni*, i.e., the “practice of rewriting of the precedent text line by line in a more elevated register.”⁵³ His *yuefu* poems also have precedents and respond to their precedents in complex ways. Like his “imitations of ‘old poems,’” these *yuefu* poems are notable for their rich, ornate diction, which, being more elaborate and rhetorically elevated than that of the *ur*-texts, indicates a great degree of self-conscious literary crafting. This has led many contemporary scholars to turn away from the proposal that Lu Ji’s “imitations” are a beginner’s literary exercises and look for other explanations, such as a desire to show off his talent and outdo his

51. Wang Sengqian 王僧虔 (426–485) wrote: “Today’s clear *shang* music has originated from the Copper Bird Terrace. One cannot but long for the romantic panache of the three Wei emperors” 今之清商實由銅雀，魏氏三祖風流可懷。Cited in *Yuefu shiji*, 44.638. Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086) states, “Wei Taizu [i.e., Cao Cao] constructed the Copper Bird Terrace at Ye. He composed song lyrics himself and set them to pipes and strings. Later, a Director of Clear *Shang* Music was established to be in charge of it” 魏太祖起銅雀臺於鄴，自作樂府被之管弦，後遂置清商令以掌之。Zizhi tongjian, 134.898.

52. See Lai, “The Craft of Original Imitation: Lu Ji’s Imitations of Han Old Poems,” 122–24.

53. Stephen Owen, *The Making of Early Chinese Classical Poetry*, 261.

predecessors.⁵⁴ While such a desire might have been present in Lu Ji's mind, I argue that his poetic practice exemplifies a southerner's fascination, appropriation and, ultimately, "correction" of the northern musical tradition.

The theory of fan literature in contemporary cultural and literary studies is particularly illuminating here. Fan literature, especially fan fiction, has been described as works that "generate variations that explicitly announce themselves as variations," and it is the fact that "works enters the archive of other works by quoting them consciously" that distinguishes the condition of fan fiction from intertextuality, which is considered by some critics as the condition of all literary works.⁵⁵ Fan fiction represents the interest of the socially subordinate, as "most fanfic authors are women responding to media products that, for the most part, are characterized by an underrepresentation of women."⁵⁶ Fan fiction scholars find Gilles Deleuze's argument about repetition and difference particularly useful in discussing fan literature; according to Deleuze, "repetition" is not mechanical and secondary to the original, but contains within itself "a 'differential'" that is "disguised and displaced." Fanfic scholars use Deleuze's theory to get away from the notion of a hierarchical relation between the original work and its new version that is conventionally denigrated as "derivative work."⁵⁷

Lu Ji's "imitations of 'old poems'" and *yuefu* songs, inspired by the northern court music, exemplify many characteristics of fan writing. Stephen Owen's chapter on "Imitation," focusing on Lu Ji's set of imitations of "old poems," states that the conditions of *ni* in the third century are that it is "specifically textual, responding to what is presumed to be a *fixed prior text*" (thus differentiated from the earlier poets' participation in a largely oral poetic repertoire), and that it is "the only form of using prior poetic materials that requires consistent *difference* from its source text."⁵⁸ The *requirement* of difference is significant: in writing *yuefu* and "imitations of 'old poems,'" Lu Ji is always repeating with a difference. On the simplest level, his rewritings elevate the linguistic register of the *ur*-texts; on a deeper level, he offers more politically correct versions to override the *ur*-texts that he feels are no longer appropriate for a unified empire. Though not a woman, he occupies the feminized position of a social subordinate, both as a subject in the Jin court, and as a southerner from a conquered state; and yet, by rewriting the northern musical tradition and consciously, explicitly making it "better," he attempts to intervene in the dominant culture. Lu Ji's imitations generate more imitations in the fifth century: as Derrida says, "the archive is never closed."⁵⁹

Lu Ji's "imitations of 'old poems'" have been discussed by many scholars; in contrast, his *yuefu* poems have received much less attention, and yet they show greater ingenuity in transforming existing lyrics. I will discuss two examples.

54. See, for instance, Zhao Hongling, *Liuchao ni shi yanjiu*, 105–18; Chen Enwei, *Moni yu Han Wei liuchao wenxue shanbian*, 208–10.

55. Abigail Derecho, "Archontic Literature: A Definition, A History, and Several Theories of Fan Fiction," 65.

56. *Ibid.*, 71.

57. *Ibid.*, 73–74.

58. Owen, *The Making*, 261–62.

59. Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, 68.

The first example is “The Song of Perambulating the East and West Gates” (Shun dong xi men xing 順東西門行).⁶⁰ There is no earlier *yuefu* under exactly the same title; instead, we have “The Song of West Gate” and “The Song of East Gate,” both preserved in the *Song shu*.⁶¹ The *Song shu* version of “West Gate” reads:

I went out West Gate,⁶²
 I paced brooding:
 If I don't make merry today,
 What moment am I waiting for?

As for making merry—
 to make merry one must seize the moment.
 Why sit in troubled sadness,
 Should we wait for some year to come?

Drink pure ale,
 Roast the fatty ox,
 Call to those your heart enjoys,
 Who can release worries and sadness.

Man's life does not last a full hundred years,
 He worries always about living a thousand.
 If the daylight is short and the nights are long,
 Best to go roaming with a candle in hand.

Since I'm not the immortal Qiao the Prince,
 It's hard to expect such a long lifespan.
 Since I'm not the immortal Qiao the Prince,
 It's hard to expect such a long lifespan.

Man's lifespan is not of metal and stone,
 How can you expect long-fated years?
 If you're greedy for goods and begrudge spending,
 You'll be only mocked by later ages.

60. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 269. *Shun* here is interchangeable with *xun* 巡, to walk about, to patrol.

61. *Song shu* 11.617–18, 11.616. There is a “Que dong xi men xing” 卻東西門行 beginning with the words “Wild geese” that is attributed to Cao Cao, but it is preserved only in the much later *Yuefu shiji*, 37.552. A citation from the sixth century work *Gujin yuelu* 古今樂錄 by the monk Zhijiang 智匠, which in turn cites from Wang Sengqian *Ji lu* 伎錄, states that the “Que dong xi men xing” by Cao Cao beginning with the words “Wild geese” “is not transmitted today” (*jin bu chuan* 今不傳), a phrase very different from the statement, “not sung today” (*jin bu ge* 今不歌), which, also frequently used in *Ji lu*, indicates that the lyrics were still extant but the music had been lost. *Yuefu shiji* might have a reliable source for this *yuefu*, though it is dubious.

62. Stephen Owen's translation, *The Making*, 182.

出西門，步念之。今日不作樂，當待何時。夫為樂，為樂當及時。何能坐愁佛鬱，當復待來茲。飲醇酒，炙肥牛。請呼心所歡，可用解愁憂。人生不滿百，常懷千歲憂。

晝短而夜長，何不秉燭遊。自非仙人王子喬，計會壽命難與期。自非仙人王子喬，計會壽命難與期。人壽非金石，年命安可期。貪財愛惜費，但為後世嗤。

A variant version recorded in *Song shu* is identical with the above version in the first four stanzas but ends with the following stanza:

Off you go,
passing like clouds,
battered wagon and run-down nag—push 'em yourself.⁶³
行去之，如雲除，弊車羸馬為自推。

Yuefu shiji records the first *Song shu* version, which is supposed to be the performance text used by Jin court musicians; it also records an alternative version that is believed to represent the “original lyrics” (*benci* 本辭):⁶⁴

I went out West Gate,
I paced brooding:
If I don't make merry today,
What moment am I waiting for?

When it comes to making merry,
When it comes to making merry,
We must seize the moment.
Why be in troubled sadness,
Should we wait for some year to come?

Brew the fine ale,
Roast the fatty ox,
Call to those your heart enjoys,
Who can release worries and sadness.

Man's life does not last a full hundred years,
He always worries about living a thousand.
If the daylight is short and the nights are long,
Best to go roaming with a candle in hand.

Go roaming, off you go, passing like clouds,
Battered wagon and run-down nag, your store.⁶⁵

63. *Song shu* 11.617–18.

64. *Yuefu shiji* 37.549. Stephen Owen's translation, with modification of the penultimate line, in *The Making*, 183.

65. See Owen's discussion of the two ending lines in *The Making*, 183–84. Here I have chosen to render the

出西門，步念之。今日不作樂，當待何時。逮為樂，逮為樂，當及時。何能愁怫鬱，當復待來茲。釀美酒，炙肥牛。請呼心所歡，可用解愁憂。人生不滿百，常懷千歲憂。晝短苦夜長，何不秉燭遊。遊行去去如雲除，弊車羸馬為自儲。

After summarizing the content of “West Gate,” Wu Jing 吳競 (670–749) in his *Yuefu guti yaojie* 樂府古題要解 observes, “There is also a ‘Song of Perambulating the East and West Gates’ in three-and seven-syllable line, which inherits the theme of lamenting [the passage of] time and cherishing the day, very much resembling it [West Gate].”⁶⁶ Below is Lu Ji’s version:

I go out West Gate,
I gaze at heaven;
The Sun Valley is empty, the Yanzi Mountain full.

I am moved by the morning dew,
I am saddened by human life:
It flows past like this, how can it be stopped?

I take my lesson from the mulberry door spindle,
And the crickets are singing,
If I do not enjoy today, the year is marching on.

Before it gets dark,
While we are still at a time of peace,
I set out a banquet in the grand hall to entertain my associates.

Playing the flute, loud and clear;
Strutting the melancholy harp—
We take pleasure today and enjoy it to the full.

出西門，望天庭，陽谷既虛崦嵫盈。感朝露，悲人生，逝者若斯安得停。
桑樞戒，蟋蟀鳴，我今不樂歲聿征。迨未暮，及時平，置酒高堂宴友生。
激朗笛，彈哀箏，取樂今日盡歡情。

A quick comparison of Lu Ji’s poem with the anonymous “West Gate” shows the extent to which he deploys literary learning. The Sun Valley where the sun rises and the Yanzi Mountain where the sun sets are mythological places that have appeared in various literary sources such as the *Han fu* and the *Chu ci*. Morning dew is a common metaphor for human

mysterious phrase, *ru yun chu* 如雲除, differently, having in mind the usage of “chu” in the *carpe diem* poem “Cricket” (Xishuai 蟋蟀) in the *Classic of Poetry*: “If I do not make merry now, / days and months are passing by” 今我不樂，日月其除。See *Maoshi zhengyi* 6A.3b. Nevertheless, what matters more in these *yuefu*/old poems are perhaps verbal echoes and sound associations rather than how a line is exactly written down in “only one realization of a virtual network of material and associations.” *The Making*, 183.

66. Cited in *Yuefu shiji* 37.549. The citation is slightly different in the Mao Jin 毛晉 (1599–1659) edition: “In the *yuefu* of the various poets, there is also a ‘Song of . . .’” This variant makes it clear that there is no anonymous original for this *yuefu* title. See Ding Fubao, *Lidai shihua xubian*, 30.

life seen in many sources, from *Han shu* to Cao Cao's "Short Song" (Duan ge xing 短歌行) and Cao Zhi's "Seeing off Biao, Prince of Baima," with which Lu Ji was certainly familiar.⁶⁷ Much more notable is the allusion to Confucius's remark, "What is gone by flows past just like this [river]," in the *Analects*.⁶⁸ The third stanza contains two textual echoes. The first, "mulberry door spindle," is a reference to *Zhuangzi*: the virtuous Yuan Xian lived in dire poverty, and "used mulberry as his door spindle," but he was happy nevertheless, playing music to amuse himself.⁶⁹ The second allusion is to the *Shi jing* poem, "Cricket," which contains the lines: "The crickets in the hall: / the year is drawing to a close. / If I do not make merry now, / days and months are passing by."⁷⁰ Interestingly, the verb used in the last line, "days and months are passing by," is *chu*, which is exactly the same as the one used in the enigmatic phrase, *ru yun chu* 如雲除 (passing like clouds), in the variant version of "West Gate," whose faint verbal echo of the ancient *carpe diem* poem is brought out explicitly in Lu Ji's poem.

The next stanza does not contain any specific textual reference, but "I set out a banquet in the grand hall to entertain my associates" is a more elegant rewriting of the stanza about drinking pure ale and roasting fatty ox in "West Gate." In contrast with "those your heart enjoys," Lu Ji uses *yousheng*, a phrase that appears in a *Shi jing* poem;⁷¹ instead of the more corporeal description of food—"fatty ox"—which might seem low, Lu Ji chooses to describe the spatial setting of the party, which is literally a "high" hall.

The literary reference in the last stanza takes this apparently straightforward *carpe diem* poem in an uncertain direction. Zhang Heng's 張衡 (78–139) "*Fu* on the Western Capital" (Xijing fu 西京賦) satirizes the lavish and sensual indulgences of the Western Han rulers and the nobility: "They take pleasure today: 'There is no time to worry about what will happen after us'" 取樂今日，遑恤我後.⁷² Does Lu Ji's song imply, by repeating Zhang Heng's phrase verbatim, this "Après moi le déluge" mentality? If so, then the song is no longer a clear and simple call to seize the day, but contains a self-critique that deconstructs its surface message, and casts an ominous shadow over the earlier statement, "while we are still at a time of peace." Such ambiguity is not found in "West Gate," which induces no guilt about the pleasures it promises.

The great Eastern Han scholar Cai Yong 蔡邕 (133–192) had dismissed the lyrics of the clear *shang* music, saying that "their words are not worth collecting and recording" 其詞不足採著.⁷³ One of the songs he criticizes is "Going out West Gate" (Chu guo ximen 出郭西門), which, given the fluidity of poem titles in early medieval times, may very well

67. "Human life is like morning dew—what's the point of making yourself suffer like this" 人生如朝露，何久自苦如此 (*Han shu* 54.2464).

68. *Analects* 9/16 (*Lunyu zhushu* 9.7b).

69. From the chapter "Rang wang" 讓王, in *Zhuangzi jishi*, 9.975.

70. See Note 65.

71. "Although I have brothers, they are not as good as my associates" 雖有兄弟，不如友生 (*Mao shi* 164/5).

72. Yan Kejun, *Quan Hou Han wen*, 52.763.

73. Cited in *Yuefu shiji* 44.638.

be our “West Gate.” Lu Ji, however, transforms “West Gate” into a more literary and high-brow song.

One thing that deserves mention is that Lu Ji seems to have followed the variant *Song shu* version, as his poem has five stanzas rather than six, and the more literary image of “mulberry door spindle” seems to be a transformation of the reference to the speaker’s poverty—“battered cart, run-down nag,” which only appears in the variant *Song shu* version (or the alternative version in *Yuefu shiji*). The variant *Song shu* version also includes a distinctive three-three-seven syllable line stanza, which is adopted throughout Lu Ji’s poem.

Lu Ji seems to be very fond of this particular metrical pattern. In the preface to another *yuefu*, “The Soccer Song” (Juge xing 鞠歌行), Lu Ji writes:

According to my investigation, the Han palace complex had a Hanzhang Soccer Field and a Numinous Mushroom Soccer Field. Ma Fang of the Latter Han built his residence right beside a public street,⁷⁴ so connected towers, linked pools and walled soccer field crowded the roadside. The “Soccer Song” presumably refers to this. In addition, the Prince of Dong’e writes in his poem: “With many riders one after another, they struck the [fur-ball and] rang sticks.”⁷⁵ Perhaps this line refers to the soccer game? The form that mixes three-syllable line with seven-syllable line, though an extraordinary treasure and a prized vessel, would not be valued if it does not encounter an appreciative person. I hope to encounter an appreciative person to convey my feelings [through this form].

按漢宮閭有含章鞠室、靈芝鞠室。後漢馬防第，宅卜臨道，連閣、通池、鞠城彌於街路。鞠歌將謂此也。又東阿王詩連騎擊壤，或謂蹙鞠乎。三言七言，雖奇寶名器，不遇知己，終不見重。願逢知己，以托意焉。

With the passion of an outsider, Lu Ji “investigates” the physical cityscape of Luoyang as well as the northern poetic landscape to find out about the origin of the “Soccer Song.” Lu Ji does not elaborate on why he finds this particular metrical form so attractive, although it is worth noting that a contemporary northern piece rewriting one of the “Nine Songs” from *Chu ci*—the classic southern poetic anthology—adopts precisely the same metrical form.⁷⁶ Strikingly, Lu Ji positions himself as an “appreciative person” who understands the true value of a northern metrical form. He compares the form to a prized vessel, through which he conveys his feelings, and hopes to find a similarly appreciative reader for his song composed in this form. This preface in many ways embodies Lu Ji’s view of the northern musical tradition—an “extraordinary treasure” that is underappreciated—and his high expectation for his own writings in the northern tradition.

74. Ma Fang (d. 101) and his brother were known for their lavish lifestyle. They “constructed grand mansions, with towers and pavilions overlooking the avenues going on and on” 大起第觀，連閣臨道，彌互街路. *Hou Han shu* 24.857.

75. The Prince of Dong’e is Cao Zhi. He writes in “Song of Famous Metropolis” (Mingdu pian 名都篇): “Continuously we struck the fur-ball and rang sticks” 連翩擊鞠壤. Lu Ji’s quotation may be abbreviated from the five-syllable line.

76. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 261.

The next example to be discussed is Lu Ji's transformation of the "Song of Joining the Army" (*Congjun xing* 從軍行). There are two extant precedents using the same title: the first are two song fragments credited to the famous Wei court musician Zuo Yannian 左延年 (fl. early to mid-3rd century); the second is a set of five poems as well as two fragments by the prominent poet Wang Can 王粲 (177–217).⁷⁷ The first song fragment by Zuo Yannian is preserved in Tang and Song encyclopedias.⁷⁸

How joyful to be in the army!
 We dash forward on a pair of piebald horses.
 The saddle dazzles one's eyes,
 The dragon steed gallops without urging.
 從軍何等樂，一驅乘雙駢。鞍馬照人目，龍驤自動作。

The second is cited in Shen Jian's 沈建 *Yuefu guangti* 樂府廣題, which is in turn cited in *Yuefu shiji*:

How they suffer—those serving on the frontier!
 In one year they are drafted three times.
 Three sons go to Dunhuang,
 Two sons arrive at Longxi.
 All five sons fight afar,
 their wives are pregnant at home.⁷⁹
 苦哉邊地人，一歲三從軍。三子到敦煌，二子詣隴西。五子遠門去，五婦皆懷身。

Wang Can's poems were not all composed at the same time. Of the set of five poems anthologized in the *Wen xuan*, the first poem was written in early 216 in celebration of Cao Cao's victory over Zhang Lu;⁸⁰ the second through fifth poems were traditionally dated to late 216 when he followed Cao Cao on a campaign against Wu (and he was to die of illness during the return journey).⁸¹ The opening poem of the *Wen xuan* series begins with the couplet:

There are suffering and joy in joining the army;
 It all depends on whom you join.
 從軍有苦樂，但問所從誰。

77. The five poems are entitled "Poems on Joining the Army" (*Congjun shi*) in the *Wen xuan* (27.1269–73), but *Yuefu shiji* includes them as *yuefu*. This shows the lack of boundary between a *shi* poem and a *yuefu* song at this stage.

78. *Chuxue ji*, 22.537. In this version *mu* 目 (eyes) reads *bai* 白 (white). *Taiping yulan*, 358.1775.

79. *Yuefu shiji*, 32.475. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 411.

80. *Sanguo zhi*, 1.46.

81. See Li Shan's commentary to *Wen xuan*, 27.1270.

Comparing this couplet with Zuo Yannian's fragments, we find that Wang Can seems to have combined the "joy" and "suffering" respectively appearing in the opening line of each of Zuo Yannian's songs. This might indicate a trope in writing about military life: either one sings of the macho pleasure of being a soldier, or one laments the hardship of campaigns and evokes longing for home and wife.

Notably, four of the five *Wen xuan* poems by Wang Can describe campaigns against Wu, and one of Wang Can's two fragments, with its description of warships and river battle, can be identified as being about a southern campaign as well.⁸² In contrast, Zuo Yannian's second fragment contains place names such as Dunhuang and Longxi, both being places on the northwestern frontier of the Han empire (modern Gansu) where military action traditionally took place between the Han army and the Xiongnu forces.

Lu Ji's "Song of Joining the Army" presents an interesting contrast with these aforementioned poems:

How they suffer—those on a faraway campaign!
Swept along to the farthest edge in four directions.⁸³
To the south they ascend the Five Peaks;
To the north they defend the Great Wall.
Valleys are deep, bottomless pits;
Lofty mountains are many and steep.
When climbing, they strive to hold on to the towering trees;
Leaving behind foot tracks as they cross sand desert.
The heat of summer is miserable enough;
Chilly autumn wind, stern and cruel.
Fresh blooms are scorched on summer branches;
Cold ice freezes rushing currents.
Tartar horses gather like clouds;
Yue banners everywhere like profuse stars.
Flying blades cast endless shadows;
Sounding arrowheads sing in harmony.
Even at breakfast they don't take off their armor;
When resting at evening, they still carry the halberds.
How they suffer—those on a faraway campaign,
Striking their chests, they grieve; yet can do nothing about it.

苦哉遠征人，飄飄窮四遐。南陟五嶺巔，北戍長城阿。深谷邈無底，崇山鬱嵯峨。奮臂攀喬木，振跡涉流沙。隆暑固已慘，涼風嚴且苛。夏條焦鮮藻，寒冰結衝波。胡馬如雲屯，越旗亦星羅。飛鋒無絕影，鳴鏑自相和。朝食不免胃，夕息常負戈。苦哉遠征人，撫心悲如何。

82. "The towered warships ride on great waves; we thrust our halberds into the enemies" 樓船凌洪波，尋戈刺群虜。See *Taiping yulan* 351.1746.

83. A variant version of this line reads: 飄飄窮西河。See *Yiwen leiju* 41.750.

Lu Ji repeats the structure of the opening line of one of Zuo Yannian's songs ("How they suffer . . ."), but it is not difficult to see the dramatic difference between the two poems in terms of linguistic register. Lu Ji's poem is also stylistically more ornate than Wang Can's poems because of its heavy parallelism and minimum narration. The most important difference is that, if each of Zuo Yannian's and Wang Can's poems focuses on one region—either North or South, Lu Ji deliberately creates the totality of experience of "the soldier" fighting for the empire, not the unique experience of any particular historical person, by incorporating both north and south in his poem (although he mentions "the four directions" at the start, it soon becomes clear that east and west are not part of the picture). Skillfully employing parallel structure, he pairs south and north in the second couplet; subsequently, geographical and climate characteristics respectively associated with the north and the south crop up: trees vs. desert, heat vs. cold. The parallel structure of the couplets conditions the reader to split geographical features that may be found in the same location, to divide seasonal changes that are universal—valleys and mountains; summer heat and autumn cool; spring blossoms and winter ice—and to identify each set with the south or the north. As a consequence, the south and the north are not only identified with heat/cold associations but take on certain geological traits as well, and these geological traits are in turn related to gender traits, e.g., valley = yin/female; mountain = yang/male. In this aspect, Lu Ji was one of the first to begin a long process of the making of the cultural South and North.⁸⁴

Lu Ji is writing the poetry of a unified empire—no longer the North against the "south-eastern barbarians" (*dongnan yi* 東南夷), or the South against the northern "bandits" (*kouzei* 寇賊).⁸⁵ In fact, toward the end of his poem, Lu Ji explicitly brings up the identities of the northern/southern foes: they are now displaced to "Tartar" (*hu*), the traditional reference to northern non-Han peoples, and to "Yue," the name for the southern non-Han peoples living to the south of the Yangtze River. Through such an ingenious displacement, Lu Ji suggests that it is ethnic and cultural identity, not regional identity, which is and should be the issue in a unified empire.

In the last example to be discussed in this section, we have the old lyrics to a *yuefu* title that may seem at first glance to have little overt connection to Lu Ji's poem under the same title, but Lu Ji's poem is based on the old theme and contains implicit verbal echoes. The original *yuefu* in question is entitled "Song of Yuzhang" (*Yuzhang xing* 豫章行).⁸⁶

84. For a detailed discussion of the making of the north and south in the Six Dynasties, see Chapter Seven in Tian, *Beacon Fire and Shooting Star: The Literary Culture of the Liang (502–557)*, 310–66.

85. "Southeastern barbarians" are what Wang Can calls the Wu people in No. 3 of his "Joining the Army." "Bandits" is how the Wu describes Cao Cao's army in one of Wu's state ritual songs, "Ke Wancheng" 克皖城. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 545.

86. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 264; *Yuefu shiji* 34.501. The English translation is by Owen, *The Making*, 133–34. The text of this song is corrupted; I use Lu Qinli's version here. Lu Qinli appends a note: "The *Siku* [*quanshu*] version of *Yuefu shiji* has filled many lacunae; it is unknown on what textual basis [they did that]."

When the white poplar first grew,
 It was right there on Camphorwood Mountain.
 Above, its leaves brushed the blue clouds,
 Below, its roots reached to the Yellow Springs.
 In cool autumn, in the eighth or ninth month,
 A man of the mountains brought an ax.
 My . . . how gleaming bright,
 Hacked away . . .
 Root and trunk had been broken apart,
 It fell over among the rocks of the cliff.
 The great craftsman brought ax and saw,
 With rope and ink he made the two ends even.
 Once it was carried four or five leagues,
 The branches and leaves were destroyed.

...

Happened to be [burned] for a boat.⁸⁷
 My person is in the palace of Luoyang,
 My roots are on Camphorwood Mountain.
 Send my regards to my leaves and branches—
 When shall we be rejoined again?
 My life, a hundred years . . .
 . . . together.

Who would have thought that the craft of ten thousand
 Would cause me to be separated, trunk from root?

白楊初生時，乃在豫章山。上葉摩青雲，下根通黃泉。涼秋八九月，山客持斧斤。我口何皎皎，梯落口口口。根株已斷絕，顛倒巖石間。大匠持斧繩，鋸墨齊兩端。一驅四五里，枝葉自相捐。口口口口口，會為舟船燔。身在洛陽宮，根在豫章山。多謝枝與葉，何時復相連。吾生百年口，自口口口俱。何意萬人巧，使我離根株。

The “yuzhang” 豫章 in the title of the song is a camphor tree, but also the name of a Han commandery (in modern Jiangxi) in the South. In *The Making*, Owen points out that this *yuefu* song makes use of the same thematic material as an exposition in Lu Jia’s 陸賈 (ca. 240–170 BCE) chapter “On Material” (Zi zhi 資質), with a tree cut and fashioned as timber (*cai* 材) appearing as “a figure of human ‘talent,’ *cai* 才／材.”⁸⁸ Lu Jia’s exposition stresses that “circulation” (*tong* 通) is essential to both tree and talented people: the common poplar is being used in state ceremonies because it grows close to the capital while the fine camphorwood wastes away in the wilderness. The *yuefu* song, however, describes

87. *Fan* 燔 (burn) has a textual variant *pan* 蟠 (coil, twist), which makes better sense: “happened to be bent/twisted for a boat.” *Yuefu shiji* 34.501.

88. Owen, *The Making*, 130–33.

a poplar growing in the Camphorwood Mountain that laments being cut and destroyed as timber, separated from its native place and from its “branches and leaves.”

That a tree growing in the southern mountains is cut down and sent to the capital to be timber (*cai*) would be a resonant theme for Lu Ji, a southern talent (*cai*) relocated to “the palace of Luoyang.” His “Song of Yuzhang” is a remarkable, and subtle, reworking of the theme.⁸⁹

Sailing in a boat by isles on the clear river,
 I gaze at the shadowy north slopes of the high mountain afar.
 River and land present different routes;
 A loved one is going on a distant quest.
 The three briar trees once rejoiced in sharing the same trunk;⁹⁰
 The four birds are saddened by flying off into different woods.⁹¹
 Since ancient times people have enjoyed gathering;
 To lament parting does not begin with this day and age.
 How long are we lodgers in this world?
 The sun is declining, with no still shadows.
 The road traveled has already been very long;
 The path ahead is creeping up on me with the years.
 Time is fast approaching twilight;
 It flows on and on, few could forbid it.
 Why is it then that with time passing so fast,
 I should cling to misery and sadness?
 With far-reaching aspiration, my entanglement with external things is shallow;
 Yet I cannot help it if my immediate sentiments run deep.
 Go on then, and may you keep good fortune;
 When the shadow is gone, I will follow up with sound.

汎舟清川渚，遙望高山陰，川陸殊途軌，懿親將遠尋。三荊歡同株，四鳥悲異林。樂會良自古，悼別豈獨今。寄世將幾何，日昃無停陰。前路既已多，後塗隨年侵。促促薄暮景，亹亹鮮克禁。曷為復以茲，曾是懷苦心。遠節嬰物淺，近情能不深。行矣保嘉福，景絕繼以音。

89. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 657. *Yuefu shiji* 34.502–3.

90. Three briar trees sharing the same trunk as a figure for three brothers is a common trope. See “Shangliutian xing” 上留田行 in Lu, p. 288. Zhou Jingshi’s 周景式 (ca. 4th century?) *Biographies of Filial Sons* 孝子傳 (a lost text) records a story about three brothers who wanted to split family property; upon seeing three briar trees sharing the same trunk, they were moved to change their mind. *Yiwen leiju* 89.1548. Wu Jun’s 吳均 (469–520) *Xu Qixie ji* 續齊諧記 records a similar story, but the *jing* tree becomes a *zijing* tree (baubabina).

91. One morning Confucius heard a woman weeping nearby. His disciple Yan Hui remarked that this was the sound of those being parted. He explained that the mother bird of Wan Mountain had made a wailing sound just like that when her four young birds, having fledged, set off in different directions. Confucius sent someone to investigate and it turned out that Yan Hui was right. *Shuo yuan shuzheng* 18.647–48.

In the opening couplet the poet brings out the contrast between river and mountain. Sailing on the currents and gazing at the “shadowy slopes,” that is, the northern side of a mountain, he implicitly creates a contrast between his native South, represented by the “clear river,” and the northern landscape where he is heading.⁹² One recalls Lu Jia’s description of the relocation of the cut trees: “They drift on the currents of mountain rivers; they come out of the mysterious wilderness; following the course of the Yangzi and Yellow rivers, they arrive near the capital” 浮於山水之流，出於冥冥之野，因江河之道，而達於京師之下。⁹³ The timber theme of the *yuefu* song is, however, compressed into one line in Lu Ji’s poem: “The three briar trees once rejoiced in sharing the same trunk” 三荊歡同株. The word, trunk (*zhu* 株), is a verbal echo of the *yuefu* song: “. . . to be separated, trunk from root” (*li gen zhu* 離根株), and the poet is clearly hinting at his fate of being severed from his loved ones with whom he once shared the same trunk. But the image of a cut tree is diffused in the next line into the image of woods (*lin*), and the timber metamorphoses into a bird, a freer, more active agent than a tree. The bird is also able to make sound (*yin*) that can be heard by those at home, and this is precisely what the speaker promises to his loved ones at the end of the poem: “When the shadow is gone, I will follow up with sound.” That is, when he is away, he will send letters.

Jing, here translated as [the poet’s] shadow, also means “sunlight.” The poet plays with light and shadow throughout the poem: in the opening couplet he gazes at the shadowy slopes of a high mountain (*gaoshan yin*); at the middle point of the poem, the sun speeds by “with no still shadows” (*wu ting yin*); two lines later, it is approaching twilight (*mu jing*); in the last couplet the sunlight and the poet’s shadow cast by the sun are gone, and in the darkness where sight fails, the poet turns to the sound of words, which in a self-referential twist points to this poem itself. The shift from light to dark mimics the course of the sun, of time, and of human life; it also mirrors the poet’s relocation from the south to the north, for the South, symbolized by “vermillion brightness” (*zhuming* 朱明), is the land of the sun and summer, and the North is considered a country of cold winter governed by the God of Dark Mystery (*xuanming* 玄冥).⁹⁴

As the poet himself is “approaching twilight” both in temporal and spatial terms, his heart is heavy with ambivalence:

Why is it then that with time passing so fast,
I should harbor such misery?

92. In another poem Lu Ji identifies himself as a “man of water country” (*shuixiang shi* 水鄉士). See “In Reply to Zhang Shiran” (Da Zhang Shiran shi 答張士然詩). Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 681.

93. *Xinyu jiaozhu* 101. English translation by Owen, *The Making*, 131.

94. See, for instance, the Western Han work *Huainanzi* 淮南子: “The south is of the fire element, its god is the Fiery God, whose assistant is Vermillion Brightness” 南方火也，其帝炎帝，其佐朱明. *Huainan honglie jijie* 3.88. “Dark Mystery” is the name of the god of winter as well as the god of the north. See *Li ji zhushu* 17.8a.

With far-reaching aspiration, my entanglement with external things is shallow;
 Yet I cannot help it if my immediate sentiments run deep.
 曷為復以茲，曾是懷苦心。遠節嬰物淺，近情能不深。

In the first couplet, we hear the echo of the familiar rhetorical question in the *carpe diem* songs of the north: “Human life is short, why be sad and not make merry?”⁹⁵ The second couplet provides an answer to the question: the poet has “far-reaching aspiration,” which takes him on the journey; in the meantime, however, he cannot help but feel “immediate sentiments”—attachment to his loved ones.

In this poem, Lu Ji keeps to the old *yuefu* theme of leaving loved ones behind and seeking fortune in the capital city, but also transforms it into something more complicated in terms of the feelings he seeks to express. The poem is not a simple, straightforward celebration of the timber/talent’s good fortune, nor is it a simple, straightforward lamentation of the timber/talent’s separation from his native soil. Feeling the pressure of passing time and desiring to achieve his noble aspiration, the poet voluntarily undertakes the journey, even though he is pained by his longing for home; and yet, as he advances on the journey that is compared, in a reversal of a commonplace metaphor, to human life (“the path ahead is creeping up on me with the years”), the poet is driven by the force of his rhetoric to a dead end in darkness. The poem turns out to be an uncanny prophecy for Lu Ji.

3. Boating Song: Cultural Transactions between the South and North

The emperor, upon seeing the turbulent waves [of the Yangtze River], heaved a sigh, saying, “Alas, this is truly how heaven separates the South and North!” He subsequently turned around and withdrew the troops.

— Sima Guang, *Zizhi tongjian* 70.2225

In the previous section we discuss Lu Ji’s transformation of the northern *yuefu* tradition by rewriting it, much in the same way as a fan writes fan fiction: take the established theme, plot and character, extend them, develop them, and give them a very personal twist. The raising of linguistic register is a prominent feature of these writings; in addition, Lu Ji’s poems are much more complicated and nuanced than the *ur*-texts. Of the poems analyzed, “The Song of Joining the Army” and “The Song of Yuzhang” in particular are informed by Lu Ji’s trajectory from south to north and his obsessive concern with both. In this section, I will discuss another of Lu Ji’s songs inspired by the northern *yuefu*, “The Song of Oars” (Zhaoge xing 棹歌行), and its further transformation in the hands of a group of Northern

95. For instance, “Enjoy to the fullest, amuse your heart, / why be pressed by gloomy thoughts” 極宴娛心意，戚戚何所迫 (“Nineteen Old Poems” III); “The ‘Dawnwind Hawk’ harbors misery; / the ‘Cricket’ laments a hard-pressed life. / Clear your mind of worries, set your feelings free, / what’s the point of constraining yourself?” 晨風懷苦心，蟋蟀傷局促。蕩滌放情志，何為自結束 (“Nineteen Old Poems” XII). Lu Ji has written “imitations” of both of these “old poems.” Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 329–30, 332.

and Southern Dynasties poets. As we will see, literary and cultural changes and geopolitical shifts are closely connected; the creation of a southerner in the North in celebration of the newly unified empire is rewritten to celebrate the new South by northerners in the South; it finally goes back to the North, and is turned by northerners into an erotic fantasy about the “Southland” (*jiangnan* 江南).

It is not hard to see why Lu Ji chose this northern *yuefu* title for rewriting. Its precedent, attributed to Emperor Ming of the Wei (or alternatively to Zuo Yannian), sings of a military campaign against Wu.⁹⁶

The emperor spreads the great cultivation,
His merit matches Heaven and tallies with the Earth God.
While the *yang* energy produces and nurtures, the *yin* destroys;
The shadow cast by the sundial moves in response to the stars.

The civil virtue is applied at the appropriate time;
The martial power punishes those who disobey.
Chonghua performed the dance of shield and axe,
And the people of You Miao submitted to Gui.⁹⁷

The ignorant rebels of Wu and Shu⁹⁸
Roost beside the Yangtze River and in perilous mountains.
Miserable are the emperor's people,
Who look up but find no one to rely on.

The emperor feels compassion for them;
His heavenly wrath is stirred overnight.
We set out from Our palace at Xuchang,
Lining up battleships beside the long embankment.

The next day we ride on the waves,
The song of oars is sad and poignant.
The Taichang banners brush the white sun;
Numerous standards and pennons are displayed.

Bearing standards and axes,
The army will demonstrate its power in their land.
Punishing the criminals, bringing comfort to the people,
We shall clear up Our southeastern territories.

96. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 416.

97. Chonghua is an appellation of Emperor Shun, a legendary sage emperor in antiquity, whose surname was Gui. “You Miao,” or the “Three Miaos,” is the name of a tribal people in the south supposedly brought into submission by Shun.

98. This is the reading in *Song shu* 21.621 and *Yuefu shiji* 40.593. Lu Qinli adopts the variant reading “Wu *zhong lu*” 吳中虜 (the rebels of Wu) here.

王者布大化，配乾稽后祇。陽育則陰殺，晷景應度移。文德以時振，武功伐不隨。重華舞干戚，有苗服從媯。蠢爾吳蜀虜，馮江棲山阻。哀哀王士民，瞻仰靡依怙。皇上悼愍斯，宿昔奮天怒。發我許昌宮，列舟于長浦。翌日乘波揚，棹歌悲且涼。大常拂白日，旗幟紛設張。將抗旆與鉞，耀威於彼方。伐罪以弔民，清我東南疆。

The extant version of Lu Ji's "Song of Oars" is apparently a fragment of the original poem:⁹⁹

Sunny and warm is the day in late spring,
 The weather is soft and pleasant.
 Great auspice is augmented on the Festival of the Primal Si,¹⁰⁰
 We go on an outing on the Yellow River to cleanse ourselves.
 The dragon boat floats with its heron prow;
 Plumed streamers are hanging with their flowery decorations.
 Riding the wind, illuminated by the flying light,
 Leisurely we roam and play in mid-current.
 Famous performers sing solo, unaccompanied by music,
 Boatmen intone the song of oars to their heart's content.
 Fishing lines, thrown out, sink into the great river;
 Stringed arrows fly into purple clouds. . .

遲遲暮春日，天氣柔且嘉。元吉隆初巳，濯穢游黃河。龍舟浮鷁首，羽旗垂藻葩。乘風宣飛景，逍遙戲中波。名謳激清唱，榜人縱棹歌。投綸沈洪川，飛繳入紫霞。

What Lu Ji describes here, instead of the navy's preparations for going to war, is a joyful celebration of the Festival of the Primal Si (*Chu si* or *Shang si*), which, beginning in the Wei, was observed on the third day of the third month. On this day, the people of Luoyang would go to the Yellow River to purify themselves. It was an important festival for royalty, nobility and commoners alike, judged by the large number of poems composed on the occasion (many of which were written by imperial command), and by the depiction of the festival in poetic expositions and prose pieces.¹⁰¹

99. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 660. *Yiwen leiju* 42.757; *Yuefu shiji* 40.593.

100. I follow the *Yiwen leiju* and *Yuefu shiji* versions of this line by adopting *long* (augment) rather than *jiang* 降 (bestow).

101. Lu Ji's older contemporaries Chenggong Sui 成公綏 (231–273) and Zhang Xie 張協 (d. 307) each wrote a "Fu on Lustration at Luoyang" (Luo xi fu 洛禊賦). *Quan Jin wen* 59.1795, 85.1951. The biography of Xia Tong 夏統 (courtesy name Zhongyu 仲御), a native of Wu and Lu Ji's contemporary, records how Xia went to Luoyang to buy medicine for his ailing mother and chanced on the festival celebration: "The people in Luoyang, from princes and dukes on downward, all went out riding their carriages, which advanced side by side and flowed on continuously, to perform the lustration rite by the South Pontoon Bridge. The men's crimson official robes dazzled the road; the women were dressed in splendid bright-colored brocade and silks." "Xia Zhongyu's Unofficial Biography" 夏仲御別傳, cited in *Yiwen leiju* 4.63. Also see Xia Tong's biography in *Jin shu* 94.2429–30. Interestingly, Xia Zhongyu was said to have astounded his northern aristocratic audience, not only by his superb boating skills, but also by his singing of southern airs on the Yellow River.

Lu Ji's poem has a strikingly different focus from the Wei court *yuefu*: instead of a military song sung by the navy on the eve of war, his is a celebration of a festival in a time of peace and prosperity. The militant banners of the Wei army, including the Taichang banner usually indicating an imperial procession, are turned into the more ornate and less somber streamers decorated with feathers in Lu Ji's version. The imperial presence in the Wei *yuefu* is displaced on a verbal level to the mention of "dragon boat." While dragon may be a symbol of the emperor, a dragon boat could simply refer to a large boat decorated with the figure of a dragon. Both texts contain a self-referential mention of the "song of oars." In the Wei *yuefu*, "the song of oars is sad and poignant," evocative of battle and death; Lu Ji's version, on the other hand, depicts a picture of singing at ease, and the song of oars takes on a casual and carefree air. With the couplet, "Bearing standards and axes, / the army will demonstrate its power in their land," the Wei *yuefu* hints at the violence of war; Lu Ji's version displaces violence to birds and fish.

The ultimate point of departure lies in the opening lines. The Wei *yuefu* shows that a ruler, who is a match for heaven and earth, contains within himself both *yang* and *yin* forces, the former for the protection and cultivation of life, the latter for punishment and destruction. While the Wei *yuefu* emphasizes the martial (*wu*) power of a ruler, Lu Ji's extant version begins with *chichi*, a compound descriptive of the warmth of the spring sun, and develops along the line of "the *yang* energy" that "produces and nurtures." Noticeably, in the second line of the poem, Lu Ji uses *rou jia* (soft and pleasant), a compound from *Shijing* which usually depicts a person.¹⁰² By using the phrase to describe the weather of the day, Lu Ji gives it a moral quality that agrees with the human agency acting in accordance with the spring season. Once again, Lu Ji's poem exemplifies the poetics of a unified empire, in which the only violence should ideally be directed at the non-human world of the birds and fishes as well as the often dehumanized "barbarians."

Based on the limited textual corpus we have of Eastern Jin (317–420) poetry, there seems to have been a hiatus in composition of the old Wei/ Western Jin *yuefu* titles during the fourth century. The early fifth century, with the southern elite's renewed access to northern musical and textual repertoire, saw a revival of interest in writing in the tradition of the earlier *yuefu* and "old poems."¹⁰³ However, if Lu Ji was still able to enjoy the *yuefu* songs as a live music tradition being carried on in the Jin court, this might not have been the case in the early fifth century. In other words, the contemporary writers' relation to the Wei/Western Jin *yuefu* corpus, or at least to a large part of it, might have become purely textual at this time.

Xie Lingyun 謝靈運 (385–433) and his cousin Xie Huilian 謝惠連 (407–433) both wrote a series of "imitations" of Lu Ji's *yuefu* in the restricted sense of the word *ni* mentioned earlier; but in regard to the "Song of Oars," it is a piece written by a prominent writer of the

102. See, for instance, "All People" (Zhengmin 蒸民), *Mao shi* 255.

103. See Xiaofei Tian, "Chapter Three: From the Eastern Jin through the Early Tang," in Kang-i Sun Chang and Stephen Owen, ed. *Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, vol. 1, 228–29.

day, Kong Ningzi 孔甯子 (d. 425),¹⁰⁴ that provides a link between Lu Ji's version and the later versions produced in the sixth century.¹⁰⁵

A noble man takes delight in the gentle season,
 Myriad things depend on the sunny time of year.
 The Supreme One bestows profuse blessings;
 On the first *si* day, he orders water games.
 The Granary and the Armory watch over the bridges;
 The Master of Foreign Dances sets up plumed streamers.
 On tall masts are raised soaring sails,
 Feathered canopies conceal flowering branches.
 Archery officers stir distant reverberations;
 A lovely woman intones elegant lyrics.
 I have no chance to "go against the current,"¹⁰⁶
 [Coming upon] the flow, I am filled with sadness and longing.¹⁰⁷
 I look up at the arrow-string that disappears into the clouds;
 Then I look down, pulling the line sinking in the water.
 The riverbank is inundated with fallen feathers,
 Fresh fish fill up the shore.
 The heron prow fills the River God's attendants with awe,
 The boats raise waves, shocking Pingyi.¹⁰⁸
 Although the evening sun is setting in the west,
 ... is endless.

君子樂和節，品物待陽時。上位降繁祉，元已命水嬉。倉武戒橋梁，旄人樹羽旗。高檣抗飛帆，羽蓋翳華枝。攸飛激逸響，娟娥吐清辭。汨洄緬無分，欣流愴有思。仰瞻翳雲繖，俯引沈泉絲。委羽漫通渚，鮮染中填坻。鵲鳥威江使，揚波駭馮夷。夕影雖已西，□□終無期。

Kong's opening line reproduces the grammatical structure of that of the Wei *yuefu*, but shifts its focus from the ruler to the "noble man" (*junzi*). The "soft and pleasant" spring weather in Lu Ji's opening couplet ("Sunny and warm is the day in late spring, / The weather is soft and pleasant" 遲遲暮春日，天氣柔且嘉) reappears in Kong's version as the "gentle season" and the "sunny time of the year."

104. Kong Ningzi was well known for his literary talent in the early fifth century, but fell into obscurity later on. He had a sizable literary collection in fifteen scrolls, from which only two poems, both of them being *yuefu* (including "The Song of Oars"), and a few fragmented prose pieces, are extant.

105. I will not discuss Bao Zhao's 鮑照 (414?–466) "In Place of 'The Song of Oars'" (Dai Zhao ge xing 代棹歌行) here because, like many of Bao Zhao's *yuefu*, it deliberately deviates from the tradition, as indicated by the word "dai" in its title.

106. This is an allusion to the *Shi jing* poem "Reeds and Rushes" 蒹葭 (*Mao shi* 129).

107. *Xin* 欣 should perhaps be emended to *lin* 臨.

108. Pingyi is the name of the Yellow River god, but is also used to refer to water deities in general.

It is interesting to observe Kong's intricate transformation of Lu Ji's second couplet ("Great auspice is augmented on the Festival of the Primal Si, / We go on an outing on the Yellow River to cleanse ourselves" 元吉隆初巳，濯穢游黃河). Kong Ningzi echoes Lu Ji on a verbal level by taking *yuan* and *si*, respectively the first and fifth character of the first line of Lu's couplet, to make a new combination: *yuan si* (the first *si*); the phrase *yuan ji* (great auspice) in Lu's couplet becomes *fan zhi*, "profuse blessings." And if we look at the variant version of Lu Ji's first line ("Great auspice is bestowed on the Festival of the Primal Si" 元吉隆初巳), we find that Kong keeps the verb *jiang* (bestow) in the same position of his own first line.

The next four lines of Kong's poem rework Lu Ji's couplets in much the same way, maintaining the sense of the earlier text with many verbal echoes. The phrase "plumed streamers" is repeated in the sixth line; "flying light" (*fei jing*) becomes "soaring sails" (*fei fan*). The major difference is that, while Lu Ji focuses on depiction of water in these lines, Kong Ningzi complements the water scenes with land and sky scenes.

The following couplet turns to sound and rewrites Lu Ji's couplet ("Famous performers sing solo, unaccompanied by music, / Boatmen intone the song of oars to their heart's content" 名謳激清唱，榜人縱棹歌) word by word with two notable differences: Kong drops the self-referential "song of oars," and changes the sound of singing in the first line to that of shooting arrows. The latter difference intensifies the effect of parallelism, as variation not only occurs on the verbal level but also in terms of sense: between male ("archery officers") and female ("lovely woman"), martial (hunting) and civil (singing).

The next couplet, "I have no chance to 'go against the current,' / [Coming upon] the flow, I am filled with sadness and longing," has no counterpart in Lu Ji's poem. We do not know whether it is because a corresponding couplet is missing from Lu's poem or it represents Kong's invention. In any case, this is an interesting couplet because it implies that the speaker is gazing at a fair woman singing on the other side of the river but finds it impossible to follow her. Instead, he has to content himself with just looking. His gaze first moves up, then down: "I look up at the arrow-string that disappears into the clouds; / then I look down, pulling the line sinking in the water." This couplet presents a neat reworking of Lu Ji's fishing/shooting couplet, with which Lu's poem comes to an abrupt stop, clearly removed by the encyclopedia editors in its earliest source. A following couplet, which may or may not have a counterpart in Lu Ji's now-fragmented original text, expands the fishing/shooting couplet to describe the rich gains of the day.

The two "extra" couplets at the end of Kong's poem give us an idea of how Lu Ji's version might have ended. The last line is ambiguous because of the textual corruption. It is tempting to fill the lacunae with a phrase such as "our joy or pleasure," but *wuqi* also has the meaning of "no time has been set for something," such as in the five-syllable line from the second century: "Once we are separated, there is no time for us to meet again" 一別會無期.¹⁰⁹

109. This line is from the Fei Feng 費鳳 stele text. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 176.

One wonders if the poet might be alluding to his unfulfilled desire for the fair woman singing the “song of oars.”

Kong Ningzi’s poem furnishes a good example of the line-by-line imitation of an original poem still being practiced in the early fifth century; it also turns out to be an important link in the tradition of “The Song of Oars.” The next extant version, composed by Xiao Gang 蕭綱 (503–551), demonstrates a remarkable continuity as well as a new take on the theme.¹¹⁰

My home is by the Xiang River;
 I am good at singing water-chestnut songs.
 In the rising wind, I know how to paddle through the waves;
 I am capable of rowing the boat in deep waters.
 Leaves tangle, as water plants are being pulled;
 Filaments float from the broken lotus root.
 Water splashing on my make-up, one suspects light sweat;
 My dress is soaked, as if having been cleansed on purpose.
 Laundering silk makes the currents turbid for a while;
 The color of washed brocade becomes fresh again.
 Along with Zhao Feiyan,
 We would ask Li Yannian:¹¹¹
 Of all the songs ever sung to strings and pipes,
 Which one is superior to the “Song of Oars”?

妾家住湘川，菱歌本自便。風生解榜浪，水深能捉船。葉亂由牽葑，絲飄為折蓮。澣妝疑薄汗，沾衣似故湔。浣紗流暫濁，汰錦色還鮮。參同趙飛燕，借問李延年。從來入弦管，誰在棹歌前。

For an educated premodern Chinese reader, any mention of the Xiang River would be liable to evoke the pair of poems from the “Nine Songs” in the *Chu ci*: “The Goddess of the Xiang” (Xiang jun 湘君), and “The Lady of the Xiang River” (Xiang furen 湘夫人). And yet, the woman in Xiao Gang’s poem is no deity. Goddesses, especially water goddesses, do not have wet, ruined make-up. The water drops on the woman’s face resembling a light sweat forcefully calls the reader’s attention to her corporeality, and takes her far away from the otherworldly realm of the *Chu ci*. Instead of engaging in festive celebration, she seems to be picking lotus on the river. In the southern *yuefu* songs, lotus (*lian*, punning with *lian* 憐, passion) and the filaments in lotus roots (*si*, punning with *si* 思, longing) are commonplace images associated with romantic love. The entangled (*luan*) leaves and the floating filaments in Xiao Gang’s poem create a scene with erotic undertones. Whatever the woman is doing in the poem, Xiao Gang’s poem is a far cry from the earlier “songs of oars,” even

110. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 1907; *Yiwen leiju* 42.757; *Yuefu shiji* 40.594.

111. Zhao Feiyan (d. 7 BCE) was the empress of Emperor Cheng of the Han (r. 32–7 BCE); she was a famous dancer. Li Yannian was the court musician favored by Emperor Wu of the Han (r. 140–87 BCE).

though one can nevertheless detect their influence. The Primal Si Festival is about cleansing and purifying oneself; here it reappears as the washing of silk and brocade. The self-referential mention of the “song of oars” also returns in the last couplet of the poem.

The final lines of the poem, evoking two legendary Han dynasty court performers, remind the listener/ reader that the foregoing section of the poem is a song presentation; in other words, the function of the last two couplets is very similar to that served by the traditional “musician’s ending” of a *yuefu* song, in which the musician pulls back from the content of the song, addresses the audience directly and wishes the audience happiness and a long life. Such a “musician’s ending” breaks the spell of the song, declares the end of performance, and foregrounds the fictionality of the narrative of the *yuefu* song. In the poems by Lu Ji and Kong Ningzi, singing is one of the many festive activities taking place on the river; but in his version, Xiao Gang zooms in on the female singer, and his *yuefu* effectively becomes the song she sings.

“The Song of Oars” had started out as a northern song about undertaking a military campaign against the south, but it migrated to the south in the fifth century and became a favorite music title for the Southern Dynasties poets, who saw the possibility of conflating it with other southern motifs: picking lotus or water-chestnuts, washing silk, or just pleasure boating in general.¹¹² Xiao Gang’s poem is representative of the transformation. Moving the site of the song to the Xiang River, he evokes the *Chu ci*, the classic poetic anthology of the South, and infuses the poem with a powerful southern aura by bringing together all the southern motifs mentioned above. By making the woman in his poem a secularized Xiang River goddess and a skilled court singer on a par with the legendary performers of the Han, and by claiming the superiority of “The Song of Oars,” now repackaged as a southern song, Xiao Gang asserts the cultural supremacy of the southern court.

In the same way a southerner and an outsider like Lu Ji became a fan of northern cultural tradition, northerners are fascinated by the southern music, and unsurprisingly their attention is focused on those songs that can particularly conjure up a southern aura. After Yang Kan 羊侃 (d. 548), a stalwart northern general and a music connoisseur, defected to Liang in 529, he “composed two tunes, ‘Lotus-picking’ and ‘Song of Oars,’ which struck people as quite original” 自造采蓮棹歌兩曲，甚有新致。¹¹³ Both titles appear in the extant corpus of one of the best-known northern poets, Lu Sidao 盧思道 (530–581). His “Song of Oars” is as follows:¹¹⁴

112. Silk-washing has a southern association because of the legend of the silk-washing southern belle, Xi Shi, from Yue. For other versions of “Song of Oars” by southern poets, see *Yuefu shiji*, 40.594–95. The title itself also frequently appears in Southern Dynasties poems, such as Shen Yue’s 沈約 (441–513) “Song of South” (“Jiangnan qu” 江南曲, Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 1621) and Xu Mian’s 徐勉 (466–535) “Song of Picking Water-chestnuts” (“Cailing qu” 采菱曲, Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 1811). Lotus and water-chestnuts were not exclusively southern plants, but they were made “southern” in literature as part of the cultural campaign in the Southern Dynasties. See Tian, *Beacon Fire and Shooting Star*, 346–58.

113. *Nan shi* 63.1547. It appears that Yang Kan created two new musical tunes rather than wrote lyrics to old tunes.

114. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi*, 2628; *Yuefu shiji* 40.595.

The autumn River is so clear one can see its bottom;
 Girls of Yue are so beautiful they can topple a city.
 Their boats side by side, they pick water plants together;
 And they are known as the loveliest in the world.
 Fallen blossoms flow with jeweled earrings;
 A light breeze stirs the aromatic pouch strings.
 Sashes hang low, “joint branches” drenched;
 Oars raised, magnolia light.
 Passing on a soft whisper by the wind,¹¹⁵
 Sending deep feelings with the current—¹¹⁶
 Who could tie up the brocade hawser,
 And go off at dusk to the river isle?

秋江見底清，越女復傾城。方舟共采摘，最得可憐名。落花流寶珥，微吹動香纓。帶垂連理濕，棹舉木蘭輕。順風傳細語，因波寄遠情。誰能結錦纜，薄暮隱長汀。

As in Xiao Gang's poem, the world of nature and the world of artifice become entangled, as the girls' earrings drop into the currents and are mixed with the fallen blossoms, and their sashes are soaked. The scene is wet, and heavy with erotic undertones. But unlike Xiao Gang's poem that uses the first-person monologue, Lu Sidao's version adopts the perspective of a fascinated onlooker fantasizing about the girls from afar. Noticeably, the girls in Lu's poem never sing—there is no self-referential mention of “song of oars” as in all previous poems to this title; instead, the girls whisper some indistinct words. It is hard to know who addresses the question to whom in the last couplet, and the question itself might be the very content of the whisper made by the girls or one of the girls—or by the onlooker himself to the girls.

As a natural barrier for all northerners coveting the South, the Yangtze River always presented a significant military advantage for the south. When Cao Pi, on a campaign against the Wu, came upon the Yangtze River, he reportedly said, “Alas, this is truly how heaven separates South and North!” He then turned around and withdrew the troops.¹¹⁷ In the line that reads, “Sending deep feelings with the current,” however, the depth and width of the Yangtze River are displaced to human passion. The term *yuan qing* literally means “faraway feelings / feelings from afar,” measuring the physical distance between the northern poet and the land of his erotic fantasies. The question about who could go off with the Yue girls is a real question, a challenge, and an invitation; readers of the poem—Lu Sidao's contemporary male northern audience for this song—are included in the game.

115. *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華 has a variant for *Shunfeng* 順風: “Avoiding the others” 避人. *Wenyuan yinghua*, 203.1004.

116. *Ji* 寄 reads *song* 送 in *Wenyuan yinghua*.

117. *Zizhi tongjian* 70.2225.

4. Conclusion

This paper begins with a discussion of two southerners going North, and ends with that of a northerner dreaming of going South. The sixth century was a long way away from Lu Ji and Lu Yun; nevertheless, the North-South dynamic continued to be at work throughout the Northern and Southern Dynasties. I have discussed the making of the cultural images of the North and South during this period elsewhere. This paper seeks to demonstrate the intricacies of the cultural transactions between the North and South. Lu Ji intervenes in the contemporary dominant culture—the northern culture—through his prolific “fan writings” that eventually become part of the Chinese literary canon.

Lu Ji is one of those poets who mark a turning point in literary history by effecting extraordinary transformations of previous works, but, once the turn is made, are gradually neglected. Looking at his poems re-situated in their context, we might understand why his poetry was so admired in the Southern Dynasties: it turns the five-syllable-line poetry, still a relatively low genre at his time, into a sophisticated poetry with nuances and finesse, with close attention to the crafting of words and phrases more prevalently than any poet before him. The Southern Dynasties poets still had access to that cultural world of the earlier period and were much better able to appreciate Lu Ji’s transformation of it.

This helps us understand why Lu Ji’s literary reputation suffered after the Tang. He was writing as a fan, and fan writings are contingent on the original texts. The appreciation of Lu Ji’s works therefore much depends on the reader’s familiarity with the literary and cultural world with which Lu Ji was fascinated; and yet, only a small fragment of that world has survived, and even that small fragment is largely indebted to Lu Ji’s writings: his works had made it seem noteworthy in the first place.

In his “*Fu* on the Feather Fan,” the fan becomes a synecdoche for the crane, who is “burdened by its beautiful plumes, like the one carrying a precious jade,¹¹⁸ / its lifespan of a thousand years is compromised by one single arrow” 累懷璧於美羽，挫千歲乎一箭。 Going north to serve in the Jin court, Lu Ji stayed on at a perilous time when many of his fellow southerners resigned and went home.¹¹⁹ The figure of the crane, an immortal bird killed for the sake of its plumes, becomes an omen of the Lu brothers’ tragic end, casting a dark shadow on the image of the white fan.

118. This refers to a proverb, “A man may be guiltless, but he has committed a crime by carrying with him a precious jade” 匹夫無罪，懷璧其罪。 *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*, the tenth year of Duke Huan, 7.7b.

119. For instance, Zhang Han 張翰, a scion of a prominent Wu family, returned to Wu before the situation in Luoyang deteriorated (*Jin shu* 92.2384). The brothers Zhang Xie and Zhang Zai 張載 also resigned from their posts (*Jin shu* 55.1518–24).