UC Berkeley
UC Berkeley Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title
Excursion, Estates, and the Kingly Gaze: The Landscape Poetry of Xie Lingyun

Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2xq3w1k7

Author
Huang, Harrison Tse-Chang

Publication Date
2010

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

eScholarship.org Powered by the California Digital Library
University of California

Excursion, Estates, and the Kingly Gaze:

The Landscape Poetry of Xie Lingyun

by

Harrison Tse-Chang Huang

A thesis submitted in satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Chinese Language

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Robert Ashmore
Professor Paula Varsano
Professor Michael Nylan

Fall 2010

© Copyright by Harrison Tse-Chang Huang 2010
All Rights Reserved

Table of Contents

Abstract ii

Chapter One: Reading landscape as *youlan* 1

Chapter Two: Excursion and imperial impersonation 39

Chapter Three: Complicities of countryside and capital 75

Chapter Four: Connecting passages and conclusion 127

Bibliography 147

Appendix: Illustrations of *youlan* in the *Yiwen leiju* 158

Abstract

My dissertation situates Six Dynasty landscape poetry within traditions of *youlan* 遊覽 (“excursion and the panoptic view”), whose generic conventions were codified in medieval literary anthologies and commonplace compendiums. By deploying this medieval category, I bring into focus the relationship between landscape poetry and actual excursion practices such as imperial tours and surveys to prospect land for development. The significance of this approach is that it allows us to contextualize landscape poetry within a broader intellectual history that reaches back to pre-Qin debates about the ruler’s use of natural resources, and the political and economic stakes of writing within this tradition in the medieval period. Whereas previous scholars have focused on natural landscape, I call attention to landscaped nature—the manmade parks and engineered playgrounds that were crucial to early Chinese representations of excursion. Using Xie Lingyun 謝靈運 (385–433), widely hailed as the progenitor of Chinese landscape poetry, as a case study, I show landscape excursion to be a literary performance organized around imperial impersonation, and a body of practices on the ground that rehearsed and mirrored the authority and functions of the state.

Chapter One: Reading landscape as *youlan*

I. Introduction: landscape poetry as *youlan* 1
(a) Semantic range and syntax of *youlan* 6
(b) Genre and genealogy of *youlan* 12
II. The royal park as premiere excursion space 15
(a) Mencius in the excursion entourage 15
(b) Forgetting to return: center and periphery 20
(c) Positions and dispositions in the park 22
(d) Landscape as text: classicism in the "Preeminent Park exposition" 26
(e) Synopsis: *youlan* as ecstatic projection 32
III. Reading Xie Lingyun's poetry as *youlan* 36

I. Introduction: landscape poetry as *youlan*

Scholarly treatments of Chinese excursion writing often take for granted the transparency of the concept of landscape poetry, which in Chinese is called *shanshui shi* 山水詩, the poetry of "mountains and waters" (or "mountains and rivers").[1] The obviousness and obstinacy of this concept are everywhere affirmed in myriad contexts outside poetry: in the landscaped peaks and ponds that are the "mountains and waters" of Chinese gardens; in the misted hills and meandering streams of museum paintings and gift shop postcards; and in the majestic cliffs and mighty currents of the Three Gorges, engineered now into oblivion yet perhaps made more iconic through its memorialization in media. The concept of the Chinese landscape seems as basic as its elements of earth and water are fundamental, and as given and natural as their pairing in compositions. However, Chinese landscape poetry, like the objects now buried under the depths of the Three Gorges dam, is a cultural artifact whose former aspect has been partly lost to time. We remember, but imperfectly. In part, this is because the poetic representation of "landscape" has been so refined and reified in the Chinese literary tradition. For later literati in the imperial era versed in this genre, its tropes, conventions, and basic discursive terms need not be fully thematized or articulated to be understood; in a sense, the perfection of a tradition is premised on this mute transparency. For us in present times, the naturalness of landscape poetry as a category belies the considerable slippage between our terms of discussion and analysis and those properly belonging to the literary tradition of landscape poetry.

A familiar strategy for handling (or skirting) the problem of the category's historicity is to understand "mountains and waters poetry" (*shanshui shi*) as "nature poetry"; nature, it is assumed, is not a human invention. But, while nature, by definition, is natural, one's conception of the

[1] The classic works in the field exemplify this approach: J.D. Frodsham, "The Origins of Chinese Nature Poetry," *Asia Major* 8.1 (1962): 68-104; Lin Wenyue 林文月, *Shanshui yu gudian* 山水與古典 (Taibei: Xialin hanying, 1976); Ge Xiaoyin 葛曉音, *Shanshui tianyuan shipai yan jiu* 山水田園詩派研究 (Shenyang: Liaoning daxue chubanshe, 1993).

natural—bounded by historical and cultural exigencies—is not.[2]

In recent Chinese scholarship, an example of a historiography of mountain-and-rivers poetry that fails to historicize the concept of nature (*ziran* 自然) is the *History of Chinese Classical Landscape Poetry*,[3] whose theoretical underpinnings enable a kind of sprawling background of antecedents. Accordingly, it mines ancient texts such as the *Classic of Poetry* 詩經 and *Verses of Chu* 楚辭 for depictions of nature even though there is no evidence that the texts themselves thematize the natural as such.[4] However, resemblance neither constitutes influence nor, as is my aim, recovers a historically faithful category. Approaches of this kind in effect flatten the historical conditions and contexts of these early texts under the auspices of an umbrella category that is by no means a given in the works themselves.

J.D. Frodsham's study of Xie Lingyun 謝靈運 (385–483), widely hailed as the originator of Chinese landscape poetry, has framed Xie Lingyun as the first and foremost Chinese nature poet. Frodsham, recognizing the inadequacy of *shanshui* as an analytical concept, especially for its entrenched contrast with another thematic subgenre, the poetry of *tianyuan* 田園 (fields and gardens),[5] has favored instead the concept of "nature poetry" to highlight the affinities between these two subgenres ("mountains-rivers" and "fields-gardens") with respect to their shared focus on natural environs; and to draw connections between the Chinese and English lyric traditions, particularly between Xie Lingyun and Wordsworth.[6] However, Frodsham's concept of "nature poetry" is anachronistic and does not address the key question I wish to pose in this chapter: What were the literary and epistemic categories by which medieval readers themselves understood Xie Lingyun's landscape poetry?

My argument aims to shift our discussion of Chinese landscape poetry, taking Xie Lingyun as a case study, away from the terms "nature" and even *shanshui* and reframe it instead according

---

[2] Nowhere is this more apparent than the term's being subject to the exigencies of linguistic change and cultural exchange. Originally, *ziran* refers to what is the case (*ran* 然) in-and-of-itself (*zi* 自). It comes to mean "nature" in the contemporary sense as a translation of concepts introduced by Japan and Western countries. For a general discussion of how and under what conditions the translation of a foreign language alters the target language, see: Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900–1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995): pps. 1–44.

[3] Tao Wenpeng 陶文鵬 and Wei Fengjuan 韋鳳娟, eds. *Zhongguo gudai shanshuishi shi* 中國古代山水詩史 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2004).

[4] In narratives of Chinese literature, it is unseemly to discover all the offspring—very sensitive to suggestion—begat by the *Classic of Odes*. The actual influence of antecedent texts is hard to demonstrate, but it is easy to naturalize histories that narrate influence.

[5] In Chinese literary criticism, this distinction is invoked to contrast Xie Lingyun with Tao Qian 陶潛(365-427). In a letter written for Yuan Zhen (與元九書), Bo Juyi 白居易 (772–846) furnishes a history of literature that associates Xie Lingyun with the tag *shanshui*, and Tao Qian with the "farmstead" (*tianyuan* 田園): "Xie Lingyun's profound breadth was for the most part mired in mountains and rivers; Tao Qian's lofty antiquity was inordinately cast into farms and gardens." (以康樂之奧博, 多溺於山水；以淵明之高古, 偏放于田園; from: *Boshi changqing ji* 白氏長慶集, 45.3, collected in the *Siku quanshu.*) So it seems that by the mid-Tang, the association between Xie Lingyun and *shanshui* had become stabilized. However, during the Six Dynasties, *shanshui* was not a fixed literary category. For a study of these subgenres, see Ge Xiaoyin 葛曉音, *Shanshui tianyuan shipai yan jiu* 山水田園詩派研究, *op. cit.* For a comparative study of *tianyuan* poetry, see Charles Kwong, "The Rural World of Chinese 'Farmstead Poetry' (*Tianyuan shi*): How Far Is It Pastoral?" in *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* (CLEAR), Vol. 15, (Dec., 1993), pp. 57-84.

[6] J.D. Frodsham, *The Murmuring Stream, The Life and Works of Hsieh Ling-yün (385-433), Duke of K'ang-Lo* (Kuala Lampur: University of Malaya Press, 1967).

to the poetic subgenre and epistemic category known in the medieval period as *youlan* 遊覽. This compound is comprised of *you*, a generic verb for excursion (which includes activities such as banquet outings, hunts, sightseeing and royal tours of inspection) and *lan*, whose basic meaning, "to panoptically behold the surrounds," signifies an entire class of viewing modes (such as surveying land, observing phenomena, making oneself visible, as well as to read and intellectually penetrate). As the demarcation of a thematic subgenre of poetry, *youlan* allows us recover the themes, tropes, topoi and core narratives that informed Xie Lingyun's literary production (what we now call landscape poetry) and his reception by readers in his own time. As an epistemic category, *youlan* enables us to situate landscape poetry in a nexus of early Chinese discourses about political authority, economic control, ethical cultivation, genteel arts, and the uses of pleasure. By reframing landscape poetry as excursion and viewing, I thereby foreground its active, verbal modes; in effect, I am approaching landscape not as a terrestrial domain or natural object but as a performative space of signifying acts that are *observed*—both in the sense of habitually practiced and publicly witnessed.

In the time of Xie Lingyun, *youlan* was already a refined literary and discursive utterance. As such, it exhibits what we might call a formed "syntax": an identified subject, a demarcated and cohesive range of action verbs, and the corresponding objects of those actions.

The import of this approach is that it both brings together independent observations about Chinese landscape in previous scholarship into a unifying and historically faithful framework and draws connections to non-poetic texts and discursive contexts that have been taken for granted as unrelated. For example, Frodsham defined nature poetry as "the genre which uses the landscape, whether majestically rugged or charmingly rustic, as a means of conveying ethical principles."[7] Whereas for Frodsham, the "ethical principles" conveyed through Xie Lingyun's work reflected the poet's engagement with Buddhist enlightenment, I situate his poetry more broadly within Han expositions about the capital park, and representations of excursion and viewing thematized in earlier Chinese texts such as the *Book of Documents* and the *Mencius.*

Whereas Frodsham emphasized "majestically rugged" and "charmingly rustic" natural landscapes,[8] I will call attention to landscaped nature, the manmade royal parks and imperial recreation grounds that are at the center of excursion writing in early and medieval China. As engineered and carefully landscaped constructions, they problematize the distinction between the natural and manmade; centrally located at the state capital, these playgrounds complicate our notions of urban and rural. Moreover, they are venues for pleasurable hunts, ritualized archery and gentlemanly arts, and are thus sites where aesthetic appreciation, political authority and ethical education all intersect.

Before I begin my argument proper, given the importance of the term *shanshui* in literary criticism about landscape poetry, let us reconsider the term's provenance. The purpose of this is twofold: to show its inadequacy as a tool for analyzing the genre of landscape poetry; and to highlight the prominence of the term (and its related lexicon) in contexts outside poetry, a fact that alerts us to how landscape poetry cannot be fully accounted for strictly within the construction of the poetic canon itself.

If we track this term in texts from the Warring States up to the medieval period, its

---

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 88.

[8] For Frodsham, these two tags are gestures towards encompassing, respectively, Xie Lingyun's "mountains-rivers" poetry and Tao Qian's "fields-garden" poetry. In am eschewing both of these thematic tags in favor of *youlan*.

frequency of appearance is surprisingly low given its contemporary currency, and there is no evidence that it is marked as a literary genre or even a particularly privileged term among other possible candidates, which I discuss below. The elevation of this term can be traced to how genealogies of landscape painting and poetry organized medieval texts in search of the prestige conferred by an early pedigree. During the Ming, the connoisseurship of landscape painting necessitated a story of its origins, which were traced back to Six Dynasties (222–589 AD) texts with *shanshui* in their titles.[9]

While a discussion of the relationship between Six Dynasties painting and landscape poetry would take us too far afield, let me note how this genealogy is problematic. First, it is unclear whether the early titles in which *shanshui* appear are original or fabrications in service of producing a teleological story of origins. (More generally, it may be anachronistic to speak of "original" titles in a manuscript culture, wherein titles are neither sacrosanct nor fixed.) Secondly, it remains to be proven that *shanshui* functions as a privileged, key term in these texts and in the Six Dynasties at large. In fact, the term *shanshui* circulated alongside several other closely-related terms such as, to name but a few, *shanchuan* 山川 (mountains and streams), *shanze* 山澤 (mountains and marshes), *qiuhe* 丘壑 (hills and gullies), and *qiushan* (hills and mountains). None of these terms took pride of place, and in many cases, if not mutually interchangeable, exhibited significant fluidity and overlap in usage. For example, Zhong Rong 鍾嶸 (468–518) lauded his contemporary Xie Lingyun (385–483) for his poetry of "*shanquan* 山泉 (mountains and springs)."[10] And Xie Lingyun himself reserves no special place for *shanshui* in his vocabulary: it appears but twice in his entire opus.

Within literary genealogies, the reification of the term *shanshui* derives from the *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 [The Literary Mind & the Carving of Dragons] by Liu Xie 劉勰 (466–520), whose influential pronouncement appears in the chapter "Elucidating Poetry (*mingshi* 明詩)." If we reconsider this passage without any prior assumptions, the emphasis here is not so much on a subject matter of writing (such as nature) as on qualities of literary style (such as structural complexity and the unusual effects enabled therein).

宋初文詠, 體有因革。 莊老告退, 而山水方滋。 儷采百字之偶, 爭價一句之奇, 情必極貌以寫物, 辭必窮力而追新, 此近世之所競也。	In prose and poetry at the start of the Song dynasty (founded in 420), there was both continuity and change in literary form. When Laozi and Zhuangzi withdrew, *shanshui* flourished: [writers] embellished the coordinated pairs and parallel structure of a passage, and competed in the unusual novelty of an individual line. In disposition, they necessarily exhausted appearances to depict things; in phrasing, they necessarily exerted their strength to pursue novelty. This is what recent ages have strived to do.[11]

Constructions of the Chinese literary canon have taken this passage as the *locus classicus* for the emergence of landscape poetry in general and Xie Lingyun's work in particular. Focusing on the

[9] See: Susan Bush and Shih Hsio-yen, eds., *Early Chinese Texts on Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1985).

[10] For an annotated discussion of this passage, see Wang Shumin 王叔岷, ed. *Zhong Rong Shipin jianzheng gao* 鍾嶸詩品箋證稿 (Taibei: Zhongyang yanjiu yuan wenzhe suo, 2004): 117. Wang Shumin and the commentators that he cites take for granted that *shanshui* is the implied, default term and work backwards from that assumption.

[11] Zhan Yang 詹鍈, ed., *Wenxin diaolong yizheng* 文心雕龍義證 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1999): 2.208.

line "When Laozi and Zhuangzi withdrew, *shanshui* flourished," critics have discussed the relationship between Daoism and the formation of *shanshui*, ultimately understood as a genre that, once freed from having to didactically illustrate Daoist principles, could finally discover the natural environs.[12] A corollary to this reading is the assumption that the designation "poetry at the start of the Song dynasty" refers exclusively to Xie Lingyun who, within later conventional literary history, is the defining figure of "landscape poetry." However, medieval readers would have understood this tag phrase as referring, not to Xie Lingyun alone, but to him and Yan Yanzhi 顏延之 (384–456) as a grouped pair.[13] Yet, Yan's writings were not singled out in critical reception for its attention to natural environs; he is characterized rather for a literary style whose "composition is densely-woven as brocade."[14]

If we approach the term *shanshui* as a cipher in this passage, then its meaning must be supplied by its context, in particular what Liu Xie says after mentioning it. The narrative elaborates on the kind of writing that flourished then. What has saliently emerged in the time of Xie Lingyun and Yan Yanzhi is not so much, as the conventional account goes, the natural environs as a newfound object of attention but something of quite another order: the highly wrought productions of human craft. "[Writers] embellished the *coordinated pairs* and *parallel structure* of a passage; and competed in the unusual novelty of an individual line." Here, the phrase *shanshui*—a compound that contrasts "mountains" with "rivers"—is itself a demonstration and instantiation of the phenomena to which it refers: the pairing of juxtaposed and oppositional elements within a parallel structure.[15] What is original about this period is not actually the "depiction of things" (寫物) *per se*, whether things natural or manmade. The novelty pursued at the time is characterized by how writers "exerted their strength" (窮力) to "exhaust appearances" (極貌); it is not the objects depicted that are new but the literary depictions themselves. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the style of both Xie and Yan was said to have "favored cleverly-crafted simulacra" (*shang qiaosi* 尚

[12] Ge Xiaoyin's work delineates the shared terms of this debate. Operating with the same framework, she has argued the opposite: that Daoism was both the impetus and intellectual background for the formation of nature poetry. See: "*Shanshui fang zi Zhuang-Lao wei tui* 山水方滋莊老未退" (*Xueshu yuekan* 學術月刊, 189, no. 2, 1985): 68-75. For a skeptical reappraisal of the conclusions that can be drawn from this short passage, in particular the relationship between Xie Lingyun's poetry and Daoist-inflected "Dark Learning" (*xuan xue* 玄學), see Zhao Changping 趙昌平, "*Xie Lingyun yu shanshui shi qi yuan* 謝靈運與山水詩起源" (*Zhongguo shehui kexue*, 1990/4), reprinted in in *Xie Lingyun yanjiu congshu* 謝靈運研究叢書 (Guilin: Guangxi Shifan Daxue chubanshe, 2001): vol. 3, 187-190.

[13] Xie Lingyun's biography in the *Song shu* 宋書 (67.1778-9) says:

爰逮宋氏，顏謝騰聲。靈運之興會標舉，延年之體裁明密，并方軌前秀，垂範後昆。

At the time of the Song dynasty, Yan Yanzhi and Xie Lingyun soared in their reputation. Lingyun's stirring meanings were markedly outstanding, while Yanzhi's compositional design (lit., "tailoring") was lucid yet tightly formed. Together, like carriage wheels running in tandem, they equaled the refinements of the past and extended models to posterity.

[14] "體裁綺密." To avoid the negative connotations of "dense," *mi* 密 might also be rendered as "tightly constructed."

[15] Given the compound's interchangeability with similar terms in circulation, Liu Xie's lexical choice is I believe only meaningful insofar as it satisfies the need here for a phrase that instantiates contrastive parallelism, and both connotes a cosmic scale and elemental simplicity—"water" is more elemental than streams and gullies; "mountains" resonates as a more fundamental category than mounds or barrows). Aside from this formal requirement, other similar terms would have been functionally-equivalent compounds, such as Tao Qian's, "In youth, I had no affinity for the customary; by nature, I love *hills and mountains* (*qiushan* 丘山)"; or Xie Lingyun's "In the past, I roamed the splendors of the capital, but I have never *abandoned hills and gullies* (*qiuhe* 丘壑). See Lu Qinli 逯欽立, 2:991, 2:1168.

巧似).[16] The "*si* 似" favored here is not the verisimilitude that aims to correspond to a newly discovered natural world out there but a crafted simulacra whose significance is measured in terms of how it is internally organized, just as a densely textured piece of brocade—to recall the characterization of Yan's style—was prized for the manifold elements organized under its weave. The emphasis in this *Wenxin diaolong* passage is not on the natural environs as an external object of focus but rather on the internal designs of literary composition.

If we consider an alternate phrase, *shanchuan* (mountains and streams), it appears in the medieval period with much more frequency than *shanshui*. The valence of *shanchuan* is not strictly a literary one, as it appears in contexts focused on cult sacrifice to the spirits of mountains and streams, surveying an area's economic prospects, and mapping a site's geomorphology to assess its strategic, economic and military importance.[17] Instead of focusing on "landscape" as an object, I wish to reframe the discussion in terms of the verbs of excursion; I am interested in object terms insofar as they are tied to modes of relating to space.

I will first introduce the basic terms and syntax of *youlan* and then discuss the historical sources that both thematize this term as a literary and epistemic category and furnish the key texts for my analysis in this chapter.

(a) Semantic range and syntax of *youlan*

The Chinese tradition's earliest examples of *youlan* 遊覽 identify the ruler as its classic agent who tours (*you*) and surveys (*lan*) his domains. The far reaches of human potential are figured through the ruler, and *youlan* represents the outermost limits of the subject in a mode of ecstatic, unbounded roaming (*you*) and panoptic beholding (*lan*). While I ultimately hold that, as a category of literary discourse and production, the terms *you* and *lan* are intimately bound together, it will nevertheless be useful to try to fix their semantic range as separate and discrete terms. After all, the concept of a coupling is made more concrete if one can articulate the distinct things coupled.

If we consult Ruan Yuan's 阮元 (1764–1849) compilation of word glosses found in exegetical texts, the most basic definition given by traditional commentators is that of the Han dictionary *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字, which glosses *you* as "旌旗之流": the "streaming" or "dispersal" (*liu* 流) of banner standards.[18] (Also, *you* is cognate and homophonous with *liu* 旒, which are the decorations that stream from the underside of pennants).[19] This core meaning refers both to the literal sense of banners that, dispersed and streaming high, display their ensign as well

---

[16] This label applies to Xie, Yan and Bao Zhao 鮑照. *Song shu*, 67.1778-9.

[17] For a reconstruction of the discourse of *shanchuan,* see my translation of Cheng Yü-yü's 鄭毓瑜 essay, "Bodily Movement and Geographic Categories: Xie Lingyun's 'Mountain Dwelling exposition' and the Jin-Song Discourse on Mountains and Rivers" in *The American Journal of Semiotics*, 23.1–4 (2007), 193–219.

[18] "游, 旌旗之流也." *Cf.*, Kong Yingda's (574-648) gloss: "游是旒之垂者, 旆之别名" in *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*, 2nd year of Duke Huan, 5.168. For early citations of *you* and accompanying exegetical glosses, see: Ruan Yuan 阮元, *Jingji zuangu* 經籍纂詁. Taibei: Hongye chubanshe , 1974: 378.

[19] The *Shuowen* definition is both graphically and phonetically paronomastic, punning *liu* 流 and *liu* 旒 (also written as 斿). In Old Chinese, the words 遊/游 (*yuw*) and 旒 (*ljuw*) rhyme with one another and all three can be written as 斿. Yang Bojun 楊伯峻, in his annotation for *Zuozhuan* Huan Gong 2/2, claims that 游 should be pronounced the same way as 流. See his *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhu* 春秋左轉注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990): Duke Huan 2/2, p. 88.

as to the mobilization of a royal entourage heralded by such a spectacle. For example, in a *Zuozhuan* 左傳 passage that enumerates spectacles of the ruler's moral and political authority, the display of standards (*you*) is listed among items that manifest the ruler's eminent rank and distinction.[20] To this passage, the 3rd century commentator Du Yu 杜預 (222–84), echoing the *Shuowen* definition, explains *you* in terms of the streaming and movement of banners ("旌旗之游也"). The term's early use, based on Spring and Autumn (722–481 BC) sources, is tied specifically to the ruler and, moreover, to his excursions beyond the political center of the capital.

While, in theory, this might include all cases in which the standards of the royal entourage are witnessed, its actual usage largely excludes the two most important affairs of state: warfare and cult sacrifice, both of which have their own clearly defined vocabulary.[21] Instead, *you* refers to excursions that lie beyond the purview, or ambiguously on the edge, of official functions. In the key activities associated with *you*—tours, hunts, and banquets—there is the possibility of playful diversion without demonstrable purpose. This ambiguity between purpose and play is built into the term's semantic range, which is overdetermined. By this, I not only mean that the term is multivalent (suggesting a range of activities) but that the relationship among meanings is one of tension and even contradiction. There is nevertheless a unifying rationale for this contradiction: they are the terms of an ongoing debate about the uses of royal power, leisure, and state resources. We can trace the semantic range of *you* along two lines: purpose and play.

Representative of one semantic line of *you* is its technical and most specific sense, which refers to the king's touring of farm fields in the spring to inspect the agricultural enterprise. Along the same vein, *you* can refer generally to royal tours in which the ruler travels to and inspects his domains. David Keightley, in his study of Shang 商 political practices, has argued that political power was represented by the continual procession of the royal entourage in which the "king displayed his power by frequent travel, hunting, and inspecting along the pathways of his realm."[22] The tour remained a major aspect of political power in the Warring States and Han period, during which both mythic and (allegedly) ancient practices were re-enacted.[23] There is here both spectatorship and spectacle: by these inspection tours, the king not only surveys his territory but also makes himself seen by his subjects.

His visual prominence is heightened by the royal banners heralding his procession and also by his ascent during the tour to a mirador (*guan* 觀), a raised platform for viewing the surroundings.[24] This graph can also signify two modes of viewing: in its passive sense, *guan* 觀 is "to make [oneself, or something] saliently visible to others"; in its active sense, it means "to

---

[20] *Zuozhuan*, Huan Gong 2/2: "藻、率、鞞、琫，鞶、厲、游、纓，昭其數也."

[21] *Zuozhuan*, Cheng Gong 13/2: "The great affairs of state lie in sacrifice and warfare (國之大事，在祀與戎)."

[22] David Keightley, "The Late Shang State: When, Where and What?" in David Keightley, ed., *The Origins of Chinese Civilization* (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1983): 552.

[23] See Mark Edward Lewis, "The *feng* and *shan* sacrifices of Emperor Wu of the Han" in Joseph P. DcDermott, ed., *State and Court Ritual in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999): 57. Based on the editorial background for the *Shangshu* passage that served as the purported precedent for Qin Shihuang's *feng* and *shan* sacrifices, Martin Kern has suggested that Qin scholars invented these sacrificial rites and then conferred upon them legitimacy by retroactively inserting the newly fashioned details into the *Shangshu*. See his *The Stele Inscriptions of Ch'in Shih-huang* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 2000): 111.

[24] Its most basic sense seems to be as some kind of raised architectural structure, propped up by layers of pounded earth. In can also refer to the twin gate towers of a city wall and, much later, to Daoist monasteries.

scrutinize" or "observe."[25] While the former, passive sense may be implied, the latter is an essential activity of the tour. The commentator Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200 AD) explains: "*You* refers to [the ruler's] coming and going, and scrutinizing from on high."[26] Scrutinizing is distinguished from neutral viewing verbs such as *shi* 視, "to look," by the viewer's focused attention and careful observation, as well as his high vantage point. This elevated position is emblematic of the viewer's mastery over the objects(s) and subjects scrutinized. Hence, with regard to social hierarchy, it is said that "Superiors are venerated; inferiors are low. The low do not get to scrutinize (*guan*) their superiors."[27] Conversely, in an infamous *Zuozhuan* case, Duke Ling abuses his power and his subjects: "Duke Ling shot at people from the raised platform and watched closely (*guan*) their dodging of the pellets."[28] With regard to domains of knowledge, *guan* implies a mastery over what can be deduced and known: it is said that Fu Xi 伏羲 invented writing by "scrutinizing the patterns of heaven above and the principles of earth below"[29]; and Ji Zha 季札 "scrutinized the musical performances of the Zhou states" to ascertain each state's emotional temperament, moral character, and political destiny.[30] Xunzi 荀子 exhorted others to learning: "I once gazed afar on tiptoe, but that is not as good as ascending on high and seeing comprehensively."[31] In the context of the royal tour, the act of scrutinizing affirms the king's dominion and monitorship over his lands.

A related viewing verb is *lin* 臨 "to look out over [a vista]," whose extended sense signifies control: "to preside over [the palace court or a regional office]." In excursion writings, the most prominent verbs are: *wang* 望 ("to gaze afar"), which emphasizes the distance or height separating viewer and viewed; and *lan* ("to survey from a panoptic view"), which highlights the all-encompassing and boundless scope of its purview. In its ritual sense, *wang* is a verb that always takes *shanchuan* as its direct object: "to gaze at mountains and streams," i.e., to pay cult to the spirits governing mountains and streams. In the "Canon of Shun" chapter of the *Shang shu*, the key aspects of the royal tour are framed as acts of seeing.

歲二月，東巡守。至于岱宗，柴。望秩于山川，肆覲東后。	In the second month of spring, the ruler tours east. Upon arriving at Mount Tai, he performs the firewood-burning sacrifice. In proper sequence, he gazes towards (*wang*) the mountains and streams [i.e., pays cult to the spirits governing them]; and showing proper rites, he *sees* [i.e., meets with] the eastern feudal lords.[32]

If we think of the tour as an itinerary, then the moments of seeing are the story's highpoint, often literally so. In this way, the summit view serves as a narrative climax, as it can cover far more ground than travel by carriage. While the tour's peregrination is dictated by the expediencies of

[25] In the section on palace buildings in the *Shi ming* 釋名 [Explication of names] by Liu Xi 劉熙 (fl. 20), the mirador is defined by the viewing that is performed there. "觀，觀也，於上觀望也."

[26] "遊謂出入上觀." *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義, 王制 chapter, 13.423. Another variant has 止觀, "to stop and observe." Also, in the commentary to the *Zhouli*, the phrase "囿遊" is identified as the viewing place (觀) at the park. *Zhouli zhengyi* 周禮正義, 16.499.

[27] *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋, 25.1680.

[28] "從臺上彈人，而觀其辟丸也." *Zuozhuan*, Xuan Gong 2/3. The *tai* 臺 here is probably a mound built from pounded earth instead of the multistory woodwork structure implied by translating it as "terrace."

[29] *Zhouyi zhengyi* 周易正義, *Xi ci* 繫辭, 8.298.

[30] *Zuozhuan,* Xiang Gong 29/13.

[31] "吾嘗跂而望矣，不如登高之博見也." From the essay "*Quan xue* 勸學, *Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解, 1.4.

[32] *Shangshu zhengyi*, 舜典 chapter, 3.71; and parallel text in *Liji zhengyi*, 王制 chapter, 11.425.

transport, the passage performed by the gazing eye seems as if boundless in its reach and capable of passing into even the invisible domains of the spirit world. The significance of the burning of sacrificial firewood is to properly announce to (the god of) heaven the king's arrival.[33] It is analogous to the eye's passage from the seen to the unseen: the smoke that issues from the sacrificial pyre is an ether that, in the firmament above, becomes fully consumed. Presumably, when the signal smoke rises up and finally disappears from sight, the message will have been delivered to highest heaven[34]; likewise, when the peaks and rivers gazed upon from afar recede into the haze of remote distance, their terrestrial and aquatic spirits will have received the sacrifice offered. The king's human subjects are also brought close: when the king "sees" the feudal lords assembled below him, the power of the raised view overcomes spatial constraints and obviates the need for face-to-face meetings. Moreover, this passage about the royal tour has a parallel in the *Li ji* 禮記, which repeats the text nearly verbatim and then, in addition to the list of viewing verbs (i.e., "gaze afar" and "see/meet") attaches acts of scrutinizing: "…the king orders the music master to show the *Odes* (*shi* 詩) in order to scrutinize the customs of the people; and orders the market to present traded goods in order to scrutinize what the people like and dislike."[35] Thus the views afforded by the tour are represented not only as surpassing terrestrial limits but also as windows into historical trends of the past and cultural currents in the present.

The word *lan,* "to survey panoptically," is relatively uncommon in Warring States texts. It never appears in the thirteen classics, which uses instead a functionally equivalent phrase, *siwang* 四望 which means to gaze afar at and pay cult to the spirits of mountains and streams in all directions.[36] *Lan* might have originally been part of a Chu idiom, as it appears twenty one times in the *Verses of Chu*. Liu An 劉安 (179-122 BC), prince of Chu during the Han, had authored works included in the *Verses of Chu* anthology, and his compilation, the *Huainanzi* 淮南子, devotes a chapter to the topic *lan ming* 覽冥 ("surveying the hidden") about observing the invisible patterns of order that govern the universe.[37] The commonplace compendium *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 cites a passage from the *Verses of Chu* to illustrate *lan* as an all-encompassing gaze that can range over the world.

覽冀州兮有餘。 橫四海兮焉窮。	I survey the land between the rivers— And more lies beyond. [My gaze] sweeps across [the world within] the four sees— how can it be exhausted?[38]

In another illustration of *lan* by the *Yiwen leiju*, the *Verses of Chu* is cited again to show that *lan*'s inexhaustible visual reach is accompanied by a sense of a unlimited peripatetic ranging.

---

[33] I follow here Kong Anguo's explanation, "To burn the firewood is to sacrifice to heaven and announce one's arrival." (燔柴祭天告至) *Ibid*.

[34] Smoke is ethereal. The spirits were thought to partake in the smoke from burnt offerings.

[35] "命大師陳詩。以觀民風。命市納賈。以觀民之所好惡." *Liji zhengyi*, 王制 chapter, 11.425.

[36] This phrase appears eight times in the *Zhouli*. In one instance from the *Shangshu*, while *wang* is not accompanied by the adverb *si*, the notion of "all-around" is implied by its being grammatically parallel with *bian* 遍: "望于山川，遍于群神." *Shangshu zhengyi*, 3.65

[37] Chapter 6. See also the summary chapter (要略), which explains the significance of individual chapter titles such as *lanming*. He Ning 何寧, *Huainanzi jishi* 淮南子集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998): 21.1443.

[38] From "雲中君" in the Nine Songs. *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注, 2.59. I follow Wang Yi's gloss, "兩河之間曰冀州."

登崑崙兮四望。	I ascend Mount Kunlun— gazing in the four directions.
心飛揚兮浩蕩。	My heart soars —unfettered and free.
日將暮兮悵忘歸。	Sunset nears —in sadness, I forget to return.
惟極浦兮寤懷。。	I wish to reach the far bank—longing stirs.[39]

In this example, which uses for the phrase *siwang* ("gaze in the four directions") in place of *lan*, the gaze seems to carry one so far that one even forgets to go back.

In addition to the viewing modes outlined above, *lan*, in its expanded sense, can also mean to peruse texts, with the implication that the reader can survey a large body of material and immediately discern therein broader patterns. This expanded sense of "to peruse" connects to sensory seeing by way of the imagination: what has been seen in texts instructs what one visualizes. While, in general, all modes of seeing can be said to culturally determined, *lan* is arguably a highly textualized viewing mode, since its tropes conventionally blur the lines between seeing and reading. From the Han into the Six Dynasties, what is seen, and its significance, gazing becomes increasingly likened to reading. In this light, *lan* can be said to be as much a literary performance—something enacted through text—as an act of sensory apprehension. In a recent article, Stephen Owen has called Xie Lingyun's landscapes "bookish."[40] This characterization is not surprising if we think of Xie Lingyun as operating with *youlan* traditions, in which reading can be troped as seeing, and viewing takes place atop multiple stories of literary precedents.

Like the viewing modes of *lan*, the excursion modes of *you* also have a rich textual history, which we will now survey. *You* can refer to a particular royal institution, namely the king's tour of inspection, as well as signify a broad range of excursion activities that have no demonstrable official function. This latter sense is the most familiar to us, and is often rendered as "play," "sport," or "frolic." Zheng Xuan glosses this second semantic line thus, "*You* refers to leisure time that is free of duties."[41] In relation to the ruler, the classic agent of excursion, *you* is a general excursion verb that is associated with banquet outings, hunting expeditions, and, once again, tours.[42] The tour straddles the line between purpose and play, since in practice an inspection tour cannot be strictly differentiated from a sightseeing tour. Traveling around and fulfilling engagements from place to place easily doubles as a pretext for visiting sites of interest, and vice versa. Likewise, while the hunting expedition serves a military function as the staging ground for combat drills and tactical training,[43] the hunt is also a premiere recreational activity for the royal court and elites. Featuring charioteering, horseback riding and archery, the hunt is to be enjoyed as sport. Banquets too may be divorced from official function. While they surely lend themselves as venues for forging diplomatic ties and strengthening social bonds, there is nothing more required to sustain them than the delights of food, drink, song and women. Even when there are transactions to be clinched at the banquet, we might suppose that (as with our notion of the "power lunch"), smooth success relies much upon the blurring of business and pleasure. The considerable

---

[39] From "河伯" in the Nine Songs. *Chuci buzhu*, 2.77.

[40] Stephen Owen, "The Librarian in Exile: Xie Lingyun's Bookish Landscapes," Early Medieval China 10-11 (2004): 203-26.

[41] "遊謂閒暇無事，謂之遊." See commentary for "脩焉，息焉，遊焉" in *Liji zhengyi*, 學記 chapter, 36.1233.

[42] E.g., see *Zuozhuan*, Cheng Gong 17/10 and Zhuang Gong 8/3 where banqueting and hunting are respectively mentioned alongside *you*. In contexts that do not cite specific entertainments, *you* might be rendered generally as "to take a trip to…"

[43] The rituals for hunts and military reviews are closely linked, and in many ways, indistinguishable from one another. See Derek Bodde, *Festivals in Classical China* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1975): chapters 10, 17, 19.

regulatory baggage in the ritual texts tied to banquets, which can serve and sate every sense, only underscores a latent anxiety towards its devolving into excess.[44]

Just as the banquet does not so much refer to a particular list of delectations but the panoply of available pleasures, so also *you* is a generic excursion verb that encompasses a range of leisure activities. Leisure, by definition, is a kind of excess; it is a surplus of time that consumes a surfeit of resources. As such, it is at once a problem and a potential, both extravagance and efficacious plenitude. When taken to extremes, the excursion may be defined once more in terms of the word *liu* 流, not in the sense of the previously mentioned stream-like "dispersal" of banners, but according to the word's connotations of free-form "digression," unfocused "diversion" and moral "dissipation."[45] In the excursion, acts of viewing are climactic in two senses; they serve as narrative highpoints and emotional apogees of utmost pleasure (or, its variant, displeasure). What is pleasurable (both descriptively and prescriptively) and what agent enjoys the excursion's pleasures are foregrounded in the *youlan* genre as contested issues. Together, representations of leisure in excursion writings constitute a discourse about the proper use of lands, resources, time, desire, and what might be called the reserves of the self—emotional and intellectual—by which culture and the cultivated person are fashioned.

The relationship between this second semantic of *you*, as leisurely play, cannot be understood as separate from the first, as state ritual. Instead of seeing them as parallel lines that never meet, let us consider how these two lines are tied together like threads spun into a cord. On the most obvious level, this connection is evident in texts that feature both semantic lines, which are set off against each other such that the term *you* is a contested term and the excursion a negotiated practice. We see this early on in Warring States texts, where the technical sense of *you* as a springtime tour of inspection appears prominently in the context of a king's recreational excursions.[46] While we would not consider these as being excursion writings proper, they nevertheless belong to the medieval understanding of *youlan*'s origins as both a literary and epistemic category (see following section). The weaving of state and ritual in excursion writing will highlight for us the political and economic discourses latent in landscape writing as well as show how the key tropes of this literary genre draw heavily from the figurative language of ritual.

In addition to uncovering the continuities between excursion as state ritual and excursion as recreation, a consideration of the differences between them will also allow us to see the changing "syntax" of the *youlan* genre as it comes to be crystallized in the Six Dynasties. In particular, we see a shift of the subject from its classic agent, the ruler, to a wayfarer defined by his ethical purpose and interpretive acumen. Stronger still, this model personality comes to be defined through the *youlan* mode; the excursion becomes the definitive projection of this personality.

Corresponding to this shift in subject is a refiguring of the space of landscape. By "space," I do not strictly mean a model of space that conceives of landscape, whether explicitly or implicitly, as a container that holds natural things or terrestrial features in the way that a vessel holds items.

---

[44] The ritual texts do not deny the pleasure-taking of banquets but rather emphasize the enjoyments of harmonious sociality. In this paradigm, utility and pleasure converge in ritual. See, e.g., Xunzi's "Discourse on Music (樂論)" in *Xunzi jijie*, 20.

[45] The relationship between the words *you* and *liu* in this respect is illustrated by the many compounds formed from *liu* (e.g., *liulian* 流連, *liulang* 流浪, *liufang* 流放) that are basically synonymous with *youyi* 遊逸 and *youdang* 游蕩.

[46] E.g., see *Mengzi* 孟子 1B4; *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋 4/1.

My emphasis is not on what occupies a space but the human preoccupations that govern it.[47] This is an embodied space mapped by the dispositions (bodily movement, visual modes, emotional comportment, self-presentation) performed therein. In short, the poetic landscape is not a vessel but a vehicle; it is not so much a container of natural objects ("mountains" and "water") as a narrative for the projection of the self.

My survey of this shift in the subject and space of *youlan* will focus on the royal park, which is privileged for featuring the full gamut of excursion activities including hunting, touring and banqueting.

(b) Genre and genealogy of *youlan*

We first see the formulation of *youlan* as an operative category in two medieval classificatory schemes: the *Wen xuan* 文選 [Selections of refined literature; *c*. 530 AD][48], the earliest fully-extant literary anthology to organize literary works into thematic subgenres; and, more importantly, the *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類舉 [Texts arrayed into categorized exemplars; 624 AD], the first encyclopedic compendium to condense and classify the totality of textual knowledge.[49] We find that neither scheme identifies a body of writing defined vis-a-vis "nature," "natural environs," or "*shanshui* 山水." Rather, the *Wen xuan* anthology classifies the poetry of Xie Lingyun 謝靈運 (385–433), widely hailed as the progenitor of Chinese landscape poetry, under the thematic subgenre of "excursion and the panoptic gaze" (*youlan*).[50] While some scholars have noted this fact, they have not pursued the significance or medieval understanding of this category.[51] To address this critical blind spot, I deploy the *Yiwen leiju* (hereafter, known as *YWLJ*), which furnishes a textual genealogy of *youlan* that is comprised of excerpts from early, non-poetry sources. (The reader may refer to Appendix A, which includes the text and translation of the *youlan* exemplars).

Whereas a dictionary gives definitions, the *YWLJ* gives illustrations, through examples. The *YWLJ* does not define a category with a generalizing concept abstracted from particular cases, but instantiates it through representative examples, from which the reader may infer their unifying concept. What is expected from the *YWLJ* reader is analogous to what Confucius expected from his students: the student, once he is presented with one corner of a square, should be able to infer

[47] For a phenomenological analysis of place, see Casey S. Edward, *Getting Back Into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).

[48] The *terminus ante quem* for its completion is the death of its chief editor, the Liang crown prince Xiao Tong 蕭統, in 531. Since the anthology appears to follow the custom of excluding writers still alive, the earliest date for its compilation is 526, the year that one anthologized writer, Lu Chui 陸倕, died. For considerations regarding the compilation date, see: David R. Knechtges. *Wen xuan, or, Selections of Refined Literature.* Vol. 1 (N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982): 10; n. 82-3.

[49] Ōuyang Xun 歐陽詢 et al. (557-641). *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1965). Cao Pi's court compiled the first encyclopedia, the *Huang lan* 皇覽 [The imperial panoptic view], which survives only in fragments. See Hu Daojing 胡道靜, *Zhongguo gudai de leishu* 中國古代的類書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982): 39-43.

[50] What's more, Xie Lingyun is the most anthologized author in the *Wen xuan* and his poems are largely distributed in the subgenre called *youlan*.

[51] E.g., Zhao Changping 趙昌平, "*Xie Lingyun yu shanshuishi qiyuan* 謝靈運與山水詩起源," in *Zhongguo shehui kexue*, 1990/4.

how its other three corners are drawn.[52] The *YWLJ* presents what is presumed to be joined together but not the joinery that binds them. If we wanted a dictionary definition, the *YWLJ* exposition of *youlan* may appear messy. However, for the purposes of reconstructing the discursive fields by which medieval readers situated landscape poetry, this messiness is a boon, since it allows us to connect landscape poetry to texts that hitherto seemed unrelated.

None of the examples illustrating *youlan* are contemporaneous with the *YWLJ*'s compilation; they are all, except entry #16, drawn from sources of Han dynasty provenance or earlier.[53] From this, we can infer that the *YWLJ* compilers selected these examples not only for their assumed conceptual affinities but also for their status as early models of the category. They thus constitute, from the perspective of a medieval readership, a genealogy of *youlan*, a textual lineage landscape poetry within longstanding, classical discourses about the functions of excursion and viewing.

Furnishing a genealogy of *youlan* that traces back to a broad range of Warring States and Han sources, the *YWLJ* supplements what we can infer from the *Wen xuan*, whose *youlan* selections are limited in terms of type (i.e., poetry) and historical period (Six Dynasties).[54] My analysis will therefore focus on the *YWLJ* illustration of *youlan*. Before doing so, I wish to first consider what we can infer about *youlan* from the *Wen xuan*'s formulation of it as a literary genre.

The *Wen xuan* is the first fully-extant "general collection" (*zongji* 總集) that anthologizes the full range of literary forms and thematic subgenres. It follows at the heels of more than two centuries of anthology making, beginning with Zhi Yu's 摯虞 (d. 312) *Wenzhang liubie* 文章流別 [Writings divided by genre], which survives only in fragments.[55] These anthologies were a response to the proliferation of belletristic writings after the Jian'an 建安 period (196-220 AD).[56] While surviving fragments of the *Wenzhang liubie* cite nine literary genres,[57] the *Wen xuan* is useful for its classificatory specificity, delineating a total of thirty-eight genres further divided into numerous thematic subgenres.

Let us consider how the *youlan* subgenre relates to others in the anthology. As the only

---

[52] *Analects* 7/8: "舉一隅不以三隅反，則不復也."

[53] Most of the cited sources are compilations of allegedly earlier materials, such as the *Zhanguo* ce 戰國, *Mutianzi zhuan* 穆天子傳, *Han Shi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳, and *Kongzi jiayu* 孔子家語. The historically latest example is from the *Shishuo xinyu* 世説新語. We must bear in mind that the dating of these texts by *Yiwen leiju* compilers may differ from the views of modern scholars.

[54] The *Wen xuan* selections of *youlan* open with Cao Pi 曹丕 (187–226) and close with Xu Fei 徐悱 (d. 524).

[55] *Ibid*., 35.1082. Another candidate for the earliest general collection is Du Yu's 杜預 (222-85) *Shan wen* 善文 [Fine writings], which has not survived. Luo Hongkai 駱鴻凱 points out that it is the earliest to be cited in commentarial traditions. (See: Luo Hongkai 駱鴻凱. *Wen xuan xue* 文選學. Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1937: pp.) However, the *Sui shu* monograph's editorial comments make no special mention of the *Shan wen* and instead singles out the *Wenzhang liubie* as the model for later anthologies. It catalogs the *Shan wen* as having fifty *juan*; *Wenzhang liubie* as forty-one *juan*; and the *Wen xuan* as thirty juan. Also attributed to Zhi Yu are two *juan* of notes (*zhi* 志) and essays (*lun* 論), whose surviving fragments are collected in *Quan Jin shu*, 76.1905-6. For an annotated edition, see: Xu Wenyu 許文雨. *Wen lun jiang shu* 文論講疏 (Nanjing: Zhengzhong shuju, 1937).

[56] See section on *zongji* in the *Sui shu* 隨書 "monograph on literature," 35.1089.

[57] *Shi* 詩, *fu* 賦, eulogy (*song* 頌), exhortation (*zhen* 箴), inscription (*ming* 銘), dirge (*lei* 誄), commemorative tablet (*bei* 碑), words of mourning (*aici* 哀辭), and refuting ridicule (*jiechao* 解嘲). The *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 cites ten genres, seven of which are the same as the first seven listed above; the remaining three are discourse (*lun* 論), memorial (*zou* 奏), and persuasion (*shui* 說).

subgenre to appear in both the *shi* 詩 and *fu* 賦 forms, *youlan* seems to be a meta-category: a distillation of general tropes about excursion and viewing drawn from excursion poems about particular locales. Among poems in the *fu* form, there are many site-specific subgenres: capitals (in *juan* 1-6), sites of suburban and agricultural sacrifice (7-8), hunting grounds (8-9), military campaigns (10), palace buildings (11), and rivers (12). Since generic commonplaces probably developed out of treatments of specific places, the locales listed above furnish for us an outline of the earliest types of excursion poetry. This list is comparable to the types of works catalogued in the Han imperial library. Those that appear to be about excursion or "landscape," loosely defined are:

> 出行巡狩及游歌詩十篇
> Songs and poems about going out on inspection tours and excursions, 10 *pian*
>
> 雜行出及頌德賦二十四篇
> Miscellaneous *fu* on excursions and praises of imperial achievements, 24 *pian*
>
> 雜山陵水泡雲氣雨旱賦十六篇
> Miscellaneous *fu* on mountains, water, clouds, and rain, 16 *pian*[58]

From the site-specific excursions listed above, we see that it is the ruler who is the assumed subject: i.e., both the discursive topic and acting/perceiving agent. He occupies the imperial center that is the capital and its palaces; presides over state sacrifices; acts as commander-in-chief in hunts and military campaigns; and wields the authority to sacrifice to the spirits of pan-regional mountains and rivers. He is the organizing principle uniting these various locales and their associated activities.

The ruler is more than a political institution: he is not only the governor of the state (and its organized sites), he is also in early Chinese thought the governing figure for conceptions of the human subject and its potential modes of being-in-the-world. While classical Chinese has no word that corresponds to the term "Subject," the figure of the ruler functions similarly as an abstraction. Abstracted from such particularities as individual predisposition and circumstance, the Ruler is a figure around which discourses about perception, pleasure, emotion, economic consumption, self-cultivation and state authority coalesce. The philosophy of consciousness introduced by Buddhism in the Six Dynasties abstracted the subject from its political and social contexts in favor of a "pure" study of the mind. By contrast, in early Chinese thought, the placeholder figure for articulating the potential and disposition of the subject was not the "everyman" but the privileged figure of the ruler. The Ruler stands for all men, not because he is interchangeable with anyone, but precisely because he signifies unlimited potential by being privileged in every way. Equipped with supreme rank and material accoutrements, he functions as the test subject by which the possibilities of the human being are imagined and negotiated.[59]

The prominence of the ruler in excursion writings brings into focus the relationship between political authority and poetic authorship, between the royal gaze and the lyric vision of

[58] *Han shu* 30.1753. In the third title, we have two-character compounds whose parts are either redundant or opposite; their meaning can be rendered by translating the first part. E.g., the Chinese compound "long-short" (*changduan* 長短) simply means length. Likewise, "mountains-barrows" (*shanling* 山陵) are mountains and "rain-drought" (*yuhan* 雨旱) rain.

[59] Contrast for example, the test subject of Kant's formulation of the categorical imperative in which the ethical subject is emptied of any particularizing accoutrements in favor of a universalized human being.

landscape. While we may not immediately associate landscape poetry with the royal procession, the *YWLJ* illustrations of *youlan* corroborate this connection. Among its sixteen examples, ten explicitly feature the ruler as the agent of excursion and the panoptic view, and most of the remaining six can be seen as variations predicated on this premise.

It is also important to note that depictions of natural landscape in the *YWLJ* examples are either spare or absent altogether. The space represented in *youlan* writings is not so much natural landscape but a human *habitus*, by which I mean a site organized around the performance and witnessing of actions that signify habitual dispositions and comportments. The most prominent and representative *habitus* among the *YWLJ* examples is the royal park. As a venue, it offers the full range of leisure activities: hunting, touring and banqueting. As a cultural icon, the park estate is plenitude itself, an aggregation of political privilege, economic power and leisure time. I will thus organize my analysis of the *YWLJ* examples of *youlan*, which may seem sprawling and repetitious, around the site of the royal park.

II. The royal park as premiere excursion space

In (a), I will trace *YWLJ* entry #14 to the text of the *Mencius*, whose dialogues between philosopher and king represent the landscape as performative space for manifesting personal dispositions; in (b) I track the recurrent motif of "forgetting to return," adumbrated by the *Mencius*, in several *YWLJ* examples. This motif maps excursion as a political-ethical space organized around the coordinates of center and periphery; in (c), I analyze the relationship posited by *YWLJ* entries between spatial position and human disposition. Then, in section (d), I analyze the incorporation and transformation of these tropes in a poem: the exposition of the *Shanglin* 上林 imperial park by Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 (179-118 BC).

(a) Mencius in the excursion entourage

In Part I.a, I showed that the semantic range of *you*, as seen in traditional glosses and commentaries, encompasses two opposites: purposeful ritual and unfettered play. On one hand, in its most technical and normative sense, *you* refers to the king's springtime tour of his domains, in which he inspects the agricultural harvest and supplements scarcities; on the other hand, it is unstructured recreation that has no demonstrable purpose or official function, such as with park outings, sightseeing tours, lavish banquets and unbridled hunting trips. This semantic tension reflects a philosophical dilemma posed by classicists about the function of royal tours, public spectacle, and excess—as both economic plenitude and the extra time that is leisure.

YWLJ entry #14 represents an attempt at reconciling the ethics of ritual regulation and the excess of unfettered play. (Since each *YWLJ* entry is short, I will always quote the entire passage).

新序曰，晉平公遊西河，中流而歎曰，嗟乎，安得賢士，與共此樂乎。	*New Compilation* (by Liu Xiang, 79–8 BC): When Duke Ping of Jin toured West River[60] and sailed in the river, he sighed, "Ah! How do I attain worthy men with whom to share this joy?"[61]

[60] I.e., the stretch of the Yellow River between Shanxi 山西 and Shanxi 陝西 that runs from north to south.

[61] Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 et al. (557 – 641), *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1965),

This passage belies a philosophical debate about the relationship between the joys of recreation and the ethical duties of governance. The solution to this implicit problem is the inclusion of "worthy men," ethical examplars, in the royal entourage. This motif of sharing joy has its roots in the *Mencius*, which espouses "sharing pleasures" (*tongle* 同樂). The concentration of power and possible enjoyments in the figure of the ruler is diffused by the sharing of pleasure, and the more equal distribution of goods implied by this ideal.

Just as the semantic range of *you* encompasses a contradiction, so also Mencius's role at court is double: he plays both the Confucian philosopher and the court entertainer.[62] Mencius (4th c. BC) was a *you ke* 游客, or "itinerant guest." These "itinerant guests" of the Warring States period were free agents who, untied to any state, traveled from one court to another seeking employment. They are conventionally associated with philosophers or specialists in classicism, ritual, government, and warfare. However, we must bear in mind that the services they offered were multitudinous; included therein were entertainments and pleasures for the king such as storytelling and musical performance, for which there is little textual documentation. For example, the *Analects* speaks of music maestros who traveled far from their native locale in search of an employer.[63] While these personages may be mythic, they highlight the breadth of services offered by itinerant specialists during the Warring States. For our purposes, we can also understand Mencius's status as a *you ke*, "itinerant guest," to mean "excursion guest," since he is staged in the text as a guest companion invited by kings to park excursions and sightseeing outings.[64] Playing the roles of both Confucian philosopher and court entertainer, Mencius' discussion of the park estate with the king straddle both definitions of *you*, as both purposeful ritual and recreational play. The *Mencius* thereby circumscribes for us the range of discourses regarding excursion activities.

There are three episodes in which Mencius is a guest at a king's park. In each case, the park is superimposed against and compared with models from high antiquity by Mencius or, as in the following case, by the king himself. In *Mencius* 1B2, King Xuan of Qi asks Mencius whether the royal park of the legendary Zhou founder, the Civilizing King (*Wen wang* 文王), was indeed nearly twice as large as his own. While King Xuan's park covers an area of forty *li* square, nearly half the size of a small state, that of the Civilizing King's was reputed to be seventy *li* 里 square. Mencius argues that while his park is small by comparison, it is nevertheless considered "too big" by his subjects because they are prohibited from accessing its resources, for to procure game from it was as punitively severe as murdering a man. From this brief episode, we can infer that (1) royal parks were large; (2) they were restricted areas marked by exclusivity and privilege, such that rulers competed with one another over their size; and (3) they were not, as we might envision, nature preserves protected from use. Rather, royal parks were economically fruitful estates that generated products—e.g., game meat, leather, timber, herbs—and were themselves sites of consumption that housed royal palaces and, as we will see in the third episode, sightseeing venues. Finally, we note how Mencius shifts the terms of his discussion away from the estate's physical

---

28:499–500.

[62] I use the term "Confucian" in its most minimal sense—as someone who represents himself to be a follower of Confucius—instead of referring broadly to Traditionalists (*ru* 儒).

[63] *Analects*, 18/9.

[64] For a discussion of the rhetoric of court entertainment, see my masters thesis, "Desire and the Fulfillment of Integrity in the Mencian Dialogues," UC-Berkeley, 2002; and my article co-authored with Michael Nylan, "Mencius on Pleasure," in Marthe Chandler and Ronnie Littlejohn (eds.), *Polishing the Chinese Mirror: Essays in Honor of Henry Rosemont, Jr.* (New York: Global Scholarly Publications, 2008): 244–269.

dimensions and emphasizes instead the actions enacted there (in this case, the deployment of punitive measures to forbid access to the park's resources). The *Mencius* emphasizes actions and dispositions, including that of viewing, performed at the park.

In *Mencius* 1A4, King Xuan of Qi invites Mencius to the royal estate's Snow Palace and asks his guest whether he too takes pleasure in it. In this episode, Mencius' doubling as both philosopher and entertainer enables both semantic lines of *you* to be put into play. Mencius' response negotiates the significance of *you* by reframing it, not as the recreational outing that the king intends, but as the ritual tour of inspection that the illustrious kings of old were said to have practiced.

This semantic shift has material consequences: how the ruler goes out reflects how state goods circulate. The park estate produced income that went directly to the ruler's privy purse, to be used at his discretion (or indiscretion); it was thus a restricted area that was also fiscally separate.[65] By contrast, the inspection tour prescribed by Mencius makes the space of excursion permeable and state goods more equally distributable. Mencius illustrates the qualities of a true king through the exemplary tour of inspection ascribed to the venerably ancient reign of the Xia 夏.[66]

春省耕而補不足,
秋省斂而助不給。
夏諺曰,
吾王不游, 吾何以休。
吾王不豫, 吾何以助。
一遊一豫, 為諸侯度。

In spring, the King inspects the plowing and supplements scarcities;
In autumn, He inspects the harvest to remedy insufficiencies.
A Xia proverb says,
If Our King does not tour in spring (*you*),
how can we have time for resting?
If Our King does not tour each fall,
how can we have a windfall?
By tours (*you*) vernal and autumnal,
He sets model measures for lords all.[67]

Mencius' reconfiguration of *you* has several important consequences that resonate with the development of the *youlan* genre. First, the space of excursion is not framed as a container of natural assets but as a performative space that manifests the illustrious endowments and capacities of the sojourner. Political authority is, in turn, redefined as the public procession and outward excursion of the ruler instead of by the contained spaces of his sequestered park and cloistered palaces. Finally, the terrain traveled becomes textured with the antiquarian models superimposed upon it; in short, the landscape becomes textualized.

The semantic range of *you* supplies terms of fluid application such that the critique of the king's excursion is carried out through the selfsame language of excursion. Mencius appropriates the word's association with *liu*, not as the *streaming* banners that signal the royal tour but as a movement that gone *adrift* and become morally *dissipate*. Below, Mencius enumerates the recreational excursions enjoyed by the king—sightseeing, hunting, and banqueting—and then describes them in terms of *liu* and a series of related appellations to imply an errant excursion that has strayed far from the center. In short, to wander adrift is to err. (This trope is also reflected in

[65] In depicting the excesses and failure of the Later Han, the standard history highlights the enormous privy purse amassed by Emperor Ling 靈帝 through channels that bypassed the state bureaucracy. See chapter 8 of the *Hou Han shu* 後漢書.

[66] In our received texts, the earliest precedent for this ritual tour of inspection appears in the *Shangshu* (discussed above on p. 10), which does not mention the king supplementing what is scarce during his inspection tour. There is a parallel passage in *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋, 4/1.

[67] In Old Chinese, all six lines of the proverb follow the same rhyme. *Mengzi zhushu* 孟子注疏, 2.49.

English: “error” comes from the Latin *errare*, “to wander.”)

從流下而忘反謂之流,
從流上而忘反謂之連,
從獸無厭謂之荒,
樂酒無厭謂之亡。
先王無流連之樂,
荒亡之行。惟君所行也。

Forgetting to return by following the drift downstream is called *floating adrift* (*liu*);
Forgetting to return by following the drift upstream is called *loitering about*;
Hunting game without satiety is called *wasted to extremes*;
Relishing drink without satiety is called *lost in abandon.*
The First Kings did not partake in the pleasures of dissipate dallying and the journeys (*xing*) of errant abandon. I look to how Milord would choose His course of conduct (*xing*).[68]

We see here how the language of excursion parallels the language of ethics. The word *xing* 行 bifurcates to signify both a “journey” and a “course of conduct.” Moral trespass is accordingly expressed in terms of spatial orientation: to *lian* 連 is to loiter and linger without purpose as if tethered to a place; *huang* 荒 refers to geographically remote wastelands and the extreme behavior characteristic of a wastrel; *wang* 亡 is to be lost, nowhere to be found, and the dereliction of an absentee ruler. Together this series of spatial-ethical orientations map the park estate in the cultural imaginary as a problematic, peripheral space that may displace the ruler’s proper station and marginalize his moral standing. The motif of “forgetting to return”—repeated twice here and resonant throughout *youlan* poetry—does not refer to a geographical point but the wayfarer’s personal disposition and orientation in excursion.

I will further discuss in section (b) the theme of forgetting to return as seen in the *YWLJ* illustrations; and later in section (d), its antithesis: return proper.

The third park episode in the Mencius demonstrates key motifs of *lan*: an expansive visual survey of the land; the viewing act’s convergence with a climax of pleasure or intensity of emotion; and the relationship between viewing a vista and reading a text. For Mencius, how one sees and enjoys the view is not a sensory given; consequently, viewing is not so much an apprehension of the properties of the vista (here, the park estate) as an index of the viewer himself.

孟子見梁惠王，王立於沼上，顧鴻雁麋鹿，曰「賢者亦樂此乎。」孟子對曰「賢者而後樂此；不賢者，雖有此，不樂也。

Mencius had an audience with King Hui of Liang. While the king stood over the pond and looked upon the wild geese and deer, he said “Do worthies [such as you] also enjoy this? Mencius replied, “It is only the worthy who takes pleasure in this; if one is not a worthy, then even though one may possess it, one does not [actually] take pleasure.”[69]

After the king surveys the park with the pride of a proprietary gaze, he makes an appeal to Mencius to enjoy the surrounds, “Do worthies such as you also enjoy this?” Mencius’ response—“though one may possess it, one does not [actually] take pleasure”– calls into question the immediacy of pleasure derived from the eye.[70] Although the king’s gaze is struck with a sense of immediacy—as if the eye were unmediated in its direct visual acquisition of things and sensory grasp of the

[68] *Mengzi zhushu*, 2.50.
[69] *Mencius* 1A2.
[70] I have translated Mencius’ use of “*le* 樂” as “to take pleasure” instead of “to enjoy” (which is what his interlocutor means) in order to connote a cultivated action instead of an immediate sensory reaction. For Mencius, one’s pleasures are as behaviors: they can and must be refashioned. Those who have done so are termed “worthies (*xian* 賢),” which I understand here as a generic term that is not, as in medieval sage theory, strictly distinguished from “*shengren* 聖人.”

pleasure they yield, for Mencius, true enjoyment is socially mediated. We must recognize that in this scene there are actually two distinct moments and directions of looking. The first is the king's gazing at the pond, individually taking stock of its geese and deer; the second—a social-oriented seeing—is when he turns to Mencius and looks to him to partake in this pleasure outing. For Mencius, to be lost in the former gaze is to "forget to return"; to attend to the latter view—wherein one regards, and is regarded by another, with shared pleasure—is to return from an errant outlook. True enjoyment does not lie in proprietary holdings but is a property of one's inner cultivation of social pleasures.

The alternate excursion that Mencius subsequently presents highlights the social act of viewing and downplays the import of the viewed object, the surveyed park, which becomes literally immaterial: Mencius invites the king on an imaginary journey to the park of the legendary Civilizing King. To cease "forgetting to return" is to remember the models of the past.

> 詩云「經始靈臺，經之營之。庶民攻之，不日成之。經始勿亟，庶民子來。王在靈囿；麀鹿攸伏。麀鹿濯濯，白鳥鶴鶴。王在靈沼，於牣魚躍。」文王以民力為臺為沼，而民歡樂之，謂其臺曰靈臺，謂其沼曰靈沼，樂其有麋鹿魚鱉。古之人與民偕樂，故能樂也。

> The *Classic of Poetry* [Mao #242] says, "When the King commenced the Numinous Terrace, He measured and founded it. The people labored at it, and in less than a day finished it. When He built it, He did not press them, yet they came. The King is in the Numinous Park, where doe and deer lay. Doe and deer spring and prance, white birds gleam and glisten. The King is at the Numinous Pond, full of fish jumping." The Civilizing King used the people's strength to build terrace and pond, and the people in conviviality took pleasure in them. They called them the Numinous Terrace and Numinous Pond and took pleasure in their deer and fish. The ancients enjoyed together with the people and thus were [truly] capable of taking pleasure.[71]

The underlying premise of *youlan* is that it is the primarily the viewer who is on display. Whereas King Xuan is depicted as surveying and enjoying the stock of his park estate, the Civilizing King is characterized by being manifestly viewed by his people—who enjoy him and partake in a pleasure of mutual regard. As seen through the public's gaze, "the King is in the Numinous Park, where deer and doe lay." He is in full view and accessible, and the Numinous Park, for its part, becomes a commons for a public beholding. *Youlan* features as its primary spectacle the touring spectator himself.

Furthermore, the switch from King Xuan's excursion invitation to Mencius' alternative invitation reflects an inward turn. What was originally intended by the king as a recreational exercise becomes an exercise in reading: the journey offered by Mencius takes place through a recitative performance of the *Classic of Poetry*. In effect, what is presented for the king's view expands spatially and temporally such that he gazes beyond the geese and deer of the park immediately before him and can broadly survey the illustrious monuments and paragons of the past. It is in this sense that *lan* is truly panoptic: as with reading a text, it not beholden to but what eyes behold.

To summarize, the *Mencius* is the context by which *YWLJ* entry #14 (p. 15) must be understood because it represents a constitution of the excursion entourage that is predicated on the

[71] *Mencius* 1A2.

"worthiness" of the wayfarer. Accordingly, it configures the premiere excursion site, the park estate, as a *habitus*, i.e., a performative space organized around actions and dispositions that are *observed* (both in the sense of habitually followed and publicly seen). It is this premise that informs and enables Mencius' descriptions of errant wandering to signify erroneous behavior. Being "adrift" and "forgetting to return" manifest a person's *bearings*: as both his sense of orientation and the outward demeanors that bear out his personality.

The *Mencius* is not an antithetical to pleasure or recreation; rather, it circumscribes a discourse about excursion in which pleasure, leisure and classicism are conjoined. Consequently, the "landscape" is thereby text-ured with classical models such that viewing becomes an act of reading (*lan*) and the terrain as much a time-scape as a landscape.

(b) Forgetting to return: center and periphery

Mencius' enumeration of excursion activities and his serial renaming of them—as dissipate drifting, aimless loitering, errant wandering, and derelict abandon—together map an excursion space that is organized by center and periphery. These are political-ethical coordinates such that the king's "forgetting to return" is symptomatic of his displacement from the governing center, and the loss of his moral bearings. By mapping excursion activities vis-a-vis correct center and errant periphery, Mencius articulates a normative place and performance that the viewer, enraptured in the ecstasy of the panoptic vision, has himself lost sight of and forgotten. In the *YWLJ*'s treatment of *youlan*, this is a prominent motif that recurs across the four entries below.

What we do *not* find in these or any other *youlan* entries, is an extensive description or representation of the viewed landscape. This underscores how, in the medieval system of categories, "landscape poetry" is not about landscape per se but the modes of action and disposition displayed through excursion and viewing. Insofar as there are such descriptions in poetry, they must be read as part of the excursion narrative and the performance of viewing.

What we do find across all the *youlan* entries is a typical structure that combines three basic commonplaces in a nested fashion: (1) a minimalist excursion narrative, which stages, explicitly or implicitly, (2) a climactic moment of viewing, which closes with (3) a synoptic exclamation of pleasure. These three elements are additive. To illustrate this, consider entry #3 which is pared down to only two commonplaces: an excursion narrative and the summit view.

穆天子傳曰, 天子北昇于舂山之上, 以望四野。舂山是惟天下之高也。天子五日觀于舂山之上。

Traditions of King Mu: The Son-of-Heaven ascended in the north to the top of Mount Chong to gaze upon remote expanses in all four directions. Mount Chong is indeed the highest mountain in all under heaven. For five days, the Son-of-Heaven observed from atop Mt. Chong.

The five-day-long stay implies a lingering. In the following four entries, this lingering is intensified such the viewer is oblivious to returning, and the synoptic exclamation is added as the third commonplace in the narrative.

韓詩外傳曰, 齊景公遊於牛山而北望齊曰, 美哉國乎, 鬱鬱蓁蓁。

(#9) *Outer Traditions of Master Han's Odes*: When Duke Jing of Qi toured Ox Mountain, he gazed northward at Qi exclaimed, "Lovely is the kingdom! Lush and luxuriant."

說苑曰，齊景公遊海上。樂之，六月不歸。

(#12) *Park of Sayings*:
Duke Jing of Qi toured the seas. He delighted in them and **for six months did not return.**

又曰，楚昭王欲之荊臺遊。司馬子綦進諫曰。荊臺之遊，左洞庭之波，右彭蠡之水，南望獵山，下臨方淮，其樂使人遺老而忘死。

(#13) *Ibid*.
King Zhao of Chu wished to go roam at Jing Tower. Sima Ziqi presented himself and remonstrated, "The roaming (*you*) at Jing Tower is such that, facing the waves of Dongting Lake on the left and the waters of Pengli to the right, one gazes southward towards Mount Lie, and looks out over Fanghuai. Its pleasure is such that it makes people leave behind old age and **forget death**.

戰國策曰，昔楚王登彊臺而望崇山。左江右湖，以臨方淮。其樂忘死。

(#11) *Intrigues of the Warring States*:
Once, the King of Chu ascended the Qiang Tower and gazed upon Mount Chong. Facing rivers on the left and lakes on the right, he looked out over Fanghuai. His joy was such that he **forgot about death**.[72]

Note that the longest "landscape" description among all the *YWLJ* entries on *youlan* occurs in entry #9, in which the viewer exclaims— phrased in just four Chinese characters—that Ox Mountain is "lush and luxuriant." In context, the description serves not so much as a mimetic representation of the vista as an indication of the viewer's extreme pleasure and overwhelmed senses.[73] The narrative arc, and overall moral, of the passage is made explicit in the other entries (#12, #13, and #11), where extreme pleasure leads to the viewer's "forgetting to return," or, its variant formulation, "forgetting about death."[74] The ecstasy of excursion is such that one loses oneself completely, abandoned to an errant wandering that can result in forgetting that the pleasures of this life must terminate with death. Insofar as there are landscape descriptions found here, the greater emphasis lies not in what the viewer sees, but fails to see—that this pleasure cannot last forever. The excursion narrates a transformation of the viewer.

Entry #9, we may have noticed, does not explicitly cite the "forgetting to return" or "forgetting death" commonplace like the other entries, and we can understand this difference in two ways. A conservative, minimalist reading would take the entry as simply demonstrating the genre's basic nested structure (excursion narrative, climactic viewing and synoptic exclamation) such that the final exclamation is open-ended enough to allow a writer composing in this genre to develop it in different ways. In short, closure admits variation. Another approach would track how this excerpted passage develops in the source text, the *Outer Traditions of Master Han's Odes*, which does in fact feature the king wishing to escape death. After experiencing the apparently unlimited scope of the panoptic view, he ponders the limits of mortality. This is then followed up by a minister who chastises him for using his excess time to stray from his central duties to the state: "Look only to the agricultural enterprise—how is there excess time to ponder death?"[75] We

[72] *Yiwen leiju*, *op. cit.,* 28.499–500.
[73] In the *Mencius* 6A8, the rich bounty of Ox Mountain is adopted as a metaphor for a person's moral endowments. Accordingly, to envision this mountain's beauty is to envision the perfection the cultivated self.
[74] It is a trope that great pleasure results in a forgetfulness or failure to notice. For example, "When the Master was in Qi, he heard the Shao, and for three months did not know the taste of meat." *Analects* 7/14.
[75] This is a free translation of "惟農事之恤，何暇念死乎." *Han Shi waizhuan jishi* 韓詩外傳解釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005): 10/11 (p. 350-1).

may note that the switch from excess time to the agricultural enterprise is still occupied with time: the timetable for crop culture and the timeliness of seasons.

By thus accounting for how the passage develops in the source text, this entry can be seen as dovetailing with the other three. Both approaches—one which treats the excerpt as a closed text, and the other which ties it to its context—are in principle valid and my point is not to decide between them but to illustrate how the *YWLJ* demonstrates the genre through commonplaces that are at once discrete units and associated parts. On one hand, they are freeform enough to be enable variation, rearrangement and new effects; on the other hand, the weight of historical precedent is such that the arrangement of commonplaces coheres in recognized ways.

Seen as a whole, these *youlan* exemplars are concerned with the ruler's straying from the center via ecstatic excursions and sights. The excursion implicitly references center and periphery. Situated in the context of the poetic tradition, the "forgetting to return" commonplace is connected with variations such as the poet's exile from the capital, and one of the most important excursion narratives of the Six Dynasties, returning to one's rightful place.[76] These variations are all organized around coordinates of center and periphery, understood as normative places.[77]

(c) Positions and dispositions in the park

We recall how the *Mencius* inserted the "worthy" into the excursion entourage and how this is echoed in entry #14, which expresses the king's desire to share his pleasure outings with men of noble character. The emphasis on the entourage's constituent members, and in particular, their moral constitution, makes the landscape of excursion a staging ground for the performance of roles. To stress the intimate binding of subject and object (i.e., the agent of excursion and the sites of excursion), I have called the excursion a *habitus*, a place where habitual dispositions are *observed*, both habitually carried out by an acting agent and witnessed by the public or reading audience. It is through the *youlan* excursion that the worthy or unworthy comes to be *placed* and identified as such.

Therefore, the coordinates of center and periphery can be understood as organizing every aspect of the "syntax" of *youlan*: the subject(s) that constitute the touring entourage; the verbs of excursion; and the site of excursion. I will illustrate this with *YWLJ* entry #14, which among all the entries best exemplifies all three aspects: subject, verb, object. As for the subject, consider how the king is positioned in the seating arrangement for those riding the entourage carriage.

列女傳曰，楚昭王燕　　*Biography of Honorable Women*: When the King Zhao of

---

[76] The *Wen xuan* anthologizes "Exposition on Returning to the Fields" (歸天賦) by Zhang Heng 張衡 (78-139) and "Return" (歸去來) by Tao Qian 陶潛 (365-427). While these are excursion poems, they do not feature the panoptic view from a summit and, are for that reason, not categorized under *youlan*.

[77] "Forgetting death" raises the issue of transcendence and, in the literary tradition, is associated with quests for immortality. The *Wen xuan* categorizes such poems under a separate subgenre, that of "Excursions to the undying" (*youxian* 遊仙). While they do bear a family resemblance to *youlan* poems, I would argue that they organize the space of excursion in a fundamentally different way, namely around transcendence and immanence instead of center and periphery. The *Wen Xuan*'s separation of these two poetic traditions also reflects classicist prejudices towards the prospect of immortality. See the anthology's editorial comments on Guo Pu's 郭璞 *youxian* poetry in *Wen xuan* 22. For a study of this genre, see Li Fengmao 李豐楙, *You yu you: Liuchao Sui Tang xian shi lun wenji* 遊與憂：六朝隋唐游仙詩論文集 (Taibei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1996).

遊, 蔡姬在左, 越姬參乘, 王親乘駟以逐。登附莊之臺, 以望雲夢之囿。乃顧謂二女曰, 樂乎。吾願與子生若此。	Chu went on banquet-excursions (*yan-you*), Consort Cai sat on the left, Consort Yue attended him on the right, while the king personally steered the four-horse chariot. When he ascended the Terrace of the Appended Villa to gaze at Yunmeng park, he turned around to address his two consorts, "Isn't it joyous? I wish to live like this with you."

By rights, the ruler should occupy the seat of honor which is on the chariot's left, yet he has ceded this position to the Consort Cai. He has instead placed himself in the middle seat, which is that of the driver; the king, in effect, condescends to act the chauffeur. This marginalization of the king's place in the touring vehicle is particularly significant because the mobilized procession that bears the standards of royal insignia is what heralds his central political position to the public. This particular constitution of the entourage has displaced him from the seat of power, both literally and figuratively.

The excursion verb used here, a combination of "to banquet" and "to take an excursion" (*yanyou* 燕遊), also suggests a marginal activity in a peripheral space. We recall how the meaning of *you*, by itself, includes the official tour of inspection and also semantically drifts into leisurely recreation that has no official function.[78] When it is, as we have here, coupled with "to banquet," a byword for enjoying the panoply of available pleasures, the status of the excursion becomes problematically ambiguous such that there is no clear divide separating center and periphery, core duties and external dalliances. The *Book of Rites* names *yanyou* in its discussion of court roles. The text's ritual regulations stipulate that servants who attend the royal entourage, serving functions such as assisting the ruler in boarding his carriage, may request the opportunity to serve the ruler but cannot retire from his presence without his express permission, which is the privilege of the ruler's alone. What concerns us is the ritual vocabulary for different types of royal excursion, which take on specific spatial associations.

請見不請退。	[The entourage attendant] may request an audience with the ruler but cannot request to withdraw. [When he is granted permission to withdraw]:
朝廷曰退,	At court, it is called "to withdraw";
燕遊曰歸,	During banquet outings and excursions (*yanyou*), it is called "*to return to his rightful place*" (my emphasis);
師役曰罷。	At military campaigns, it is called "to desist."[79]

The term "withdraw" is straightforward because it applies to a normative situation: when the ruler occupies his official position at court sessions. The point of reference is the political center from which the attendant steps back. On military expeditions, the attendant is said to "desist" or "stop" because it is implied that the army, fully mobilized in a military expedition, is in transit. On leisure outings, to designate the attendant's withdrawal as "returning" carries the normative force of "returning to his proper place" (*gui* 歸). The implication here is that during that the leisure excursion, the entourage royal is situated for the time being outside its proper station. This condition of being away must not be understood strictly in geographical terms but set in a normative configuration of place. As such, the excursion may be *liu* 流: a "digression" on the ruler's part, a "dissipation" of the royal role.

---

[78] The title of a work catalogued in *Han shu*, 30.1753, is called, "Songs and poems about going out on *inspection tours and excursions* (巡守及遊)." Here, the word "excursions" is problematic precisely because it is *not* completely redundant.

[79] *Liji zhengyi*, 少儀 chapter, 35.1193.

In addition to the subject and verb, consider finally the object viewed in the excursion of *YWLJ* #14, namely Yunmeng park (雲夢之囿), the final destination of King Zhao's tour. Rather than covering the various tour sites found in the *YWLJ* entries, I will now give a detailed discussion of Yunmeng as a representative example of a premiere excursion locale. As a geographical moniker, Yunmeng refers to a southern expanse of woods and wetlands rich in timber, ore and game. As the name of a royal estate, this so-called "park" was (as the outer wall circumscribing its graph "*you* 囿" illustrates) a demarcated compound, monumental in size and exclusive in status.[80] The *Fengsu tong* 風俗通 gives a broader definition based on the word's lexicography: "The park 囿 is precisely to have 有."[81] This suggests that the park demarcates holdings: flora, fauna, and other resources. This landscape is not wilderness but owned property.

The royal park was demarcated into different sections featuring a plethora of palace buildings and recreational venues. For example, in King Zhao's tour, he ascends a viewing terrace in the section of the park compound called the "Appended Villa." The significance of Yunmeng, and the royal park in general, is that it signifies an entire vertical chain that spans from material production to economic, military, and cultural consumption. The earliest survey of regional territories is found in the *Shangshu* 尚書 and repeated by Han dynasty accounts. It lists amongst the prized products of Yunmeng: yak-tail banners, leather, ivory, cinnabar, gold, silver, copper, stone chimes, grindstones, arrow shafts, cypress wood, *Toona sinensis* mahogany [for furniture], *Cudrania tricuspidata* mulberry [for sericulture] and *Trichosanthes kirilowii* [a medicinal herb].[82] As impressive as this list is, omitted are generic products; it is not intended to be an exhaustive list but is comprised only of tribute items exclusive to, and canonically associated with, the region's productivity.[83] Even from this selective account given by a canonical geography, what Yunmeng park supplied was not limited to the targets of the hunt (e.g., elephants and regular game); it also furnished the very machinery of hunting-military campaigns (e.g., metal weapons, arrow shafts, leather armor and equestrian gear); the tools of its maintenance (e.g., grindstones for sharpening blades); and the insignia of troop organization and command (e.g., yak-tail banners, emblems of silk and metal). Even the viewing terrace that is the culmination of King Zhao's leisure ride through the park could be built from the estate's timber, furnished by its mahogany, decorated by its cinnabar, and made to resound with its stone chimes. We thus understand that the park terrace's panoptic view is the summit of pleasure precisely because the park itself is the *summa* of all that can be possessed and consumed.

Yunmeng park recurs as a motif in *YWLJ* #10, where the site represents pleasure itself.

淮南子曰, 所謂樂者, 遊雲夢,	*Huainanzi*: So-called "pleasure" is to: roam (*you*) Yunmeng and ascend its high hills;

[80] *Shuo wen* 說文: defines "*you* 囿" as a park with low walls (苑有垣也); another definition is a space with birds and beasts (有禽獸曰囿). Since such spaces were not used exclusively as zoos or preserves, I have translated *you* as "park." For a study of parks, game preserves, and gardens in early writings, see Edward H. Schaefer, "Hunting Parks and Animal Enclosures in Ancient China," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 11, no. 3 (1968): 318-43.

[81] "囿猶有也." As cited in the cited in the *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽, *juan* 196, *bu* 24.

[82] *Shangshu zhengyi* 尚書正義, 6.84. Parallel passages appear verbatim in *Shi ji* 史記, 2.60, and *Han shu* 漢書, 28.1529.

[83] The fact that Han historical accounts echo the *Shangshu* do not reflect a continuous and unchanging economic history; they speak rather to the legitimacy conferred to the imperial court by its re-enactment of ritual forms found in canonical texts.

陟高丘，耳聽九韶六莖，口味煎熬芬芳。馳騁夷道，釣射鷫鷞，之謂樂乎。	have one's ears listen to the nine harmonies of six woodwinds and have one's mouth savor fragrant flavors of cooked delicacies; race over level roads and shoot wild geese—is this really what pleasure consists of?[84]

The Yunmeng estate, a natural storehouse of items of manifold purpose—military, economic, and the multiform accoutrements of prestige—was an icon of plenitude.

The concrete resources afforded by the park made it a particularly apartment setting for the royal performance of territorial dominion and possession of plenitude. To possess things is one thing; to show, via performance, such possession is everything. The grandest portrayal of this royal performance of power is perhaps the *Traditions of King Mu*, which the *YWLJ* cites among its illustrations of *youlan* commonplaces. In *YWLJ* entry #2, quoted below, the Son-of-Heaven treats the entire world—stretching as far as Mount Kunlun—as his personal playground. At center stage is not where he goes—since, in principle, all is his to have—but rather what he does: the emblematic gestures of kingly privilege.

穆天子傳曰，天子遂襲崑崙之丘，遊軒轅之宮，眺望鍾山之嶺，玩帝者之寶，勒石王母之山，紀迹玄圃之上。乃取其嘉木豔草，奇鳥怪獸，玉石珍瑰之器，金膏銀燭之寶。	*Traditions of the Mu Son-of-Heaven*: The Son-of-Heaven then went to the Kunlun mountains. He toured (*you*) the palaces of the Yellow Emperor; gazed over the ridges of Mount Zhong; fondled jewels of the gods; inscribed stones atop the mountains of the Queen Mother [of the West]; and set down his tracks upon the Dark Orchards. He then took its fine timber and herbs, strange birds and beasts, implements of precious jade and stones, and treasures of golden lamp oil and silver candlesticks.[85]

Attend to the Son-of-Heaven's gestures in this tour. With the reach of his gaze, he surveys the Kunlun's palaces and ridges; with the tracks of his vehicle, he marks the orchards; with stone inscriptions, he literally imprints the mountains of the Queen Mother of the West with his name. Through excursion (*you*) and the panoptic view (*lan*), the Son-of-Heaven performs the possession of the realm. "The park is precisely to have"—here, the Son-of-Heaven treats the world as his park, where all is at hand. With a prehensile grasp, "takes hold of" (*qu* 取) products particular to this toured land: "fine timber and herbs, strange birds and beasts, implements of precious jade and stones, and treasures of golden lamp oil and silver candlesticks." With a playful touch, he "fondled (*wan* 玩) the jewels of the gods," a gesture that connotes turning something over and over in hand, like toying with a bauble.[86] Even his playful enjoyment (*wan*) assumes possession. In effect, the realm as far as Mount Kunlun, conventionally conceived as unreachably distant, becomes miniaturized to be readily available at hand.

The plenitude of the park, which As the ethical endowments and inner resources of the cultivated self.

---

[84] In the source text, the passage goes on overturn this common conception of pleasure as the consumption of things. *Huainanzi jishi*, *op. cit.*, 1.66.

[85] *YWLJ*, 28.499. The *YWLJ* reads "重膏," "heavy (?) oil." For the sake of parallelism, with "silver candlesticks," I follow the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 which reads "golden oil (金膏)."

[86] As It is from this basic meaning of *wan* connoting physicality that its use as an aesthetic term for enjoyment derives. E.g., *Guoyu* 國語, ### *Chuyu* 楚語, "The white pendant trinket is a bauble of the first kings (若夫白珩，先王之玩也)." The commentator Wei Zhao glosses *wan* as a "plaything" (玩弄之物).

(d) Landscape as text: classicism in the "Preeminent Park exposition"

Sima Xiangru (179-188 BC), the most celebrated poet of the Western Han, wrote a exposition about *Shanglin* 上林 park, which was built by the Qin First Emperor on an unprecedented scale and inherited by the Han as part of a totalizing projection of imperial power. In design, the park, signifying Preeminence (*shang*), was meant to encompass both capitals of the two Zhou dynasty founders.[87] Envisioned as a microcosm of the world, it included lavish palaces as well as man-made mountains and lakes; even the capital of Chang'an was enveloped by its expansive boundaries.[88]

Sima Xiangru's poetic treatment of the park not only mimicked the park's monumental scale, it was also presented a sweeping summation of the manifold discussions of the park as a state institution, economic powerhouse, and cultural icon. It is a literary summation of the park as a discursive site. As such, it incorporates two opposing excursion narratives: an errant hunting expedition in the park that wanders to geo-ethical extremes; and a final return to the normative center.

This incorporation of two narratives is not simply additive but constitutes a fundamental reinterpretation of the park's significance. The shift from errant excursion to a return to the center is essentially a shift towards talking about the park as a text. Allow me to illustrate this shift through an analogous move made by a *Zuozhuan* passage, which reinterprets a hunting expedition described in the *Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋. Both the *Zuozhuan* and the exposition reinterpret a previously described hunt.

The context of the *Zuozhuan* passage is as follows: the Duke of Jin, in an act of ritual transgression, has forcibly summoned the Zhou king. Retaining only titular superiority, the Zhou king bows to Jin might and answers the summons. Leaving behind his court and feudal territory, he crosses the border into Jin. The *Spring and Autumn Annals* refers to this event euphemistically: "The king hunted at Heyang [in Jin territory]."[89] The *Zuozhuan* commentary to the episode reframes the significance of the hunting excursion.

晉侯召王，以諸侯見，且使王狩。仲尼曰，以臣召君，不可以訓。故	The Duke of Jin summoned the King so the feudal lords would have an audience with him. Moreover, he had the king take a hunting excursion. Confucius said, "For a subject to summon his lord cannot be spoken of directly. Hence it is written [in the

[87] *Shi ji*, 6.256: "'I have heard that capital of Zhou's Cultivated King was in Feng 豐 and that of the Martial King was in Hao 鎬. The land between Feng and Hao is to be the capital of the God-King.' Thereupon, the Qin First Emperor built palaces in Shanglin Park at Weinan." (吾聞周文王都豐，武王都鎬，豐鎬之閒，帝王之都也．乃營作朝宮渭南上林苑中.)

[88] The "Western Capital Exposition" describes the park as stretching to the provinces of Shu 蜀 and Hanzhong 漢中, with a circling wall 300 *li* in circumference (*Wen xuan*, 1.10). The *Sanfu huangtu* 三輔黃圖 (4.65) gives it variously as 300 *li* and 340 *li* square; for a discussion of these figures, see Knechtges, 1:112–3. The "Western Capital Exposition" also describes a procession through the park in relation to other capital structures within and without the park (see *Wen xuan*, 1.18–9; and Knechtges, 1:135–7). See also Edward Schaefer, "Hunting Parks and Animal Enclosures in Ancient China," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 11, no. 3 (1968): 327. For the Luoyang counterpart to this park, see Hans Bielenstein, "Lo-Yang in Later Han Times" in *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* (Vol. 48, 1976): 1-142; Ho, Ping-ti, "Lo-Yang, A. D. 495-534: A Study of Physical and Socio-Economic Planning of a Metropolitan Area" (Harvard-Yenching Institute, Vol. 26, 1966): 52-101.

[89] *Zuozhuan*, Xi Gong 28/16.

書曰天王狩于河陽，言非其地也，且明德也。	*Annals*], ‘The King of Heaven hunted at Heyang.’ This expresses that it is not the land [i.e., the land proper to the King], while it manifests the favor [given by the Duke to the King].”[90]

The aforementioned favor shown to the King by the Duke is his having arranged a hunting outing to ameliorate the humiliation and hierarchical violation of the King by the summons. The hunt gives the King, as it were, an “out,” an excuse for being outside his domain; it provides a pretext for his departure from the center and his sojourn to, from the wayfarer’s perspective, the ritual-political margin. While Heyang is not part of the King’s domain proper, the spread of his banners here during the hunt is meant to signify that he is but *en passant*. His status of being in transit is an unstable state demanding resolution. There is here a tension that results from the uneasy layering of two competing narratives: one story speaks of the King’s excursion to extremes (the geopolitical periphery and ritual margin); this is overlaid with another story that attempts to reclaim his *ex*-cursion as the excess of leisure (an outing taken for pleasure). The trope underwriting both versions of the story is that the excursion narrates an excess: the first is ritual-political; the latter, an excess of leisure time. That is the point of contiguity connecting the *Annals* text and its commentary in the *Zuozhuan*. It is this core trope of excess that enables the arranged pretext to fit with, and retrofit, the text.

Likewise, Sima Xiangru’s exposition retrofits its first excursion, also a hunting outing, with a revised excursion narrative, which describes a return to the center. The point of contiguity, what enables the latter to fit the former, is a specific type of excess, that of leisure. By definition, leisure is excessive: it is those pastimes by which extra time is passed. The exposition directly frames leisure as the problem but the solution is not to get rid of excess but, like the *Zuozhuan*, to retrofit its significance. Specifically, leisure must be refashioned to accord with classical models of genteel activity. With this framework in mind, let us turn now to the exposition’s two excursion narratives.

The first *you* narrative performs the plenary of the park through comprehensive lists of its varying resources and items: rivers and mountains; flora and fauna; palaces and terraces; and the carriages, props, and lavish spectacles of the hunt. The narrative engine that propels the story forward and loosely links together these expository accumulations is the motif of extending the body to sensory and peripatetic extremes. For example, extending the eye to extremes: “Gazing round, broadly viewing, one sees such plenteous profusion, such a vast vista. The emperor becomes dizzy and dazed, confounded and confused. Look at it and it has no beginning; examine it and it has no end”; reaching on foot the farthest limits: “He roams and rambles hither and thither, to scan the movements of his regiments and companies, review the changing gestures of generals and chiefs. Then, little by little, He increases his pace, and suddenly He is off in the remote distance.”[91] This *you* narrative reaches its climax, as we would expect, with a banquet (“Tired of excursion and sport, He sets up a feast”[92]) and concludes by detailing the full range of musical, culinary and sensual entertainments offered. This first *you* narrative performs the trope of excursion as excess.

Now, I wish to focus on the transition scene by which this first *you* narrative pivots to another form of *you*. Sated by excess, the emperor then reflects on the significance of such a

[90] *Zuozhuan*, Xi Gong 28/9.
[91] Translation by Knechtges. *Selections of Refined Literature*, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 87 and 101. *Wen xuan*, 8.361-2; 8.372.
[92] *Ibid*. vol II, p. 109. *Wen xuan*, 8.374.

passage to extremes, prompting a critique of the park's exclusivity and leisure as moral dissipation. The emphases are mine.

> And then, in the midst of drinking, during the rapture of music, the Son-of-Heaven becomes disconsolate, as if He had lost something. He says, "Alas! This is too extravagant! *During Our leisure moments from attending to state affairs, with nothing to do We cast away the days*; following the celestial cycle, We kill and slaughter, and from time to time rest and repose here in this park. But *We fear the dissolute dissipation* of later generations, that once they have embarked on this course they will be unable to turn back. This is not the way to create achievements and pass down a tradition for one's heirs. Thereupon, He *dissolves the feast, ends the hunt*, and commands His officials, "Let all and that can be reclaimed and opened up:
>
> Be made into farmland
> In order to provide for the common people!
> Tear down the walls, fill in the moats,
> Allow the people of the mountains and marshes to come here.
>
> Restock the pools and ponds and do not ban people from them!
> Empty the palaces and lodges and do not staff them!
> Open the granaries and storehouses in order to give relief to the poor and destitute!
> Supply what they lack![93]

This transition scene hinges on two issues: the organization of the park estate (space) and the management of leisure (time). As regards the space of the park, the ruler reorganizes the estate to address the problem of uneven resource distribution: he dissolves the park's boundaries ("tear down the walls, fill in the moats"); removes the legal prohibition and surveillance of its resources ("do not ban people from them"); reduces his private consumption ("empty the palaces and lodges and do not staff them"); and integrates the estate into the public common-wealth ("open the granaries and storehouses" and "supply what they lack").

As regards the issue of time, the ruler worries that the uses of his leisure might set an example that leads future generations into "dissolute dissipation."[94] This recalls the glossing of *you* as *liu* 流, which refers both to excursion (lit., the "dispersal" of banners") as well as moral "dissipation." Since the problem of moral dissipation is articulated in this exposition in terms of *you*, the solution, likewise, will also be framed in terms of excursion: a second *you* succeeds the first. Pastime is thereby resolved through a different passing-of-time, through an alternate narrative of the uses of leisure. Consequently, the rest of the exposition, which transitions from the scene above, is devoted to narrating a journey of self-fashioning whose governing metaphor is that of excursion.

I wish to emphasize that the exposition's two contrasting narratives cannot be understood simply as a dichotomy of (the first narrative's) unfettered "play" versus (the second narrative's) ritual regulation. To do so would overlook how the language of self-cultivation is itself articulated in terms of *you*, which can only be read as "play" in the broadest possible sense, one whose pastimes includes practices of self-cultivation. Consider canonical precedents such as the

---

[93] *Wen xuan*, 8.376. Translation by Knechtges. Ibid. vol. II, pp. 110-1.

[94] The phrase in the exposition translated as "dissolute dissipation" is *mili* 靡麗. *Cf.*, the early use of *mi* that refers to banners that have fallen over, e.g., *Zuozhuan*, Zhuang Gong 10/1, "視其轍亂， 望其旗靡."

following from the *Book of Rites*:

君子之於學也， 藏焉，修焉， 息焉，遊焉。	The gentleman' relationship to learning is that he stores himself in it and cultivates himself in it; he rests in it and *you*-s in it.[95]

The substance of this passage is embedded in its parallel structure. The verb *you* is parallel with, and thereby linked to *xiu*, to "cultivate oneself" or "to extend oneself." They are juxtaposed with "to rest" (*xi*) and "to store" (*cang*). As such, *you* refers to the activities of one's *extra* time, in contrast with the place of repose and stored capacities that is rest; it connotes taking *excursions* in practiced arts whilst still *extending* oneself with learning. In the ritual texts, *you* is thus a figure for both play and practice, both diversion (going "out") and devotion (going "all out").

The paradox of this formulation reflects how the solution offered by the ritual texts for the problem of leisure is a delicate one that attempts to reconcile recreational diversion with directed action. Accordingly, Confucius' lifelong self-cultivation is described as culminating in a form of circumscribed play that is both directed and at ease: "At seventy, I could follow what my heart desires without transgressing the bounds."[96] The governing metaphor for this ideal of perfected personhood is that of excursion: the sage's being-in-the-world is conceived as a ranging freedom that, following his every inclination, nevertheless does not lose its way. Contrast this with the earlier imperial park excursion that, taken to extremes, resulted in the wayfarer's feeling "dizzy and dazed, confounded and confused."

The program for attaining this ideal of ranging freedom is formulated in terms of embarking on a path, that of the Way, by which one roams (*you*) within a space defined and circumscribed by gentlemanly arts. From the *Analects*:

子曰，志於道，據於 德，依於仁，游於藝。	The Master said, "Set your aim upon the path and be based in virtue; cleave to [the quality of a] *mensch*[97] and roam (*you*) in the arts."[98]

The polite arts (rites, music, archery, writing, riding, and accounting) provide the grounds for fashioning oneself into a proper gentleman. They are also where one's extra time should be placed. This resonates with *Analects* 1/6, "If your course of conduct (*xing* 行) has energy to spare, then use it practice the polite arts."[99] Leisure is hereby reclaimed for an excursion in self-cultivation.

It is important to note that "excursion" in such arts is not strictly figurative. Arts such as archery and riding are readily appropriated for their figurative uses precisely because they are activities that are part and parcel of park excursions and hunts. The formula "setting one's aim upon the way" is transposed from archery ("take aim" at it); the metaphor of embarking upon the

[95] *Liji zhengyi*, 樂記 chapter, 36.1233.
[96] *Analects*, 2/4. I follow Yang Bojun's 楊伯峻 passage numbering, which is also that of D.C. Lau's translation. *Lunyu yizhu* 論語譯注 [Paraphrase and Annotation of the Analects] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1958).
[97] *Ren* 仁, conventionally rendered narrowly as "humaneness," is for Confucius a broad and nearly unattainable ideal. I understand *ren* as that which makes one a model "person" (*ren* 人), in the normative sense a true "man"—a "mensch"— whose fortitude of purpose and quality of character endow him with a suasive and charismatic virtue (*de* 德). For a discussion of the relationship between *ren*, man, human, and humane, see Arthur Waley's introductory notes to his *Analects of Confucius*, New York: Vintage Books, 1939, p. 26.
[98] *Analects*, 7/6. *Cf.*, *Liji zhengyi*, 少儀 chapter, 35.1196: "士依於德，游於藝；工依於法，游於說."
[99] "行有餘力，則以學文."

path carries over from riding. On another level, the gentility and loftiness of purpose represented by these arts is bound up with class identity. The class of *shi* 士, to which Confucius and his disciples belonged, were distinguished from regular foot soldiers by the privilege of riding horses and mounting carriages. In this respect, *shi* might be translated as "knights," for whom skill in these martial arts was not only assumed but a mark of honor.[100]

It is this discourse equating the mastery of genteel arts with moral distinction that informs the imperial park exposition's second, alternate narrative of excursion. It offers an idealized portrait of rulership that is at once a panegyric to the imperial court (i.e., that of the Han Martial Emperor) and a critique of its uses of leisure and resources.

於是歷吉日以齋戒,
襲朝服，乘法駕,
建華旗，鳴玉鸞,
游于六藝之囿,
馳騖乎仁義之塗。
覽觀春秋之林,
射貍首，兼騶虞。

And then, on an auspicious day, he fasts and cleanses himself,
Dons the robes of court, mounts chariots of the Standard (*fa* 法),
Raises floral banners and rings jade simurgh bells.
He takes an excursion (*you*) in the Park of the Six Arts;
Courses upon the path of the *mensch* and rightness.
He panoptically surveys (*lan*) and closely observes (*guan*)
the thicket of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*;
He shoots the "Wildcat Head" and "Spotted Tiger."[101]
[continues]

A common feature of park excursions recurs here: the dispersed banners (*you*) of the ruler's entourage. However, the "park" in this excursion is (re)defined, not by economic plenitude, but by the plenary of personal resources accumulated from one's cultivation of the polite arts and classical texts.

There is a lot to be said about this passage. Let me first point out that the exposition's retrofitting of the park according to classicist norms that, in turn, reconfigures the meaning of viewing: the excursion's panoptic view is likened to the comprehensive reading of canonical works. Hence, the exposition has the ruler "panoptically survey (*lan*) and closely observe (*guan*) the thicket of the Spring and Autumn Annals." The canonical text of the *Annals* was understood by classicists as embodying a knowledge of change characterized as *wei* 微: subtle, almost hidden in appearance, and microcosmic in significance.[102] Accordingly, to survey the *Annals* is to discern what is nearly imperceptible yet far-reaching in its manifest application. It is important to note that the quality of *wei* is not an immediate sensory datum but the perception of a subtle ordering produced by an interpretation of phenomena or texts. In this respect, this depiction of viewing implies a textualization of the landscape such that to view the thicket is to interpret it.

Secondly, this shift towards landscape as text is further reflected by the exposition's figurative use of "park 囿" and "thicket 林." Just as a hunting outing in a park or thicket targets their richly stocked game, so also a trip to the "Park of the Six Arts/Classics" and the "thicket of the *Annals*" aims at perusing prized assemblages of canonical texts. This figurative usage of

[100] The current sense of *shi* as scholars only develops after the Song dynasty, when advancement and prestige were linked to achievement in the civil service examinations.
[101] This passage is my translation. *Wen xuan*, 8.377.
[102] *Xunzi* 荀子, the first classicist to systematize the five classics as a program of cultivation such that each classic is associated with a particular aspect of knowledge, twice links the *Annals* to the quality of *wei* 微. See *Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解, 勸學 essay, 1.12; and 儒校 essay, 8.133. The *Zuozhuan* adumbrates this understanding of the *Annals* in Cheng Gong 14/4 and Zhao Gong 31/5.

"park" and "thicket" is not unique to the exposition but part of the common currency of Western Han classicism. For example, two previously discussed *YWLJ* entries, #12 and #13, cited the *Park of Explanations* 說苑 by Liu Xiang 劉向 (79-9 BC); and chapter seventeen of the *Huainanzi* compiled by Liu An (179-122 BC) has a chapter called "The Thicket of Explanations 林說" about the aggregation of knowledge. This expanded significance of the names for excursion sites ("park" and "thicket") and the panoptic view (*lan*) reflect how during the Western Han (as well as into the Six Dynasties) *youlan* is the prevailing figure for describing the process of self-cultivation and the textual mastery implied therein.[103]

Thirdly, the exposition is important for our discussion, and in this respect differs from the strictly metaphorical use of "park" in the aforementioned titles, for its depiction of the park as a habitus of observed practices. Through broad metonymic moves, the exposition associates the park with the ritual activities performed there. The so-called park of six *yi* 藝 refers not only to the Six Classics (i.e., texts) but also to the Six Arts (i.e., practices), which include riding and archery.[104] The term should not be disambiguated, as the exposition fully deploys both these senses and sometimes concurrently. For example, the ruler is said to, using an equestrian metaphor, "course upon the way of the *mensch* and rightness." Adopting the language of archery, the exposition depicts the ruler as "shooting" (an Art) the "Wildcat Head" and "Spotted Tiger," which are titles in the *Classic of Poetry*.[105] The significance of his having "set his aims" (*zhi* 志) upon these particular songs in the *Classic of Poetry* is explained by the *Book of Rites* (another Classic): "The Civilizing King disbanded the troops and performed the suburban shooting rite: on the left, he shot [and performed the song] 'Wildcat Head'; on the right, he shot [and performed] 'Spotted Tiger.' Thereupon, the shooting that pierces armor ceased."[106] In other words, the incantation and performance of these two classical songs are part of a shooting rite that realizes a governance of the world in which military force is obviated.[107]

Thus, archery at the imperial park is simultaneously: a recreational sport; a cultivated art practiced by gentlemen; and a ritual ceremony that can even signify the negation of its martial purposes. This exemplifies how the premiere excursion site, the park, is a habitus, a performative site of observed (both followed and witnessed) practices. These practices demonstrate the performer's ethical disposition.

Fourthly, the exposition presents this excursion in the Six Arts/Classics as the normative understanding of play and the uses of leisure. It closes by concluding: "Under these conditions,

[103] For a study of *youxian* 遊仙 poetry as narratives of religious practice and self-cultivation, see: Li Fengmao 李豐楙, *You yu you: Liuchao Sui Tang youxianshi lunwen wenji* 遊與憂：六朝隋唐游仙詩論文集 (Taibei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1996); and Liu Yuanru 劉苑如, ed., *Inner Landscape Visualized: Techniques of the Body in Medieval Chinese Literature and Religion* 遊觀作為身體技術的中古文學與宗教 (Taibei: Zhongyanyuan wenzhesuo, 2009).

[104] The Six Arts are: ritual, music, archery, riding, writing, and accounting. The Six Classics are: the *Odes* (*Shi* 詩), *Documents* (*Shu* 書), *Rites* (*Li* 禮), *Music* (*Yue* 樂), *Changes* (*Yi* 易), and *Annals* (*Chunqiu* 春秋).

[105] "Wildcat Head" (*lishou* 貍首) is the title of a "*yishi* 逸詩," i.e., a poem not included among the 305 pieces anthologized in the *Classic of Poetry*. (For references to this piece, see *Liji zhengyi,* 樂記 chapter, 39.1325; 投壺 chapter, 58.1831; *Zhouli zhushu*, 樂師 chapter, 23.704). "Spotted Tiger" (*zouyu* 騶虞) refers to a mythological animal, an omen of righteousness, and its namesake ode (Mao #25).

[106] *Liji zhengyi*, 樂記 chapter, 39.1325: "散軍而郊射，左射貍首，右射騶虞，而貫革之射息也."

[107] For a study of archery rites, see Derek Bodde, *Festivals in Classical China* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1975): 364–70.

hunting can be enjoyed."[108] The problem of leisure as excess time is thus resolved by an alternate narration of pastimes that unites ritual fashioning and pleasurable play. The two narratives in Sima Xiangru's imperial park exposition circumscribe for us a range of conceptions regarding the farthest limits of human capacity. Together, they delineate the shared terms of discourse negotiated by excursion writings. Even the counter discourse about leisure proffered by Sima Xiangru's is couched in terms of the same tropes of *you* as extension and excess (extra time).

Finally, the habitus is a space that propels the subject towards his aims. Whereas the first *you* narrative developed the motif of extension as a peripatetic movement to spatial, and psychic, extremes, in this second *you* narrative, extension is primarily framed as a *projection of the self over time*. To set one's aims is to propel oneself towards a future. This is both a personal project and one that preserves posterity. Recall the emperors lament: "We fear the dissolute dissipation of later generations, that once they have embarked on this course they will be unable to turn back." Time is here both the problem and its solution. The exposition resolves the problem of excess time not by prohibiting leisure but by redirecting one's diversions towards self-cultivation and refashioning one's pastimes according to classicist pursuits. To "survey the thicket of the *Annals*" is to discern the nearly unseen yet profound principles of change over time that govern both the grand destiny of states and the individual project of self-transformation. Ultimately, the primary spectacle featured in the imperial park tour is the spectator's own transformation.

(e) Synopsis: *youlan* as ecstatic projection

I wish to now summarize and appraise our journey from Mencius' park outings to the imperial park exposition. In some respects, we have come full circle. Both texts downplay the physical externality of the park and frame the excursion as a performance space. Both identify the wayfarer's "forgetting to return" and then stage a return to the normative center through a re-enactment of classicist traditions. Mencius, first invited by the king as a guest in the park outing, consequently invites the king on an alternate excursion: a tour of the Numinous Park of the Civilizing King by way of a performance of the *Classic of Poetry*. Likewise, Sima Xiangru's exposition first presents the king's errant hunt and then succeeds it with a final return to a ritual park site where classicist arts are observed.

At the same time, a shift has occurred from Mencius to Sima Xiangru in the depiction of the agent of excursion. *YWLJ* entry #14, echoing the *Mencius*, enjoined the inclusion of worthies in the royal entourage. What Sima Xiangru's exposition exemplifies is an internalization of this motif: the classic agent of excursion, the ruler, has become the perfected worthy. Once the excursion becomes a performance of worthiness and classicist cultivation, excursion is no longer the exclusive prerogative of the ruler.

From this perspective, we can understand why entry *YWLJ* #1 has installed Confucius—the perfected worthy and "uncrowned king"—as the agent of excursion *par excellence*.[109] This entry is the opening passage that introduces the *youlan* category in the *YWLJ* and is perhaps its definitive

[108] *Selections of Refined Literature, op. cit.,* vol. 2, p. 113.

[109] Part of the Han court's justification for its legitimacy was a cyclical theory of royalty whereby the founding of the Han empire coincided with the prophesied appearance of sage-king five centuries after the predecessor Confucius. In this master narrative, Confucius retroactively becomes an "uncrowned king," one worthy of kingship but foiled by his time. Han rule fulfills destiny.

illustration.

家語曰，孔子北遊，登農山。子路、子貢、顏回侍。孔子四望，喟然歎曰，二三子各言爾志。	*School Sayings of Master Kong:* Master Kong traveled north and ascended Mount Nong, with his disciples Zilu, Zigong and Yan Hui in attendance. He gazed out on all four directions and sighed, "My little ones, each of you articulate [for me] your aim."[110]

I focus my analysis of this passage on what conventional elements are crystallized in this passage, when this crystallization approximately comes into formation, and how it relates to the discursive arc I have traced from the Mencius to the imperial park exposition.

This passage combines two scenarios that are well established in the Western Han (206 BC–AD 24): (1) a forum whereby a worthy articulates his "aim" or "project" (*zhi* 志); and (2) an ascent to a panoptic view that prompts, and sets the stage for, an utterance that enables the viewer-speaker to demonstrate his exalted standing.[111] The first scenario is a typical set piece from the *Analects*, in which the Master asks each disciple to articulate his definitive aim: what defines and is defined by his personality.[112] In the *Analects*, this scene is already highly conventionalized such that each disciple conforms to a characteristic *zhi* that expresses his particular type of personal disposition.[113] However, in the *Analects* this scene is never coupled with a mountain excursion or summit ascent. I identify this added layer, which links the panoptic view with a performed recitation, as the second scenario, which reflects a Western Han cliché that says that a person is an exalted gentleman if he can give a poetic recitation upon ascending a high vantage point.[114] (I will discuss this cliché in detail in Part III).

Now, let me suggest an approximate date for the combination of elements in entry #1. The entry is taken from the *School Sayings of Master Kong* compiled by Wang Su 王素 (418-471 AD) from earlier traditions about Confucius.[115] However, entry #1's fusion of the two scenarios already

[110] Appendix 1/1, *Kongzi jiayu* 2/8.

[111] To my knowledge, the earliest text to explicitly fuse these two scenarios is *Han Shi waizhuan*, *op. cit.*, 7/25, where Confucius explicitly states the formula, "One must give a recitation upon ascending on high (登高必賦)" to prompt his disciples for their aims.

[112] *Analects* 5/26 is an example of this scenario in miniature. Passage 11/26, the longest in the *Analects*, is the most sophisticated reworking of this scene. For a discussion of how core scenes in the *Analects* are re-worked and expanded over time, see Steven Van Zoeren, *Poetry and Personality: Reading, Exegesis, and Hermeneutics in Traditional China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

[113] In the many traditions about Confucius's school, each disciple is fixed to a specific role. For example, *Zilu* 子路 is conventionally linked with bravery, loyalty and martial prowess; and the disciple Yan Hui 顏回 invariably represents the closest approximation of sagehood, however that might be understood in a particular context. To Yan Hui, the *Analects* and the *Sayings of the House of Confucius* attribute slightly different aims.

[114] In discussing this cliché, both traditional and contemporary critics usually cite *Han shu* 30.1755, which opens its discussion of poetry by stating that, "Being able to give a poetic recitation upon ascending a high vantage point makes one a grand noble." (登高能賦，可以為大夫). The *Han shu* attributes this formula to "*zhuan* 傳," a "tradition" or "what has been passed down." As a traditional formula, it may predate the imperial period. However, it is possible that this so-called "tradition" is not so very old. The most conservative take on the cliché's provenance traces this "tradition" to the Mao commentary to *Ode* #50, which presents a version of this formula, perhaps taken from earlier oral traditions. In any case, in our received texts, the Mao commentary is the earliest to present this formula. When the Tang commentator Li Shan 李善 identifies the *locus classicus* for this saying, he cites the Mao commentary. (See *Wen xuan*, 4.173)

[115] For a discussion of dating issues, see Robert Paul Kramers, *Kong zi jia yu: The School Sayings of Confucius* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1950).

circulated in the Western Han.[116] The earliest precedent in our received texts is a passage is from the *Han Shi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳 [Outer traditions of Master Han's *Odes*], which also combines the two aforementioned scenarios, and explicitly cites the cliché that latently informs the version in entry #1: "A gentleman, upon ascending to a high vantage point, must give a recitation" (君子登高必賦).[117] Given the attribution of the *Han Shi waizhuan* to Han Gu 韓固, who served as an erudite in the time of Emperor Jing (r. 188-141 BC),[118] we can infer that the formulation in entry #1 was already in circulation at the time of Sima Xiangru (179-118 BC) and his imperial park exposition dedicated to Emperor Wu (r. 156-87 BC).

I have established the historical overlap between the formulation in entry #1 and Sima Xiangru to show that his exposition is not at all unusual for narrating the emperor's excursion as a return to a "park" of classicist practices. At the time of Emperor Wu, poetic treatments of imperial excursions coexisted with traditions about Confucius (e.g., *YWLJ* entry #1) that stage the Master and his disciples as engaging in a mountain excursion featuring a panoptic vista—an activity previously associated with royal power. On one level, this convergence reflects the Western Han's elevation of the teacher Confucius to the status of "uncrowned king" (*su wang* 素王), one who never attained high office in his lifetime but was nevertheless worthy of kingship.[119] On another level, this reflects how, within classicism, excursion becomes the dominant metaphor for the process and perfection of self-cultivation. Whether or not the agent of excursion is an actual ruler or the "uncrowned king," the underlying premise is nevertheless the same: *youlan* performs the farthest reaches of human possibility.

Capable of marshaling every resource, the ruler-sage is the figure of utmost potential, and *youlan* is its *projection*, i.e., a portrayal of the person as directed towards a project that defines him. As the premiere space of excursion, the royal park is an icon of plenitude: having more, seeing more, encompassing all there is and shall be. (We recall the earlier gloss of the "park 囿" as "having 有".) As a discursive site, the royal park is where the issues of recreational diversion and ritual performance, economic excess and leisure time, personal resources and cultivated pastimes all converge. As an orientation that defines the self, one's project is directed at that fullness of potential that lies beyond.

It is fitting then that the envisioning of a person's utmost potential is linked to the seemingly unlimited range of the panoptic view (*lan*). Let us focus now on the connection between the panoptic view and the articulation of one's *zhi* (which is the projection of a person's potential) as seen in entry #1. What is remarkable about the passage's staging of the panoptic view is what might be called its turn towards an inner space: it is precisely after *gazing outward* that the Master asks each disciple to—*looking inside* himself—articulate his "aim."

---

[116] While the first, *Analects*-type scene certainly predates the imperial period, the second formula might be as late as the Western Han. See footnote 114.

[117] *Han Shi waizhuan jishi,* op. cit., 7/25 (p. 267). There is also a parallel passage in *Shuo yuan* 說苑, 指武 chapter, *juan* 15.

[118] *Shi ji*, 121.3122.

[119] This portrayal first appears in our received texts in the ninth chapter (*Zhu shu xun* 主術訓) of the *Huainanzi*, which was presented to the court in 139 BC. Part of the Western Han court's justification for its legitimacy was a cyclical theory of royalty whereby the founding of the Han empire coincided with the prophesied appearance of sage-king five centuries after its predecessor Confucius. In this master narrative, Confucius retroactively became an "uncrowned king" who, while unable to realize kingly rule himself, presaged a destiny ultimately fulfilled by Han rule.

This inward turn of the panoptic view dovetails with what we have observed throughout our park tours in the *Mencius* and the imperial park exposition: as stated before, the tour's primary spectacle is actually the spectator himself. This notion implicitly informs entry #1 and is one that medieval readers would have immediately registered. It is something that goes without saying, and indeed the editors of the *YWLJ* have left it unsaid. If we trace entry #1 to its original source text, we find that the *YWLJ* editors have omitted a transition (which I have highlighted below) between the panoptic view and the articulation of aims. This editorial move was perhaps done for the sake of concision. For medieval readers, the passage coheres and makes sense despite the omission; for us, it is helpful to recover the underlying joinery that makes this passage coherent.

孔子四望，喟然而嘆曰， 於斯**致思**，無所不**至**矣。 二三子，各言爾**志**。	Confucius gazed in all directions and sighed with great feeling: "*As for the yearning brought on by this [gazing], there is nothing it does not reach.* My little ones, each of you articulate your aim."

The passage's transition from the panoptic view to the expression of aims turns on a conceit: paronomastic connections among three words—致, 至, and 志— suggest conceptual links. (On the graphic level, "致" puns with "至"; on the phonetic level, all three words are linked by homophony or proximate homophony.)[120] Through paronomasia, "there is nothing it does not reach (至)" expresses both the boundlessness of the gaze's visual sweep and the expansive yearning brought on (致思) by unhampered viewing. This inward turn from outward gaze to inner desire brings focus to a particular set of possibilities: gazing in *all directions* narrows to the particular aim (志) to which one is *personally directed.*

Just as in other *YWLJ* entries where the panoptic view evokes ecstatic joy, the Master likewise expresses his sense of boundless elation at the panoptic view by sighing with great feeling (in a *kuiran* 喟然 manner).[121] Just as the normative understanding of excursion (*you*) is a unity of ritual and play, so also the notion of "aim" or "project" connects to both ethics and pleasure. While the sense of unbounded elation is expansive and broad, the aim or project (*zhi* 志) is specific to the person and represents his particular vision of his destiny. One's *zhi* supersedes any local or immediate goals or enjoyments. Expressed in the language of archery, it does not refer so much to the projectile's target as the direction and overall arc of one's aim. Framed in terms of pleasure, it is not so much the objects desired as the emotional predilections and responses that drive one's desires. A person's project reflects his personal disposition, makes local goals meaningful, and orients one's emotional energies towards a coherent purpose.[122]

To summarize entry #1 as well as our previous itinerary through the park, the literary genre

[120] In Old Chinese, "致" and "至" share the same phonetic final (in the "質" rhyme category). According to William Baxter's reconstructions of later Middle Chinese, "致" is pronounced *trijH*; and is phonetically proximate to "至" and "志," which are both pronounced *tsyiH.* See: William Baxter, *An Etymological Dictionary of Common Chinese Characters* (Preliminary draft of October 2000).

[121] *Analects* 11/26 uses the same phrase to show the Master's joy upon hearing a proposed excursion: "The Master sighed in a *kuiran* manner and said, 'I am with Dian [in his choice of excursion] (夫子喟然歎曰吾與點也).'"

[122] In its early use of *zhi* referred to political ambitions and its concrete gorals. In its later, expanded sense, evident in Warring States texts, it takes on what we might call an aesthetic dimension associated with the refinement of the personality, the connoisseurship of leisure arts and its concomitant terms of appreciation. For a study of the semantic arc and range of *zhi*, see: *Poetry and Personality: Reading, Exegesis, and Hermeneutics in Traditional China*, *op cit*., 52-79.

and discursive mode of *youlan* might be called *ecstatic*, in the original sense of the word: "standing beyond or outside itself." I have chosen this term for its felicitous joining of two senses. First, as a rapturous state wherein one is "beside oneself" with joy, whose conditions of satisfaction are indicative of one's disposition and defining project; and secondly, as an *ex*-ternalizing movement (in Latin: *ex*-stasis) by which the subject projects itself outwards.

Terms of like derivation—ecstatic, excursion, extension, extremity, expansion, as well as exile[123]—are all commonplaces of the *youlan* genre. Through our park journeys, we have seen the trope of outward extension in various forms such as peripatetic movement to geographic extremes, extending beyond ritual boundaries, and extending oneself (either pressed too far to emotional limits or furthering oneself through the cultivation of polite arts).

Once we understand "landscape poetry" as *youlan*, the "mountains and waters" (*shanshui*) comprising the represented vista are no longer mimetic reproductions of "nature" but a human arrangement of elements that reflects the outlook and disposition of the onlooker. As a literary form, the excursion functions as a vehicle of narration that imparts structure to successive scenes (which are moments, as it were, "coming out of stasis" and propelled forward in time). The scene of viewing, usually from a high vantage point, punctuates the narrative and frequently prompts or coincides with a meditation on the uses of pleasure. If we think of the excursion as an itinerary, then the scene featuring a viewed vista is a necessary topos of that narrative journey: it is the "common-place" through which all excursions run. The summit view functions as a narrative climax by affording a comprehensive and far-reaching visual summa of the projection through space performed by the excursion.

III. Reading Xie Lingyun's poetry as *youlan*

The connection between Xie's poetic stature and the *youlan* category is evidenced by the *Wen xuan* anthology (*ca.* 530 AD), which demarcates a poetic subgenre called *youlan* that is dominated by Xie's work. Of the twenty-three poems anthologized in this genre, nine (nearly 40%) are by Xie; by comparison, two other poets are only allocated three selections each and the remaining eight poets, one each.[124]

Framing Xie Lingyun's poetry as *youlan* has several important consequences for how we approach his work and how we situate it within literary history. In order set up reading of his poems as *youlan* in the following chapters, let me make some general comments about my framework.

First of all, it is clear that the genealogy for Xie Lingyun's work that medieval readers constructed is quite different from that created by modern literary historians. This is important because a tradition is only intelligible when we understand how the people engaged in its perpetuation tell stories about the relevancy of the past and its perduring legacy. Whether or not one concurs with the historical continuity posited by such stories does not alter the fact that their perceived truth by medieval literati had real consequences for their poetic practice. While modern

---

[123] In Latin, the preposition *ex* expresses movement out from a place.

[124] Yan Yanzhi 顏延之 (384-456) and Shen Yue (441-513) each have three selections. The rest have one selection: Cao Pi 曹丕 (187-226), Yin Zhongwen 殷仲文 (d. 407), Xie Hun 謝混 (d. 412), Xie Huilian 謝惠連 (d. 433), Bao Zhao 鮑照 (414-466), Xie Tiao 謝朓 (464-499), Jiang Yan 江淹 (444-505), and Xu Fei 徐悱 (d. 524).

scholars widely regard Xie Lingyun as landscape poetry's progenitor, medieval readers would not have regarded such works as *sui generis* but rather situated within a long tradition of writings about excursion and viewing. The *Yiwen leiju*, which attempts to summarize this traditional knowledge with textual exemplars, traces the commonplaces for excursion and viewing to materials that are: considerably early (i.e., of Warring States and Western Han provenance); as well as, it is important to note, non-verse (i.e., comprised of texts that are not poetry). As such, the *YWLJ* allows us to recuperate the medieval sense of this genre as a memoried practice enmeshed in the fabric of literary tradition and its shared community of reference.

Therefore, *youlan* is a historically faithful category for framing landscape poetry because it is rooted in the categories of the times, and also because it captures the historical sense for the literary past felt by writers such as Xie Lingyun.

Secondly, this sense of the literary past was not only for Xie Lingyun a matter of implicit understanding, imparted by his prodigious internalization of, and profound engagement, with texts; it was part of his appointed duties as an imperial librarian and poetry anthologist. As the imperial librarian of the Song court, he supervised the editing of the "Quadripartite Classification Catalogue (*Sibu zongmu* 四部總目), a compendium of canonical texts executed on a massive scale: in 64,582 *juan*.[125] As an anthologist of poetry, he is credited with compiling at least two poetry compilations based on generic types: a *Collection of Palin-textural Verse* (*Huiwen shi* 回文集)[126]; and a *Collection of Rhapsodies on Seven Enumerations* (*Qi fu ji* 七賦集).[127] While neither compilation is extant, we nevertheless know that, in the latter case, the genre of Seven Enumerations was organized around a specific notion of literary lineage and a vertical chain of reference linking exemplary precedents with later imitations. Illustrative of this referential chain is the "Seven impetuses" (*Qi qi* 七起) by Cao Zhi 曹植 (192-232 AD), whose import is attested to by its selection by the *Wen xuan* as an exemplar of the Seven Enumerations genre. In Cao Zhi's preface to the poem, he directly links his work with, and explicitly cites, four predecessors for the "Sevens," such as Mei Sheng's "Seven stimuli," that together provided the model and inspiration for his own output in the genre. Regardless of whether Xie Lingyun's compilation anthologized this particular work, it is clear that the notion of a vertical chain of reference provided a key organizing principle for his compilation.[128] In sum, due to Xie Lingyun's engagement in

---

[125] Completed in 431. (*Sui shu* 32.1216). While this compilation does not survive, we can infer two things about its classificatory scheme. In its basic structure, it is based on the quadripartite classification of the imperial library catalogue established by Xun Xu 荀勗 (d. 289), whose compilation was considerably smaller, in 29,945 *juan.* At the same time, the considerably larger scale of Xie Lingyun's project, more than double in size, would probably have necessitated an expansion and modification of the schema of subtypes to accommodate the demands of organizing a greater body of material. (For a description of Xun Xu's classification system, see *Sui shu* 32.906.)

[126] I have coined "palin-textural" (*palin* means "again") to render the defining feature of this genre: poetry whose lines can be read again backwards by reversing the sequence of characters. Unlike palindromes, the reverse reading does not produce the selfsame result but a different semantic field and even an alternate grammatical syntax for lines (e.g., nouns can transform into verbs, and verbs into adjectives). This word play is possible because Chinese is not an inflected language. The topics treated in such verse include natural-celestial bodies: the *Sui shu* catalog (35.1085) lists a Liang dynasty compilation of palintextural verse on the "Five Marchmounts and Seven Constellations (五嶽七星)."

[127] The "Sevens" refer to rhapsodies (*fu*) that enumerate and epideictically perform seven items. The *Wen xuan* anthologizes three exemplars of this genre: the *Qi fa* 七發 [Seven stimuli] by Mei Sheng 枚乘 (*f.* 3rd c. BC); *Qi qi* 七起 [Seven impetuses] by Cao Zhi 曹植 (192-232 AD), and *Qi ming* 七命 [Seven commands] by Zhang Xie 張協 (255-310).

[128] While these "Sevens" are clearly in the *fu* form, the *Wen xuan* does not classify them as such but allocates an independent section for them, apart from both *shi* and *fu*, a move that some later critics have considered unsystematic and arbitrary. However, Xie Lingyun's compilation is a clear precedent, and perhaps an influential one, for treating

compiling, classifying, selecting and sequencing texts of all types, the problem of literary type—including the concept of *youlan*—would have been for him a well-articulated category of literary production.

this genre as a self-standing type that is governed by a very specific notion of poetic lineage, production, and reproduction. For a discussion of classification issues, see Luo Hongkai. *Wen xuan xue*, op cit.; James R. Hightower, "The Wen Hsüan and Genre Theory." Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies 20, no. 3/4 (1957): 512-33.

Chapter Two: Excursion and imperial impersonation

I. Introduction ... 39
II. Imperial gaze: political supervision and poetic recognition ... 40
(a) Cao Pi as critic of embodiments ... 42
(b) Cao Pi as patron of excursion ... 46
(c) The appreciative mind (*shangxin*) ... 50
III. Xie Lingyun's retinue ... 53
(d) Postures of gazing in excursion poetry ... 55
IV. Center and periphery in Xie's tours of exile ... 59
V. The imperial body and bodies of poetic form ... 63
VI. Appreciation in landscape poetry ... 69

I. Introduction

陳思贈弟，仲宣七哀，	Cao Zhi's letter to his brother, Wang Can's "Seven Laments";
…靈運鄴中…謝客山泉…	…Xie Lingyun's Ye suite…and mountain-and-spring verse…
斯皆五言之警策者也。	All these are the 'thoroughbreds' of pentasyllabic poetry.[1]

In the preface to *Rankings of Poetry* 詩品, the medieval critic Zhong Rong 鍾嶸 (d. 518) singles out twenty-two literary compositions by twenty-one authors as pentasyllabic poetry's literary exemplars, its "thoroughbreds."[2] This critical assessment gives the landscape poet Xie Lingyun (385–433) special acclaim by citing two collections of his opus: his poetry of "mountains and springs" (*shanquan* 山泉); and an eight-part suite imitating Cao Pi 曹丕 (187–226), crown prince of Wei 魏, and members of his entourage during an excursion at the Ye 鄴 palace grounds (hereafter, the Ye suite).[3]

From Zhong Rong's account, we see, first of all, that there is no single, established term in the Six Dynasties for what is now called "landscape poetry." While Chinese scholarly studies speak of the genre as the poetry of "mountains-and-waters" (*shanshui* 山水), Zhong Rong opts for an alternate, and less familiar term, "mountains-and-springs." This detail from literary history, which deviates from currently reified terminology, is symptomatic of how landscape writing was not yet fully codified as a thematic subgenre of poetry during the time of Xie Lingyun, now widely regarded as the founder of "landscape poetry." We can therefore reconsider how medieval readers understood this thematic subgenre, and how it may differ from our present day preconceptions. In particular, I wish to argue that Xie's landscape poetry must be read alongside the Ye suite.

[1] For an annotated edition of this preface passage, see Wang Shumin 王樹民, "*Zhong Rong Shipin jianzheng gao* 鍾嶸詩品箋證稿" (Taibei: Zhongyanyuan wenzhe, 2004): 117. The preface as we now have it has been reconstituted and edited.
[2] Literally, "whips," which drive fine steeds. Excellent literary compositions are likened to whipped steeds that, racing ahead, stand out from among the crowd. See Li Shan's explanation of this metaphor in his annotation to *Wen xuan*, 7.767.
[3] The complete title is "擬魏太子鄴中集詩八首." *Wen xuan* 30.1432.

Xie Lingyun's literary reputation in the medieval period was tied to his Ye suite. Studies of Xie Lingyun have largely neglected this work because it does not conform to conventional conceptions of landscape poetry, or to the author's place in literary history.[4] However, if we approach Xie's work, not as landscape writing, but as excursion writing, then we find that there are considerable family resemblances between the Ye suite and the body of work for which he is usually known. Furthermore, the Ye suite is key to understanding Xie Lingyun's aesthetics of landscape, as it lays out his fundamental premises regarding the dynamics of appreciation manifest in excursion. These premises, I argue, also undergird his landscape poetry. More broadly, Xie's understanding of the meaning of excursion and the conditions of appreciation, while inflected with his own concerns and poetic idiom, resonate with the discourse of personality appraisal seen in Wei institutional reforms and propaganda, and in Six Dynasties "pure conversation" (*qingtan* 清談).

The Ye suite instantiates several topoi of the thematic genre "excursion and the panoptic view" (*youlan* 遊覽), which I analyzed in Chapter One. These include the kingly bearing of the viewer (in this case, the impersonated figure of Cao Pi); excursion as royal procession; ruler as an institutional arbiter of value who confers recognition and appreciation; and the normative uses of pleasure, which in group excursion are represented as necessarily convivial. Furthermore, the Ye suite draws our attention to the relationships between imperial authority and poetic authorship; and between the lyric vision of landscape and the court evaluation of personnel. I pose two questions: How did court appraisals of personnel and personality shape the medieval appreciation of landscape poetry? How did Xie Lingyun's poems that highlighted his own individual journeys through landscape incorporate and transform earlier representations of group excursions undertaken by the imperial entourage?

The arc of my argument moves from court practices to poetic conventions: from the institutionalized discourse of evaluating human resources to the aesthetic language of appreciating excursion. Tracing the continuities across this spectrum, the representation of Cao Pi's imperial gaze as a site of both political supervision and poetic recognition; and the term *shang* 賞, which pivots between its institutional sense as "to reward," conferred by the ruler to a subject for his recognized contributions, and its import as "to appreciate," directed at aesthetic objects enjoyed and evaluated.

II. Imperial gaze: political supervision and poetic recognition

Xie Lingyun's Ye suite belongs to the tradition of imitating (*ni* 擬) past literary models.[5] The suite is comprised of eight poems, each imitating the literary style of a particular personage of the Wei 魏 court. What is Xie doing by writing these? The answer to this question has several layers. The general explanation is that imitation demonstrates stylistic mastery and creative

[4] Another factor is the relatively low prestige, among modern critics, of the imitation (*ni* 擬) genre, to which the suite belongs. Poets such as Tao Qian 陶潛 (365–427) were also known in the Six Dynasties for their imitation poems. E.g., see *Wen xuan*, 30.1432.

[5] This suite is listed as *ni* in *Wen xuan* chapter 30, which includes other examples of the genre such as Lu Ji's 陸機 (261–303) "Twelve imitations of the old poems (擬古詩十二首)." For a classic study of imitation as a literary practice, see Wang Yao 王瑤, "*Nigu yu zuowei* 擬古與作偽 [Imitation and forgery]" in *Zhongguo wenxueshi lunji* 中古文学史論集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982).

adaptation.[6] And imitating a broad pantheon of poetic styles, as Xie does, showcases a virtuosic, ranging command of poetic idiom.

However, the significance of bringing together eight different imitations is not simply additive; the sum effect is not reducible to an accumulation of literary styles. The suite is concerned with "style" in a broad sense that covers the assumed continuum between personal style and poetic style, the traceable connections between what a person "embodies" (*ti* 體) and his characteristic body of textual output (*ti*). In short, the suite is preoccupied, not so much with stylistic imitation, as impersonation: the manifest coherence of a persona.

We can get a sense of what is unusual about the Ye suite by considering the issue of authorship. In comparison, the "old poems" (*gu shi* 古詩) that Lu Ji 陸機 (261–303) famously imitated had no identifiable authors. In this case, such anonymity had its own significance, as it lent the poems an aura of untraceable oldness that was a testament to their lasting importance. But these old poems lacked an author in the substantive sense: as the presumed cohesiveness that binds a body of writing to a particular persona. What Lu Ji imitated, and reworked, were features of literary style; he was not impersonating a particular authorial persona.

By contrast, the Ye suite's overall effect is not directed at miming or adapting different literary styles, but at fashioning an abiding persona, an authorial-critical intelligence that unifies the suite. A single figure presides over, and serves as the organizing principle for, the entire suite: the Wei crown prince and emperor Cao Pi—who functions, I will argue, as a global alter-ego for Xie. By understanding what Cao Pi means for Xie, we can better understand the aims and paradigms governing Xie's other works, in particular his landscape poems. In the figure of Cao Pi, Xie fuses together core themes that run throughout his poetry: recognition, appreciation, the imperial gaze and court excursion.

Xie, writing in the voice of Cao Pi, introduces his imitations with two levels of prefaces: a major preface for the suite as a whole; and minor prefaces for each of the eight poems. Each minor preface pithily describes a particular persona and its corresponding poetic "embodiment (*ti*)"—what we would call poetic "style"; it thereby indicates to the reader the mimed style the ensuing poem is meant to embody. The major preface sets a pretext for this assemblage of eight personages and their corresponding poems: as an impersonation of Cao Pi, the major preface narrates an occasion in which Cao Pi and seven other men have gathered for a group excursion.

Before we turn to the prefaces, consider the personages assembled.

1. Cao Pi 曹丕 (187–226), crown prince and emperor of Wei
2. Wang Can 王粲 (177–217)
3. Chen Lin 陳琳 (156–217)
4. Xu Gan 徐幹 (171–217)
5. Liu Zhen 劉楨 (d. 217)
6. Ying Yang 應瑒 (d. 217)
7. Ruan Yu 阮瑀 (d. 212)

[6] Lu Ji's "imitations" did not simply repeat or extend older models but updated their register, lexicon, and meter to conform to contemporary (i.e., 3rd c.) poetic tastes. Likewise, Xie's imitations of Wei dynasty poems do not read as such, but very much stand out as products of, and for, his time. For a detailed study of Lu Ji's rewriting of former models, see the chapter "Imitation" in: Stephen Owen. *The Making of Early Chinese Classical Poetry* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006): pp. 260–97.

8. Cao Zhi 曹植 (192–232), prince of Wei, brother of Cao Pi

These eight luminaries were contemporaries. Nos. 2–7 represent six of the "Seven Worthies of the Bamboo Grove" (*zhulin qixian* 竹林七賢); omitted is Kong Rong 孔融, since he was executed in 208 by Cao Pi's father Cao Cao, and thus belonged to an earlier generation. But the rationale for this assemblage of luminaries is not the historical plausibility of their having attended a group excursion. If there ever were such a gathering, it would have to have taken place after 217, the year the historical Cao Pi became crown prince, because the major preface clearly stages him as a ruling figure, either as emperor or heir apparent. Yet, 217 is also the year that persons 2–6 died. There is rightfully some confusion about assigning a hypothetical date for the imagined gathering. From this consideration of dates, we must conclude that the staged occasion narrated by the major preface is not, even as an imagined event, historically plausible. But the rationale for this gathering of personages lies elsewhere: the suite stages of Cao Pi as an iconographic spectacle. As an iconic figure, Cao Pi is at once represented as supreme literary critic, appraiser of personages, and patron of court excursion.[7] Just as a retinue's banners and heralds are the accoutrements of a ruler's presence, so also these personages are assembled like props around Cao Pi. The poem in which Xie impersonates Cao Pi likens him to the Pole Star, the center around which stars—luminary men—gather.

百川赴巨海，	A hundred rivers wend to the vast sea;
眾星環北辰。	Thronged stars circle the Pole Star.

Let us now turn to each iconic aspect of Cao Pi—as (a) literary critic, (b) appraiser of personages, and (c) patron of excursion—that Xie has drawn upon to fashion an authorial alter-ego.

(a) Cao Pi as critic of embodiments

In the Ye suite, Cao Pi represents not simply an additional poetic style but an arch sensibility that can identify and classify all styles. He is aesthetic recognition fully realized.

A seminal part of the legacy of Cao Pi, posthumously named the Literary Emperor (*Wendi* 文帝; r. 220–6), is his *Discourse on Literature* (*Lun wen* 論文). It is commonly regarded as the earliest piece of literary criticism, because it furnishes pithy appraisals of particular writers and their literary styles—what it calls a poetic "embodiment" (*ti* 體). The concept of *ti* unifies character disposition and literary style: it assumes a semiotic connection between the discernable qualities a person "embodies" and his body of writing, his literary "embodiment." At the same time, this concept of "embodiment" underpins an epistemological theory of literary appreciation that addresses the problem: What body is required to know a particular literary embodiment? The historical Cao Pi, in positioning himself as the ultimate appraiser of embodiments, represents himself as endowed with a special kind of body, one of "comprehensive capacity" (*tong cai* 通

[7] Li Shan's commentary for this suite frequently cites an epistle by Cao Pi, so we can infer that medieval readers regarded the Ye suite as based in part on this epistle. There is indeed overlap in the circumstances, sentiments and diction between the Ye suite and the epistle, in which Cao Pi nostalgically recalls his group excursions at Nanpi 南皮 county with personages 2–6; evaluates in turn the individual talents of personages 2–7; and explicitly mentions having assembled their writings in a collection. There is no mention of Cao Zhi attending these excursions. See Cao Pi's letter to Wu Zhi 吳質, in *Yan Kejun* 嚴可均, *Quan Sanguo wen*, 7.1089; *cf.,* 7.1091. The survival of this document, albeit in fragments, is due in no small part to the prestige of the Ye suite.

才). It is comprehensive because it is neither predisposed in practice, nor biased in judgment, towards any particular embodiment.

<table><tr><td>夫文，本同而末異。蓋奏議宜雅，書論宜理，銘誄尚實，詩賦欲麗。此四科不同，故能之者偏也。唯通才能備其體。</td><td>As for belletristic writings, its roots are the same, yet its branches differ. [Branches such as] memorials and discourses should have dignity; epistles and essays, natural principle; as for inscriptions and eulogies, one esteems substance; as for poems and rhapsodies, one desires beauty. Each of these four divisions is different, so a capable writer will be disposed and biased (*pian*) towards one over the others. Only the comprehensive talent can be fully-equipped in these forms (literally, "embodiments," *ti*).[8]</td></tr></table>

Most persons lack "comprehensive capacity," and are thus necessarily *pian* 偏, i.e., disposed and biased towards a particular poetic style or "embodiment." As such, they have but a piecemeal and partial view of the pantheon of possible embodiments; only one such as Cao Pi, endowed with a "comprehensive" form— in terms of both of personal disposition and literary style—can thereby recognize the full gamut of embodiments. Cao Pi has in effect fashioned an iconography of his imperial role, which combines the imperial gaze with literary recognition. Just as a ruler's inspection tours display his power to panoptically survey his entire kingdom, so also the *Discourse on Literature* projects Cao Pi's capacity to recognize the realm's embodiments—human personnel and their bodies of literary output.

The notion of the emperor as embodying a "comprehensive capacity" was not only advanced by Cao Pi's *Discourse on Literature*, but also by the Wei court's attempts at reforming the political institution of personnel evaluation. Emblematic of this discourse is the court-commissioned work *Treatise on Personnel/Personality* (*Renwu zhi* 人物志) written by Liu Shao 劉邵 (?189–?244). The *Treatise* lays out a typology of personalities—of personal dispositions and the skills to which they are disposed—in order to assign personnel to official posts that suit their particular endowments. Like Cao Pi's literary criticism, each type of personnel-personality is also known as an "embodiment (*ti*)." Connoting physicality, "embodiment" points to what is inborn: a person's physical features, as well as his native character and endowed capabilities—his nature (*xing* 性). Just as the skin is the porous membrane joining inner and outer, so also the "embodiment" mediates between the corporeal person and his discernable "immaterial" qualities. A person's posture and gestures embody his characteristic manner; words voiced through the mouth intone one's temperament; the look of one's eyes conveys demeanor.

The *Treatise*'s typology is premised on the mutual exclusivity of embodiments, each of which is assigned a station within the administrative bureaucracy. Persons, once properly evaluated, can be placed in posts that can best avail their natural capacities and propensities. Given the practical demands addressed—namely the need for a systematized process for managing human resources—the discourse of character appraisal does not admit exceptions or acknowledge exceptional persons: all subjects of the state can in theory be known by being governed by a concept of type, and named as members of a defined "body."

Within this system the emperor is exceptional. The *Treatise*'s chapter "Differentiation of Embodiments" (*tibie* 體別) represents the emperor as capable of boundless transformation into all possible embodiments. While he may take the form of a particular embodiment to meet the

[8] *Wen xuan*, 52.2271.

exigencies of a specific situation, his underlying substance is unmarked by a fixed form or permanent qualities. Essentially "indistinct" (*yong* 庸), he occupies what lies "in between" (*zhong* 中) fixed categories.[9]

夫中庸之德，其質無名。故 鹹而不鹼，淡而不醴 質而不縵，文而不繢， 能威能懷，能辨能訥， 變化無方，以達為節。	The potency of the "In Between and Characterless" is that its substance has no name. Thus it is: salty yet not briny, bland yet not flavorless; plain yet not bare, patterned yet not embellished; it can intimidate, and embrace; artfully persuade, and clumsily speak—[10] Its transformations are boundless, and comprehensive reach is its constant.[11]

The emperor's substance, which is at bottom indeterminable, confers upon him the power (*de* 德) to determine all bodies in the realm. His transcendence of fixed types and particular embodiments enables him to be lord and appraiser of all subjects in the realm. Fully freeform, he can adapt to the exigencies of any situation, and thus recognize the qualities of any body—any perceived object.

If we conceive the poetic, not strictly as a crafted work of art, but as that which presents a "determinate specificity, " "a complex individuation," then there is nothing more 'poetic' in the Six Dynasties than the human individual. This poetics is rooted in the apperception and appraisal of human embodiments.

It is this iconic understanding of Cao Pi—as supreme critic of poetry and supervisor of human resources—that the Ye suite impersonates.

The Ye suite's minor prefaces, which Xie had written in the voice of Cao Pi, must be read as instances of a "comprehensive" capacity taking measure of particular embodiments. While, as prefaces, they are ostensibly about the poems they preface, they also call attention to the power of recognition from which they issue. Taken as a whole, the minor prefaces reflect the capacity of the imperial gaze to survey the pantheon of human forms, including both personal dispositions and poetic styles. The eight-poem Ye suite has only seven minor prefaces, because (the impersonated) Cao Pi does not write one for himself. They show the views afforded by the imperial gaze, but not, as it were, the eye itself. We know the eye through its reflections. The minor prefaces, collated:

---

[9] The *Treatise* deploys *zhong* and *yong* for their air of canonical traditionality; we should not expect that there is necessarily semantic continuity with earlier usage. I have translated the connotations of these terms as invoked in this particular context, not how they might be read in the eponymous chapter of the *Li ji* 禮記, from which they are best known. Here, *zhong* seems to refer, not to a middling balance between the two ends of a spectrum, which is still a known quantity, but to what in its very essence cannot fit within a fixed concept. As for *yong*, the commentary on the *Liji* by Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (2nd c.) glosses it as *yong* 用. However, Liu Bing 劉昞 (4th c.), commenting on an earlier instance of *zhongyong* in the *Renwu zhi*, explains *yong* as "treading on what is ordinary." (居中履常故謂之中庸). My translation of *yong* highlights the ordinary as that which has lacks salient distinctive characteristics.

[10] *Cf., Analects* 4/24: "The Master said, A gentleman covets the reputation of being halting in speech (*ne* 訥) but prompt in deed"; *Laozi*: "The great persuasion is like stammering speech (*ne*)."

[11] Chen Qiaochu 陳喬楚 (annot.), *Renwu zhi jinzhu jinyi* 人物志今註今譯 (Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1996): 2.41.

王粲：貴公子孫，遭亂流寓，自傷情多。
Wang Can: A scion of a noble house, he encountered disorder and became a refugee. He mainly had sentiments of self-lamentation.

陳琳：述喪亂事多。
Chen Lin: He mainly narrated the affairs of loss and disorder.

徐幹：少無宦情，有箕潁之心事，故仕世多素辭。
Xu Gan: In youth he was not disposed towards official service, for in his heart were the matters of Ji and Ying.[12] So, regarding the generation's courtiers, his words were for the most part simple and homely.[13]

劉楨：卓犖偏人，而文最有氣，所得頗經奇。
Liu Zhen: An outstanding personage of extreme disposition and inclination (*pian*): his writings possessed force (*qi*) in the utmost, and what he grasped rather crossed into the extraordinary.

應瑒：流離世故，頗有飄薄之歎。
Ying Yang: As for his age's problems of dislocation and separation, he rather had the sighs of a drifting vagrant.

阮瑀：有優渥之言。
Ruan Yu: He possessed speech that was ample and saturated.

曹植：公子不及世事，但美遨遊，然頗有憂生之嗟。
Cao Zhi: The prince did not get to be involved in official affairs, and only esteemed carefree roaming. Yet he rather had sighs of worry about his life.[14]

These minor prefaces are a form of literary criticism that take for granted the semantic continuum of *ti*. Most follow a formula: they open by remarking about a person's disposition, or his characteristic response to historical circumstances, and then close with a comment about his definitive poetic style. In the appraisal for Ruan Yu, a single statement encompasses both aspects: Ruan Yu "possessed speech that was ample and saturated." The key phrase comes from the *Classic of Poetry*:

益之以霡霂，
既優既渥。

Added [to snow] is drizzling rain,
generous and saturated.[15]

In personality appraisal, the tag refers both to a personal, and literary, quality—like nourishing rain: generous and generative, suffused with superabundance.

By comparison, the Mao commentary's small prefaces to the *Classic of Poetry* illustrate what is noteworthy about the Ye suite's minor prefaces. Whereas the Mao prefaces speak in the name of collective tradition, of anonymous authority, the Ye suite minor prefaces articulate a particular persona, namely Cao Pi as a comprehensive authorial-critical intelligence. It is in the imperial person that authority is vested. Taken as a whole, the minor preface displays the unifying power of Cao Pi as a comprehensive critic of texts, and appraiser of persons.

It is with two questions in mind that I discuss in the next section the Ye suite's major preface: What does the authorial-critical intelligence impersonated by Xie have to do with his practice of writing landscape poetry? What is the relationship between excursion and aesthetic appreciation? To answer these questions, we must first understand that Cao Pi and the Wei court performed the process of appraising embodiments with court excursions. It is this understanding of excursion, not as landscape viewing, but as a stately spectacle for displaying the imperial gaze's power of recognition and appraisal, that Xie modeled.

[12] I.e., reclusion. The hermit Xu You 許由 dwelled at the foothills of Mount Ji, on the north bank of the Ying river.
[13] And therefore noncommittal about political allegiance.
[14] *Wen xuan*, 30.1433–8.
[15] Mao #210; *Maoshi zhengyi* 毛是正義, 13.967.

(b) Cao Pi as patron of excursion

In fashioning an authorial alter-ego through the Ye suite, Xie Lingyun draws upon Cao Pi's iconic status as a premiere host of excursions. It was through group outings that the historical Cao Pi represented his patronage of literary talents and his status as the lord of men. As part of his political persona, Cao Pi organized, patronized, and promulgated excursions with the luminaries of his era. The historical Cao Pi, in a well-known epistle that Xie most likely drew upon in impersonating this figure, writes, "Whenever I think longingly about our former excursions at Nanpi [county], I truly cannot forget them."[16] In his epistles, Cao Pi promulgated such excursions as channels for forging social bonds; he highlighted consummate happiness as pleasures shared with members of his entourage.

同乘並載,	By riding together in shared carriages,
以游後園...	we took excursions in the rear park...
余顧而言,	I say, thinking back on this,
斯樂難常。	it is hard to always have such pleasure.[17]
昔日遊處,	In our former excursions,
行則連輿,	when moving, we linked our carriages;
止則接席,	when stationary, we connected our sitting mats—
何曾須臾相失。	when were we for a moment apart?[18]

Cao Pi presented these spectacles of convivial recreation as a prominent feature of his public image. As seen in his collected writings, he posited that an integral aspect of state governance and the "kingly way" is the ruler's forging of social bonds, and, by association, the leisure pastimes serving this purpose. He states in another epistle:

陰陽交，萬物成。 君臣交，邦國治。 士庶交，德行光。 同憂樂，共富貴， 而友道備矣。易曰， 上下交而其志同。 由是觀之，交乃 人倫之本務，王 道之大義，非 特士友之志也。	When Yin and Yang bond, the ten thousand things form. When lord and subject bond, province and state are governed. When courtier and commoner bond, virtuous conduct is illuminated. Sharing burdens and pleasures, partaking in riches and honor, thereby the amicable way is fulfilled. The *Changes* say, "When superior and inferior bond, their aim is shared." Seen from this perspective, bonding is none other than the essential task of ethical relations, and the great significance of the kingly way. It is not limited to the amicable aims among courtiers.[19]

The connections that Cao Pi's posits among proper rulership, shared pleasure, and group excursion are drawn from longstanding precedents that recall my discussion of the medieval understanding excursion (*you* 遊) in Chapter One. Medieval readers (retroactively) traced such

[16] "每念昔日南皮之游，誠不可忘." Epistle to Wu Zhi 吳質, in *Quan Sanguo wen*, 7.1089. Li Shan, who references this epistle thrice in his annotations of the Ye suite, certainly read the suite alongside this epistle. It is very likely that Xie drew upon this text.
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Ibid.*, in a separate epistle, 7.1089.
[19] *Ibid.*, 7.1091.

precedents to *Mencius*' normative depiction of excursion as the king's processional tour, during which he inspects his domains and redistributes state goods to places in need. We also recall that the *Yiwen leiju*'s 藝文類聚, in illustrating commonplaces of excursion (*you*), cites the ruler's expressed desire to share his recreational outing with talented men, "How do I attain worthy men with whom to share this joy?"[20]

This does not mean that Cao Pi and Wei court have inherited an unbroken tradition about normative excursion. Rather, the Wei court played an important role in the medieval construction of this tradition as such, whereby textual antecedents—such as the *Changes* passage quoted by Cao Pi, "When superior and inferior bond, their aim is shared"—became authoritative precedents for seeing the king as the supreme patron host of group outings. We can see Cao Pi's declaration, "[Bonding] is not limited to the amicable aims among courtiers," as reflecting institutional changes ushered by the Wei court to centralize power by having the emperor directly bond with courtiers, and thereby circumventing "amicable aims among courtiers"—coded language for factions at court. The Wei court, starting with Cao Pi's father and furthered by Cao Pi's successor, attempted to reform the old Han system of official recruitment, which—"limited to the amicable aims among of courtiers"—had been entrenched in the internal loyalties and nepotistic interests of powerful clans. Such internal interests, which recommended their own ilk for promotion and secured loyalties from recommendees, weakened imperial authority.

The historian Tang Changru 唐長儒 has argued that the Wei court retained the basic structure of the old Han recommendation system but positioned representatives of the court as the evaluators of state personnel; these appointed representatives replaced the "illustrious courtiers" (*mingshi* 名士), who, as scions of local interests, had held enormous sway over officials' reputations and careers.[21] In this light, the proclamation in Cao Pi's epistle, "[bonding] is the great significance of the kingly way," reflects the court's institutional efforts to establish direct, vertical ties between the emperor and persons of influence. Cao Pi's group excursions were in effect the public performance and ritual realization of this proclamation.

To summarize Cao Pi's cultural legacy, he combined in the figure of the emperor the comprehensive literary critic, the consummate personnel appraiser, and great patron of excursion. It is with this understanding of excursion—as the recognition of "embodiments"—that we must approach the major preface of Xie's Ye suite. Here, excursion is the procession of the imperial entourage, a constellation of persons organized around the central figure of Cao Pi. Accordingly, the pleasure of excursion is not so much the enjoyment of natural landscape as one defined by shared conviviality, mutual responsiveness and recognition. The natural forms in landscape's "lovely scene" are incidental; paramount is the recognition and appreciation of human forms. The major preface, written in the voice of Cao Pi:

---

[20] See Appendix, entry #14.

[21] Tang Changru 唐長孺, "*Jiuzheng zhongzheng zhidu shi shi* 九正中正制度試釋, in *Wei Jin Nanbeichao Shi Lun* Cong 魏晉南北朝史論叢 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000): 81–121. On the importance of personal recommendations during the Later Han for those aspiring to commissioned posts, see: Rafe de Crespigny, "The Recruitment System of the Imperial Bureaucracy of Later Han" (*The Chung Chi Journal* VI.1, November 1966): pp. 67–78.

建安末，余時在鄴宮，
朝遊夕讌，究歡愉之極。
天下良辰美景，
賞心樂事，四者難并。
今昆弟友朋，二三諸彥，
共盡之矣。古來此娛，
書籍未見，何者。
楚襄王時，有宋玉唐景，
梁孝王時，有鄒枚嚴馬，
遊者美矣，而其主不文。
漢武帝，徐樂諸才備應
對之能，而雄猜多忌，
豈獲晤言之適。
不誣方將，
庶必賢於今日爾。
歲月如流，零落將盡，
撰文懷人，感往增愴。
其辭曰。

Near the end of Jian'an,[22] I was at the Ye palaces. With excursions by day and banquets at dusk, we sought the consummation of convivial joy. A fine hour, a lovely scene, an ***appreciative mind***, and a merry occasion—it is hard for these four to coincide. Now, with brother and friends, a coterie of talented men, together we fulfill all these. Since antiquity, such enjoyment has never been seen before in writings. Why?
In the time of King Xiang of Chu (3rd c. BCE), there were [talents in the entourage such as] Song Yu, Tang Le, and Jing Cha;
in the time of King Xiao of Liang (184–144 BCE), there were Zou Yang, Mei Sheng, Yan Ji, and Sima Xiangru.
The men of the excursion were splendid indeed,
***but their rulers were not literary* (*wen*).**
As for the Martial Emperor of the Han (r. 140–87 BCE), Xu Yue along with other talents fulfilled the capacity for response and repartee. But their lord had strong distrust and many a jealousy—how could he garner the satisfaction of ***face-to-face speech***?
I do not disparage future generations yet to come,
whom I venture will surely be worthier than we today.[23]
Years and months seem to stream past, and these men have passed away one by one and are nearly all gone.
I write this preface to remember them.
I am stirred by the passing of things, which adds to my sorrow.
The poems composed were as follows.[24]

After mentioning three conditions—the comfortable weather of a "fine hour," the surrounds of a "lovely scene," and the circumstances of a "merry occasion"—the major preface makes clear that these are insufficient for true excursion. Xie Lingyun devotes the rest of the major preface to what he terms the "appreciative mind" (*shang xin* 賞心), which he attributes to be the operative factor enabling this (projection of) Cao Pi to enact a paradigmatic excursion "never been seen before in writings." For Xie, the dynamics of appreciation are inseparable from the activity of excursion. This is because appreciation is modeled first and foremost as a social encounter; and the emblem of this paradigmatic encounter is court excursion.

The preface points out the failings of past court excursions: "The men of the excursion were splendid indeed, but their rulers were not literary (*wen* 文)." Appreciation as social encounter requires worthy participants on both sides—both appraiser and appraised. The label "*wen*" evoked here plays on Cao Pi's posthumous title as *Wendi* 文帝, "literary emperor." Given the legacy of Cao Pi discussed above, we must understand this label as referring not simply to a ruler capable of literary composition but to a composite figure that combines the consummate

[22] As I've stated before, there is no sensible way to date this occasion, even as hypothetical. Also, since Ruan Yu 阮瑀 died in 212, the date must be assigned to the middle of Jian'an, not towards the end of the reign period (i.e., *ca*. 220).
[23] This line paraphrases part of Cao Pi's epistle: "Formidable are those born later, so I cannot belittle those yet to come. However, I fear that we will not get to see such men, for we are already advanced in years." (後生可畏，來者難誣。然恐吾與足下不及見也。年行已長大; *cf.*, *Analects*, 9/23.) Xie Lingyun's imitation, by virtue of being historically later, inscribes himself into the "formidable later-born" imagined by Cao Pi.
[24] *Wen xuan*, 30.1432.

literary critic, the evaluator of personal embodiments, and the patron of group excursion. A true "appreciative mind" fulfills all these aspects.

The preface, playing upon the binary "*wen* 文" versus "*wu* 武," contrasts literary and civil(izing) rulership with military leadership. The opposite of a "Literary" (*Wen*) ruler like Cao Pi is the Martial (*Wu*) Emperor of the Han, criticized by the preface thus: having "strong distrust and many a jealousy—how could he garner the satisfaction of *face-to-face speech*? " (*wu yan* 晤言) This understanding of court excursion as the enactment of social responsiveness echoes Cao Pi's epistle: "Bonding is the great significance of the kingly way." Xie invokes the phrase *wu yan*, borrowed from the *Classic of Poetry*'s "Pond at East Gate." While this borrowing might not constitute a "strong" allusion, the phrase's conventional associations nevertheless merit our attention because it allows us to bring focus to Xie's understanding of excursion space. The space celebrated by "Pond at East Gate" is noteworthy, not as for the visually "lovely scene" it affords, but for what a person can do, and interact with, in it.

東門之池，可以漚菅。	The pond by the eastern gate is fit for softening rope-rushes.[25]
彼美淑姬，可與晤言。	That beautiful Shu Ji is fit for speaking face-to-face.

The word *wu* 晤 is glossed by the Mao commentary as "to meet 遇," and by Zheng Xuan as "to face 對."[26] Li Shan, in annotating Xie's use of *wu yan*, cites Zheng Xuan's reading, so medieval readers understood *wu yan* as "speaking face-to-face."[27] Accordingly, Xie's notion of the "appreciative mind" is one that always presumes a counterpart like Shu Ji, one who is "fit for speaking face-to-face (*wu yan*)." If the face-to-face is an integral feature of Xie's notion of the appreciative mind, then this "mind" is not conceived as an inner faculty or a bounded "Subject" that must reach, as it were, "out there" to appreciate objects; rather, it is that interstitial space between self and other. In the Ye preface, the emblem of this interstitial space of appreciation is excursion. The preface's opening explicitly connects court excursion with social pleasures: "With excursions by day and banquets at dusk, we sought the consummation of convivial joy (*huanyu* 歡愉)." Expressed in the language of the *Classic of Poetry*: it is the mode of "being with (*yu* 與)" and "facing (*wu* 晤)" another; in the language of the Ye suite preface, this social dynamic is typified by "response and repartee (*ying dui* 應對)" among excursion participants.

In Chapter One, I discussed Mencius' exhortations to the king to share with his subjects pleasurable outings at the royal park. The discussions in the *Mencius* about parking outings were embedded in a discourse about the politics of pleasure: how it should be used, and the societal distribution of goods entailed by different uses. Like Mencius' idealized excursions, Xie's Ye suite also envisions court excursion as a normative space that is likewise typified by mutual gratifications. However, unlike the *Mencius*, the Ye suite's ultimate concern is not the politics of pleasure, or sharing as an end in itself, but group pleasure as a figure of aesthetic recognition. Xie's "appreciation" is indeed a social pleasure, but one that ultimately affirms the patron-emperor as supreme. Pleasure is mutual but nevertheless hierarchical. Cao Pi's politically-motivated declaration, "bonding is the great significance of the kingly way," becomes, through Xie's impersonation, a motto for the dynamics of appreciation. The enactment of the

[25] Steeping the fibers of the *jian* 菅 plant in water softens them for being used to make rope and mats.
[26] Mao #139; *Maoshi zhengyi*, 7.522.
[27] In the three other instances of *wu yan* in the *Wen xuan* (in poems by Xie Huilian 謝惠連, Ruan Ji 阮籍, Fan Ni 潘尼), Li Shan invariably cites Zheng Xuan's reading. See *Wen xuan*, 22.1036; 23.1075; 24.1158.

"appreciative mind" is staged with the entourage in excursion, where worthy men come to be recognized in a face-to-face with him.

(c) The appreciative mind (*shangxin*)

We must approach Xie's landscape poetry, not as a poetry of "nature," but as performances of excursion, which for Xie represents the highest mode of perceptual and social responsiveness. As we have seen in the Ye suite major preface, natural landscape ("lovely scenery") is insufficient for perfect excursion. For Xie Lingyun, what is essential is what he terms the "appreciative mind" (*shangxin* 賞心). If we are to speak of a medieval "aesthetics" of landscape, we must attend to the associations that Xie, the founder of landscape poetry, vested in this concept. *Shang-xin* has a special place in Xie's landscape poetry, where it is frequently foregrounded, often in moves of poetic closure.[28] The compound *shangxin* actually appears for the first time in our extant texts in Xie's works, whose literary prestige in the Six Dynasties no doubt contributed to its later currency in the Tang and onwards.

What does it mean to *shang*? Let us step back from Xie's invocation of the term and consider its broader significance, and usage in the Six Dynasties.

By itself, *shang*'s semantic range covers perceptual and emotional response, as well as evaluative assessment—what we might broadly call "aesthetic" recognition. It is a cross-over term that joins individual valuation and state-conferred distinction. In the political arena, to *shang* is to "reward" or "bestow," a privilege performed by the ruler to recognize courtiers for achievements or services rendered to the state. This is the most basic sense of the term, which the *Shuowen* 說文 defines as: "to reward a person who has merit (賜有功也)."[29] Just as market forces make an asset appreciate in value, so also the ruler's palpable act of *shang* by monetary, material, or social rewards increases the courtier's worth and cultural capital. This sense of "appreciation" is tied to a strict division of labor: the ruler appreciates; the courtier is appreciated. While by no means the earliest example, the chapter on "Capabilities (材能)" in Liu Shao's *Treatise on Personnel-Personality* is emblematic of this usage of *shang* as an incentive mechanism wielded by the state. While courtiers are tasked with government affairs, the ruler's role is to appreciate.

臣以自任為能,	The courtier takes fulfilling his own post as his ability;
君以用人為能。	The ruler takes the application of personnel as his.
臣以能言為能,	The courtier takes being able to speak as his ability;
君以能聽為能。	The ruler takes being able to listen and heed as his.
臣以能行為能,	The courtier takes being able to execute tasks as his ability;
君以能賞罰為能。	The ruler takes being able to reward (*shang*) and punish as his.
所能不同,	What each person is capable of doing is not the same
故能君眾材也。	therefore the capable ruler gathers a throng of talents.[30]

This governmental sense of *shang* might be understood as the institutional expression of

[28] It appears six times among Xie's ninety odd extant poems.
[29] Dong Lianchi 董蓮池, *Shuowen jiezi kaozheng* 說文解字考證 (Beijing: Zuojia chubanshe, 2005).
[30] *Renwu zhi jinzhu jinyi*, 5.144.

gratitude. Only a slight semantic shift is needed for this sense of *shang* to also signify appreciate in the senses of "to recognize the value of" and "to feel stirred by the qualities of." In this sense, a person "rewards," not materially, but emotively.

This emotive sense of *shang* is not so different from the institutional sense if we consider that it too expresses gratitude: to appreciate is to be gratified (*shangshi* 賞適).[31] Appreciation is enjoyment experienced as reciprocity: one feels grateful for being thus gratified by it. Consider this example from the *Shishuo xinyu*, which is among the earliest in our extant texts to foreground and discuss acts of appreciation.

> 或問顧長康（顧愷之）「君箏賦何如嵇康琴賦。」顧曰「不賞者，作後出相遺。深識者，亦以高奇見貴。」
>
> Someone asked Gu Kaizhi," How does your 'Zither Exposition' compare to that of Xi Kang?"[32] Gu replied, "Among those who do not appreciate (*shang*) my composition, it is dismissed as derivative; among those with deep recognition, it too is esteemed as lofty and extraordinary."[33]

Here, *shang* is equated with "deep recognition 深識," whose perceptual acumen and judgment can distinguish qualities and rank their relative values. At the same time, the tone of Gu's remark ("Those who do not appreciate my composition dismiss it as derivative") implies not just that he considers them wrong in their judgment, but that they are somehow ungrateful for the goodness he has extended to them, for his "lofty and extraordinary" personal qualities embodied in, and shown through, his composition. In normative appreciation, appraiser and appraised are emotionally joined by mutual gratitude: those with deep recognition are gratified by Gu Kaizhi's composition; Gu, in turn, is grateful towards them for being recognized. This exchange is both emotional and emotive, both responsive and expressive. To highlight this aspect of appreciation, we can also render *shangxin* as the "gratified and grateful heart." Thus, appreciation is as much an emotionally and socially bound exchange as a perceptual-cognitive act.

In sum, appreciation implies the perceptual and emotive interaction of embodiments. For Xie, the perfect emblem of these dynamics of appreciation is the imperial excursion of the Ye suite. The space of excursion, normatively understood, fulfills the act of appreciation's mutual gratification and gratitude. A model patron and practitioner of excursion, the Ye suite's Cao Pi serves as Xie's alter-ego; it is Xie as he would have liked to see himself. As such, the imperial figure of Cao Pi allows us to track a recurring authorial persona in Xie's landscape poetry, and his understanding of excursion as a cultural practice.

---

[31] The phrase *shangshi* is taken from the Yuan dynasty commentator Liu Lü 劉履, who uses the term in his exposition of Xie's poem "Following Jinzhu Gully, I cross the ridge and stroll along the stream 從斤竹澗越嶺溪行." See Liu Lü's *Feng ya yi* 風雅翼, collected in the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書. A modern but nevertheless emblematic example of this usage of *shang* is a passage from Lu Xun's writings: "Among the weeds some small flowers bloom in red and white. Truly, to simply look at them gratifies (*shang*) the heart and delights the eyes (*shang xin yue mu* 賞心悅目)." Here, *shang* is grammatically parallel to, and functionally synonymous with, "delight." From "Cai wei 采薇" in *Gushi xinbian* 故事新編.

[32] The *qin* zither had five strings and later, seven; the *zheng* had, variously, five, thirteen, sixteen, and more strings. Since these two instruments were considered similar enough for expositions on them to merit comparison, in this passage I render them both simply as "zither."

[33] *Shishuo xinyu*, 4/98.

There is no doubt an element of presumptuousness on Xie's part to impersonate an emperor in a literary composition, but we must bear in mind that he was the proud scion of an elite clan. He probably regarded the Song dynasty founder, the "Martial Emperor" Liu Yu 劉裕 (r. 420-2), born of humble origins, as an uncouth upstart. Regarding the prestige of the Xie clan, one that rivaled that of dynastic houses, Cynthia Chennault writes:

> During [the Southern Dynasties'] frequent changes in political authority, the Langye Wang and the Yangjia Xie were typically positioned at center stage, prepared to carry out functions of large symbolic moment such as presenting the imperial regalia at a new ruler's investiture, memorializing on behalf of the hundred officials to urge a usurper to the throne, and so forth. Through ancestral ties with illustrious statesmen of the Eastern Jin, leaders who were genuinely powerful in both the political and cultural realms, the service of great family members helped legitimize the imperial record's many disjunctures.[34]

The Song dynastic house regarded Xie clan members such as Xie Lingyun as important allies for imparting legitimacy to its rule. We might say that Xie clan members not only "presented imperial regalia at a new ruler's investiture" but were themselves, as tokens of elite breeding, a kind of imperial regalia. Indeed, in one recorded occasion, the Song emperor brought Xie Lingyun on an imperial excursion, and asked the illustrious poet to—"carrying out functions of large symbolic moment"—commemorate it in verse.[35]

Despite his clan status, Xie Lingyun's actual career was marked by failure, frustration, and fear. He became marginalized, and his prospects for high office dashed, when the prince with whom he had aligned himself, Yizhen, was killed by rivals. During the factional struggles surrounding the enthronement of another prince as a puppet emperor, Xie was expelled from the capital. The standard biography for Xie ties his conspicuous excursions through "lovely" landscapes to his exile from the political center.

廬陵王義真少好文籍，與靈運情款異常。少帝即位，權在大臣，靈運構扇異同，非毀執政，司徒徐羡之等患之，出為永嘉太守。郡有名山水，靈運素所愛好，出守既不得志，遂肆意遊遨，遍曆諸縣，動逾旬朔。	Prince Yizhen was at youth fond of belles-lettres and shared an unusually deep affinity with Xie Lingyun. When the Child Emperor ascended the throne [in 423, after the prince was killed by rivals], court power lay in the hands of high officials. Xie Lingyun provoked people to take sides, and denounced those wielding power. Chancellor Xu Xianzhi and his ilk considered him dangerous, and exiled him to be governor of Yongjia province [in the southeast]. The province had celebrated mountains-and-rivers, of which he had always been fond. Since his post failed to satisfy his ambitions, he consequently abandoned himself to carefree excursion, going everywhere across various counties. On each trip, he would be gone for a fortnight to a month.[36]

[34] Cynthia L. Chennault, "Lofty Gates or Solitary Impoverishment? Xie Family Members of the Southern Dynasties," *T'oung Pao* 85, (1999): pp. 257-8.
[35] This poem is collected in: Lu Qinli 逯欽立, 2:1158; *Wen xuan*, 22.1037.
[36] *Song shu*, 67.1753.

This account in the standard biography has echoes of a Tao Qian-type narrative in which career failure actually makes possible a return to a truer, more carefree self.[37] "Since his post failed to satisfy his ambitions, he consequently abandoned himself to carefree excursion, going everywhere across various counties." It is perhaps from this reading that Xie Lingyun is now widely thought of as a celebrant of lovely landscapes. However, the final minor preface that Xie wrote for the Ye suite speaks of an exilic excursion that is anything but carefree, and whose beauty is disquieting. While the suite's Cao Pi may represent Xie's ideal projection of himself, the minor preface for Cao Pi's brother, Prince Cao Zhi, best mirrors the disappointment and even mortal danger of Xie's actual career life.

> 曹植：公子不及世事，但美遨遊。然頗有憂生之嗟。
>
> Cao Zhi: The prince did not get to be involved in official affairs; he was only engaged in celebrating and beautifying (*mei*) excursion. Yet he rather had sighs of worry about his life.

There is here a discomfiting tension that links the "beautification (*mei* 美)" of excursion and misrecognition in public life. Just as the brothers Cao Pi and Cao Zhi were popularly thought of as adversaries, so also their prefaces in the Ye suite point to asymmetries in the dynamics of appreciation.[38] Such asymmetries play out throughout Xie's landscape poetry, which, when read alongside the Ye suite, reveal themselves as excursion performances preoccupied with the disjuncture between excursion's normative ideal and its failure to be realized. The opening major preface (voiced as Cao Pi) and the final minor preface (voiced as Cao Zhi) together bookend the Ye suite as a work elaborating on excursion's relation to recognition and appreciation, both perfected and unrealized.

A model of aesthetic recognition, Xie's articulation of "appreciation" is embedded in the institutional practice of court excursion, and the system, formal and informal, of personnel evaluation.

III. Xie Lingyun's retinue

Xie Lingyun performed the imperial excursion not only through writings, best exemplified by his Ye suite, but also marshaled his considerable estate resources to transform the natural landscape on a scale that aspired to the great public work projects organized by state power. Chiseling away mountain passes, dredging waterways, and cutting paths through the wilderness by felling groves—all these labors were carried out by the enormous retinue that attended him on his conspicuous excursions. The standard history writes:

> 靈運因父祖之資，生業甚厚。奴僮既眾，義故門生數百，鑿山浚湖，功役無已。尋山陟嶺，必造幽峻，岩嶂千重，莫不備盡。登躡常著木
>
> Based on the resources of his father and grandfather, Xie Lingyun's income was very ample. Having multitudinous slaves, and loyal retainers numbering in the several hundreds, his efforts in chiseling mountains and dredging lakes never ceased. Whenever he sought to ascend mountains, he necessarily went to places remote and lofty. Even with thousand-layered crags, there was nothing with which he was not fully equipped. When climbing, he often

[37] I am speaking of the conventional understanding Tao Qian as propounded by later readers such as Su Shi. See Tian Xiaofei, *Tao Yuanming & Manuscript Culture* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington, 2005).
[38] The *Shishuo xinyu* aggressively depicts the Cao brothers as rivals.

履，上山則去前齒，下山去其後齒。嘗自始甯南山伐木開徑，直至臨海，從者數百人。臨海太守王琇驚駭，謂為山賊，徐知是靈運乃安。

wore wooden clogs which, upon ascending, he would detach the grooves of the front sole, and when descending, detach the grooves of the heel. Once, he chopped trees and cleared a path from Shining all the way to Linhai with attendants numbering in the several hundreds. The governor of Linhai, Wang Xiu, thought they were mountain bandits and became alarmed. Bit by bit he learned that it was Xie Lingyun, and only then did he become at ease.[39]

The Linhai governor's fear of these "mountain bandits"—a force outside governmental control or, at worse, a rebel regime—underscores how the scale, spectacle, and projective force of Xie's retinue was comparable to a state-organized expedition, or imperial tour. This enormous retinue no doubt required some kind of internal command structure to be managed. At the same time, unlike officers of the state bureaucracy, whose ultimate allegiance is to the imperial court, this retinue was made up of persons tied to Xie by personal bonds. In addition to a throng of slaves, Xie's retinue included several hundred personal retainers (門生) and long-established affiliates bound to him by oaths of loyalty (義故). Whether or not this retinue counts as a rebel force is a matter of adjudicating intention; but the suspicion is not so far from the truth when considering the retinue's sociological organization, one whose allegiance is independent of central state authority.

In addition to the aura and spectacle of this large retinue, its projective force also emanated from the concrete transformations that its army of engineers wrought on the surrounds. The environmental historian Mark Elvin has pointed out the many crossover applications between Chinese civilian and military technologies. For instance, the technologies for dredging waterways and ramming earth to build dikes are the same used to raise forts and establish embattlements.[40] Furthermore, the capacity of this retinue to chisel a path through mountains is nothing short of to being able to alter the tactical layout and strategic value of a territory, for it opens up new entry points into the land that can ensure supply lines for a military expedition. What differentiates an axe-wielding bandit force led by the ambitions of a rebel commander, a public works project built for geopolitical and economic goals, and a pleasure-tour organized for an aesthete of excursion is their ostensible purpose, and not a difference in the scale of organized labor or its projective power. Thus, the Linhai governor's misrecognition of these "mountain bandits" is a mis-interpretation of Xie Lingyun's aims, not of the considerable resources marshaled under his command.

However, what is not lost on the governor, what he has correctly "read" into Xie Lingyun's efforts, is the imperial pretensions of Xie's spectacular tours. Indeed, such imperial pretensions would ultimately spell his demise, for he was finally accused of mobilizing a rebel army and beheaded in 433.[41] Whether these allegations are valid, or are the machinations of court politics, is difficult to ascertain and, for our purposes, irrelevant;[42] what is germane about his fate

[39] *Song shu*, 67.1775.

[40] Mark Elvin, *The Retreat of the Elephants: An Environmental History of China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

[41] *Song shu*, 67.1775.

[42] The standard biography states that emperor, cherishing Xie's talents, wished to absolve him of capital punishment and only strip him of his office. However, Wang Yi, in a memorial, insisted that the charge was correct but that he should be spared from death because of the heroic merits of his grandfather Xie Xuan 謝玄. Thereupon, Lingyun

is that his reputation would be so vulnerable to such accusations. The standard biography's statement that "there was nothing with which Xie was not fully equipped" does not merely concern Xie's paraphernalia, such as the custom clogs that he designed for hiking, but the magnificent scale and full trappings of imperial power projected by his landscape tours.

(d) Postures of gazing in excursion poetry

As we saw in the Ye suite major preface, for Xie, what is essential to excursion is not simply a "lovely scene" but an "appreciative mind" through which it acquires its fullest valence. This is significant because it allows us to recognize Xie's landscape poetry, not as nature writing, but as excursion performances. At such, it allows us to see connections between his "landscape poems," in the conventional sense, and works such as the poem below which is about surveying farm fields. This poem is emblematic of a general feature of the excursion performance: what is on display is the act of viewing itself.

There is indeed a presumptuousness, even a tinge of megalomania, to Xie's tours. Showing the viewer's high vantage point, as well as high social advantage, the tour displays postures of the imperial gaze. By "posture," I am also calling attention to the performance's discernible shape. A pose is a codified manner that is recognizable—by the manner, one knows the man. This is to read Xie's excursion poetry alongside the dynamics of appreciation articulated in the Ye suite, and the Six Dynasties discourse of embodiments.

白石巖下徑行田　Surveying farm fields along the path below Whitestone Ridge
1 小邑居易貧，In a small town, dwellings tend towards poverty;
災年民無生。In famine years, there is no way to live.
3 知淺懼不周，My ken is shallow and, I fear, piecemeal;
愛深憂在情。My concerns are deep and worry lies in my heart.
5 舊業橫海外，The old estates have dispersed to distant shores;[43]
蕪穢積頹齡。Wild overgrowth has accumulated over years of decline.
7 饑饉不可久，Crop failure and famine must not persist,
甘心務經營。I willingly strive to measure and plan:

9 千頃帶遠堤，A thousand acres would be girdled by faraway levees;
萬里瀉長汀。Ten-thousand miles drained into long shoals.[44]
11 州流涓澮合，Flowing among islets, tiny trickles would converge;
連統塍埒并。Linked in networks, field paddies would combine.[45]

13 雖非楚宮化，While this transformation wouldn't compare to the buildings at Chu,[46]

---

was held in Guangzhou. After a plot was discovered in which Xie had made payments to arrange for a band of armed men to rescue him, he was finally beheaded. *Song shu*, 67.1776–7.

[43] An emblem of the area's decline. An example of *ye* 業 as "estates" or "landholdings" is *Shi ji*, 73.2340: "I requested gardens and ponds as the landholdings for my posterity (請園池爲子孫業)."

[44] Irrigated paddies are drained (*xie* 瀉) by an opening in the paddy levee to ensure a constant water level.

[45] They "combine" in the sense of being unified under a central system. Low-lying embankments circumscribe a field or paddy, dividing it from adjacent ones. They furnish walkways through fields, and control water levels through gaps in the embankment that both input and drain away irrigation water.

荒闕亦黎萌。 The governed populace, just as then, is in destitute need.[47]
15 雖非鄭白渠, While this would not measure up to the Zheng-Bai canals,
每歲望東京。 Each year, I look towards the capital in the east.[48]
17 天鑒儻不孤, If Heaven's Mirror is not partial,[49] then
來茲驗微誠。 years to come will give proof my [efforts'] small bit of sincerity.[50]

The excursion narrated in this poem resonates with the normative understanding of excursion formulated in classic texts such as the *Mencius*: true excursion (*you*) is the king's survey tour of the agricultural enterprise. The poem opens with the authorial narrator surveying the barrenness of his administered lands, whose rundown estates are symptomatic of the area's demise. Like a beneficent ruler, he expresses his concern for the people's plight ("My cares are deep and worry lies in my heart"). He then sets his sights on "measuring and planning," a verb phrase associated with King Wen's celebrated construction of the Divine Terrace. This verb phrase then sets up the poem's centerpiece in lines 9–12, which present an imagined landscape that, transformed by Xie's grand water works, revitalize the region.

We might call the landscape of lines 9-12 "focalized" because its appearance and very existence depend upon the poet's vision. It is not an accomplished fact but an imagined vista projected by the focalizing eye or "I." Thus, I interpret the grammatical mood of lines 9–12 as future subjunctive, instead of, as J.D. Frodsham does, as past perfect.[51] What is at stake here is the nature of the appreciative act, and what is actually presented for appreciation. What the poem ultimately presents to "Heaven's Mirror" (天鑒) for reflection is the transformative act of the poet's envisioned excursion. It is not natural landscape that is on display but the landscaping enacted by the poet's vision. Just as the Ye suite excursion, and its dynamics of appreciation, called for a "comprehensive capacity," so also this poem about a tour gestures towards a supremely appreciative and gratified intelligence, either an ideal reader or the institution of the emperor.

The envisioned network of levees, drainage canals, and irrigation channels take their inspiration from the Zheng-Bai canals (line 15), the monumental hydraulic works of the early imperial period. The *Records of the Historian* credits the strategic advantages afforded by the Zheng canal's as integral to the Qin regime's unification of the central states; likewise, the Bai

[46] An allusion to Mao #50, in which Duke Wen 文 of Wei 衛 resettles his state on a hill in Chu after it was destroyed by the Di 狄. The ode begins, "With the Building Star right in the middle of the sky, we started the buildings at Chu." *Gong* 宮 in early usage refers to residential buildings (see also Mao #154 for similar usage).
[47] I.e., his achievements may fall short of the classical model but they nevertheless address the same needs of the people. This line has been grammatically inverted so that the end-rhyme falls on 萌; it should be understood as, "黎萌亦荒闕."
[48] The exact reference of "eastern capital" is unclear. If *jing* 京 follows the usage of Mao #50 (alluded to in line 13), then it means "hills," in which case the line might mean that he looks to the eastern hills to prognosticate whether the site will be good.
[49] This clause can be paraphrased, "If I do not fail to make myself worthy of the position conferred upon me by the emperor, who as a mirror reflecting the true aspect of things has assessed me fit for office..."
[50] Lu Qinli, *Song shi*, 2:1168.
[51] J. D. Frodsham, *The Murmuring Stream: The Life and Works of the Chinese Nature Poet Hsieh Ling-Yün (385-433), Duke of K'ang-Lo* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1967): Vol. II, p 123.

canal is linked to economic prosperity and military strength.[52] On a mythic level, water control is associated with the labors of the sage-king Yu 禹, whose engineering mastery of flood waters enabled agriculture and civilization itself. The ambitious scale of the Zheng-Bai water works is consummate with the kingly postures presented by the poem.

The poem's transformative vision is predicated on rulership. Line 13—"While this transformation wouldn't compare to the buildings at Chu…"—alludes to the *Classic of Poetry*'s "Settling right in the center 定之方中," traditionally understood as eulogizing the founding of a new state. After the Wei kingdom was vanquished by the Di 狄, the king went to the Chu hills and prognosticated about the feasibility of the site for a establishing a new kingdom. In this allusion, kingship is marked not by the project's completion but by the projection of its realization yet to come. The relevant stanza of "Settling right in the center" reads:

升彼虛矣，以望楚矣。	I ascend that barrow and gaze over Chu.
望楚與堂，景山與京。	I gaze over Chu and its villages, lofty ranges and hills.
降觀于桑，	I look below at mulberries, and
卜云其吉，	the prognostication declares its auspiciousness.
終然允臧。	In the end, it will truly be good.[53]

These villages in the Chu hills are imagined. The mulberry fields, too, are focalized through an expectant viewer. The Mao commentary says, "The land is suited for silkworms; it is permissible to settle the people here (地勢宜蠶，可以居民)." The king, looking into the future, sees the thriving sericulture and polity that will be sustained by the mulberries, a result divined to be "in the end, truly good." Xie's poem, by deploying this allusion, likewise stages his landscape as a visualization of future developments. The closing line, "years to come will give proof my [efforts'] small bit of sincerity," says that the wholehearted ardor that constitutes his appreciable worth is demonstrated by his visionary, and transformative, desire. This desire takes shape as landscape, from which one knows the man.

The regal allusions to state building deployed by Xie run the risk of presumptuousness, even perhaps *lèse majesté*. Whereas the Ye suite was written as imitation, and thereby provided a literary pretext for such imperial posturing, this poem must manage the risk of presumptuousness with a different economy of gestures. The antepenultimate and penultimate couplets (lines 13–16) are each structured around point and counterpoint, such that king-like presumption is balanced by a courtier's precaution. Line 13, in which the poet aspires to the founding of a state, is balanced by line 14, which pleads for the people's destitute conditions and need for an ambitious economic stimulus plan—the couplet thus implies that Xie only acts the ruler out of situational necessity. In the penultimate couplet: while the hydraulic works aspire to the magisterial canals of Zheng and Bai (lines 15), he nevertheless "each year looks always to capital in the east" (line 16). Finally, the closing couplet makes conventionally humilific gestures: the poet calls his sincere efforts "small (*wei* 微)," and also suggests that his merits might not live up to the station bestowed to him by the emperor—"Heaven's Assessment," or, literally, "Heaven's Mirror."

[52] See section on hydraulic engineering in Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1971): Vol. 5, pp. 284–7.
[53] Mao #50; *Maoshi zhengyi*, 3.235.

At the same time, the elevated register of "Heaven's Mirror" might be read as more regalia. Contextually dependent, the phrase can refer to that power greater than the emperor himself: Heaven. For instance, we see its usage in canonical works such as the *Classic of Poetry*'s "Major Bright 大明," in which Heaven, seeing that King Wen of the Zhou had fulfilled his charge, confers upon him a consort.

天監在下	Heaven assesses[54] the world of men below:
有命既集	[and saw] its charge fulfilled.
文王初載	King Wen had begun his task,
天作之合	and Heaven made for him a match.[55]

Read alongside this canonical reference, the appearance of *tianjian* 天鑒 in line 17 positions Xie not as a courtier who looks to his lord, but, like King Wen himself, answers only to highest Heaven. The poem's economy of reference both suggests, and preempts the risk of, presumption. On one hand, the contrapuntal gestures of the preceding couplets steer us away from this interpretation; on the other hand, these gestures have the air of protesting too much, as if to ward off the implications posed by the text's accumulation of imperial postures and allusions to state-building. The point here not to adjudicate the authorial intent behind the ambiguous reference "Heaven's Mirror," but to recognize this ambiguity as symptomatic of a globally-operative language of excursion evoked by Xie's poetry: this is a register of grandeur and stateliness, dressed in a regalia of classical reference.

This poem instantiates, *mutatis mutandis*, the social dynamics of appreciation outlined in the Ye suite. The excursion presumes an audience; the narrator's acts of spectatorship—viewing, and visualizing, lands—is itself the spectacle. While the poem, unlike the Ye suite preface, does not narrate a group excursion, or mention a single touring companion, we note that there is nevertheless the social moment, the gratifying "face-to-face" encounter. This is accomplished by the prosopopoeial invocation of the "Heavenly Mirror," an intelligence imagined as reflecting upon, and gratified by, the narrator's sincere motivations and efforts. Like the appreciative counterpart Shu Ji, the one occupying the position of "mirror," may variously be understood as the celestial divinity, the political sovereign, or the poem's audience itself.

Finally, we note that the disquieting asymmetries between the Ye suite's Cao Pi and Cao Zhi—i.e., the disjunct between normative excursion and exile—are here resolved. Just as a mirror creates a symmetrical counterpart by its reflective property, so also the narrator's acts of viewing are matched by the Heavenly Mirror—the narrator looks; and the mirror looks upon him looking. The solitary tour, by the poem's closing, orchestrates the tropes of group excursion.

We see thus that Xie's Ye suite and his "mountains and springs" poetry—two apparently disconnected bodies of work that the medieval critic Zhong Rong singled out for praise—are united by the persistence of the imperial gaze. It predicates the narrator's transformative vision; and is also invoked as the "appreciative mind" that bears witness to the vision as spectacle.

---

[54] The word *jian* 監, as "mirror" or its extended verbal sense, "to asesss," can also be written as 鑒. The former graph refers to a vessel that holds water and reflects on its liquid surface; the latter refers to a mirror made of polished bronze and, as the product of a newer technology, is a historically later graph. See *Wang Li gu Hanyu zidian* 王力古漢語字典 (Beijing:Zhonghua shuju, 2000): 778–9.

[55] Mao #236; *Maoshi zhengyi*, 16.1135.

IV. Center and periphery in Xie's tours of exile

The poems that seem to most contrast with the Ye suite are those associated, according to the conventional biographical timeline, with his period of exile, during which he embarked on pleasure excursions through "mountains and waters." These works make no direct reference to state tours. To begin our discussion of these works, I would like to turn to the poetic account of his exile, "Yongchu's 3rd year (422 AD), 7th month, 16th day: Setting out to the province from the capital 永初三年七月十六日之郡初發都."

1	述職期闌暑,	The announcement of my post came at summer's end;
	理棹變金素。	Readying my boat, [the season] has turned metal-white [i.e., autumn].
3	秋岸澄夕陰,	Autumn banks washed in shades of night;
	火旻團朝露。	Vernal skies coalesce dewdrops of dawn.[56]
5	辛苦誰爲情,	Worn down by adversity, who can console my emotions?[57]
	遊子値頹暮。	As a wanderer, I confront the fading twilight [of my life].
7	愛似莊念昔,	Attached to those who seem familiar, Zhuangzi yearned for the past,[58]
	久敬曾存故。	Ever respectful, Zengzi maintained his old friends.[59]
9	如何懷土心,	How can I bear this heart of mine longing for its native soil?
	持此謝遠度。	Holding onto this, I am chagrined at my distant sojourn.[60]
11	李牧愧長袖,	Li Mu was ashamed about his long sleeves;[61]
	郤克慚躧步。	Xi Ke was humiliated at his lame gait.[62]
13	良時不見遺,	In good times, they were not cast aside;
	醜狀不成惡。	While ugly, they were not abhorred [by their lords].
15	曰余亦支離,	[While] I too am a Limp-limb Gimp,[63]
	依方早有慕。	To cleave to the "square" [i.e., official life], I have long aspired.[64]

---

[56] The appearance of the fire star, Mars, in the western firmament marks the onset of autumn.

[57] Translated literally, 為情 might be "manage emotions." This is presumably something done by others on his behalf. *Cf.,* a similar line, "In the adversity of wayfaring, who can console me? (羇苦孰云慰)" in the poem 行田登海口盤嶼山 (Lu Qinli, 2:1159).

[58] In the *Zhuangzi*, a wayfarer's yearlong homesickness makes him delighted to see even those who merely resemble people back home. Given the phraseology of the *Zhuangzi* passage (見似人者而喜矣), I read *si* 似 here as a noun. *Zhuangzi jishi*, 24.822.

[59] *Han Shi waizhuan* 9: Zengzi states it is a waste to cut off friendships long maintained (久友交). *Cf., Analects* 5/17: "The Master said Yan Zhongping was good at bonding with fellow men, for he continued to treat friends with reverence even after a long acquaintance (久而敬之)."

[60] Following Li Shan, I understand *xie* 謝 as *kui* 慚. For similar usage, see Yan yannian's 延延年 line, "屬美謝繁翰," in *Wen xuan* 1202. It may seem unusual to Xie's "native soil," not as since ancestral home Shining, but the capital. However, the line's place in the entire couplet (lines 9–10) necessitates this reading, as his "distant sojourn" must refer to current exile and not to his former stay in the capital.

[61] Li Mu was a Warring States general of Zhao 趙 who had such short arms that he required prosthetic attachments, which he hid under bundled sleeves. A rival exploited Li Mu's handicap, which prevented him from properly performing obeisances before the king, and had him executed for lack of deference. (*Zhan guo ce*, intrigues of Qin.)

[62] A lame-footed messenger of Jin 晉, who while dispatched to Qi 齊, was ridiculed for his gait. (*Zuo zhuan*, Xuan gong, 17/1)

17	生幸休明世,	In my lifetime, I fortunately met a time of glorious resplendence;
	親蒙英達顧。	I personally received the care of one perspicacious and penetrating.
19	空班趙氏璧,	Without basis, I was arrayed with the jade of Sir Zhao;[65]
	徒乖魏王瓠。	To no avail, I was a misapplied gourd of King Wei.[66]
21	從來漸二紀,	Since then, two dozen years have gradually passed,
	始得傍歸路。	And now I draw near the homeward path [i.e., towards Shining].
23	將窮山海迹,	I will exhaust all the pathways of mountain and sea;
	永絕賞心晤。	I am ever cutoff from the regard of the appreciative mind.[67]

The poem's narrative arc, as would be expected of an exile poem, moves between two cardinal points: the imperial capital, and the backwaters post in Yongjia 永嘉 province to which Xie has been dispatched. However, the notion of home or center does not neatly correspond to either of these points; the poet's inner compass is split concerning where he, normatively speaking, belongs (*gui* 歸). Leaving the imperial capital makes him "long for his native soil" (懷土; line 6), for the capital is not only the center of political life but also his social base of "old friends" (line 6). At the same time, exile affords him the opportunity both to realize his abiding desire to explore the "mountains and seas," and to embark on the "homeward path" (歸路; line 22) leading to his ancestral home in Shining 始寧. There thus remains a tension in the poem concerning the location of home and center, which oscillate between the imperial capital and the landscapes of "mountains and seas."

We might expect a poem about exile to be resolved by the poet's final adoption, or even reluctant acceptance, of reclusion, such that a private re-centering of the self is finally achieved at the political margins. In this kind of resolution, officialdom's center and periphery are in private life reversed, so that exile, through a rewriting of one's personal narrative, becomes a coming-home. However, in Xie's poetry, the landscape excursion does not readily signify reclusion. As we have seen from the Ye suite and the "Surveying the fields," Xie's landscapes are a performative space for stately excursions, for focalizations of kingly vision. By reading this exile poem against the above works, the penultimate line's declaration that he intends now to traverse every corner of the realm—"I will exhaust all the pathways of mountain and sea" (line 23)—does not signal a resigned acceptance of his political marginalization but rather posits, through stately excursions, a doubling of the imperial center. The verb "exhaust" (*qiong* 窮) connotes conducting a magisterial tour of the world's territories. Consider, for instance, how a

---

[63] A *Zhuangzi* character whose name, *zhi li shu* 支離疏, means "limbs disjointed loose." An invalid with a grotesquely contorted body, his chin was embedded in his belly, his shoulders jutted above his head, his spine pointed upwards, his organs were on top, and his hipbones doubled as his ribs. The "uselessness" of his form absolved him from conscription and preserved him from harm. *Zhuangzi jishi*, 2.180.

[64] In the *Zhuangzi*, those who operate "within the square" (*fang zhi nei* 方之內), such as Confucius, cleave to worldly duties and customs. *Zhuangzji jishi*, 3.267.

[65] I.e., without any basis in his merits, he was placed alongside the most esteemed officers, the "jades," of court.

[66] From the *Zhuangzi*: King Wei's gourd, useless as a ladle but suitable as a boat, has utility only when properly applied. Just as King Wei had regarded this gourd as useless, so also Xie Lingyun was placed to a post that failed to avail his particular abilities. *Zhuangzi jishi*, 1.36.

[67] Or perhaps more literally, "Ever cutoff from the appreciative mind's face-to-face (晤)." Following the commentators I read "*wu* 晤" as "to face" (*dui* 對). This is the same term that in the Ye suite appears in the phrase "晤言之適 (the satisfaction of face-to-face speech)."

contemporary of Xie's, Yan Yanzhi 顏延之 (384–456), used the same verb to eulogize an actual imperial tour across the empire's "mountains and streams."

周御窮轍跡，	The Zhou carriage was exhaustive (*qiong*) in its tracks,[68]
夏載歷山川。	The Xia transports passed through mountains and streams.[69]

Resonating with classic models of royal tours, both this example of "exhaust" and Xie's invocation of the term call to mind boundless journeys to faraway lands taken by the immortal King Mu of the Zhou, the sage Yu of the Xia, as well as the First Emperor of Qin, who completed a circuit across the world's sacred peaks. (For classic illustrations of the medieval understanding of *youlan* 游覽 such as these, see entries #2, #3, and #4 in the Appendix.) According to this conception, imperial power is not represented by the static location that is the capital but by the ranging power of tours themselves—to rule is to roam.[70]

What kind of closure is effected by Xie's closing couplet? My reading of the penultimate line rests on associations with excursion as a literary subgenre drawn from outside: from Xie's other poems, and, more generally, from the medieval understanding of excursion as illustrated by the *Yiwen leiju*. The poem itself, admittedly, does not explicitly mark "mountain and sea" excursions as a doubling of imperial power, but we could not expect otherwise, for to do so would be a capital crime. If we approach the final couplet on its own terms, and bracket the broader connotations of exhaustive tours, the final line at least seems to be fairly stable in its meaning.

將窮山海迹，	I will exhaust all the pathways of mountain and sea;
永絕賞心晤。	I am ever cutoff from the regard of the appreciative mind.

To be forever cutoff from the appreciative mind's face-to-face regard probably refers, in this context, to his banishment, and fall from imperial favor. The difficulty in settling the question of closure lies in the ambiguous relationship between the two halves of the closing couplet. While grammatically parallel, their semantic relation can be either complementary or compensatory. If complementary, both halves express the basic idea: "From now on, I am cut off from the center and marginalized to remote mountains and seas." This would be a standard way of closing an exile poem, one that reaffirms the authority of the center. If compensatory, then the couplet may be paraphrased, "Even though I am cut off from the center, I will now undertake my stately excursions through mountains and seas." In the former reading, there is still a single political center, which is simply reaffirmed; in the latter, the stately excursions that Xie plans to undertake, according to a *youlan* topography, become a doubling of the political center and thereby compensate for his exile. If the latter reading is correct, it nevertheless depends upon the closing's ambiguity to be safely uttered, for it cannot be stated outright. The former reading is, I will argue below, undercut by the poem's economy of allusions.

---

[68] Refers to King Mu of Zhou's journeys across the mortal and immortal realms. See *Zuozhuan* , Zhao gong, 12/11; and *Mutianzi zhuan* 穆天子傳.

[69] *Shangshu zhengyi*, 5.134: "Yu said, I ride upon four transports, following along the mountains and cutting trees. (禹曰，予乘四載，隨山刊木)" Kong Anguo's commentary cites four types of transport: for travel over land, sea, mud, and mountain. Yan Yanzhi's poem is recorded in *Wen xuan*, 22.1049; Lu Qinli 5.1230.

[70] Yan Yanzhi's poem makes this connection explicit: "All those good at excursion are sagacious and superhuman (善遊皆聖仙)." *Ibid.*

In the previously discussed "Surveying the farm fields," we saw a structural balancing of presumption with precaution. This poem likewise, through its use of allusions, both pays tribute to, and constantly undercuts, the authority of the emperor as a proper "appreciative mind" capable of correct assessments. Most of the allusions are humilific gestures: the poet likens his deficient abilities to cripples such as the short-armed Li Mu and the lame-footed Li Mu; and compares his uselessness to the deformed Limp-limb Gimp, a typically "useless" character found in the *Zhuangzi*. At the same time, the poem's allusions to the *Zhuangzi*, which reverse conventional notions of utility and value, may be so ambiguous as to encapsulate wholly opposite readings: Is Xie, as a Limp-limb Gimp, truly useless? Or has the emperor failed to find Xie's proper use? Line 20 can likewise be read as both deferential and critical: "To no avail, I was a misapplied gourd of King Wei." This gourd, while too large to be used as a ladle, is suited to make a boat. Is Xie, like the gourd, a worthless vessel, or is the emperor—whose normative function is to properly assess personnel—like King Wei, incapable of recognizing the capacities for which a vessel is suited? The deployment of these *Zhuangzi* allusions, which reverse the poem's humilific moves, in the end undercuts the authority of the emperor as an "appreciative mind," who is one only in name, not in actual function. In this way, the final line—"I am ever cutoff from the regard of the appreciative mind"—laments his exile as the result, not of his own deficiencies, but the ruler's misrecognition. The place and performance of true recognition then actually belongs to the future excursions in "mountain and sea" cited in the closing.

The line, "I will exhaust the pathways of mountain and sea" can be seen, from a structural point of view, as the point of departure for much of Xie's so-called "landscape poetry." In short, this exile poem is a pivotal piece in Xie's poetic topography. If we divide Xie's oeuvre into, on one end, those "political" poems overtly performing imperial tours (e.g., the Ye suite and "Surveying the farm fields") and, on the other end, his "aesthetic" poems conventionally identified as "landscape" poetry, then this exile poem bridges the two sets, and suggests the intimate relation between the aspects of Xie's poetry fusing court representation and a model of appreciation. Xie's poetic topography can be seen as a doubling of imperial power and its court excursions. The unifying concept is the "appreciative mind," which has taken various incarnations in our analysis up to this point. In the Ye suite, as an embodiment of the supremely cognizant political center and literary critic, as represented by the imitated cultural icon Cao Pi; in the "Surveying the farm fields" as both the transformative gaze that focalizes the landscape, and as the "Heavenly Mirror" that properly reflects upon this visual act; and, in the exile poem, a reference to the emperor as an "appreciative mind" in name but not wholly in substance, who fails to fulfill his charge to properly employ state personnel. These various incarnations all rely on tropes linking viewing, excursion, and rulership. Furthermore, the objects of imperial vision are not only landscapes but personnel and personalities.

Before we turn to the poems conforming to the conventional understanding of landscape poetry as nature writing, we must first attend to discourse of personnel-personality evaluation in the Six Dynasties. By reading his poetry against the discourse of personnel-personality evaluation, we will see that Xie's anthropomorphization of landscape is not simply a poetic device in the service of literary embellishment but an integral feature of the hermeneutics of Xie's landscape poetry.

V. The imperial body and bodies of poetic form

> Aesthetics is born as a discourse of the body. In its original formulation by the German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten, the term refers not in the first place to art, but, as the Greek *aesthesis* would suggest, to the whole region of human perception and sensation, in contrast to the more rarefied domain of conceptual thought.
>
> For if sensation is characterized by a complex individuation which defeats the general concept, so is history itself. Both phenomena are marked by an irreducible particularity or concrete determinateness, which threatens to put them beyond the bounds of abstract thought. 'Individuals,' writes Baumgarten, 'are determined in every respect…particular representations are in the highest degree poetic.' Since history is a question of 'individuals,' it is 'poetic' in precisely this sense, a matter of determinate specificities.
>
> Terry Eagleton—*The Ideology of the Aesthetic*[71]

In the case of Six Dynasties aesthetics, I would adapt Eagleton's saying to read, "Aesthetics is born as a discourse of the imperial body." If we approach aesthetics as the "whole region of human perception and sensation," then the imperial body, represented as embodying the highest level of apperception, is the organ of aesthetic appreciation par excellence. If we conceive the poetic, not strictly as a crafted work of art, but as that which presents a "determinate specificity," "a complex individuation which defeats the general concept," then there is nothing more 'poetic' in the Six Dynasties than the human individual. The Six Dynasties discourse of character appraisal foregrounds the problems of recognizing human personalities, whose qualities are at once conventional, and thereby capable of being captured by a concept, and exceptional, characterized by an irreducible particularity.

We see the application of Liu Shao's discourse of personnel evaluation in a court memorandum that recommends for promotion none other than Liu Shao himself to the Brilliant Emperor 明帝 (r. 227-39). I will analyze this text in two parts. In the first part, the recommendation portrays Liu Shao in precisely the way that Liu Shao's *Treatise on Personnel-Personality* characterizes the role of the ruler: as embodying (*ti*) a complete range of personal qualities. This convergence of characterization speaks to the broad currency of the concepts put forth by Liu Shao's treatise, which, we infer, represent not his individual formulations but a medieval consensus about the epistemology and typologies of personality appraisal. At the same time, this convergence between the portrayal of Liu Shao and the theorized role of the emperor also speaks to Liu Shao's professional trajectory, either as a proxy of the emperor in selecting staff, or as a key player in the Wei reforms of personnel-appraisal institutions. In any case, we have in this document a level of self-referentiality: Liu Shao is recommended as a master recommender, appraised as a perspicacious appraiser. This memorandum was submitted by Xiahou Hui 夏侯惠 (fl. 3rd c.).

伏見常侍劉劭，深忠篤思， 體周於數，凡所錯綜， 源流弘遠。是以群才大小，	In my humble view, I appraise (*jian*) the Attendant-in-ordinary Liu Shao as a person of deep devotion and wholehearted aspirations, whose embodiment (*ti*) is complete by all measures. In all that commingles [in his person], the resources are vast

[71] Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990): 13; 16.

咸取所同而斟酌焉。故性實之士服其平和良正，清靜之人慕其玄虛退讓，文學之士嘉其推步詳密，法理之士明其分數精比，意思之士知其沈深篤固，文章之士愛其著論屬辭，制度之士貴其化略較要，策謀之士贊其明思通微，凡此諸論，皆取適己所長而舉其支流者也。

and its outpourings extensive. For this reason, among talented men, both great and small, each takes a measure of Shao according to what they share in common. Therefore:
Courtiers of innate substance are swayed by his pacifying accord and upstanding rectitude.
Men of pure quietude admire his profound emptiness and acquiescent yielding.
Courtiers of learning praise his cosmological reckonings[72] and attention to detail.
Courtiers of methods hail his precepts and refined analogies.[73]
Courtiers of noble aspiration understand his hidden depths and wholehearted perseverance.
Courtiers of letters covet his compositions and phrasing.
Courtiers of institutional measures value his efficacious policies and clear priorities.
Courtiers of situational schemes celebrate his brilliant deliberations and penetrating insight into the triggers of change.
In all these discussions of him, each person, according to what he excels in, and singles out his own line of talents.[74]

Whereas most men can only "single out their own line of talents," Liu Shao, whose "embodiment is complete by all measures" can impartially take a measure of every person of talent. To adopt the memorandum's technical term for appraisal, we can say that Liu Shao's complete embodiment allows him to properly "appraise"—*jian* 見, literally, "see"—others. This technical use of *jian* appears frequently in the later *Shishuo xinyu*, along with an equivalent term, *mu* 目—literally, "to eye [a person]." In their technical usage, the verbs *jian* and *mu*, signal an ensuing epithet that is meant to capture the essence of the appraised person. It is from this language of appraisal that we must approach Xie Lingyun's aesthetic of excursion.

What is the relationship between embodiment (*ti*) and landscape? How do we bridge Xie's Ye suite and his "nature poetry"? To answer these questions, let us turn to the medieval discourse of personality appraisal articulated in the refined conversations of the *Shishuo xinyu*. We note that epithets ascribed to appraised persons frequently take the form of landscape descriptions. For instance, consider this case from the chapter entitled "Speech and Conversation (言語)."

王武子（王濟）、孫子荊（孫楚），各言其土地人物之美。

Wang Ji and Sun Chu each spoke of the beauty/excellence of his territory and its personages [or, read as a single noun,"his territory's personages"].

[72] This job description, *tui bu* 推步 , calls to mind the duties of Sima Qian's office as an astronomer and court scribe. *Tui bu*, "to logically infer about regular motion," refers to retrodictive or postdictive reckonings regarding astronomical movements and calendrical cycles. These are not strictly mathematical calculations, as they may also involve theories of phases and dynastic transition. For a discussion of these types of reckonings, see: Christopher Cullen, "The birthday of the Old Man of Jiang County and other puzzles: work in progress on Liu Xin's Canon of the Ages," *Asia Major*, 2000, xiv (2):27–70.

[73] Whereas the courtiers of "situational schemes 策謀" are adept at handling exceptional situations, courtiers of "methods 法" focus on constant, over-arching patterns of phenomena." Their "precepts 分數" and "essential analogies 精比" are both prescriptive (like, articles of law) and descriptive (like "natural laws" governing the world).

[74] *Sanguo zhi* 三國志, 21.619.

王云,	Wang Ji said:
其地坦而平,	The land is level and even (MC: *bjæ ng*);
其水淡而清,	The rivers, bland and pure (*tshjeng*);
其人廉且貞。	The personages, modest and true (*trjeng*)."
孫云,	Sun Chu said:
其山嶵巍以嵯峨,	The mountains are precipice-steep, crag-crested (*dza-nga*);
其水沖渫而揚波,	The rivers surge in spates, ripples roiling (*pa*);[75]
其人磊砢而英多。	The personages amass mightily, eminent men abound (*ta*).[76]

We must not read these encomiums as topographies of place but as instances of refined speech that operate within established conventions of character appraisal. The lines of each encomium—examples of refined "Speech and Conversation"—are articulated in grammatical parallels and unified end-rhymes and, most importantly, by the recognized conceit that human embodiments (*ti*) are portrayed in terms of terrestrial bodies and bodies of water. It is through this conceit that the presumed intelligibility and elegance of this exemplary "Speech and Conversation" rests. Richard Mather, expecting the confirmable topographies of a regional geography, necessarily concludes that the attribution of these sayings to Wang and Sun must be "purely facetious," since the localities from which the two men hailed, both in Taiyuan 太原 province, were separated by only several *li* and thus could not have accommodated such radical geographical differences. I consider this problem of (mis)attribution moot, as the passage surely "hung together" and made sense quite apart from this geographical conundrum.[77] To conclude that the passage misidentifies the named speakers is to misidentify the speech genre here: this is not a geography but an encomium of character appraisal. As such, the verifiability of its observations concerns the natural features, not of place, but of personage.

From this case of refined "Speech and Conversation," we see that conventions of personality appraisal conflate landscape description with human portraiture. For now, let us regard this conflation as a comparison. It is not a fanciful, "merely poetic," comparison if we consider a term not found in the above passage itself but relevant to our discussion of landscape's broader significance: "*jiang shan* 江山." Literally "rivers and mountains," this term refers to the totality of properties that belong to the state. In its most obvious sense, these are natural assets—economically productive sites, and strategically important topographies. At the same time, the resources jealously amassed by the state also include the personnel staffing its government. In this respect, the encomiums by Wang and Sun constitute another kind of geography: one that surveys and prospects a land's capacity to produce human resources. "The personages amass mightily, eminent men (*ying* 英) abound." A country teeming with "*ying* 英"— literally

[75] Mather translates 沖渫 as "mud-roiled." My translation is based on Li Shan's gloss of 浹渫 (which is interchangeable with 沖渫) as "waters surging" (水滂溏也). See his annotation of the "River Exposition" (江賦), *Wen xuan* 12.561.

[76] *Shishuo xinyu*, 2/24. Middle Chinese reconstructions of end-rhymes are based on William H. Baxter's *An Etymological Dictionary of Common Chinese Characters* (Preliminary draft of October 2000).

[77] Liu Jun 劉峻 (462-521) notes that the *San Qin ji* 三秦記 and *Yu lin* 語林 record a certain Yi Ji 伊籍 from Shu 蜀 uttering a saying whose words are the same as Sun's. The topography of Shu certainly corresponds to one that is precipitous and craggy. Mather's argument that this is the correct "version" assumes that one is original and the other corrupt. However, there is no reason that these two "versions" must be mutually exclusive, nor a way to adjudicate which precedes the other. The fact remains that each was coherent as is, such that it could circulate independently of the other.

"efflorescent flowerings"—is a land that burgeons with blooming talent. Once we consider the generic conventions governing this type of "Speech and Conversation," the difference between translating the phrase "土地人物之美" as referring to two nouns (the excellence of a territory **and** the excellence of its personages) or as a single noun (the excellence of a territory's personages) is but a grammatical nuance, not a substantive semantic difference. As sources of state power, not to mention local pride, territory and personnel are both subsumed under the concept of "rivers and mountains."

From this perspective, the intersection of landscape description and character appraisal cannot simply be called a comparison, as if joined by a mere literary device; they are linked not simply by clever turns of phrase but by their verifiability in bodily experience. It was presumed that a perspicacious person—what Xie Lingyun would later call the "appreciative mind"—could recognize a person's "precipice-steep" loftiness just as a mountain's height could be glimpsed by the eye. In other words, the pivot from landscape description to human portraiture is not effected by figurative language, if by figurative we mean a poetic embellishment of an otherwise literal and precise observation. The language of these appraisals cannot be further translated to literal statements, but are themselves basic, fundamental terms. Wang's depiction of his social milieu as "level and even (坦而平)" is not the figurative adornment of a literal statement; the tag "level and even" could not be more plainly spoken. We might paraphrase: "my milieu is level-headed and even-tempered." The larger point is this: such landscape-like appraisals, like a survey of a land's economic output, were considered confirmable by direct experience. The language of character appraisal is rooted in the bodily experience of human embodiments. It is a technology, a method of knowing, and has its own technical language.

The epithets formulated in this technological discourse are not nominalizations—"Person *X* is *Y*." Rather, they are organized around verbs: "To directly see and meet person *X* is to experience *Y*." The verbs articulating such experience are verbs of the body. The epithet "bland (淡)" is no less precise than concepts such as "modest and true (廉且貞)." To recognize a person as "bland" is to know his embodiment as a balancing of qualities such that there is no salient "flavor" that overwhelms the overall effect. To speak of "flavor" and "blandness" is to organize experience around the sensation of taste, but this cannot be further reduced to more literal, more precise terms. It is not a metaphor. Character appraisal is bodily sensory recognition: an appreciative mind "tastes" the blandness of a person just as the tongue can know the blandness of a soup.

The verbal component of character appraisal is readily evident in the *Shishuo xinyu* chapter titled "Appreciation and Appraisal (*shang yu* 賞譽)." Consider the meaning of this chapter title. Whereas Mather translates the latter term *yu* 譽 as "praise," I render it as "appraise" because it is necessary to differentiate it from the Chinese term for praise or eulogy, *zan* 讚, which connotes panegyrical exaggeration and hyperbole; by contrast, *yu* 譽 implies assessment affirmed to be confirmable and impartial.[78] Which is to say, to *yu*, "appraise," is to issue an observation that is considered unembellished, and experientially verifiable by experts. I want to emphasize two related points. First, the figurative language in these character appraisals is not a poetic fancy but in fact integral to the technology of appraisal. Secondly, it is through bodily

[78] "讚、譽，二字都有稱讚、讚美之意。讚是讚美、頌揚，帶有夸張之意味；譽是稱道、稱譽，更具客觀的肯定." *Wang Li gu Hanyu zidian*, *op. cit.,* 1301.

experience that human embodiments are appraised, and appraisals ascertained as valid. As for the term *shang* 賞 ("appreciation"), while it may suggest for us a rarified aesthetic recognition, by its pairing with *yu* in the chapter title, we may infer that it too was considered a mode of knowing grounded in verifiable bodily experience.[79] Examples from the chapter "Appreciation and Appraisal":

（裴楷）**見**山巨源如登山臨下，幽然深遠。	[Pei Kai] characterized seeing (*jian*) Shan Tao: it is just like ascending a mountain and peering down—hidden recesses dark and deep.[80]
此人（樂廣），人之水鏡也，**見**之若披雲霧睹青天。	"This man [Yue Guang] is the water mirror of men. I characterize seeing him (*jian*): it is just like parting away the clouds and seeing the azure sky."[81]
王公**目**太尉（王衍），巖巖清峙，壁立千仞。	Wang Cheng characterized seeing (*mu*) the Grand Marshal Wang Yan: "Tall and towering, pure and sheer, a cliff standing over a thousand feet."[82]

A discussion of a translation issue will bear out the verbal component in these appraisal epithets. As mentioned earlier, the technical terms *jian* 見 or *mu* 目 ("to see") signal that an epithet of the appraised person will follow. In this respect, *jian* and *mu* might be rendered as "to characterize [so-and-so] as [epithet]." But what is actually being characterized here? Another way of asking this question is: What is the thing that is "*just like* (如) ascending a mountain and peering down"? This epithet does not attempt to denote the person's identity independent of observers, but the *experience of seeing him.* Likewise, what is "exactly like parting away the clouds and seeing the azure sky" is the experience of personally knowing and appraising Yue Guang. In short, these epithets are not nominal but verbal, as they refer to the dynamic experience offered by one human embodiment to and for another. Hence, "to see" actually characterizes the seeing itself, the experiential process of recognizing a human embodiment.[83] From these cases, we can infer that other epithets in the "Appreciation and Appraisal" chapter that are formulated as nominalizations (*X* is *Y*) actually have an implicit verbal component: to know *X* is to experience *Y.*

（王羲之）道劉真長（劉惔）「標雲柯而不扶疏」。	Wang Xizhi said of Liu Tan: "A tree whose branches reach the clouds yet not densely overgrown."[84]
裴僕射（裴頠）時人謂為言談之林藪。	Contemporaries called Pei Wei the woods and wetlands of conversation.[85]

[79] While the chapter is titled *shangyu*, neither *shang* nor *yu* ever appears in the body of the text. The semantic connotations of *yu* furnish an important clue, but ultimately we can only decide what these terms mean through the verbs in the text that perform the role of appreciating/appraising, such as *jian* 見 and *mu* 目, "to see."
[80] *Shishuo xinyu*, 8/8. This motif of inscrutably deep or vast spaces also appears in 8/82.
[81] *Ibid.* 8/23.
[82] *Ibid.* 8/37. *Cf.,* 8/54, 8/56.
[83] The epithet given to Shan Tao plays on his surname *shan* 山, "mountain." The "azure sky" of Yue Guang's epithet probably plays on his given name *guang* 廣, "expansive." While there is no consistent connection between name and epithet across examples, this word play no doubt contributed to the felt aptness of these two particular epithets.
[84] *Ibid.* 8/88.
[85] *Shishuo xinyu*, 8/18.

張威伯（張暢）歲寒之茂松，幽夜之逸光。	Zhang Chang: a luxuriant pine in the cold of year, a surpassing radiance in the dark of night.[86]

One knows Pei Wei to be the "woods and wetlands of conversation" by engaging him in conversation, by hearing with one's ears. Like fauna gathered in woods and wetlands, in him is found a bounty of sound and resonance. To know Liu Tan is like looking up at a towering tree whose branching capaciousness is extensive without being over-diffuse. To recognize Zhang Chang is to observe his constancy over time, like an evergreen throughout winter or a light undimmed by nightfall. These landscape-like epithets articulate appraisal as process: just as a complex landscape unfolds a series of vistas and vantage points upon it, so also a complex human embodiment cannot be properly seen and known in an instant. Like the procession of an excursion, it has successive stages of passing-through. Appraisal, troped as procession, is serial revelation.

This trope of appraisal-as-procession also appears in the Wei court memorandum recommending Liu Shao, himself known as a skilled appraiser, for promotion. Note that the memorandum uses the metaphor of roaming to describe the emperor's audience with recommended candidates.

臣數聽其清談，覽其篤論，漸漬歷年，服膺彌久，實為朝廷奇其器量。以為若此人者，宜輔翼機事，納謀幃幄，當與國道俱隆，非世俗所常有也。惟陛下垂優游之聽，使劭承清閒之歡，得自盡於前，則德音上通，煇燿日新矣。	Your servant [Xiahou Hui] has on numerous occasions listened to Liu Shao's pure discussions and surveyed his substantive discourses. I have gradually steeped in them for years and imprinted them in my breast over time. He is truly is an extraordinary vessel of the court. I consider that a man such as this is suited to assist in critical matters, and plan court affairs. He should be promoted in accord with the way of governing, for few like him can be found in the world. I look to His Majesty to extend to him an audience of ***carefree excursion***; and allow him to receive the conviviality of His Majesty's ***pure leisure***. Should Shao get the opportunity to fully manifest himself before His Majesty, then Shao's excellent reputation will be communicated above from below, and [the court's] resplendence will be renewed with each passing day.[87]

From this document, we see an institution of personnel evaluation whereby recommendations are sent to the emperor, who subsequently may grant a meeting, something of a job interview, to the recommendee. The stock phrase referring to the recommendee's audience with the emperor is formulated as *youyou* 優游, i.e., "carefree roaming" or "leisurely excursion," which is canonically associated with the leisure activities of the king.[88] This meeting does not entail any actual excursion on the part of the emperor; the person recommended is summoned to have an

[86] *Ibid.* 8/20. Winter pine is a conventional metaphor for firm resolve and integrity in the face of tribulations. *Analects*, 9/28.

[87] *Sanguo zhi*, 21.619. Emphasis is mine.

[88] The *locus classicus* for is the *Classic of Poetry*. In Mao #252: "In carefree leisure, you [King Xuan] rest (優游爾休矣)." Zheng Xuan comments: "*Youyou* is to allow oneself to rest (優游，自休息也)." Zhu Xi, paraphrasing this commentary, glosses *youyou* simply as "leisure (閑暇之意)." The phrase also appears with the same usage in Mao #186, where it refers, according to the Mao preface, to King Cheng.

audience with the emperor. However, this formulaic language implies that imperial recognition is conceived in terms of the ranging coverage of excursion, a roaming intelligence that surveys the entirety of the realm.

It may seem at first unusual that the emperor's task of personnel evaluation is spoken of as belonging, not to official duties, but to His Majesty's carefree leisure time. However, we recall that a longstanding discourse of royal excursion had attempted to reclaim leisure time as an integral part of normative rulership. In Chapter One, I discussed the *Mencius* as an early, emblematic example of a discourse that negotiates kingship and leisure by redefining the royal tour as political surveillance instead of recreational sightseeing; I also discussed "Exposition on Shanglin Park" as a Western Han poetic reimagining of imperial recreation according to a traditionalist conception of ritualized play. From this perspective on representations of normative rulership, it makes sense that a Wei memorandum would formulate the work of personnel evaluation as "carefree roaming" and "pure leisure," for the ruler's political life and personal leisure are, in theory, one and the same.

VI. Appreciation in landscape poetry

In poetry, it was also conventional to describe inner forms of the person in terms of outer forms of topography. For example, consider the *Wen xuan*'s final *youlan* selection, "Written in the old style in response to Head Scribe Dao Gai's 'Climbing the Langye city wall'古意酬到長史溉登琅邪城詩" written by Xu Fei 徐悱 (d. 524). The following couplet speaks of both inner and outer landscapes.

表裏窮形勝,	Inside and outside, I exhaust superiorities of form,
襟帶盡巖巒。	In bosom and sash, I encompass cliff and crag.[89]

The first line highlights that forms exist both "inside and outside," such that landscapes can be said to be exist in the viewer himself. The second line instantiates this principle by stating that "cliff and crag" are encompassed by "bosom and sash"—i.e., in one's heart and abdomen, the body's center. The incorporation of landscapes inside the body speaks to a person's capacities—his capacious breadth and depth of talent. This capaciousness can "exhaust superiorities of form," a phrase that refers to both exceptional topographies of terrain and remarkable features of personal endowment. The phrase "superiorities of form" (*xing sheng* 形勝) originally derives from discourses about the strategic value of terrain, such as in the *Xunzi* 荀子 essay "Strengthening the State 彊國":

其固塞險, 形勢便, 山林川谷美, 天材之利多, 是形勝也。	[The state of Qin's] secure fortifications are precipitous, the lay of its land is propitious, its mountains, forests, streams and valleys are excellent, and the benefits of its natural endowments are numerous—these are superiorities of form.[90]

In its literal sense, "superiorities of form" refers to the advantages conferred by a terrain's layout and natural productivity. A land is "lovely" and "excellent" (*mei*) for its richness of topography, and is "beneficial" (*li* 利) for the profitable plentitude of its natural endowments and resources

[89] *Wen xuan*, 22.1064.
[90] *Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1988): 16.303.

(*tian cai* 天材). The poem's figurative use of "superiorities of form" simply transposes such "excellence" (*mei*) and "natural endowment" (*tian cai*) to describe the forms that constitute a superior human being: these are the "mountains and forests, streams and valleys" of character.

The following landscape poem by Xie explicitly foregrounds the importance of the faculty called "appreciation" in recognizing, and engendering, beauty. As with the Ye suite, and the Six Dynasties discourse of personality appraisal, the act of appreciation is here modeled as a social encounter.

	從斤竹澗越嶺溪行	"Following Jinzhu Gully, I cross the ridge and stroll along the stream"
1	猨鳴誠知曙,	The gibbons wail, so one knows it must be daybreak;
	谷幽光未顯。	The valley is dark, the sunbeams yet to be disclosed.
3	巖下雲方合,	Below crags, mists start to gather;
	花上露猶泫。	On flowers, dew still drips.
5	逶迤傍隈隩,	Winding and meandering, I cleave to river-bend and shore;
	迢遞陟陘峴。	Soaring and surmounting, I ascend precipice and cliff.
7	過澗既厲急,	I not only cross the gully, wading through rapids;
	登棧亦陵緬。	I also scale foot planks, hovering over remote depths.
9	川渚屢逕復,	Streams and islets I repeatedly cut across and back;
	乘流翫迴轉。	Following the flow, I frolic in turns and whirls.
11	蘋萍泛沈深,	Rushes and duckweed float on concealed depths;
	菰蒲冒清淺。	Zizanias and cattails cover clear shallows.
13	企石挹飛泉,	Standing tiptoe on stones, I dip into the shooting fount;
	攀林摘葉卷。	Clambering in the trees, I pluck leaf-scrolls.
15	想見山阿人,	I imagine seeing the mountain spirit:
	薜蘿若在眼。	[Caped in] magnolias [and sashed in] creepers, as if before my eyes.
17	握蘭勤徒結,	Clutching orchids—my ardor is futilely bunched up;
	折麻心莫展。	Snapping hemp—none of my heart extends forth.
19	情用賞爲美,	Dispositions avail appreciation to be lovely;
	事昧竟誰辨。	Matters lie in darkness—who actually discerns them?
21	觀此遺物慮,	Observing this, I leave behind worries about others;
	一悟得所遣。	Upon understanding, I get what is given up.[91]

I analyze the poem in two parts: lines 1–12, which narrate the comprehensive exploration of a complex terrain; and 13–21, which liken the excursion to social interaction. The opening couplet describes traveling along Jinzhu Gully and entering a space whose unusual phenomena demand one's full sensory attention to comprehend. While sunbeams have yet to illuminate the gully along which the narrator travels on the valley below,[92] one nevertheless discerns, by the cries of gibbons, that it must be daybreak. Note the juxtapositions between dark and light, sound and sight. Likewise, the remaining couplets of lines 3–12 gesture towards a comprehensive totality of

---

[91] Lu Qinli, 2:1166; *Wen xuan*, 22.1048. My translation follows some of the phrasing of Kang-i Sun Chang's translation, which was published in: "Description of Landscape in Early Six Dynasties Poetry" from: Shuen-fu Lin and Stephen Owen, *The Vitality of the Lyric Voice: Shih Poetry from the Late Han to the T'ang*, Studies on China; 6 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986): 105–29.

[92] Lines 1–2 correspond to the title's "Following Jinzhu Gully."

experience by organizing couplets into opposed modes of sensory observation. Lines 3–4 juxtapose the sight of mist starting to gather with already-condensed dewdrops whose dripping can be variously seen, heard, and even felt.

5	逶迆傍隈隩,	Winding and meandering, I cleave to river-bend and shore;
	迢遞陟陘峴。	Soaring and surmounting, I ascend precipice and cliff.
7	過澗既厲急,	I not only cross the gully, wading through rapids;
	登棧亦陵緬。	I also scale foot planks, hovering over remote depths.
9	川渚屢逕復,	Streams and islets I repeatedly cut across and back;
	乘流翫迴轉。	Following the flow, I frolic in turns and whirls.
11	蘋萍泛沈深,	Rushes and duckweed float on concealed depths;
	菰蒲冒清淺。	Zizanias and cattails cover clear shallows.

Lines 5–6 complement one particular mode of experience—lateral meandering along river bends—with movement across another axis, the vertical scaling of cliffs; lines 7–8 supplement wading through water with ascent over wooden planks; lines 9–10 pair cutting straight-across streams with whirling on currents; and lines 11–12 match unfathomable depths with limpid shallows. Insofar as appreciation might be understood as an act of sensory or cognitive recognition, these couplets, constructed from complementarities, perform the full gamut of excursion experience.

However, as if to remind the reader that sensory observations, even those as ranging as these, are themselves insufficient for appreciation, line 19 states: "Dispositions avail appreciation to be lovely." The term "dispositions (*qing* 情)" can refer both to a person's disposition of character and emotions, as well as to the constitution of the landscape. To fully understand this claim, we must consider Xie's assumptions, evinced in the Ye suite, about appreciation as an action modeled on social exchange. While there is no person encountered in this landscape excursion, the narrator insists on its imagined, yet nevertheless keenly felt, presence.

13	企石挹飛泉,	Standing tiptoe on stones, I dip into the soaring fount;
	攀林摘葉卷。	Clambering in the trees, I pluck leaf-scrolls.
15	想見山阿人,	I imagine seeing the mountain spirit:
	薜蘿若在眼。	[Caped in] magnolias [and sashed in] creepers, as if before my eyes.
17	握蘭勤徒結,	Clutching orchids—my ardor is futilely bunched up;
	折麻心莫展。	Snapping hemp—none of my heart extends forth.
19	情用賞爲美,	Dispositions avail appreciation (*shang*) to be lovely;
	事昧竟誰辨。	Matters lie in darkness—who actually discerns them?

The text depicts appreciation, not as a receptive mode of recognition, but as an outwardly emotive dynamic between appraiser and appraised, between the excursionist and the landscape. We recall that the semantic range of the word *shang* includes emotional response, and emotive expression, such that a heart that *shang*-s is one that is both "gratified" and "grateful." Here, the text represents appreciation as the extending of gifts: the clutched orchids and snapped hemp of line 17–18 are offerings ready at hand, tokens of his ardent feeling prepared for another sentient being. If we attend to the broader semantic range of *shang*, which Xie draws upon here, then line 19 takes on a more layered significance: "Dispositions avail *expressions of rewarding* (*shang*) to be lovely." "Rewarding" (*shang*) is the expression of gratification and gratitude, and the act of

"appreciation" (also written as *shang*) that renders things beautiful is figured here as the offering of gifts in a social exchange.

However, there is no one to accept these gifts. Gratification and gratitude are emoted but there is no actual recipient on the other end. Hence, the orchids clutched in his hands are "futilely bunched up," and the snapped hemp cannot "extend forth." This scene of a failed encounter with the mountain spirit is drawn from stock stories of goddess encounters in early texts such as the *Verses of Chu*, but the poem's emphasis is not on the failure of encountering a divinity. Rather, the poem deploys this scene to highlight how appreciation is social in form, if not in fact.[93] Since Xie models appreciation as social exchange, it is oriented towards another person—either present or projected. That is, since appreciation presumes giving, a counterpart receiving the gifts must be posited. Hence, the imagined "mountain spirit" of line 15 here occupies a necessary, if not necessarily filled-in, position. The mountain is represented as a spirit with which one can interact. This poem draws, and adapts, the understanding of appreciation outlined in the Ye suite that represents it as convivial excursion.

Drawing on this model, the poem thwarts the expectation of an encounter, yet in the end reaffirms the social character of appreciation.

19	情用賞爲美,	Dispositions avail appreciation (*shang*) to be lovely;
	事昧竟誰辨。	Matters lie in darkness—who actually discerns them?

I read line 20 as a rhetorical question ("Who else but myself discerns these matters?") that emphasizes the narrator's solitude: it is he alone who, in a valley bereft of sunlight, is able to perceptibly make out all the things enveloped in darkness. The verb "discern" (*bian* 辨) calls attention to the observer's role in perceiving order and appreciable pattern in the scene. Accordingly, we are given to understand that the earlier scenes, which had been so comprehensively described in lines 1–12 despite the valley's low visibility, were only discernable through the narrator's act of appreciation. "Dispositions avail appreciation to be lovely." Through appreciation, the dimly lit valley is shown, as it were, in its best light.

The gratification that the excursion imparts to the narrator impels him, in lines 15–16, to give gifts of gratitude—that is, "rewards" (*shang*). Given the social character of appreciation staged by this gift-exchange scene, the things spoken of as appreciated in lines 19–20 do not simply refer to the landscape scenes just traversed: the narrator himself is also a potential object of appraisal. To paraphrase: "My own dispositions avail the appreciation of others to be lovely; my matters, like those of the valley, lie in darkness—who actually discerns them?" In other words, the dimly-lit valley landscape is conflated with the unappreciated narrator himself. This literary conceit resonates with the tropes of character appraisal in the *Shishuo xinyu* chapter "Character and Appraisal," which typically likened the process of knowing a person to a procession through an unfolding landscape.

Furthermore, this familiar medieval trope, in which someone's character takes the form of a landscape epithet, suggests that the poem's long description section (lines 1–12) should be retroactively read as a demonstration of the narrator's keen powers of appraisal, which may be applied both to human, and other, beings.

---

[93] Line 15's "山阿人" directly references the piece "mountain spirit 山鬼" in the *Nine Songs* (in the *Chuci*). For other early examples of the unconsummated goddess encounters, many of which involve the exchange of love tokens, see also *Shijing,* Mao #9; *Han Shi waizhuan*, 1/3; and *Lienü zhuan*, 6/6.

While the poem closes with a relinquishing of cares for other beings, the language of the final couplet nevertheless reaffirms the normative model of appreciation as social encounter.

21	觀此遺物慮，	Observing this, I leave behind worries about others;
	一悟得所遣。	Upon understanding, I get what is given up.

The closing couplet seems to be deliberately paradoxical. On one hand, the narrator observes that, in spite of his readied gifts, there is no one else beside him. (Xie no doubt conducted his excursions with a large retinue, but his excursion poems usually present a lone traveler.) With this stark awareness of his solitude, the narrator here no longer concerns himself with the presence of other beings (*wu* 物).[94] Yet, on the other hand, the final line reaffirms the social character of appreciation by deploying the verb *wu* 悟, which, in addition to meaning "to become aware of (something)," can also be read as "to face (another person)." Following the latter reading, the line would read: "Upon meeting (an imagined counterpart), I am satisfied with what is given up." These two readings are not mutually exclusive, and perhaps the richest interpretation is to read them as both in play: true recognition is like social encounter.

In the textual transmission of Xie's writings, "*wu* 悟" is indeed lexicographically interchangeable with *wu* 晤, "to face (someone)."[95] Reading the graph as "to face" fits well with the poem's narrative arc, which moves through an otherworldly landscape towards an expected encounter with a supernatural mountain spirit. The group dynamics of the Ye suite court excursion are hereby reworked as solitary travel.

My reading differs from that of Frodsham, whose translation of the last couplet suggests Buddhist enlightenment or a religious awakening: "When I look at all this, the world of men disappears / In a flash of enlightenment everything falls from me."[96] Despite Xie's engagement in Buddhist intellectual debates, there seems to be nothing within the economy of the poem that points to a final religious epiphany. Rather, the poem's central drama, made explicit in line 19, is the dynamics of appreciation, whose normative course is represented as a passage from darkness to illumination, from solitude to the conviviality of the face-to-face. Thinking of the motif of "facing another" more broadly, we recall the special importance of this concept in Xie's Ye suite, which attributed the Han Martial Emperor's failure to appreciate to his inability to "garner the satisfaction of face-to-face speech (晤言)." Like the Ye suite, this poem states that the appreciative act is the primary condition by which a scene becomes lovely.

Let us finally consider the last couplet, whose closure revolves around the tension between solitude and sociality established by the preceding lines. As a minimum, the gist of the

---

[94] To translate "物" as "thing" would inappropriately suggest a dichotomy between things and humans. In philosophical discourse, the term actually contrasts with "I": it is a being other than the Subject. As such, it encompasses both non-sentient things as well as human beings. The usage of "物" as "other persons" appears in the *Zuo zhuan*, and is well attested usage in Six Dynasties texts such as the *Shishuo xinyu*.

[95] In medieval usage, the graph "悟" is interchangeable with "晤." (*Wang Li gu Hanyu zidian*, *op. cit.,* p. 315). In the textual transmission of Xie's work, there is at least one instance in which the graph "悟" certainly means "to face": "悟對無厭歇， 聚散成分離." (Lu Qinli, 2:1175; *Wen xuan*, 25.1200)

[96] J. D. Frodsham, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p 123. Frodsham's translation ("everything falls from me") seems to take the phrase "得所遣" (lit., "I get *what* I relinquish") as ellipsis for "得所以遣" ("I get the *means* to relinquish"). This solution might be grammatically plausible, but leaves the line's connection to the poem's preceding lines unclear. It seems to me a more satisfying solution to connect the final line to the dynamics of appreciation foregrounded in line 19.

final line (line 22) must correspond to the meaning of its previous, matching line in the couplet (line 21):

21	觀此遺物慮,	Observing this, I leave behind worries about others;
	一悟得所遣。	Upon understanding/meeting, I get what is given up.

This couplet is structured as a closed-loop that reshuffles similar elements between the two lines. Both lines declare at their outset a new awareness (with the verbs "observing," and "understanding"), and both also use contextually synonymous verbs *yi* 遺 and *qian* 遣 (respectively, "leave behind," and "give up)." However, the couplet juxtaposes these elements so that the former line emphasizes relinquishment; the latter, attainment.[97] Read within this closed-loop structure, the phrase "what is given up" refers, not to a hitherto unmentioned religious awakening, but to the previously cited "others," or "another."[98] Accordingly, I would paraphrase the final line as: "Upon facing another, I get a counterpart whom I had given up on encountering."[99] This counterpart is one who can discern the narrator's true character, which is presumably among the matters that "lie in darkness" (line 20). Since others are absent in the world of the poem, one solution is to understand this counterpart as referring to someone outside the text: the reader, projected as an ideal audience.[100] Even with the ambiguity of reference in the final line, we can nevertheless circumscribe the kind of closure towards which the poem gestures: the lone traveler seeks the convivial appreciation of the face-to-face moment, which in the Ye suite is put forth as the hallmark of true excursion.

To summarize, the primary concerns of this piece—conventionally categorized as a "landscape poem"—are actually the dynamics of appreciation, and the practice of excursion as a model for the recognition of personality. Insofar as the poem describes "nature," as with lines 1–12, these are not so much representations of natural phenomena as reflections of an "appreciative mind" at work. As such, they resonate with the discourse of personality appraisal seen in the *Shishuo xinyu*'s chapter on "Appreciation and Appraisal," whose characterizations of persons typically take the form of landscape epithets. Moreover, we see that the poem remaps the model of social conviviality outlined in Xie's Ye suite to the narration of a solitary excursion that cannot realize but urgently gestures towards this normative model. Just as the Ye suite contained, in the figures of Cao Pi and Cao Zhi, both an ideal excursion and its failure, so also this poem revolves around the tension between sociality and solitude, between the face-to-face and the lone venture.

[97] The couplet contrasts *yi* 遺 with *de* 得. The two verbs share the same position in the line meter.

[98] Suggesting a Zhuangzi-esque insight, Li Shan annotates "得所遣" by citing Guo Xiang's commentary to the *Zhuangzi*: "One not only relinquishes affirmation and negation, but also, in relinquishing things relinquished, does so to the point that there is no relinquishing." (既遣是非，又遣其所遣，遣之以至于無遣; *Wen xuan*, 22.1049) This reading seems to me somewhat heavy-handed, as there is nothing else within the economy of the poem to suggest this interpretation. I cannot rule out the possibility that the phrase is shorthand for a longer catchphrase at the time, but Li Shan's citation of Guo Xiang does not bear this out. Furthermore, connecting the two texts on the basis of phraseology is tenuous because there are variants of the phrasing "遣其所遣" cited by Li Shan, such as "遣其遣" and 遺其遺." (See: *Zhuangzi jishi*, 1.79; 1.83, collation note 1.) Frodsham's free translation of "得所遣" as "everything falls from me" seems to understand the phrase as an ellipsis for "得所以遣" ("I get the means to relinquish"). This is plausible, but has the disadvantage of emending the text.

[99] *De* can also mean to acquire understanding of something, or to be satisfied with it. (*HYDCD*, definition 21 for 得, glosses it as: 滿足; 得意.) In the latter case, the word would contrast with "worry 慮" in the previous line.

[100] The poem's seemingly sudden use of apostrophe here is by no means unusual as a move of poetic closure.

Chapter Three: Complicities of countryside and capital

I. Introduction 75
II. Reading the preface to the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition" 76
a) A summary of rural place 78
b) Appreciation and patronage 84
c) Doubling the imperial center 87
d) Excursion and estate expansion 89
e) The mountain dwelling and the "lodging" of rebel intent 97
III. Estates of *youlan* performance 100
f) Cao Pi's imperial excursion in West Park 104
g) Huan Xuan: the impostor's estate 106
h) Xie Lingyun and postures of the panoptic gaze 115

I. Introduction

Most of the *youlan* 遊覽 (excursion and the panoptic gaze) poems collected in the *Wen xuan* 文選 anthology take place on imperial parks and private estates—in landscaped nature instead of 'natural' landscapes. Since Xie Lingyun's most well known poems are categorized in this medieval literary subgenre, a proper understanding of Xie Lingyun and the inception of Chinese landscape poetry must attend to significance of the estate and its relationship to excursion. If, as I've argued in chapter two, Xie's landscape poetry stages the performance of excursion, then the prime site of that performance is the estate. The first half of this chapter analyzes Xie's "Mountain Dwelling Exposition 山居賦" as a summary of countryside places and their ties—literary, economic, and political—to the imperial capital. The estate, I argue, is the middle term between two supposedly diametrically opposed places: capital and countryside. The second half of this chapter turns to particular *youlan* poems from the *Wen xuan* to show that the primary site in *youlan* writing is the imperial park, and its shadow double, the estate.

In the previous chapter, I showed that Xie's impersonation of the emperor Cao Pi in the Ye poetry suite was the model for Xie's landscape excursions, which performed the ruler-patron conferring acts of appreciation (*shang* 賞) on his subjects. The logical endpoint of imperial impersonation—a presumptuous doubling of the imperial person—is usurpation. Xie was finally executed on charges of rebellion, a telling finale that alerts us to imperial impersonation as a central motif in Xie's biography and authorial persona. Picking up the theme of imperial doubling, I show in this chapter the ways in which Xie's estate, as a politico-economic entity, mirrored the powers of the state. At the same time, I highlight how Xie's authorial persona denies the parallels between his country estate and the imperial capital. In this regard, there is a salient disjunct between Xie's literary representation of his estate and its reality on the ground, a disjunct that requires an interpretation of the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition" that reads against the grain. To read against the grain, is to recognize, as it were, the complicity of the country estate.

II. Reading the preface to the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition"

A salient aspect of the iconography of Xie Lingyun is the strong connection between his landscape poetry and his political displacement. The oft-repeated story is that he produced his most accomplished landscape poetry after his exile to the southeastern province Yongjia 永嘉 (in modern day Wenzhou 溫州) far from the capital. This connection between landscape poetry and the exilic journey originates from Xie's official biography, which also 'places' his poetic landscapes outside the political center in yet another way: as carefree excursion that is seemingly unconcerned with the business of governing.

盧陵王義真少好文籍，與靈運情款異常。少帝即位，權在大臣，靈運構扇異同，非毀執政，司徒徐羨之等患之，出為永嘉太守。郡有名山水，靈運素所愛好，出守既不得志，遂肆意遊遨，遍曆諸縣，動逾旬朔。	When the Child Emperor ascended the throne [in 423, after prince Luling was killed by rivals], court power lay in the hands of high officials. Xie Lingyun stirred up and fanned opposition, and denounced those wielding power. Chancellor Xu Xianzhi and his ilk considered him dangerous, and exiled him to be governor of Yongjia province. The province had celebrated landscapes (literally, "mountains and waters"), which he always liked. Since his post failed to satisfy his ambitions, he consequently abandoned himself to carefree excursion, going everywhere across various counties. Whenever he set out, he would be gone for up to a month.[1]

Xie Lingyun's sometimes month-long dereliction of his official duties to tour "mountains and waters" has buttressed the preconception that Xie's landscape poetry is a kind of 'nature poetry' set apart from the centers of metropolitan and political life. Implicit in this preconception is the view that the landscapes of medieval landscape poetry are spaces free of human development and the pull of the political center. The major problem attending this view is that so many of these 'landscapes' are set on the site of the estate property, which complicates simple dichotomies between urban and rural, developed and undeveloped, and center and periphery.

It is no coincidence that Xie Lingyun, now typically regarded as the founder of Chinese landscape poetry, oversaw one of the most enormous and lavish estates of his time. For Xie's contemporaries, the Xie estate loomed large as a prominent and privileged site of the "carefree excursions" for which he was famous. Suggestively situated between town and country, the Xie estate may have played to the appeal of the country but it was always the talk of the town.

靈運父祖並葬始寧縣，并有故宅及墅，遂移籍會稽，修營別業，傍山帶江，盡幽居之美。與隱士王弘之、孔淳之等縱放為娛，有終焉之志。每有一詩至都邑，	Xie Lingyun's father and grandfather were buried in Shi'ning county,[2] where he had an old residence and villa. Consequently, he changed his registration to Kuaiji, and refurbished and developed his country estate. Backed by mountains and belted by the Yangtze, it exhausted the beauty of reclusive dwelling. Along with the recluses Wang Hongzhi, Kong Chunzhi and others, he relaxed and made merry, and had the intention of staying there till the end of his life. Whenever one of his poems arrived at the capital, both

[1] *Song shu* 宋書, 67.1753.

[2] Gu Shaobo 顧紹柏 locates the administrative center of Shi'ning county at modern Sanjie zhen 三界鎮 in Zhejiang. See: Gu Shaobo 顧紹柏, *Xie Lingyun ji jiaozhu* 謝靈運集校注 (Taibei: Liren shuju, 2004): 63, n. 1; *Sheng xian zhi* 剩縣志 (Taipei: Chengwen, 1934): 136.

貴賤莫不競寫，宿昔之間，士庶皆徧，遠近欽慕，名動京師。作山居賦并自注，以言其事。

the upper and lower classes vied to copy it down, such that nobles and commoners both knew it by rote overnight. Those both far and near admired them, and his fame stirred the capital. He composed (ca. 424 AD) the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition" and annotated it himself to explain matters in it.[3]

We might say—adapting a philosophical adage—that if ever a tree fell in the forests of the Xie estate, it sounded and resounded at the capital. The Xie estate was a discursive object—celebrated in verse, copied by hand, circulated by word of mouth and recited by rote—and nowhere was this object trafficked more prominently than at the capital metropolis. This is perhaps because the countryside appealed most to urbanites, and rustic simplicity appeared most idyllic to the urbane. In terms of audience, Xie's exposition about his "mountain dwelling" found its place at the capital.

In *The Construction of Space in Early China*, Mark Edward Lewis has argued that, as a symbol and site of Han imperial power, the Shanglin 上林 imperial park was as integral as the imperial palace located within the capital's city walls. Surrounding and dwarfing the capital itself, Shanglin park was outfitted with its own palaces and key sites of state ritual performance.[4] Xie Lingyun's estate invites comparisons with the imperial park, which it rivaled in both scale and representation. David Knechtges has estimated that the estate's dimensions were "approximately thirty kilometers north-south, and about fifteen kilometers east-west. This compares with the largest expanse of the Han dynasty Shanglin park, which was about forty-two kilometers east-west and twenty-one kilometers north-south."[5] Xie's estate was a microcosm of the world that encompassed no less than two mountains and two lakes, and it was constantly expanding into areas outside of government control.

Xie's presentation of his estate in the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition 山居賦" was oriented towards the imperial capital in several respects. Not only was the exposition composed and circulated for an avid capital audience, it operated in a literary mode emblematic of Han dynasty treatments of the capital's splendors. The exposition's length is magisterial: occupying eighteen pages of modern *Zhonghua shuju* print, the text and self-annotations exhaustively depict the unparalleled scope and abundance of the estate's topographies, resources, structures, and vistas. The annotations that Xie supplied for his own work impress upon the reader the estate's singularity: so vast was its cornucopia of special features and unique names that it required additional glosses and commentary to elucidate. The primary point of reference for Xie's "mountain dwelling" was not a remote periphery in untouched 'nature' but a site akin to the imperial park as a microcosm the realm's vast riches.

Xie Lingyun's Ye suite and the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition" have been largely marginalized in contemporary scholarship on Xie Lingyun in particular and Chinese landscape poetry in general even though both works would have been touchstone texts for medieval readers.

---

[3] *Song shu*, 67.1754.

[4] Mark Edward Lewis, *The Construction of Space in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).

[5] David Knechtes, from an unpublished conference paper, "Early Medieval Chinese Estate Culture: The Mountain Dwelling of Xie Lingyun." Instead of focusing on its estimated size, considerable as it is, I will emphasize instead that the estate was constantly expanding into areas outside of governmental control. Also, like other large estates of the time, Xie's land holdings in the Shi'ning area were not contiguous but rather included several different locations not necessarily described in the exposition.

These two works challenge our preconceptions about Xie's other, better-known poetic output—typically framed as "nature poetry"—and allow us to recuperate a Six Dynasties understanding of landscape viewing that is embedded within traditions surrounding the kingly gaze and the imperial park. In the Ye suite (see Chapter Two), Xie impersonated the emperor-patron Cao Pi in acts of *shang* 賞 ("appreciation"). The "Mountain Dwelling Exposition" disavows connections between Xie's countryside estate and the imperial capital, but the work's literary form, scale, and staging of the authorial persona can be read as further permutations of imperial performance. The persona of the emperor-patron Cao Pi, staged in acts of hierarchical "appreciation," is not unique to the Ye suite but persists in the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition" and his better known "landscape" poems. Whether foregrounded as such, or layered with the mantle of rusticity, imperial impersonation is a key motif constituting the authorial persona Xie Lingyun.

The received text of the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition" comes to us through Xie's standard biography, where it occupies half the pages of his "life." A testament to the person and its persona, this exposition is where Xie is writ large.

My analysis focuses on Xie's preface to the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition," which is not just as an example of landscape writing but also a self-conscious meditation on the textual legacy connecting town and country, capital metropolis and manorial estate. The preface, in effect, provides a literary history of "mountain and wilderness" landscapes as seen from the perspective of a medieval readership. By attending to this text, we see that the primary "landscape" in Xie's time is not a pristine wilderness but the manorial estate, an entity whose greater manifestations had the economic power, political influence, and military reach of a small state.

a) A summary of rural place

The exposition's preface begins by furnishing a summary of rural dwelling as a literary topic, and in so doing, orients the countryside vis-a-vis the capital. I discuss the preface by dividing it into three sections. The opening section reads:

古巢居穴處曰巖棲，棟宇居山曰山居，在林野曰丘園，在郊郭曰城傍。四者不同，可以理推。言心也，黃屋實不殊於汾陽。	The nest and cave dwelling of antiquity is called the "cliff-side perch";[6] dwelling in the mountains within pillars and eaves is called the "mountain dwelling"; the residence in wooded wilderness is called the "backcountry orchard;"[7] the residence at the suburban outskirts is called the "city vicinity."[8] Reason allows us to infer the dissimilarities among these four. In terms of the mind's intent, the imperial abode is actually no different from the north bank of the Fen River; if we attend to the things and

[6] The "cliff-side perch" is associated with the rudimentary abodes of antiquity, which the sages were said to have improved with technological achievements. The *Xici* 繫辭 commentary to the *Changes* reads: "In high antiquity, people dwelled in caves and resided in the wilds; in later ages, the sages replaced these with buildings with erected pillars and hanging eaves that were fortified against wind and rain." *Zhouyi zhengyi* 周易正義 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000): 8.355.

[7] This phrase originates in the *Changes*, which Kong Yingda 孔穎達 annotates thus: "*Qiu* means 'backcountry (*qiuxu* 丘墟)' and *yuan* means 'garden orchard (*yuanpu* 園圃).' Where plants grow, it is a simple dwelling and not a splendid abode." *Zhouyi zhengyi,* 3.126.

[8] *Guo* 郭 is the city's outer wall.

即事也，山居良有異乎市廛。	tasks [of each mode of life], then the mountain dwelling indeed has dissimilarities with the market district.[9]

Laying out four places, the preface moves progressively from undeveloped cave abodes (“cliff perching”) in the remote wilds towards the imperial residence at the capital (“city vicinity”).[10] “Nature” is not the operative concept in differentiating these places, but rather relative distances between center and periphery, antiquity and modernity. Spotlighting sites of cumulative cultural significance, the text invokes names (“*x* is called…”) to highlight the status of these places as literary commonplaces tread and retread by the textual tradition. The first term “cliff perching” calls to mind an ascetic and antiquated ideal of eremitic life; its modern instantiation, fitted with comfortable accoutrements, is the “mountain dwelling,” which, we infer, is embodied by Xie’s estate. The third term “backcountry orchard” is a byword for simple rustic life; its metropolitan analog is the “city vicinity.”

As a summary of rural places, the preface analyzes the symmetries and asymmetries that obtain among the four sites. “Reason allows us to infer the dissimilarities among these four.” A commonsense distinction is stated: “If we attend to the things and tasks [of each mode of life], then the mountain dwelling indeed has dissimilarities with the marketplace district.” And yet, capital and countryside can actually be understood as indistinguishable: “In terms of the mind’s intent, the imperial abode is actually no different from the north bank of the Fen River.” That is to say, even though one may reside bodily at the imperial palace, the mind, unfettered, can abide in remote reaches. The reference to the Fen River alludes to a *Zhuangzi* passage in which king Yao “forgot” his place at the center of the kingdom because his mind occupied the edges of the world.

堯治天下之民，平海內之政，往見四子藐姑射之山，汾水之陽，窅然喪其天下焉。	Yao brought order to the people under heaven and stabilized governance within the seas, he went to visit the Four Masters[11] in faraway Guye Mountain, north of the Fen River. Experiencing remoteness, he forgot his kingdom there.[12]

[9] The district with marketplace shops metonymically refers to the urban center within the city walls. The exposition is recorded in Xie’s biography in *Song shu*, chapter 67.

[10] Alan J. Berkowitz identifies the “cave-dwelling ascetic” as one archetype of reclusion. See: Alan J Berkowitz, *Patterns of Engagement: The Practice and Portrayal of Reclusion in Early Medieval China* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2000): p. 232.

[11] The commentator Sima Biao 司馬彪 (243–306), whose interpretation Xie Lingyun would have known, identified the four on Guye Mountain as the hermits Wang Ni 王倪, Nieque 齧缺, Piyi 被依, and Xu You 許由. Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619–92) points out that, in the context of the *Zhuangzi* chapter, those on Guye Mountain must be supernatural beings. Guo Qingfan 郭慶藩, *Zhuangzi jishi* 莊子集釋, 1A.31; Wang Fuzhi 王夫之, *Zhuangzi jie* 莊子解 in *Chuanshan quanshu* 船山全書 (Yueli shushe chuban): Vol 13, p. 90.

[12] *Zhuangzi jishi*, 1A.31. By Xie’s time, the terms Fen and Guye both conventionally signified places of remote reclusion, as evidenced by the medieval usage of the compound “Fen Gu 汾姑” (“Fen River and Guye Mountain”), which collapses both terms together. However, this later conventionalized usage of “Fen” does not necessarily apply in the original context of the *Zhuangzi*, where “the north bank of the Fen River” can be understood as referring to the location of Yao’s capital. Following this interpretation, Burton Watson’s translates the *Zhuangzi* passage thus: “he went to see the Four Masters of the faraway Ku-she Mountain, [and when he got home] north of the Fen River, he was dazed and had forgotten his kingdom there.” My translation of the *Zhuangzi* passage reflects the later, conventional usage of “Fen River” invoked by Xie’s preface. Xie also uses the phrase in the same way in another poem, see *Song shi* 宋詩, 2.1158.

The *Zhuangzi* commentator Guo Pu 郭璞 (276–324) explains the passage thus: “He let his mind range to the most distant reaches, so he always roamed unbounded even though his body was lodged (*ji* 寄) as the supreme ruler.”[13] According to this notion, drawn from medieval eremitic discourse, a person’s deepest concerns are not dictated by where his body is circumstantially “lodged” but by where his mind truly abides.[14] The symmetry offered—“the imperial abode is actually no different from the north bank of the Fen River”—is able to close the distance between capital and countryside, imperial palace and mountain dwelling, because, as literary commonplaces, these places are conjoined. If we regard Xie’s summary of remote, rural places as the writing of ‘landscape,’ we find that its very formulation points to the capital and kingly excursions.

The preface’s allusion to the episode about Yao introduces a thread—namely, traditions about kingly roaming—that resurfaces throughout the rest of the preface. If the mind can lie on faraway mountains while lodged at the palace, such that center and periphery are collapsed together, then the same can also be said of Xie’s “Mountain Dwelling Exposition”: the text attends to the mountain dwelling but nevertheless points to the imperial center. Attending to symmetries and asymmetries of place, the preface articulates the countryside in terms of the capital, which the text continually returns to as its primary point of reference. The preface’s second section:

> 抱疾就閑，順從性情，敢率所樂，而以作賦。揚子雲云詩人之賦麗以則。文體宜兼，以成其美。今所賦，既非京都宮觀，遊獵聲色之盛，而敘山野草木，水石穀稼之事。

> While nursing illness and taking to idleness, I went along with my ingrained disposition, unafraid to be led by what gives me pleasure, and thereby composed this exposition. Yang Xiong said, “The exposition of the classic poets was lovely and adhered to norms.”[15] Literary forms (*ti*) should achieve both [loveliness and adherence to norms] to realize its excellence. Now the subject of my exposition is not the capital metropolis and palace miradors, nor the splendid sights and sounds of tours and hunts. Rather, I lay out the matters of mountain and wilderness, trees and fauna, water and stone, planting and sowing.[16]

Xie’s description of what his exposition is about—“matters of mountain and wilderness, trees and fauna, water and stone, planting and sowing”—approximates our notions, however inchoate

---

[13] “遊心於絕冥之境，雖寄坐萬物之上而未始不逍遙.” *Zhuangzi jishi*, 1A.34.

[14] Tao Qian 陶潛 (365–427) gives the idea its well-known poetic articulation (Lu Qinli 逯欽立, *Jin shi* 晉詩, 17.998):

結廬在人境，I built a cottage within the realm of men,
而無車馬喧。Yet it was free of the hubbub of horse and carriage.
問君何能爾，You might ask, How is this possible?
心遠地自偏。When the mind is distant, one’s locale is naturally remote.

[15] *Fayan yishu* 法言義疏, 3.49. Here, the term *fu* is used in the most general sense of ‘to give a recitation’ and is not tied to any particular textual corpus such as the *Chu ci*. Hence, the line speaks of the “*fu* 賦 of the *shi* 詩 poets.” The term *fu* also refers to the expressive mode named (alongside *xing* 興 and *bi* 比) in the *Ode*’s Great Preface. The force of authoritative statements like Yang Xiong’s is precisely its capacity to simultaneously deploy several classicist meanings for key terms such as *fu*. Likewise, Xie’s citation of Yang Xiong also plays upon these valences of *fu.* For a thorough explication of this passage, see: David Knechtges, *The Han Rhapsody: A Study of the fu of Yang Hsiung*, 53 B.C.-A.D. 18 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

[16] *Song shu*, 67.1754.

they might be, of what landscape poetry is about.[17] But, for Xie, the starting point for the writing of this literary topic is not an experience or contemplation of the "mountain and wilderness" itself but rather the textual legacy of expositions (*fu* 賦) about the "capital metropolis and palace miradors." While the preface proclaims the exposition's contrast with its Han dynasty predecessors, we must note the basic assumption at work here: these two apparently different topics are extensions of the same literary tradition: the exposition. The preface's citation of Yang Xiong's authoritative statement about the exposition form sets up Xie's own work as a modern realization of this old dictum, whose visage was formerly represented by Han capital expositions. "Mountains and wilderness" is ostensibly a new and different literary topic, but its point of reference, the pivot whence it turns, is the legacy of capital expositions about the "splendid sights and sounds of tours and hunts."

We see thus that Xie's exposition is not just an example of "mountains and wilderness" writing but also a literary history of this topic, one that ultimately traces the poetic practice of this topic to old expositions of the imperial park. While this literary history might not line up neatly with our preconceptions of 'landscape,' this capsule of literary history no doubt made sense to a medieval readership, on whom the connections binding the imperial park and Xie's manorial estate would not have been lost. Indeed, this literary history dovetails with the assumptions about textual practice found in the commonplace compendium *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚, which I discussed in Chapter One. Compiled as a handbook for writers, the *Yiwen leiju* illustrated the commonplace known as "excursion and the panoptic view" (*youlan*) with tropes about touring and hunting in the imperial park found in pre-imperial texts such as the *Mencius*, as well as Western Han texts.

For instance, while the preface contrasts the mountain dwelling with the capital's "palace miradors (*gong guan* 宮觀)," which are viewing platforms that enable the onlooker to survey the surrounds (*guan* 觀, or *lan* 覽), Xie's landscape poems stage the authorial persona as performing the gaze and postures that befit a ruler. That is to say, there is no mirador in such landscapes, but the lands are still surveyed by a gaze that is no less panoptic in its scope. In the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition," the narrator says: "I look over (*guan* 觀) the appearances and observe the sounds, laying out *repletely* the mountains and streams (觀貌相音，備列山川)."[18] For Xie Lingyun, the mountains and streams, if they are to be adequately treated, presume the sweep of a gaze that "looks over" (*guan* 觀), which is the very function of the palace mirador (*guan* 觀).

The panoptic views afforded by the estate residence structure the long composition. Note the topic-markers that head the sections of the exposition's main body:

其居也…	As for the residence…
近東則…	In the near east…
近南則…	In the near south…
近西則…	In the near west…
近北則…	In the near north…
遠東則…	In the far east…

[17] The last pair of terms, "planting and sowing," already makes clear that this conception of 'nature' (if it is still useful to adhere to this term) is not free of human labor and development.
[18] My emphasis. *Song shu*, 67.1762.

遠南則...	In the far south…
遠西則…	In the far west…
遠北則…	In the far north…
爾其舊居…	Nearby is the old residence….
水草則…	As for water plants…
其竹則…	As for bamboos…
其木則…	As for trees…
魚則…	As for fish…
鳥則…	As for fowl…

The sequencing of these sections replicates the extension of the panoptic gaze as it sweeps twice in all directions (East-South-West-North) in two concentric circles: the first scans what is near, and the second what is faraway. The vantage point of these two sweeping scans is the Xie family residence, which later functions as the starting point of another series: the cataloguing of the estate's bountiful flora and fauna. The exposition, while claiming to eschew the ostensibly magisterial topics of the classical expositions, is no less grand in scope and its claim of mastery over the land. While the concrete matters may differ, the significance of viewing and excursion as recognizably coded actions are remarkably similar.

Xie's preface, while invoking the literary history of capital writings, nevertheless takes pains to avert the association between capital and country estate. To write one's estate with the tropes of the imperial capital is nothing short of presumptuous, so the preface necessarily places its emphasis on the differences separating his "mountain and wilderness" exposition from former capital expositions. Accordingly, the preface makes overt moves to distance the work's associations with the capital. However, at the same time, it gestures towards a meaning—which must be read 'between the lines' in a meeting of minds beyond the inadequate signage of words—that bears a complex orientation towards the imperial center.

才乏昔人，心放俗外，詠於文則可勉而就之。求麗，邈以遠矣。覽者廢張左之艷辭，尋臺皓之深意，去飾取素，儻值其心耳。意實言表，而書不盡。遺跡索意，托之有賞。其辭曰	I lack the talent of past men, but I've set my mind free of convention. If it's a matter of chanting in patterned language, then I can with effort carry that off; but as for seeking to make it 'lovely,' that's a far-off distant wish. If the reader casts aside the alluring words of Zhang Heng and Zuo Si[19] to pursue the profound meaning of Tai Tong and the Four Hoary Heads,[20] then he will relinquish embellishment and adopt the unadorned just as if he had had a meeting of minds [with Tai Tong, the Four Hoary Heads, and myself]. Meaning indeed lies outside speech, so writing cannot exhaust it. As for leaving behind textual traces to seek after the meaning, I entrust this to those capable of appreciation. The exposition is as follows.

While Xie declares that his exposition, unlike those on the capitals, allows the reader to "relinquish embellishment and adopt the unadorned," his work is anything but simple and spare.

---

[19] Known for their grand expositions on capital metropolises and their splendor. For an annotated edition of the preface to the "Three Capitals Exposition," see Zhong Jingduo 鐘京鐸, *Zuo Si shi jishi* 左思詩集釋 (Taibei: Xuehai chubanshe, 2001): 105–15.

[20] Known for residing in a cave on Mount Wu'an 武安, Tai Tong refused summons offering him an official post. (*Hou Han shu*, 83.2770) The Four Hoary Heads dwelled on Mount Shang 商. On these four paragons of reclusion, see Alan Berkowitz, *Patterns of Disengagement*, *op. cit*., 64–80.

Its scale is actually comparable to the—supposedly very different—works of Zhang Heng 張衡 (78–139) and Zuo Si 左思 (250?–305?). A character count of these authors' works imparts a sense of the relative scale and sheer monumentality of Xie's project. Xie's "Mountain Dwelling Exposition" totals nearly 9,000 characters, which is just 400 characters shy of the **combined** total of Zhang Heng's three separate expositions on the Western Capital, Eastern Capital, and Southern Capital.[21] Xie's exposition of his estate also measures up to Zuo Si's "Three Capital Exposition" on the capitals of Shu, Wu, and Wei, whose total size of 10,078 characters is only 1,200 characters longer than Xie's presentation of his single estate property.

Xie's exposition is also comparable to Zuo Si's "Three Capital Exposition" on the level of content. Zuo Si, in evaluating previous capital expositions, criticized their geographical inaccuracies and embellishments. Zuo emphasized that his work improved upon precedents by presenting reliable information about the features and resources of the locales: "The mountains and streams, cities and towns are checked against maps; the birds and beasts and plant life are verified in local gazettes."[22] In the same vein, Xie's 9,000-character exposition comprehensively catalogs his estate's "mountains and wilderness, trees and fauna, water and stone." Together with Xie's extensive self-annotations, the exposition bears striking resemblances with geographical surveys and government-produced catalogs. Xie's self-annotations, which supplement the exposition's already exhaustive catalog with glosses and explanations, function like the maps and local gazettes that Zuo Si consulted: they position the text as an authoritative compilation of a territory's resources, and the estate as an economic powerhouse. The generic conventions governing Xie's exposition befit not just a large manor, but also a state entity in its own right.

We see thus that Xie's exposition, despite statements declaring otherwise, exhibits suggestive resemblances to the capital exposition. In effect, Xie's work positions his estate, not as a peripheral mountain dwelling, but as a doubling of the imperial center. This significance would not have been lost on a medieval audience, and indeed the preface tasks the reader to read between the lines. "Meaning indeed lies beyond words, so writing cannot exhaust it. As for leaving behind textual traces and finding the meaning, I entrust this to those of appreciation." The text is but a "trace," an imprint left behind by a force pressed into words; it is an impression that, when properly appreciated, in turn impresses upon the reader the force of its original thrust and gist. There is here a hint of something—not fully spoken and perhaps unspeakable—that Xie's preface expects the reader to register. We should not necessarily approach the text as bearing an encrypted message that, once decoded, yields a definitive and final significance. But the sum of the text's allusions cohere together to hint at something unsaid. If the reader, as the preface asks, looks for unspoken connections, there are clues pointing to Xie's estate as an alternative, and even perhaps a rival center of power.

If we contemplate what the preface calls the "profound significance of Tai Tong and the Four Hoary Heads," we note first of all that these are stock figures of mountain dwelling and reclusion: in the allusion's immediate context, these dwellers of mountains and wilderness stand as counterpoints to Zhang Heng and Zuo Si, who represent traditions about the capital's

[21] By my count, Xie's exposition and self-commentary totals 8,885 characters (*Song shu*, 67.1754–79). Zhang Heng's "Western Capital Rhapsody 西京賦" has 3,906 characters; his "Eastern Capital Rhapsody," 3,802 characters; and his "Southern Capital Rhapsody," 1,590 characters (*Wen xuan*, 2.47–80; 3.93–132; 4.159–61).

[22] "其山川城邑則稽之地圖，其鳥獸草木則驗之方誌." *Wen xuan*, 4.173.

splendors.[23] Beyond this local sense, these mountain recluses are also known as prestigious figures who refused to take office despite repeated summons from the state. Seen in this light, the mountain residence might be relatively remote (geographically and politically) vis-à-vis the capital, but the act of mountain-dwelling can radiate a critical authority that questions the center as such—its relation to the capital is not so much marginal as oppositional. We recall that Xie was expelled from the capital for protesting Xu Xianzhi's 徐羨之 faction at court; Xie's withdrawal to his manorial estate was the result of his political downfall and exile. The official biography states: "When the Child Emperor ascended the throne [in 423], court power lay in the hands of high officials. Xie Lingyun provoked opposition and denounced those wielding power. Chancellor Xu Xianzhi and his ilk considered him dangerous, and exiled him to be governor of Yongjia province."[24] He quit his post in Yongjia, located in the remote southeast after one year (citing illness, a conventional excuse), and returned to his Shi'ning estate.

Those who opposed Chancellor Xu Xianzhi's faction suffered a fate worse than the exile meted to Xie Lingyun: the head of Xie Lingyun's faction, Crown Prince Yizhen 義真, was demoted to a commoner; the officer Zhang Yue 張約 was killed after submitting a court memorial protesting the Crown Prince's demotion[25]; finally, in a scheme by Xu Xianzhi's faction, the Child Emperor and the former Crown Prince Yizhen were both assassinated on the same day.[26]

Given the dangerous consequences of overtly criticizing figures in the imperial court, the allusion to the Four Hoary Heads serves as an oblique but pointed reference. The preface calls attention to their "profound significance" and furthermore alerts the reader to have a meeting of minds—an understanding between text and reader that need not rely on overt signs. "If the reader (lit., the viewer) casts aside the alluring words of Zhang Heng and Zuo Si to pursue the profound meaning of Tai Tong and the Four Hoary Heads, then he will relinquish embellishment and adopt the unadorned just as if he had had a meeting of minds [with Tai Tong, the Four Hoary Heads, and myself]." The reader at minimum is expected not only to register the exposition's aura of regal monumentality, but also the exigencies of cautious critique in exile, one that would be understood only by a "meeting of minds." Xie's mountain dwelling is not marginal to the center but rather an alternative site of authority.

b) Appreciation and patronage

The operative verb used to describe the relationship between author and reader does not just concern hermeneutic understanding—it invokes a language of hierarchical recognition. That is to say, the relationship between the text and the assumed reader fashions the authorial persona as an appreciative patron. "If you leave textual traces behind and seek the meaning—through that, there is appreciation." The act of "appreciation (*shang*)" is embedded within social hierarchy, and in Xie's time it is exemplified by the patronage at work in literary salons. The full connotations of the term come into focus when we recover the older and more fundamental

---

[23] Tai Tong resided on Mount Wu-an 武安, and the Four Hoary Heads, Mount Shang 商.
[24] *Song shu*, 67.1754.
[25] *Song shu*, 61.1637–8.
[26] The day given for Yizhen's death, "癸未," could not have occurred that month and should be emended to "癸丑." For a discussion of the dates for both assassinations, see: *Xie Lingyun ji jiaozhu*, *op. cit.*: p. 586.

valence of the term "*shang* 賞" as "to reward." This concept covers both the literal sense of a ruler or patron bestowing a concrete gift to his servant or client, as well as the extended sense of expressing gratification and emoting gratitude. The following example from *Liu tao* 六韜 typifies *shang* as a mutually-appreciative exchange that is embedded within social hierarchy.[27]

害民者有罪。	He who harms the people will be punished.
進賢者有賞。	He who presents present worthy men [to the ruler], will be *shang* [i.e., appreciated via rewards].[28]

Here, he who recommends worthy men to the court demonstrates his capacity to recognize talented individuals; the ruler, in turn, recognizes the recommender and rewards ("appreciates") him. Recognition occurs in both directions, but it is nevertheless hierarchical, and premised on the ruler-subject or patron-client relation. In this fashion, when Xie's preface addresses the reader and expects him to relate to the text in terms of *shang*, this is not a status-neutral hermeneutic situation but one that evokes the hierarchy of the literary salon that Xie cultivated.

Xie's evocation of *shang* in a performance of patronage is a running motif throughout his writings such as the Ye Suite, and in his actual social activities. As I argued in chapter two, Xie conceived of the imperial entourage in excursion as the perfect realization of the act of appreciation; in his Ye Suite, Xie impersonated Cao Pi—ruler and patron of writers—and presented this imperial alter-ego as surrounded by literary talents. The Ye Suite was a literary projection of his actual excursion practices, which were predicated on what Xie's biography characterized as "appreciating and communing (*shang hui* 賞會)." Indicative of the social dimension of the act of appreciation, the verb "commune" (*hui*) that defined Xie's excursions means both "to congregate" and "to meet with and coincide with the mind of another person."[29]

靈連既東還，與族弟惠連、東海何長瑜、潁川荀雍、泰山羊璿之，以文章賞會，共為山澤之游，時人謂之四友。	After Xie returned east, he used literary compositions to appreciate and commune (*shang hui*) with his cousin Xie Huilian, He Changyu of Donghai, Xun Yong of Yingchuan, and Yang Yuzhi of Taishan. Together they undertook excursions (*you*) through mountains and wetlands and they were known by contemporaries as his Four Companions. [30]

The congregation and communing of these "Four Companions" was not that of equals—Xie Lingyun was by far the most prestigious and wealthy among them. Xie Lingyun is not counted among the four because he is the clique's *raison d'être*, the center around which men gather for appreciation. Like a surveyor of a land's geological and human resources, Xie Lingyun toured the lands surrounding his estate to incorporate talents into excursion entourage, and took them back with him to his estate. Xie's act of "appreciating and communing" fused the excursive tour and the literary salon into a performance of patronage that positioned Xie Lingyun as its head.

Among the so-called "Four Companions," Xie Huilian and He Changyu were kept by Xie Lingyun as esteemed protégés.

惠連幼有才悟，而輕薄	Xie Huilian at youth showed talent and intelligence, but he

[27] Xie Lingyun was certainly familiar with this text since he alludes to it in his *Xuan zheng fu* 撰征. *Song shu*, 67.1744.

[28] From the military document *Liu tao* 六韜, collected in *Quan shanggu sandai wen* 全上古三代文, 6.44-2.

[29] The verbal phrase "to meet with another's mind" (*hui xin* 會心) exemplifies this latter usage.

[30] *Song shu*, 67.1774.

不為父方明所知。靈運去永嘉還始始寧，時方明為會稽郡。靈運嘗自始寧至會稽造方明，過視惠連，大相知賞。

was unrecognized by and looked upon lightly by his father Xie Fangming. When Xie Lingyun left Yongjia for Shi'ning, Fangming at the time governed Kuaiji province. On one occasion, Xie Lingyun went from Shi'ning to Kuaiji to visit Fangming, and, while passing through, looked closely at Huilian, greatly recognizing and appreciating (*shang*) him.[31]

The verb "look closely ("*shi* 視") that Xie Lingyun performed on Xie Huilian carries the sense of "scrutinize." This is the language of recommendation and personnel evaluation. From this we see that Xie Lingyun's excursions from his estate in Shi'ning (the very one represented through his "Mountain Dwelling Exposition") were not simply pleasure outings in the wilderness but tours that doubled as circuits of recruitment whereby prospective staff members were appreciated and rewarded.

The recognition of *shang* that Xie Lingyun bestowed was a concrete appreciation: it rewarded the person by inducting him into an exclusive arrangement that provided material support and cultural capital. In the following passage, Xie Lingyun plucks He Changyu from obscurity—before then, unrecognized and "fed as a low-grade retainer"—and promotes him as an attaché in his touring entourage.

時長瑜教惠連讀書，亦在郡內，靈運又以為絕倫，謂方明曰：「阿連才悟如此，而尊作常兒遇之。何長瑜當今仲宣，而飴以下客之食。尊既不能禮賢，宜以長瑜還靈運。」靈運載之而去。

At the time, He Changyu tutored Xie Huilian to recite books and was also in the province. Xie Lingyun formed an extraordinary bond with him as well, and said to Fangming: "Huilian's talent and intelligence are such as they are, yet you regard him as an ordinary child. He Changyu is the Wang Can of this age, yet you feed him as a low-grade retainer. Since you cannot ritually honor He Changyu as a worthy man, it is appropriate that he come back with me." Thereupon Xie Lingyun took him away and departed.[32]

By comparing He Changyu to the renowned Wei dynasty literatus Wang Can, Xie Lingyun in effect likens himself to the emperor Cao Pi. Like Cao Pi, who assembled worthies like Wang Can in his imperial entourage and literary salon, Xie performed excursions defined by "appreciating and communing," a form of recognition predicated on social hierarchy. "It is appropriate that Changyu come back with me." Xie conducted this performance of patronage through both his personal effects (as appreciative patron) and his personal property (the estate and its largesse): Xie's "scrutinizing" acts of evaluation accrued personnel that returned with him to his Shi'ning estate. Once transported back to Xie's estate, Changyu would no longer be "fed as a low-grade retainer" but materially outfitted in a manner befitting his newly bestowed worth. Far from being a remote mountain periphery, Xie's estate was a center in its own right that aimed to collect the most promising human personnel in the empire.

Whether Xie intended his exposition as a literary instrument of recruitment is a matter of speculation, but it is clear that the estate itself was the centerpiece of his presentation of himself as a powerful patron. The literary salon was but one expression of Xie's patronage—albeit its most prestigious cultural institution. The "Four Companions" may have taken center stage but

---

[31] *Song shu*, 67.1774. I did not translate the adverb *xiang* 相 as "mutually" because of Huilin's lower status in this situation, which clearly foregrounds Xie Lingyun as the one who recognizes. The verb *shang* is uni-directional here.
[32] *Song shu*, 67.1774–5.

other multitudes congregated around Xie on his estate. In addition to notable personages such as Xie Huilian and He Changyu, Xie Lingyun also kept at his disposal "throngs of slaves, and several hundred loyal retainers and clients."[33] The estate's manorial economy housed and supported this enormous personal staff, whose duties to Xie Lingyun mirrored the duties of freemen towards the state. While registered freemen paid grain taxes to the state, the slaves and clients attached to Xie directly farmed his estate. Whereas the state enlisted freemen to perform corvée labor on public works, Xie mobilized hundreds of slaves and clients to develop his private lands.

靈運因父祖之資，生業甚厚。奴僮既眾，義故門生數百，鑿山浚湖，功役無已。	Having inherited the assets of his father and grandfather, Xie Lingyun's livelihood and enterprises were extremely affluent. With throngs of slaves, and several hundred loyal retainers and clients, he carved mountains and dredged lakes. His land projects never ceased.[34]

Such massive development projects—which mined and carved away mountains, dredged and reclaimed lakes as arable land—were made possible by the largesse produced by Xie's property and the transformative human labor it sustained and deployed. This civil engineering might, which was on par with some state-mobilized projects, also harbored a military capability. Whereas the state conscripted men for military service, Xie could deploy to do his bidding hundreds of retainers, which included both clients (*mensheng* 門生) attached to Xie for their livelihood, and as well as men bound to Xie with old ties of personal loyalty (*yigu* 義故). The key ways in which a freeman was obligated to the state—wealth generation, civil labor, and military service—Xie personally commanded on his estate, and by means of it.[35]

"As for leaving behind textual traces and finding the meaning, I entrust this to those of appreciation." From the preface's final gesture towards "appreciation," Xie's contemporaries would have registered the author's prominently fashioned persona as a patron, which led a literary salon of "Four Companions" and retainers in the hundreds. By addressing the audience with the word "appreciation," which invokes hierarchical recognition, the author presumes his authority upon the reader.

c) Doubling the imperial center

Once we register the language of patronage in Xie's preface, then the meaning of the allusion to the Four Hoary Heads takes on a deeper meaning. In addition to being stock figures of

---

[33] *Song shu*, 67.1775.
[34] *Ibid.*
[35] Tian Yuqing has argued that the system of "agricultural-military colonies (*tun tian* 屯田)" pushed by the Wei court and furthered in the Jin and Song were in effect state versions of private estates. Given the dominance of powerful families, the old Han system of taxation was no longer feasible and the trend in which the state competed with powerful families in establishing and maintaining estates intensified in the Southern regimes. See Tian Yuqing 田余慶, "*Qin Han Wei Jin shi tanwei* 秦漢魏晉史探微" (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004): 88–9. For a detailed account of private settlements (*si tun* 私屯)" in the Jin and Song, see: Tang Changru 唐長儒, "*Nan Song de tun di bieshu ji shanze zhanling* 南宋的屯、邸、別墅及山澤佔領" in *Shanju cungao* 山居存稿 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989): pp. 1–25; for a reconstruction of the state's *tun tian* system in the Western Jin, see Tang Changru, "*Xi Jin tianzhi shi shi* 西晉田制試釋" in *Wei Jin Nan Bei chao shilun cong* 魏晉南北朝史論叢 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000): pp. 35–55.

mountain dwelling, the Four Hoary Heads were also known for having emerged from reclusion to voice their support for the heir apparent, whom Emperor Gaozu 高祖 of the Han planned to replace.[36] Thanks to the Four Hoary Heads who leveraged their prestige to intervene, the prince (who became Emperor Huidi 惠帝) retained his position. This story about princely patronage and court factionalism has strong parallels with Xie Lingyun and his ties to the prince Liu Yizhen 劉義真, next in line to the Song throne and head of his own literary salon. I will first discuss the parallels on the level of court politics, and further develop the theme of literary patronage.

Like the Han heir apparent, the Song prince Liu Yizhen risked being ousted, but there was no one like the "Four Hoary Heads" to support him against court rivals. Prince Liu Yizhen was eventually demoted to a commoner and killed by the faction of Xu Xianzhi.[37] Xie Lingyun, having thrown in his lot with the failed party of Liu Yizhen, was thereupon forced into exile, after which he returned to his clan estate and later cultivated his own coterie of "Four Companions." Xie Lingyun's "Four Companions" and the "Four Hoary Heads" share the noteworthy leitmotif of a four-person party; more substantially, both parties were recognized as voices of political resistance against the imperial court. In the case of the Four Hoary Heads, the Han court attempted to co-opt them by offering them official positions which they repeatedly refused; in Xie Lingyun's case, he was considered too uncooperative or incalcitrant to be co-opted and was thus expelled. In adopting the critical mountain-dwelling stance of the "Four Hoary Heads," and forming his own "Four Companions," Xie Lingyun positioned his mountain estate as an alternate center.

The allusion to the "Four Hoary Heads" speaks also to the matter of princely patronage. These four lauded the Han prince's "deferential cherishing of officers," who "craned their necks hoping to be able to serve the prince to the death."[38] Just as the Han prince was known for his "cherishing of officers," so also the Song prince Liu Yizhen was famous for gathering together the age's greatest literary figures which included Xie Lingyun. Like the Four Hoary Heads, and Xie Lingyun's later assemblage of "Four Companions," prince Liu Yizhen assembled his own group of four.

廬陵王義真，警悟愛文義，而性輕易，與太子左衛率謝靈運、員外常侍顏延之、慧琳道人情好款密。嘗云「得

Prince Yizhen of Luling had a startling grasp and fondness for belles-lettres, but he was by nature unserious. He had close bonds with the Heir Apparent's Leader-of-the-Left-Guard Xie Lingyun, the Supernumerary Attendant-in-Ordinary Yan Yanzhi, and the Daoist Hui Lin.[39] He once

---

[36] *Shi ji* 史記, 55.2046–7. Xie Lingyun's self-commentary to the *Shanju fu* says that the Four Hoary Heads avoided the disorder of the Qin by going deep in the mountains of the Shang 商 and Shangluo 上洛 counties, and that the Han Gaozu was unable to summon them to take office. *Song shu*, 67.1771. For a detailed description of traditions surrounding the Four Hoary Heads, see: Alan J. Berkowitz, *Patterns of Engagement*, *op. cit*., pp. 64–80.

[37] Exploiting the rift between the boy emperor Liu Yifu 劉義符 and the prince, Xu Xianzhi and his ilk presented the prince's supposed failings at court and had him demoted to a commoner. He was then transferred to Xin'an 新安 province, where he was murdered. This assassination was part of a carefully planned scheme, as the emperor was also killed on the very same day. *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑒, 120.3765, 120.3768–9.

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] Xie Lingyun took this position after he was demoted from "Duke 公" to "Marquis 侯" (*Song shu,* 67.1753). The tile suggests being responsible for the safety of the heir apparent, but it is unlikely that Xie performed concrete duties since as the prince himself did not consider Xie circumspect enough to manage security details (*ZZTJ,* 120.3765). For the later usage of these titles, see: Charles Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press: 1985): entries 7015, 7017.

志之日，以靈運、延之為宰相，慧琳為西豫州都督。」	said, “On the day I achieve my ambition, I will appoint Lingyun and Yanzhi as my chancellors, and Hui Lin as the Supervisor of Xiyu province.”[40]

The model of political rule assumed by prince Liu Yizhen takes for granted a seamless continuum between an elite literary salon and a cabinet of governmental officers. This model derives of course from that of the Wei emperor Cao Pi, who represented the imperial person as the head of a supreme literary salon (see Chapter Two). It should not surprise us that Xie Lingyun, once so esteemed by the prince, would in turn imitate his former patron: just as Liu Yizhen was part of coterie of four, so also Xie Lingyun constituted the “Four Companions.” (We recall that Xie Lingyun compared his companion He Changyu to Wang Can, and himself to the Emperor Cao Pi.)

The leitmotif of an exclusive literary salon—as seen in Liu Yizhen’s assemblage of four personages and the “appreciation gatherings” of Xie Lingyun’s “Four Companions”—underscores a deeper connection on the level of practice, performance, and self-presentation: the wilderness excursion is a permutation of the “appreciation gathering” or literary salon, which is in turn coterminous with the patronage of a cabinet of would-be ruling officers. That is why the verb for “taking an excursion (*you* 遊)” takes on the coloring of “to associate with” and its connotations of faction formation.

徐羨之等惡義真與靈運等遊，義真故吏范晏從容戒之。	Xu Xianzhi and his ilk hated that Liu Yizhen took excursions and associated with *(you)* Xie Lingyun and others. Liu Yizhen thus dispatched Fan Yan to come along and take precautions against [Xu Xianzhi and his ilk].[41]

Xie’s promulgation of his estate—from which he undertook faction-forming excursions—was no remote wilderness, but an alternate capital or doubling of the imperial center. The significance of Xie’s estate unravels facile binaries of center versus periphery, palace building versus mountain residence—it is more aptly described as a manorial property cum imperial park.

d) Excursion and estate expansion

In the section “Appreciation and Patronage,” I showed how Xie’s estate and his excursions to and from it were central to Xie’s presentation of himself as a patron-ruler. The estate provided the material sustenance for Xie’s numerous clients (which spanned farm hands and men at arms, engineering specialists and literary talents) and it mirrored the state in its organization and mobilization of human labor. Xie’s performance of patronage was reinforced by his excursion practices, which, through acts of appreciative recognition, served as tours of recruitment that further augmented his entourage. In acts of appreciation, Xie joined the refined leisure of the salon with the stately authority of a ruling cabinet. Excursion and estate were intimately coupled in Xie’s congregation of human talents.

[40] *Zizhi tongjian*, 120.3765.

[41] *Ibid,* 120.3765. The larger context of the passage makes clear that Liu Yizhen asks Fan Yan to come along because he does not trust Xie Lingyun and Yan Yanzhi to be circumspect enough to manage details of security. This is one reason to think that the title bestowed upon Xie Lingyun, “Leader of the Left Guard,” is merely a honorary one, since he is not actually entrusted to “guard 衛” the prince.

In this section, I will show that Xie's excursions, in addition to accumulating human resources, were integral to the estate's constant expansion and seizure of land. What is at stake here is how we conceive of "landscape" and its relationship to wilderness (by which I mean a pristine nature or a land largely free of human development). Were the landscapes toured by Xie's excursions and celebrated in his poetry wild frontiers, or were they developed like Xie's estate of "carved mountains and dredged lakes" in which "land projects never ceased?" The first step to answering this question is to recognize that Xie's contemporaries were asking the same kind of questions: Under what conditions does wilderness become private property? Who is privy to appropriating and developing the wild? "Landscape" entered court discourse because it was a gray zone that existed outside of government control. The boundary between wild landscape and landscaped property was debated, contested and negotiated up to the highest level of government, which was pitted against powerful families like Xie's because of their continual expansion and reclamation of frontiers.

Questions regarding land registration became urgent for the Eastern Jin and Liu Song courts because of mass migrations to its base in the south by populations displaced by war, poor harvests and plague in the central plains. The economic historian Yang Lien-sheng writes:

> The largest migration…took place in the first quarter of the fourth century and especially after the revolt of the Hsiung-nu in Shansi in 304. It has been estimated even during the first years (298–307) the number of people involved already reached two million, that is, about one eighth of the population. It was said that from the fall of Lo-yang in 311 down to about 325 sixty to seventy percent of the upper classes had moved from the central provinces to the south of the Yangtze river. By the end of the fourth century about a million northerners had settled in their new homes in the south.[42]

The influx of migrants made land scarce and subjected it to intense competition. Migrant populations who failed to secure their own land either attached themselves as clients and retainers to powerful families with established estates, or attempted to settle more remote areas. At the same time, established families continued to expand their estates into undeveloped mountains, rivers, and wetlands, which supplied firewood and fish, and could also be developed to yield greater gains.

In response to the land grab of established families and migrant populations intensified in the first quarter of the fourth century, the Eastern Jin court issued an edict in 337 that forbade the private appropriation of wilderness areas. (In the documents that I discuss below, the "landscape" is variously referred to as "mountains and wetlands," "mountains and rivers," "mountains and seas," and "mountains and waters"; these variants are semantically interchangeable and are precursors to what has been stabilized in modern Chinese as *shanshui* 山水.)

占山護澤，強盜律論，贓一丈以上，皆棄市。	Anyone who occupies mountains and secures wetlands is to be prosecuted as a bandit who has perpetrated theft by force. Those who plunder more than one *zhang* of land are to be decapitated in the marketplace.[43]

[42] Lien-Sheng Yang, "Notes on the Economic History of the Chin Dynasty," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (June, 1946), pp. 127.
[43] *Song shu*, 54.1537.

By legally categorizing the occupation of these lands as “theft perpetrated by force,” the imperial court staked its claim on all lands that were unregistered.

However, without agents in the wild to enforce the government’s claim by fiat, the most economically fruitful frontiers were *de facto* appropriated and domesticated by powerful clans like the Wang and Xie houses. In an epistle to Xie Wan 謝萬, Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303–361) extolled his excursions with Xie An 謝安 (Xie Lingyun’s great-great uncle) into “mountains and seas,” where they prospected economically productive landscapes.

比當與安石東遊山海，並行田視地利，頤養閒暇。衣食之餘，欲與親知時共歡宴，雖不能興言高詠，銜杯引滿，語田裏所行，故以為撫掌之資，其為得意，可勝言邪。	Lately I’ve taken to eastern excursions with Xie An into mountains and seas. Together we survey fields to inspect the land’s advantages, and thereby nurture idle leisure. Beyond seeing to the practicalities of food and clothing, we hope to regularly share convivial banquets with family members and those who understand me. Although [such mundane inspection tours] do not inspire one to chant verse in resounding tones and imbibe from cups filled to the brim [i.e., do not qualify as “lofty” activities], nevertheless our talking about what we surveyed in the fields are for us resources of joy—such satisfaction is indescribable.[44]

Wang Xizhi celebrates the activity of excursion for the bountiful resources revealed in the toured landscape. In this epistle, “resources” (*zi* 資) refers to the whole continuum of consumption enabled by a land that is prospected, appropriated and developed: from rich economic productivity (food and clothing, and surplus wealth) to enriching pastimes (hosting “convivial banquets” for “those who understand me”). The term “*xing* 行,” translated as “survey,” means to “make a circuit tour.” This activity that Wang describes joins the prehensile gaze of a prospector with the peripatetic pleasure of sightseeing—in the epistle, these two moments are inseparable from each other. Wang is able to equate “inspecting the land’s advantages” with “nurturing idle leisure” precisely because the practice of excursion is predicated on domesticating the wild and appropriating its “resources of joy” for one’s house.[45]

The practice of excursion constituted a tradition among the Wangs and Xies.[46] In the above epistle, Wang Xizhi speaks of banquets in which surpluses are shared with *qinzhi* 親知 “family members and those who understand me”—that is, other members of the Wang clan, and friends such as the excursion companion Xie An, and the epistle’s recipient Xie Wan. Wang Xizhi’s epistle distinguishes between gatherings enabled by the land’s surfeit and those that “inspire one to chant verse in resounding tones,” but we note how easily Wang’s excursion can be adapted into the kind of literary-salon cum excursions favored by Xie Lingyun; it only by a slight permutation that the survey tour and “appreciation” gatherings can be conjoined. Wang Xizhi’s famous “Preface to the Orchid Station [poems] 蘭亭序” does indeed blend excursion, social gathering, and literary appreciation.

[44] *Jin shu* 晉書, 80.2102.

[45] Other accounts of Wang Xizhi’s travels not explicitly marked as tours to survey the land’s advantages, the excursion nevertheless carries a prehensile dimension. For example, Wang Xizhi “was exhaustive in his excursions through mountains and waters, and took fishing as his pastime....He cultivated a macrobiotic diet, and did not shun a thousand *li* to gather medicinal herbs.” (*Jin shu*, 80.2101) Wang’s gathering of medicinal ingredients that are so rare that extensive travel is needed to procure them speaks to a prospective relationship to the land.

[46] See, for example, *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語, 6.28.

While the occupation of “mountains and wetlands” for private use was in principle prohibited, the reality on the ground was that houses such as the Wang and Xie integrated unregistered lands into their manorial economy, and furthermore lauded this estate expansion as a gentlemanly pursuit. Imperial law branded this development of the frontier as “bandit” incursions; elite houses framed them as genteel excursions. Wang’s epistle is emblematic of how elite houses naturalized the settlement of nature—the landscaping of landscape—as a form of social communion.

In the background of these excursion practices and their cultural prestige is the matter of estate property that was expanded through landscape tours like Wang Xizhi’s. Given the extralegal status of reclaimed wilderness, information about these additions to estates is scant, but Xie Hun 謝混 (grandson of Xie An, and second cousin to Xie Lingyun) provides an example from which we can extrapolate about the larger practices of powerful families like the Xies. When Xie Hun died in 412 after his faction was defeated by Liu-Song founder Liu Yu 劉裕, his landholdings were stewarded by Xie Hongwei 謝弘微, under whose watch the “lands that were opened through reclamation (*ken pi* 墾辟) were added onto what was previously held.”[47] Over a period of a dozen years, this continual expansion of previous land holdings through the occupation of unregistered lands resulted in more than ten separate estates (called *yuan zhai* 園宅, literally “orchard residences”) spread across the three coveted commanderies of Langye 琅邪, Wuxing 吳興, and Kuaji 會稽.[48]

These multiple estates were staffed by “several hundred slaves and servants,” a figure that is comparable to the cited number of staff on Xie Lingyun’s single estate at Shi’ning alone. These “orchard residences” generated grain crop and fruit, which could be sold to market for considerable income, and a plethora of other products, which might include fish, fowl, pork, wood, bamboo, and herbs.[49]

Favored by Wang Xizhi and his excursion companion Xie An, the Kuaiji area had more lands available for reclamation compared to Wuxing and the areas around the capital.[50] By the time Xie Lingyun inherited the Shi’ning estate in Kuaiji, the property had already grown over several generations after being established by Xie An (320–85). A premier statesman and military leader, Xie An was also known for his excursions in the Kuaiji mountains. The official biography states that he “fished and hunted in mountains and waters,” and “released his feelings in hills and gullies,” where he “roamed and appreciated (*you shang* 游賞).”[51] As Wang Xizhi’s excursion companion, Xie An certainly also participated in trips to “survey fields to inspect the land’s advantages.” Thus, what Xie Lingyun inherited was not just the Shi’ning estate property but a family tradition of excursion through which the estate was continually expanded through reclamation of wilderness.

---

[47] *Song shu*, 58.1591–2. This expansion was noted upon the return of Xie Hun’s widow, princess of Jinling 晉陵, to the Xie house after a hiatus of nine years. Previously, an edict by the Song court had severed her ties with the Xies after the demise of Xie Hun and his faction.
[48] *Song shu*, 58.1593.
[49] For a short survey of historical documents regarding fruit selling, and the various products generated on estates see: Tang Changru, “*Nan Song de tun di bieshu ji shanze zhanling*, *op. cit.*: pp. 8–10.
[50] Tang Changru, “*Nan Song de tun di bieshu ji shanze zhanling*, *op. cit.*: p. 20.
[51] *Jin shu*, 79.2072.

To redress the extensive occupation of wilderness areas by powerful families like the Xies, a memorial was submitted to the court circa 457. This document postdates Xie Lingyun's death (in 433) by one generation, but it shows that the occupation of wilderness to be a longstanding problem with an intractable history.

> 時揚州刺史西陽王子尚上言：「山湖之禁，雖有舊科，民俗相因，替而不奉，熂山封水，保為家利。自頃以來，頹弛日甚，富強者兼嶺而占，貧弱者薪蘇無托，至漁采之地，亦又如茲。斯實害治之深弊，為政所宜去絕，損益舊條，更申恆制。」
>
> Wang Zishang of Xiyang, the Inspector of Yangzhou, submitted a memorial to the Emperor: "As for prohibiting [the occupation of] mountains and lakes, although there are old laws, the practices followed by the people have nevertheless followed precedent: dismissing and not heeding the old laws, they reclaim mountains through controlled fires, and enclose waters [such as rivers and lakes], and guard these [occupied areas] as family advantages. In recent times, the prohibitions have become extremely slack such that the rich and powerful occupy several mountain ranges at once while the poor and powerless even lack sources for firewood. The situation is also like this with regard to fishing grounds. This is truly a profound problem that harms order, and the government should abolish it entirely by emending the old laws and promulgating regulations in accord with constant principles.

The state's claim by fiat on all unregistered territories was an unenforceable policy: "mountains and waters" were incorporated into private holdings, and trenchantly guarded by squatters as "family advantages." Frontier areas did not obey state regulations but rather age-old customs whereby the land belonged to those who developed it (e.g., through controlled fires to reclaim farmland) or occupied it (e.g., by "enclosing" a river or lake to ward off others from appropriating its resources). When we read this document against Wang Xizhi's epistle, we see that the practice of excursion and the expansion of private estates were inextricably bound together. Through excursion, landscape became landscaped into the private estate.

The government response conceded that the former prohibitions could not be enforced and in effect codified into law the reality of private occupation.

> 有司檢壬辰詔書：「占山護澤，強盜律論，贓一丈以上，皆棄市。」希以「壬辰之制，其禁嚴刻，事既難遵，理與時弛。而占山封水，漸染複滋，更相因仍，便成先業，一朝頓去，易致嗟怨。今更刊革，立制五條。凡是山澤，先常熂爐種養竹木雜果為林，及陂湖江海魚梁鰍鮆場，常加功修作者，聽不追奪。官品第一、第二，聽占山三頃；第三、
>
> The relevant government office consulted the *renchen* decree (of 336) which reads: "Those who occupy mountains and secure wetlands are to be charged with robbery perpetrated by force. Those who steal more than one *zhang* will be decapitated in the market." Yang Xuanbao held the view that, "The *renchen* statute's prohibitions were severe. The matter is difficult to implement and the principle has become disconnected with the times. Occupying mountains and securing waters has over time become pervasive and reinforced. This practice, successively followed over generations, has given rise to hereditary estates (*ye*). To suddenly do away with this would readily incur grievances. Now I propose to change the law by establishing five regulations. In all cases regarding mountains and wetlands, those first to regularly clear land with controlled fires, and cultivate groves of bamboo, timber, and fruit trees, and those first to build and regularly maintain fishing traps on banked ponds, rivers, and oceans, are allowed [to occupy these areas] without retroactive punishment. Officials of 1st–2nd rank are

第四品，二頃五十畝；第五、第六品，二頃；第七、第八品，一頃五十畝；第九品及百姓，一頃。皆依定格，條上貲簿。若先已占山，不得更占；先占闕少，依限占足。若非前條舊業，一不得禁。有犯者，水土一尺以上，並計贓，依常盜律論。停除咸康二年壬辰之科。」從之。

allowed to occupy 3 *qing* of mountain area; 3rd–4th rank, 2 *qing* and 50 *mu*; 5th–6th rank, 2 *qing*; 7th–8th rank, 1 *qing* and 50 *mu*; 9th rank, 1 *qing*. Officials will abide by the set standards and submit an account book to the authorities. If an official has already occupied a mountain [past the allocated amount], he cannot occupy more; if the occupied area falls short [of the allocated amount], he can fully extend it up to the set limit. Unless it is an old estate created under the previous stipulations, no one can occupy prohibited [mountains and wetlands]. Violators who occupy more than one foot of prohibited land, both dry and wet, will be prosecuted by the regular laws governing banditry, with undue gains calculated [in the sentence]. The *renchen* statute will henceforth be null." The court approved the proposal.[52]

The new law looked both backwards and forwards: it legally recognized previously occupied lands, and attempted to curb new development of frontiers by private interests through the codification of allocations. In both respects, the weakness of state power in the face of landed interests is evident: the state conceded previously developed lands "without retroactive punishment" for fear of "incurring grievances"; at the same time, by allocating frontier land to officials according to their rank, it legalized the *de facto* principle that estate expansion was the privilege of the powerful.[53]

That the prohibitions stipulated in the laws had become, according to the court document, "disconnected with the times" indicates what actually did happen in Xie Lingyun's time: a landscape, once landscaped, became private property; a frontier was claimed by reclaiming it for regular and profitable use.[54] Typical reclamation practices cited by the court document include: clearing unusable plant growth through controlled fires; cultivating fruit orchards, bamboo groves, and harvestable timber; developing ponds with embankments; and setting fish traps on river and sea. It is through this landscaping of wilderness that the "hereditary estates" like Xie Lingyun's had been established. Indeed, his "Mountain Dwelling Exposition" devotes detailed sections to describe the estate's variety of bamboo, fruit trees, and fish—the results of reclaimed "mountains and water."

The charge of "banditry" (*dao* 盜) that was applied to the occupation of "mountains and waters" refers most directly to property "theft," but it also connotes the threat of political unrest and "rebellion." From the perspective of the imperial court, the private occupation of frontier land was theft because it removed land and registered persons from the state's potential tax base, and the manpower it could deploy for military service and corvée labor. At the same time, the economic might, influence, and manpower marshaled by large private estates constituted a political threat to the imperial court. In this respect, the "banditry" of "mountains and waters" lies on a continuum of state-rivaling activity whose extreme is "rebellion."

[52] *Song shu*, 54.1546–7; *Nan shi* 南史, 36.934–5.
[53] Legalization nevertheless aimed at regulation: it incentivized the registration of undeveloped areas and the policing of allotments by officials who would otherwise not have a share of the land; and it curbed the land grab of established families by apportioning land to dependents of the state.
[54] The regulation stipulates that an area must have been regularly (*chang* 常) maintained for it to be ceded to the developer as private property.

Indeed, Xie Lingyun, whose estate was like a miniature state in its own right, was (mis)taken by the state authorities as a “mountain bandit” or “mountain rebel” (*shan zei* 山賊) during one of his excursions. This passage brings out another link between estate and excursion. Whereas the Wang Xizhi epistle showed that excursions could serve to expand one’s estate, this example highlights the excursion as a mobilization of one’s estate as a state-like force.

靈運因父祖之資，生業甚厚。奴僮既眾，義故門生數百，鑿山浚湖，功役無已.... 嘗自始甯南山伐木開徑，直至臨海，從者數百人。臨海太守王琇驚駭，謂為山賊，徐知是靈運乃安。	Based on the resources of his father (Xie Xuan) and grandfather (Xie An), Xie Lingyun’s income was very ample. Having multitudinous slaves and loyal retainers numbering in the several hundreds, his efforts in chiseling mountains and dredging lakes never ceased.… Once, he chopped trees and cleared a path from Shi’ning all the way to Linhai with attendants numbering in the several hundreds. The governor of Linhai, Wang Xiu, thought they were mountain bandits (*zei*) and became alarmed. Bit by bit he learned that it was Xie Lingyun, and only then did he feel at ease.[55]

In this passage, there is no easy division between the activities that take place on Xie’s estate and those that occur on his excursions, and that is precisely the problem from the point of the government. Xie applied his landscaping powers—chiseling mountains, dredging lakes, cutting trees to clear a path—both to his estate and the lands he toured, as if all that fell within the purview of his sightseeing was his private park to take and remake as he saw fit. To appreciate the projective force of his many axe-wielding retainers, we must bear in mind that even a straight line from Shi’ning to Linhai—the stretch of land deforested to make way for Xie’s entourage—runs 105 kilometers.[56]

The Linhai governor feared that Xie Lingyun’s entourage were *shan zei* 山賊, a phrase than suggests both lawless “bandits” or, at worst, anti-government “rebels.” The threat was probably posed by the size of Xie’s force, and the scale of its tree-cutting, which harvested timber from “prohibited” wilderness. The shadow of Sun En’s 孫恩 rebellion (398–402) less than three decades earlier must have loomed large for the governor of Linhai, where the rebellion was eventually suppressed.[57] Sun En’s rebels had pillaged and destroyed resources in the area by “burning storehouses, razing houses, *cutting trees*, plugging wells, and looting property.”[58] Aside from construction purposes, timber could be sold to market for profit, and had also been used to by rebels to build warships.[59] We see thus how Xie Lingyun’s excursion, which mobilized his estate’s manpower and garnered resources outside his estate proper, was comparable to an alternate state power deploying its forces.

---

[55] *Song shu*, 67.1775.

[56] *Cf., Nan shi* 南史, 19.539, which says that Xie’s excursions sometimes covered 170 *li.* 105 kilometers is the distance between the administrative centers of Shi’ning county and Linhai county. (The distance to the administrative center of Linhai commandery was 20 kilometers farther.) The actual itinerary certainly covered a longer distance because it was not a straight line but rather wound circuitously through mountain terrain. Tan Qixiang 譚其鑲, *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* 中國歷史地圖集 (Taibei: Xiaoyuan chubanshe, 1991): vol. 4, p. 28.

[57] *Jin shu*, 100.2633. Xie Lingyun’s excursion to Linhai occurred either in 424–6 or 428–31, the two periods in which Xie Lingyun stayed at his Shi’ning estate. Gu Shaobai dates the event to 429. *Xie Lingyun ji jiaozhu, op. cit.*: p. 600.

[58] “燒倉廩，焚邑屋，刊木堙井，虜掠財貨.” *Jin shu*, 100.2633.

[59] *Jin shu*, 100.2634.

Xie Lingyun even flaunted his ability to rival the state. After cutting a path into Linhai, Xie invited its governor to meet in the mountains, and when the governor declined, Xie sent him a taunting couplet:

邦君難地嶮，	The kingdom's lord finds the land's precipices difficult;
旅客易山行。	[I] the wayfarer considers mountain touring easy.[60]

Xie highlights his facility of travel through challenging landscapes compared to the Linhai governor who is strained by the mountain trek. Implicit here is another, more significant contrast between different representations of rulership. Whereas the "kingdom's lord" occupies a stationary seat of power, Xie draws upon a perambulatory mythic model in which kingship is demonstrated by the ability to range freely across even the remotest domains of the realm. (In Chapter One, I described this perambulatory model by analyzing early *youlan* traditions.)

Xie Lingyun's excursions and estate expansion violated the prohibitions on both mountain and water: in addition to "mountain banditry," he also tried to appropriate lakes from the Kuaiji and Shi'ning municipalities.

會稽東郭有回踵湖，靈運求決以為田，太祖令州郡履行。此湖去郭近，水物所出，百姓惜之，顗堅執不與。靈運既不得回踵，又求始寧岯崲湖為田，顗又固執。靈運謂顗非存利民，正慮決湖多害生命，言論毀傷之，與顗遂構讎隙。因靈運橫恣，百姓驚擾，乃表其異志，發兵自防，露板上言。	At Kuaiji's eastern outer wall, there was Huizhong Lake. Xie Lingyun sought to open its dikes to convert it to farmland. Emperor Wudi ordered the provincial and commandery office to survey the area on foot: the lake was close to the city's outer wall, and the people prized the 'water goods' it produced. The Kuaiji governor Meng Kai adamantly refused to give the lake to Xie Lingyun. Xie also sought to convert Pihuang Lake of Shi'ning county into farmland. Again, Meng firmly refused. Xie said that Meng did not have the people's interests in mind, but was in fact worried that opening the lake's dikes would greatly harm animal life.[61] Xie slandered Meng, and an adversarial rift developed between them. Xie then acted with unrestrained arrogance [i.e., he arrogated claims upon the lake], which alarmed and riled the people. Thereupon Meng, declaring that Xie had the intent to rebel, mobilized troops in self-defense, and reported the matter to the emperor in an open memorial.[62]

This record of Xie's failed attempts to "enclose waters" is the exception that proves the rule. We can infer that Xie's arrogation of lands for development and private use was the *modus operandi* for him and similarly powerful families, and it is only when such "unrestrained arrogance" conflicts with vested interests or local authorities that the matter received public attention.[63] The

[60] *Song shu*, 67.1075.

[61] Tentative reading of *shengming* 生命. It is assumed that it is more important to attend to the people's needs than to animal life. Xie might also be implying that Meng was motivated by a selfish desire to cultivate his own karma than by an actual desire to help other beings. We know that Meng was Buddhist practitioner since Xie, on another occasion, had ridiculed Meng for his retarded religious understanding. Xie boasted that he would attain enlightenment ahead of Meng even though Meng was more advanced in years. *Song shu*, 67.1775–6: 生天當在靈運前，成佛必在靈運後.

[62] *Song shu*, 67.1776. An "open" memorial refers to one that is not sealed for confidentiality.

[63] Compare this to the estate of Kong Lingfu, governor of Kuaiji, that encompassed two mountains just like Xie's Shi'ning estate. We learn about Kong's estate in his official biography because his extensive land holdings were investigated by the authorities. *Song shu*, 54.1533: "Kong Lingfu's family was wealthy to begin with, and its

land holdings described in Xie's "Mountain Dwelling Estate" are due to annexations that, by virtue of their success, merit no mention as to their origins. The expansion of Xie's estate, which encompassed two lakes, was naturalized as the privilege of the genteel, projected through the cultural refined practice of excursion. When the emperor, prompted by Xie's request for Huizhong Lake, ordered local officials to "survey [the lake area] on foot" (*lü xing* 履行), this perambulatory investigation simply retraced a previous excursion that Xie probably made to the site. The two tours—one for public investigation, another for private appreciation—serve the same material purpose: to iterate Wang Xizhi's words, "survey [prospective] fields to inspect the land's advantages."

e) The mountain dwelling and the "lodging" of rebel intent

After being accused by the Kuaiji governor of having the "intent to rebel," Xie Lingyun rushed to the capital to exonerate himself. Emperor Wendi attributed the accusation to slander and absolved Xie but did not allow him to return to his estate.[64] Instead, he was posted as administrator of Linchuan 臨川, where he carried on as he had during his exilic posting in Yongjia: he disregarded his duties to embark on long excursions.[65] As a consequence, the authorities reprimanded Xie, and Chancellor Liu Yikang 劉義康 dispatched an officer to arrest him. Resisting arrest, Xie abducted the officer and "mobilized troops to flee in defiance, and consequently showed his intent to rebel."[66] Xie was later captured, and accused of leading his throng (of retainers and followers) in rebellion.[67] Emperor Wudi, cherishing Xie's literary talent, wished to mitigate Xie's punishment by only relieving him of his official post, but Liu Yikang adamantly maintained that Xie should not be pardoned. In the end, the emperor Xie spared Lingyun the death penalty by citing the merits of his grandfather Xie Xuan, from whom Xie Lingyun inherited the rank of duke, and sentenced Xie to imprisonment in Guangzhou 廣州.[68]

---

enterprises/estates (*ye* 業) were very extensive. In addition, he established a villa (*shu* 墅) in Yongxing county with a circumference of 33 *li* covering an area of 265 *qing*. The estate included two mountains, and nine fruit orchards. Investigated by the authorities, Lingfu was summoned to explain the circumstances. His answers were unsubstantiated, and for that reason he lost his official post."

[64] The biography includes information that gives contextual support to the conclusion that Xie was slandered. The passage regarding the dispute over the lake mentions the "adversarial rift" between the Kuaiji governor and Xie. Also, in a previous episode not cited here, Xie had publicly insulted the Kuaiji governor, a matter which he "deeply resented." *Song shu*, 67.1776.

[65] Linchuan is located in modern day Fuzhou 撫州 municipality in Jiangxi 江西 province. This and the ensuing events are narrated in *Song shu*, 67.1777.

[66] "興兵叛逸，遂有逆志." *Ibid.* The parallel account in *Nan shi*, 19.541 does not mention that Xie abducted the officer.

[67] "率部眾反叛." *Ibid.*

[68] The imperial decree reads: "The merit of [Xie Lingyun's father] Xie Xuan is commensurate with 'Were it not for Guan Zhong,' so lenience should be shown to his posterity. Xie Lingyun's death sentence can be reduced to imprisonment in Guangzhou." *Ibid.* (The merit of Xie Xuan, who defeated Fu Jian 苻堅 at the battle of Fei River 肥水, is likened to that of Guan Zhong 管仲, whom *Analects* 14/17 credits with saving Chinese civilization from barbarian conquest: "Were it not for Guan Zhong, wouldn't we be wearing our hair loose, and our lapel to the left?") Here, Xie Lingyun is allowed to redeem his hereditary rank for a mitigated sentence. Hence, the judgment does not cite the more illustrious ancestor Xie An, but rather Xie Xuan, from whom Xie Lingyun inherited the title Duke of Yikang 義康公, which was demoted to Marquis during the Liu Song. In cases of treason, rank redemption was not a

While Xie was en route to prison, an officer uncovered in Tukou 涂口 an alleged plot whereby Xie had arranged for henchmen to purchase bows, arrows, swords, shields and other items for the purpose of breaking him free from custody.[69] For this, Xie was finally executed in Guangzhou.

It must be noted that resisting arrest by itself does not constitute the capital offense of "intent to rebel," which requires demonstration of motivation. As proof of such "intent," the Linchuan case cited a quatrain that Xie supposedly composed when he was captured. There is yet another poem attributed to Xie on the occasion of his execution in Guangzhou. In both cases, the poems attributed to Xie functionally serve as confessions that impart rebel intent. Some scholars have pointed out dubious points in the case details, and questioned the authenticity of these "confession" poems.[70] Even if the charges were fabricated, it is clear that elements at court, such as Liu Yikang, the Chancellor at the time, viewed Xie as a potential threat. After all, Xie was not allowed to return to his estate—his power base—even after the Linchuan incident was dismissed as slander.

For my purposes, the question of the authenticity of the confession poems is moot. What is important to note is that rebel intent was readable, and was in fact read, into Xie's poetry. The intelligibility of this reading of Xie's authorial persona, and the efficacy of the criminal accusation based on this reading, rests on recognizing Xie as preoccupied with the performance of imperial power. The issue of performance allows us to see the confession poems as part of a gestalt of Xie's authorial persona. Adjudicating the "intent to rebel" is not restricted to observing military capability (like the threat of "mountain banditry") but also encompasses the gestures that stage a doubling of the imperial person. *Lèse majesté* can be committed by an unarmed hand—the gesture suffices. The criminal case could plausibly attribute the "intent to rebel" poems to Xie because they cohere with his other touchstone works like the Ye suite in which Xie impersonates the emperor Cao Pi. In addition to Xie's poetry, his actual excursion practices were also kingly gestures, whose significance was given explicit articulation by the couplet (discussed earlier) in which Xie contrasted his own easy roaming through mountains with the "kingdom's ruler," who traverses only with difficulty the territory over which he supposedly presides.[71] In Xie's conception of imperial performance, ruling the center is demonstrated by roaming the periphery, especially the most remote "mountains and waters" of the realm.

The particular interest of the "intent to rebel" poems is how they frame the relationship between center and periphery as intimately bound places. The following quatrain was attributed to Xie upon his capture in Linchuan.

---

legal option for the criminal but the sole prerogative of the emperor. Regarding the practice of rank redemption established in the early imperial period, see A. F. P. Hulsewé, *Remnants of Han Law* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1955).

[69] The alleged accomplices were captured and interrogated in Tukou 涂口 county, located on the north bank of the Yangtze (in modern day Liuhe 六合 county of the Nanjing metropolitan area).

[70] For dubious points in the rebellion accusations, see Hao Bingheng 郝昺衡, "*Xie Lingyun nianpu* 謝靈運年譜," in *Huadong shida xuebao* 華東師大學報, 1957, Vol. 3. Also noteworthy is Emperor Wendi's reluctance to punish Xie for his alleged intent to rebel: in the Kuaiji case, the emperor concluded the accusation was slander; in the Linchuan case, the emperor wished to pardon Xie but Liu Yikang intervened. Even if the Guangzhou account occurred according to the case details, it was perhaps more a final act of desperation on Xie's part than a careful plan to overthrow the state.

[71] In the original context, the "kingdom's ruler" (*bangjun* 邦君) refers to the "ruler" of Linhai and not the emperor, but the braggadocio of Xie's language indicates an upsmanship that knows no limits.

韓亡子房奮，	When Haan perished, Zhang Liang was roused with indignation;[72]
秦帝魯連恥。	When Qin declared emperorship, Lu Zhonglian found it shameful.[73]
本自江海人，	Always I have been a man of "river and sea,"
忠義感君子。	My loyal devotion is stirred by you gentlemen.

The historical allusions of the opening couplet draw symmetries: just as Zhang Liang and Lu Zhonglian opposed Qin rule, so also the authorial persona defies the current regime. The party to whom the author is loyal, unnamed in the text, is best identified as Prince Liu Yizhen, Xie's most ardent patron, whose murder destroyed Xie's hopes for high office and ushered in the current reign of Emperor Wendi (Liu Yizhen's younger brother).[74] The third line's "river and sea" conventionally refers to a peripheral wilderness removed from the center of political life. One *Zhuangzi* passage reads: "To embrace marshland, dwell in open expanses, and fish in leisurely sites, this is effortless action and nothing more. This is an officer of **river and sea**, a man withdrawn from the world; those of idle of leisure are fond of this."[75] However, the "intent to rebel" quatrain alludes to a different formulation of "river and sea" that is also found in the *Zhuangzi*, one that is both opposed to, and intimately tied with, the political center.

身在江海之上，	My bodily person resides on river and sea,
心居乎魏闕之下。	but my heart abides below the palace towers.[76]

In this trope, what are conventionally diametrical opposed places—the administrative center and the peripheral wilds—are actually metonymically bound together. Thus, Xie's "Always I have been a man of river and seas" means "Always my heart has abided below the palace towers, at the seat of government." This trope, in which to reside at the margins is to abide at the center, recasts Xie's landscapes as intently preoccupied with the capital. Remarkably, the "intent to rebel" was formulated in terms of wilderness.

If this "intent to rebel" quatrain was fabricated by Xie's enemies, it would further underscore that the imperial court, and Xie's avid readers at the capital, registered in Xie's body of writings the complicities binding "landscape" and capital. To use the language of Chinese literary criticism, we can say that Xie "lodged" (*yu* 寓) his imperial impulse in landscape.

[72] Zhang Liang 張良 (262–189 BCE) hailed from the state of Han 韓, where his father and grandfather served as chancellor (*xiang* 相). When Qin destroyed Han, Zhang Liang vowed revenge, and used his resources to hire assassins. Zhang Liang later served Liu Bang 劉邦 in overthrowing the Qin. See his biography in *Shi ji*, chapter 65.
[73] During the Warring States period, when the capital of Zhao was besieged by Qin, the king of Wei king urged the Zhao king to submit to the Qin king and acknowledge him as "emperor" (*di* 帝). Lu Zhonglian 魯連, a man from Qi, spoke to the Zhao king of Qin's cruelty and insatiable thirst for power, and urged the Zhao king to find allies to resist Qin. Due to Lu Zhonglian's intervention, the Qin army withdrew 50 *li*, and later withdrew. From *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策, *juan* 20.
[74] Xie wrote a dirge (*lei* 誄) for Liu Yizhen and a poem lament on the occasion of visiting his grave. Liu Yizhen declared that, once he realized his ambition, he would promote Xie as Chancellor. The couplet's conventional interpretation identifies Xie (or, the authorial persona) as a Jin loyalist opposed to the new Song dynasty. However, there is no indication of this loyalism in Xie's writings or other extant texts, and Jin loyalism was but a quaint idea in an age in which all the major players were bent on establishing their own dynasties. Liu Yi 劉毅, whom Xie served at the outset of his career and who was defeated by the Song founder Liu Yu, was no exception.
[75] "就藪澤，處閒曠，釣魚閒處，無為而已矣；此江海之士，避世之人，閒暇者之所好也." *Zhuangzi jishi*, 15.535.
[76] *Zhuangzi jishi*, 9b.979.

The poem attributed to Xie on the occasion of his execution in Guangzhou says essentially the same thing as the Linchuan one but with a different emphasis. Whereas the previous poem said that even while lodged in the wilds, his mind was occupied with the capital, this latter poem says that even while driven by political ambition, he always longed for mountain dwelling. Excerpted from the rest of the poem, the relevant couplet reads:

恨我君子志，	I regret having the nobleman's ambition,
不獲巖下泯。	[For which] I couldn't get to retire below mountain cliffs.[77]

Contrasting political ambition with the eremitic impulse, this couplet recapitulates the commonplace dichotomies of rulership versus reclusion, center versus periphery, and capital versus wilderness.[78] What is noteworthy is that the couplet frames Xie as having both desires, whose irreconcilability constitutes his character and is the cause of his demise. The "nobleman's ambition" (i.e., the drive towards rulership) he harbors with regret; mountain dwelling he desires in vain. Contradictory as they are, these two desires constitute a unifying thread that joins the "intent to rebel" poems with the rest of Xie's literary output. In the two "intent to rebel" poems, the concurrence of two different tropes—one that links capital and wilderness metonymically, and another that opposes them diametrically—points to an abiding tension in Xie's writings.

The "Mountain Dwelling Exposition" embodies the tension and complicities between countryside and capital, for it at once maintains the familiar dichotomies even while the mountain estate looms large over the imperial center.

III. Estates of *youlan* performance

My previous chapters framed landscape as the performance of *youlan* (excursion and the panoptic gaze), which the *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 identifies as a literary commonplace and the *Wen xuan* anthology names as a literary subgenre. I also showed that *youlan* performance is focused on staging kingly postures in which the main spectacle on display is not the viewed scene but the viewer himself. In this section, I argue that the estate was the privileged "stage" for *youlan* performance in Xie's time. While the *Yiwen leiju* illustrates that the earliest *youlan* commonplaces were grounded in the royal park and debates surrounding the use of this site, the *Wen xuan* selections of *youlan* show that estates took on a prominent role once reserved for the state park.

In this shift from state park to private estate as the favored site for *youlan*, there is actually considerable substantive continuity because the difference between the two places may merely be nominal—the distinction lies in the status of the owner instead of concrete differences between the sites. For example, the second *youlan* selection in the *Wen xuan* takes place at the estate of the warlord Huan Xuan 桓玄, who declared himself emperor of the new Chu 楚 dynasty in 403 and was killed in 404. Had his reign lasted and been recognized as legitimate in the dynastic lineage, the status of his estate could have been categorized as a state entity.

---

[77] *Song shi*, 3.1186.
[78] The memorial that Xie submitted to exonerate himself of the Kuaji governor's accusation repeats this dichotomy: "It is unheard of... that a mountain recluse [like myself] should conspire in the crime of usurpation." *Song shu*, 67.1776.

By attending to the *youlan* selections in the *Wen xuan* anthology, we can recuperate an 'internal' history of excursion and viewing practice—one whose examples a medieval audience would have considered exemplary.

If we think of state authority not just in terms of hard power but the ritual-political theater of display by which power is projected, then we can say that Xie Lingyun's landscape excursions were in effect rehearsals of the imperial tour. They re-enacted the spectacle of the imperial excursion. To counter the "landscape poetry as nature poetry" thesis, I had emphasized instead the codified forms of self-display in the acts of roaming and viewing.

The *Wen xuan* is seminal for being the earliest wholly-extant anthology of literature in the Chinese tradition. Compiled around 530 CE, its 761 pieces spanning dozens of genres by more than 130 writers represents the most authoritative expression of a literary canon in the medieval period.[79] During the Tang dynasty (6–9th c.), whose civil service examination required a mastery of poetry composition, the *Wen xuan* became an essential textbook for every aspiring courtier and office-holder. As a *de facto* canon, its selections were internalized through memory and recitation; it is against the anthology's templates that we can speak of literary variation and innovation. From the level of phraseology to the larger division of thematic topics, the *Wen xuan* embodied what was canonically writeable.

More fundamental to the *Wen xuan*'s role in setting standards of taste and value, it represents a broad medieval consensus about poetic forms and topoi: its organization of works into stylistic genres and thematic subgenres is the result of centuries of literary classification and anthology-making.[80] Its classificatory system identified a thematic subgenre called *youlan* 遊覽: excursion and the panoptic view. This term has little currency today, and has largely been replaced by "*shanshui* 山水," which is the phrase now commonly used to translate the English word "landscape."[81] The literal meaning of *shanshui* as "mountains and waters" has reinforced the currently common preconception that landscape poetry concerns a nature scene or natural elements. However, *shanshui* is nowhere to be found in the *Wen xuan* as a literary category. Instead, *youlan* was the operative concept during the time of Xie Lingyun and the early formation of landscape poetry. Its currency in the medieval period is evidenced by its inclusion as a category in the *Wen xuan* anthology, as well as in the encyclopedic compendium *Yiwen leiju*, which, completed in 624, attempted to categorize and compile the totality of literary knowledge (see my analysis of this compendium in Chapter One). We can therefore be confident that the category *youlan* governed the medieval understanding of landscape as a literary topic.

This will allow us to see an overall arc in the development of landscape poetry as a literary topic across three centuries. We find that the space of *youlan* generally shifts from the imperial capital to the rural, but the great majority of the collection concerns a hybrid and transitional space: the private estate. Once we understand the site's hybridity—as a layering of

[79] As is customary with anthologies at the time, the editors did include writers who were still alive. These poems seem to be arranged according to the date of the author's death. Poems in the series by the same author do not have an obvious sequencing principle to them.

[80] The earliest precursors of 'general collections 總集' are Zhi Yu's 摯虞 (d. 312) *Wenzhang liubie* 文章流別 [Writings divided by genre], which survives only in fragments, and Du Yu's 杜預 (222-85) *Shan wen* 善文 [Fine writings], which has not survived, which Luo Hongkai 駱鴻凱 points out is the earliest to be cited in commentarial traditions. See: Luo Hongkai 駱鴻凱, *Wen xuan xue* 文選學 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1937).

[81] *Shanshui* was but one of several terms that circulated in the period.

the imperial and peripheral, the developed and the rural, the natural landscape and landscaped nature—we can understand Xie Lingyun's preface to the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition," which is at once a celebration of his own estate and a summation of the tropes and debates surrounding landscape as a literary and cultural topic. The purpose of this study of the *Wen xuan* is not to simply to illuminate the work of Xie Lingyun, now widely regarded as the founder of Chinese landscape poetry. The larger point rather is to see how the *Wen xuan* anthology and Xie Lingyun himself are both part of a process of recapitulating, reconstituting, and reflecting on *youlan* as a literary tradition and cultural practice. In other words, I read Xie Lingyun's preface to the exposition as a preface to the genre of *youlan* itself.

The *Wen xuan* anthology categorized twenty-three poems as *youlan* and arranged them chronologically by author, beginning with the Wei emperor Cao Pi (187–226) and closing with Xu Fei 徐悱 (?–549). Spanning three centuries of poetry, these selections allow us to see, in broad strokes, patterns in the types of landscapes spaces celebrated—and taken for granted—by medieval writers and readers.[82] What we find from an overview of these selections is that many of the spaces for *youlan* ("excursion and the panoptic view") are not so much natural landscapes as landscaped nature. The operative concept in many of these landscapes is not "nature"—if by that concept we implicitly mean a space which belongs to no one in particular—but estate property, and the manifest order imposed on it by its owners.

I have listed the *Wen xuan* selections of *youlan* in the following table as *a* through *w*. Each entry is accompanied by the site that it is about, insofar as it can be identified.

	Author	Poem Title	Place
a	Cao Pi 曹丕 (187–226)	Composed at Lotus Pond 芙蓉池作	imperial "West Park" at the Ye capital
b	Yin Zhongwen 殷仲文 (?–407)	Written at the Nine-Wells of Duke Huan of Nanzhou 南州桓公九井作	estate of usurper Huan Xuan in Gushu 姑孰[i]
c	Xie Hun 謝混 (?–412)	Roaming West Pond 遊西池	a pond near Jiankang capital[ii]
d	Xie Huilian 謝惠連 (407–433)	Returning by sail across the lake, coming out onto the terrace and enjoying the moon 泛湖歸出樓中翫月	Xie Lingyun's estate in Shi'ning[iii]
e	Xie Lingyun 謝靈運 (385–433)	Written to match the emperor's pem while attending Him on an excursion to Jingkou's Beigu Mountain 從遊京口北固應詔	imperial retinue near Jiankang capital
f		Leaving Xishe Hall 晚出西射堂	Yongjia province[iv]
g		Ascending the poolside belvedere 登池上樓	Xie Lingyun's estate in Yongjia
h		Roaming South Station 遊南亭	Xie Lingyun's lodging in Yongjia[v]
i		Roaming Red Stone, and sailing the ocean 遊赤石進帆海	Yongjia province[vi]

[82] While anthologies do not simply reflect public opinion, but also arbitrate taste and shape consensus, the categories that organized the *Wen xuan* appear to follow established precedents. Indeed, several of its categories are also the titles of independently-circulating poetry collections (catalogued in the Sui bibliography) that specialized in particular genres and thematic topics. While there is no record in the Sui bibliography of a collection specializing in *youlan* poetry, the category of *youlan* appears as an entry in the Tang encyclopedia *Yiwen leiju*, a compendium that attempted to classify all transmitted literary knowledge. In the Tang dynasty, the *Wen xuan*'s position as the belles-lettres anthology par excellence was further buttressed by the state's civil service examination, which included a section on poetic composition.

j		Composed at Stonewall Lecture Hall, and returning by way of the lake 石壁精舍還湖中作	Xie Lingyun's estate in Shi'ning[vii]
k		Ascending Stonegate's highest point 登石門最高頂	in the area of the northern compound of Xie Lingyun's Shi'ning estate[viii]
l		From S. Mtn. heading to N. Mtn, passing through the lake and looking out afar 於南山往北山經湖中瞻眺	Xie Lingyun's estate in Shi'ning[ix]
m		Following Jinzhu Gully, traversing the ridge and walking along a stream 從斤竹澗越嶺溪行	tour in area near modern-day Shaoxing[x]
n	Yan Yanzhi 顏延之 (384–456)	Written by Imperial Decree: observing the harvest at Beigu 應詔觀北湖田收	imperial "Park of Delighting-in-excursion" 樂遊苑
o		Composed while attending the Emperor in His excursion to Jingkou's Suan Mtn. 車駕幸京口侍遊蒜山作	imperial retinue near the Jiankang capital
p		Composed while attending the Emperor in His excursion to Jingkou on the 3rd day of the 3rd month 車駕幸京口三月三日侍遊曲阿後湖作	imperial retinue in capital province
q	Bao Zhao 鮑照 (414?–466)	Walking off drugs and arriving at the bridge east of the city wall 行藥至城東橋	at a bridge east of the city 城東橋
r	Xie Tiao 謝脁 (464–499)	Roaming west fields 遊東田	Xie Tiao's estate (east of Mt. Zhong 鍾山)
s	Shen Yue 沈約 (441–513)	Accompanying the Prince of Jianping in ascending Incense-Stove Peak in the Lu Mtns. 從冠軍建平王登廬山香爐峰	prince's retinue at Mt. Lu 廬山
t		Poem of Mt. Zhong, in response to the teaching of the Prince of Xiyang 鍾山詩應西陽王教	prince's retinue 10 *li* north of Jiankang capital[xi]
u		Staying overnight at east park 宿東園	"East Garden" in east suburb of capital
v		Roaming the monastery of Daoist Shen 遊沈道士館	monastery estate
w	Xu Fei 徐悱 (d. post 513)	Written in the old style in response to Head Scribe Dao Gai's ascending the Langye city walls 古意酬到長史溉登琅邪城	Langye city

First, we note in these selections the prominence of the imperial park, which appears in the opening piece *a*, as well as *n* and *u*. If we consider the status of the estate owner, poem *b* could also be included, since the estate belonged to Huan Xuan who usurped the throne in 403. Poems *e,* o and *p* do not take place at imperial parks but were nevertheless composed for the occasion of the emperor on one of his tours. Poems *p* and *s* were written for the retinues of princes touring mountains. Last among the selections and chronologically the latest, poem *w* is itself a meditation on the *youlan* tradition. Titled "Written in the old style…," the work reflects on the significance of gazing on the capital. This last *youlan* piece highlights the capital as a vested place—a commonplace—that has accrued an "old style" for writing it. Thus, the first and last selections of *youlan* (*a* and *w*) are centered on the imperial capital.[83]

Secondly, we see that the estates of the Xie clan appear frequently among the *youlan* selections. Four (*g, j, k, l*) of the nine poems by Xie Lingyun can be identified as written about or

[83] The imperial park was not constructed as a public service. Built to serve the needs of the emperor, the park was open to guests as a gesture of patronage and exclusive association. The ideal of the shared park whose resources and spectacles were available to all that the *Mencius* so ardently espoused (see Chapter One) was never realized. That is perhaps why *Mencius*' arguments carried such pointed rhetorical force. The Numinous Tower 靈臺 at the Eastern Han capital took its name from the eponymous poem in the *Classic of Poetry* and Mencius' conception of this site as public park established by the sage-ruler King Wen. Despite this highly textual and classical representation of this building project, there is no evidence that the tower or its grounds was open to the public.

taking place on his estate. Poem *d,* written by his cousin Xie Huilian, is about sailing a lake on Xie Lingyun's estate in Shi'ning. We recall that Xie Lingyun, adopting the role of patron, took Xie Huilian back to the Shi'ning estate. Xie Huilian's piece can be seen as analogous to the *youlan* poems about the imperial retinue: the landscape that is celebrated in verse is organized around patronage and the hierarchical bond of appreciation. And Xie Hun, whom I discussed earlier as having owned more than ten separate estates, is the author of poem *c*. Finally, Xie Tiao wrote poem *r* about his own estate. In all, half of the *youlan* selections (12 of 23) are written by members of the Xie clan, which we know owned much prime real estate and occupied extensive "mountains and waters."

There is another group of four poems whose titles point to the excursion's itinerant passage instead of a statically-observed locale. All four of these (*f, h, i, m*) were written by Xie Lingyun, who titled the poems with active verbs (e.g., "roaming," "traversing," "walking). Instead of considering these as constituting a separate class of poems, their emphasis on peripatetic movement can be seen as resembling the roaming royal retinue poems. They are also like the retinue poems in performing and presuming dominion over the space toured.

Poem *a* is the emperor Cao Pi's composition about "West Park" at the Ye capital. Poem *b* was composed at, and for, the estate of the Huan Xuan 桓玄, a warlord who declared himself emperor in 403.[84] His short-lived reign was never recognized by later court historians as legitimate, hence his estate must be called a private estate instead of retroactively recognized as an imperial park. However, this nominal difference by a mere technicality only underscores the prestige and scale that the private estates achieved in the Six Dynasties, a period in which the power of aristocratic clans rivaled that of the emperor, who was at best *primus inter pares.*[85]

f) Cao Pi's imperial excursion in West Park

First among the *youlan* series is a piece by the Wei emperor Cao Pi (187–226). While his positioning at the top of the series is due to the anthology's chronological sequencing of selections, his primacy of place is arguably overdetermined. Cao Pi represented himself as the ultimate patron of group excursion, and re-invented its cultural and political significance as a court practice.[86] Cao Pi is also known for the earliest work of literary criticism: the "Discourse on Literature 論文," and he was posthumously named the *Wen di* 文帝: the Cultured-Literary Emperor.[87] Since he fashioned himself as both a patron of excursion and a consummate literary critic, it is fitting that his excursion poem "Composed at Lotus Pond" is the first to represent this literary topic.

The poem takes place at the imperial park at the Ye 業 capital.

---

[84] He was defeated the next year by Liu Yu 劉裕, who founded the Song dynasty in 420.

[85] For a classic and representative study of the role of aristocratic clans in the Six Dynasties, see Tian Yuqing 田余慶, *Dong Jin menfa zhengzhi* 東晉門閥政治 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1996).

[86] As discussed in chapter 2, Cao Pi's group excursions were re-enactments of classical models of communal life, as well as responses to factional court politics in which it was necessary for him to establish direct bonds of loyalty with his officers.

[87] Stephen Owen writes that Cao Pi's "sense of his own self-worth is very much caught up in this statement on literature." For an annotated translation and commentary, see Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Liteary Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992): 57–72.

芙蓉池作 “Composed at Lotus Pond”

1	乘輦夜行遊,	Riding the imperial carriage, We take an evening excursion.
	逍遙步西園。	Roaming carefree, We step into the West Park.
3	雙渠相溉灌,	Twin canals pour into one another;
	嘉木繞通川。	Fine trees surround the pervading stream.[88]
5	卑枝拂羽蓋,	Low branches whisk the feathered canopy;
	脩條摩蒼天。	Long boughs stroke the azure sky.
7	驚風扶輪轂,	Stirred gusts brush the wheels;
	飛鳥翔我前。	Flying birds soar before us.
9	丹霞夾明月,	Sunset's cinnabar haze encloses the bright moon;
	華星出雲間。	Splendorous stars emerge from the clouds.
11	上天垂光采,	High heaven confers its prismatic light;
	五色一何鮮。	Its five colors—how resplendent!
13	壽命非松喬,	Our lifespan is not as Song's or Qiao's;[89]
	誰能得神仙	No one can attain divine immortality.
15	遨遊快心意,	Roaming carefree delights the heart:
	保己終百年。	By such self-care, We fulfill our allotted lifespan.[90]

It is apt that the *youlan* category opens with the phrase "riding the imperial carriage," because while the later selections no longer take place at the imperial park, they nevertheless retrace and refer back to the performance of the imperial excursion. Here, as befits the Son-of-Heaven, the journey through the park is figured and narrated as an ascent into the heavens. The park excursion opens with the sight of tree boughs so tall they "stroke the azure sky." Below, in the realm of men, the trees' low-hanging branches "whisk over the [imperial carriage's] feathered canopy." The couplet's internal syntax draws affinities: whisking is parallel with stroking, up is paired against down, and, most suggestively, the canopy is matched with the firmament itself. Just as the sky-dome encases the world, so also the carriage canopy covers the imperial person. The implicit connection here between the unbounded roaming tour and the expansiveness of sky underscores the conception of imperial power as a fully-ranging authority. Indeed the poem both opens and closes with synonymous verbs of effortless, carefree roaming: *xiaoyao* 逍遙 in line 2, and *aoyou* 遨遊 in line 15.

Lines 7–8 follow up on this conceit, which likens the emperor's ride to a celestial ascent: "stirred gusts brush the wheels," and "flying birds soar"—not above the retinue but—*before* it, as if the retinue too were airborne. Even the line 10's "splendorous stars emerge from the clouds," when read in the context of the skyward ascent, takes on a new vividness: it is as if the imperial carriage had entered into a galactic constellation. The ascent narrative peaks in lines 11–12: "High heaven extends its prismatic light; its five colors—how resplendent!" We are given to understand that the couplet is a double entendre for both the splendid sunset scene, and the

---

[88] The stream is "pervading" in that it runs all the way through the park and, most likely, the grounds of its palace buildings.

[89] Chi Song 赤松 and Wang Ziqiao 王子喬 were said to attained immortality. See the *Chu ci*'s "Far Roaming 遠遊"; and the biography for Wang Ziqiao in the *Liexian zhuan* 列仙傳.

[90] A hundred years, a round number, is a stock phrase for the outer limits of a human being's lifespan. *Wen xuan*, 22.1032.

highly decorous spectacle that is the imperial entourage. In the language of a ruler bestowing his favor, heaven is said to "confer below" or "send down" (*chui* 垂) a radiance that is "prismatic" and "resplendent" like the adornments of ride and retinue. This couplet performs the panoptic gaze (i.e., the *lan* topos of *you-lan*) from both directions: the viewer looks out upon the vastness of the empyrean; at the same time, he is staged as manifestly displayed to his empire. The spectator too is spectacle.

Followed to its logical conclusion, the poem's narrative of celestial ascend leads to a godlike transcendence. The stock figure Wang Ziqiao, cited in line 13, was said to have attained immortality after soaring into the skies aboard a crane. The penultimate couplet seems to avert the ultimate peaking of the ascent narrative. It is adversative instead of elaborative: "No one can attain divine immortality." But the closing couplet nevertheless affirms the excursion as a peak pleasure and paramount attainment: "Roaming carefree delights the heart; by such self-care, We fulfill (*zhong* 終) our allotted lifespan." There is no greater way to care for one's life as carefree roaming, which offers a nurturing and lasting pleasure. The final verb *zhong* 終 ("fulfill") carries the sense of reaching the farthest limit, in this case, pushing up against the very boundary of life. The excursion allows one to reach one's "allotted lifespan (*bainian* 百年)," literally "a hundred years"—the outermost limit of a human life. Carefree roaming, seemingly unbounded in its spatial sweep and capacity to nurture, is depicted as extending even the terminus of existence. The closure of this *youlan* poem, while eschewing hopes for a godlike transcendence, nevertheless affirms the imperial excursion as the highest and most enduring attainment in the human realm.

g) Huan Xuan: the impostor's estate

To project political authority and legitimacy of succession, imperial courts imitated the institutions of prior dynasties. That was also the case for the "stage" for Cao Pi's *youlan* performance: West Park, whose name harkens back to earlier instantiations of the imperial playground. The site shared the name of the Eastern Han's imperial park at Luoyang, also known as "Park of the Pre-eminent Forest" (*Shanglin* 上林).[91] That site was itself a reconstruction of the one previously located at the Western Han's capital in Chang'an (see Chapter One's discussion of Sima Xiangru's exposition about this park). Chang'an's West Park, in turn, had been rebuilt by Emperor Wu after the destruction of the original one established by the First Emperor of Qin. While little is known about the actual details of Cao's West Park, given that the Cao house directly modeled its Ye capital on Luoyang, it not unlikely that its West Park also replicated the layout and infrastructure of its Han predecessor.[92] At minimum, the duplication of the name is meant to carry the prestige of its predecessors. The efficacy of Cao Pi's staging of *youlan* performance depended in part on its being (understood as) a re-staging, one that imitated the

[91] See Li Shan identifies "West Park" as Shanglin in his annotation to the "Eastern Capital Rhapsody" (*Wen xuan*, 3.120).

[92] For a discussion Ye's modeling of Luoyang , see: Chen Yinke 陳寅恪, "*Sui Tang zhidu yuanyuan lüelun gao* 隋唐制度淵源略論稿" (Chungking, 1943): p. 50. West Park was located in the suburbs west of the city walls. This site should not be confused with the better documented "West Garden 西苑" within the city walls. See Bielenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

hallowed imperial past. Thus, even for "legitimate" rulers, imitation lies at the very core of imperial performance.

Rulers such as Cao Pi imitated parks, and so did would-be rulers. We can rationalize the serial imitation of prior parks by rulers in terms of the exigencies of political legitimacy, but there is also here an urgency of desire: I must have what others have. No one in the medieval period exemplifies the urgency of this mimetic desire better than Huan Xuan (369–404), the owner of the estate celebrated in the second *youlan* piece. Huan Xuan's sense of upmanship brooked no bounds: he declared himself emperor in 403. He was killed the following year, and his brief reign has not been recognized by the standard story of dynastic succession as legitimate. Questions of legitimacy aside, both Cao Pi and Huan Xuan shared the same desire to imitate the imperial park.

Huan Xuan's insatiable desire is dramatized in his standard biography by his thirst for procuring estates.

> 性貪鄙，好奇異，尤愛寶物，珠玉不離於手。人士有法書好畫及佳園宅者，悉欲歸己，猶難逼奪之，皆蒲博而取。遣臣佐四出，掘果移竹，不遠數千里，百姓佳果美竹無複遺餘。信悅諂譽，逆忤讜言，或奪其所憎與其所愛。

> Huan Xuan was by nature greedy and base. Fond of things extraordinary and rare, he was especially covetous of valuables: trinkets of pearl and jade never left his hands. When others had model works of calligraphy, fine paintings, as well as orchard estates, he invariably wished to seize them for his own. If he couldn't procure them through coercion or theft, he resorted to getting them through wagers.[93] Dispatching underlings to the four directions to dig up fruit trees and relocate bamboos, he did not consider a thousand *li* to be too far. Of the fine fruit trees and lovely bamboos found amongst the general population, there was nothing he didn't have in surplus quantities. He credulously delighted in flattery and detested straight talk, and sometimes snatched what he hated along with what he actually coveted.[94]

The last line is telling: Huan Xuan acquired things that he himself didn't like just to be able to boast about, and be flattered for, possessing them. It was enough that others wanted something for him to want it too, and in "surplus quantities." This is mimetic desire: the wish to hold and behold what others—even emperors—take pleasure in. This desire's ultimate expression is Huan's acquisition of "orchard estates," which he maintained as storehouses of prized items. By digging up and relocating "fine fruit trees and lovely bamboos," Huan Xuan sought to imitate the greatest of specimen-rich imperial parks. Treating even the remotest reaches as within his grasp, he did "not consider a thousand *li* to be far" in stocking his estates. (Compare this to accounts of Wang Xizhi, who "surveyed fields to inspect the land's advantages." Wang was also said to "not shun a thousand *li* to gather medicinal herbs."[95]) Huan Xuan, in "dispatching underlings to the four directions" to seize items, regarded his orchard estate like an imperial park: as the center of the four directions towards which all local specialties of the realm converged like tribute.

---

[93] *Cf., Shishuo xinyu*, 23/34 comm., which says that Huan Xuan's father Huan Wen 桓溫, while playing the gambling game *chubu* 樗蒲 (also written 蒲博), first lost several hundred *hu* 斛 of rice, and later won a million. The account indicates that those of the Huan household were known for wagering staggering amounts in gambling.

[94] *Jin shu*, 99.2594.

[95] *Jin shu*, 80.2101. See footnote 45.

On one hand, we can say that Huan Xuan's lavish construction of his orchard estates was symptomatic of his imperial ambition. Indeed, the difference between his estates and the "legitimate" imperial park was more nominal than material. And the imperial park, we must remember, was as much a monument to imperial power as the capital's palace. In the Han, the palaces that Emperor Wu built at West Park rose even higher than those of Weiyang 未央 Palace within the walls of the capital. Mark Edward Lewis has argued that, "The hunting park in many ways supplanted the capital itself as the primary imperial residence and ritual center."[96] That is to say, if we think of how the seat of imperial power was represented, the park was no less important than the capital.

On the other hand, considered as, to use Mark Edward Lewis' phrase, a "ritual center," the orchard estate cum imperial park was different from the capital in the kinds of public performance it staged. For Huan Xuan, his orchard estate enabled him to perform a role that he coveted as much as the trappings of imperial power: to play the recluse who dwells in woods and bamboo. His procurement of "lovely bamboos" was no doubt inspired by the renowned Seven Worthies of the Bamboo Grove (竹林七賢) who garnered fame more than a century before.[97] As with everything, if others admired it, Huan wanted it for myself. But, unlike "model works of calligraphy, fine paintings, and orchard estates," being a bamboo grove master wasn't something that could simply be acquired materially—it had to be performed. The props for this performance, bamboo groves, Huan indeed stocked in great variety and surplus quantity.[98] What remained was to circulate a portrait of his rustic reclusion, for which he commissioned the son of a brand-name literati family to compose.

> 玄以歷代咸有肥遁之士，而己世獨無，乃征皇甫謐六世孫希之為著作，並給其資用，皆令讓而不受，號曰高士，時人名為充隱。
>
> Huan Xuan thought that, while there have always been throughout the ages recluses set apart from the world, his generation alone lacked them. Thereupon he appointed Huangfu Xizhi, the 6th-generation descendent of Huangfu Mi, as editor, and provided for his needs, while ordering him each time to decline the offer. Huan Xuan then styled Huangfu Mi as "Gentleman of Unsullied Loftiness." People of the time instead called him a "Phony Fill-in for a Recluse."[99]

This account reveals through ridicule the mechanics of recluse performance. What sets Huan Xuan's "Phony Fill-in" apart from putatively authentic recluses is not his method for staging the performance but his maladroit execution. The final effect of extending a commission and provisions to Huang Mifu while forcing him to decline them is like seeing a puppet worked with visibly crude strings, whose exaggerated jerks and tugs draw the audience's attention to the puppet master, and reveal the puppet as a mere "fill-in." Those skilled in literary performance pulled strings of finer thread, and did not resort to overt proclamations. What distinguishes Huan

---

[96] Mark Edward Lewis, *The Construction of Space in Early China* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2006): 178..

[97] The seven are Ruan Ji 阮籍 (210–63), Xi Kang 嵇康 (224-63), Xiang Xiu 向秀 (227–72), Shan Tao 山濤 (205–83), Wang Rong 王戎 (234–305), 劉伶 (fl. 3rd c.), and Ruan Xian (fl. 3rd c.).

[98] Wang Huizhi 王徽之, another admirer of the Seven Worthies of the Bamboo Grove, had bamboos planted at a residence he temporarily occupied. When asked why he should bother since he would soon leave, Wang pointed to the bamboos and said, "How could I go one day without these gentlemen?" *Shishuo xinyu*, 23/46.

[99] *Jin shu*, 99.2593–4.

Xuan’s phony staging of reclusion and Xie Lingyun’s “Mountain Dwelling Exposition” is not the mechanics of the performance but its skill of execution.

It may seem unusual, even contradictory, that a covetous usurper such as Huan Xuan would indulge in staging the recluse set apart from political life in lofty unsullied landscapes. If we fixate on what these two postures supposedly represent in terms of belief or life practice, then the two indeed seem mutually exclusive. But, in Huan, these two postures could happily coexist because of their underlying value as cultural capital. As someone who “snatched what he hated along with what he actually coveted,” it mattered little whether he liked it—or believed in it—to want it. He desired what was desirable, even things as seemingly incongruent as imperial performance and recluse performance. His commitment of belief in a posture—if indeed it is useful to approach performance as conviction—cannot be disentangled from the level of cultural capital that it accrued for him.

Capital and countryside may be antithetical places that staged opposing performances but they are nevertheless synthesized in Huan’s complex of desire. This complex—a meaningful and persistent combination of opposing drives— is not unique to him, however crude and exaggerated his expression of it may be. Landscape, as a literary genre, bears the imprint of this complex. In summarizing rural places and commonplaces, Xie’s preface to the “Mountain Dwelling Exposition” outlined countryside and capital in terms of both antithesis and synthesis. As antithesis: “If we attend to the things and tasks [of each mode of life], then the mountain dwelling indeed has dissimilarities with the marketplace district.” As synthesis: “In terms of the heart’s intent, the imperial abode is actually no different from the north bank of the Fen River.” Xie’s dialectical formulation was instantiated by Huan, in whose breast palaces and bamboos were planted together in consummate proportions.

Consider Huan’s complexly orchestrated performances.

玄偽上表求歸藩，又自作詔留之，遣使宣旨，玄又上表固請，又諷天子作手詔固留焉。玄好逞偽辭，塵穢簡牘，皆此類也。謂代謝之際宜有禎祥，乃密令所在上臨平湖開除清朗，使眾官集賀。矯詔曰「靈瑞之事非所敢聞也。斯誠相國至德，故事為之應。太平之化，於是乎始，六合同悅，情何可言。」又詐云江州甘露降王成基家竹上。

Huan Xuan disingenuously submitted a memorial to the emperor requesting leave from his office to return to his domain; at the same time, he wrote himself an imperial decree that retained him in office and had it promulgated. Again he submitted a memorial that firmly asked for leave, while intimating to the emperor to handwrite a decree that retained him using equally firm language. Huan’s fondness for making a show of (*wei*) false words that defiled the materials on which they were written were all of this sort. He thought that the interim before dynastic change should have auspicious signs, so he secretly orderly agents on the ground to depurate Presiding-Over-Peace Lake to make it limpid clear, and then had throngs of officials gathered there to exalt. Huan forged an imperial decree: “Phenomena of divine auspice are not what I dare heed. [Yet] this is truly a matter of the perfected virtue of [Chancellor Huan’s] guiding the state, therefore phenomena have responded in kind. The transformation of the Great Peace henceforth begins, and all within the six directions rejoice in unison—feelings of resonant response cannot be put into words!” Huan also spread false word that sweet dew descended in Jiang Province on the bamboos of Wang Chengji’s residence.[100]

[100] *Jin shu*, 99.2593.

The standard history intends to frame Huan as an illegitimate usurper, so it highlights his behavior as *wei* 偽, "making a [false] show."[101] With no stakes in adjudicating authenticity and legitimacy, I am focused rather on Huan's particular combination of antithetical roles. Huan played both protagonist and antagonist: the would-be recluse who repeatedly asks to retire, and the imperial voice that denies the requests. (Two proxies share the stage: a "fill-in" recluse and a puppet emperor.) In so doing, Huan wished to have it both ways: to be a recluse of unsullied loftiness who wished nothing more than to withdraw from court; and to remain in high office, ready to advance his imperial coronation.

That Huan played both recluse and ruler cannot be wholly explained in terms of political expediency; if anything, the dual role-playing undermined his credibility. On top of—or, in spite of—whatever calculation of concrete advantage Huan made was another key factor: his "fondness for making a show (*hao cheng* 好逞)." Rituals of "soft power," such as opting for rustic retreat and showing a charismatic nonchalance for career gains, were not simply ruses masking Huan's hidden ambition. Hard power enabled spectacles of soft power, which were desirable in and of themselves.[102] For Huan, the allure of power was inseparable from its staging.

In addition to staging proxies like the fill-in recluse and puppet ruler, Huan also called on landscapes to speak for him. Mobilizing landscaping manpower, Huan cleansed Presiding-Over-Peace Lake to an extraordinary clarity, and then, via a forged imperial decree, made the lake testify to his charismatic influence. The lake's miraculous lucidity "is truly a matter of the perfected virtue of [Chancellor Huan's] guiding the state, therefore phenomena have responded in kind." Implied is that Presiding-Over-Peace Lake has responded in kind to a man fit to preside over peace: its water has become as manifestly clear and pure as Huan's "perfected virtue." The decree closes by staging human and non-human beings into a chorus of exaltation: "all within the six directions rejoice in unison—feelings of resonant response cannot be put into words!" Such "feelings of resonant response" (*qing* 情) are evident among both humankind (such as the officials gathered at the lake to "exalt") and elements of the (highly manipulated) 'natural' landscape. In addition to the lake, Huan also staged a favorite prop, bamboo, on which he said sweet dew had fallen. The sweet dew on the bamboo fulfills the *Laozi* saying, "When heaven and earth are in accord, sweet dew descends."[103] The ultimate referent of these landscapes of clear water, sweet dew, and bamboo was Huan himself.

We can see parallels between Huan's aforementioned performances and the following *youlan* poem whose narrative takes place on Huan's estate. Just as Huan presented a lake so that an audience of gathered officials could exalt the man, so also this poem presents a landscape whose ultimate focus is Huan, who by the poem's end emerges as the primary spectacle. Also, the poem is not written by Huan himself, but the established poet Yin Zhongwen 殷仲文 (d. 407). We recall that Huan had commissioned a scion of the renowned Huangfu family to present himself as a lofty recluse. Even if Yin Zhongwen had not been commissioned to compose the

---

[101] *Cf.,* Cao Pi's orchestration of the ritual of declining emperorship, in: David R. Knechtges, *Court Culture and Literature in Early China* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington, 2002).

[102] For a rethink of the role of political ritual that approaches it as substantive reality rather than mere decorative packaging, see the essay by James Laidlaw, "On theatre and theory: reflections on ritual in imperial Chinese politics," in: Joseph P. DcDermott, ed. *State and Court Ritual in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999): 399–416.

[103] *Laozi jishi*, 32:130. In 58 BCE, during the reign of Emperor Xuan 宣, the capital witnessed two signs: phoenixes and sweet dew. *Han shu*, 8.263. The reign periods beginning in 57 and 53 were respectively named "Five Phoenixes" and "Sweet Dew."

poem, he nevertheless functions in a similar capacity: he performs as Huan's proxy. The poem presents a gathering at Huan's estate where Huan occupies the role of host, and, we might infer, the patron of a coterie.

	南州桓公九井作	"Written at the Nine-Wells of Duke Huan of Nanzhou"[104]
1	四運雖鱗次,	Though the seasons overlap like fish-scales,
	理化各有準	In pattern and change, each follows its own standard.
3	獨有清秋日,	It is only the days of clear autumn
	能使高興盡。	That put one wholly in high spirits.
5	景氣多明遠,	Sunlit airs are full of shimmer and expanse;
	風物自淒緊。	Breezy elements naturally turn and bracing.
7	爽籟警幽律,	Uneven reed-pipes agitate deep pitches;
	哀壑叩虛牝。	Wailing ravines strike open hollows.
9	歲寒無早秀,	When the year turns cold, there are no early buds,
	浮榮甘夙殞。	Floating splendors bask in what is soon to fade.
11	何以標貞脆,	By what are firmness and fragility manifest?
	薄言寄松菌。	It is said they are by pine and fungi represented.[105]
13	哲匠感蕭晨,	The Sage Craftsman is moved by the desolate dawn,
	肅此塵外軫。	He is somber in this ride beyond the dust.
15	廣筵散汎愛,	Broad mats disperse his overflowing love;
	逸爵紆勝引。	Exquisite cups tilt towards men superbly commended.
17	伊余樂好仁,	I take pleasure in a such a man, good and humane,
	惑袪吝亦泯。	For he dispels my confusion, and rids me of meanness.
19	猥首阿衡朝,	A plebeian, the Counselor holds court,
	將貽匈奴哂。	Giving Xiongnu barbarians cause to sneer.

I analyze the poem in two halves, each of which corresponds to a key phrase in the title. The first half describes the autumnal landscape at the "Nine Wells" estate, and the second half, "Duke Huan" himself. From Li Shan's annotation, we know that Huan's Nine Wells estate, located in the mountains of his native Gushu 姑孰, was large.[106] For a man who had no scruples about seizing the prized estates of others, we can imagine the scale and splendor of his native home. The poem does not call attention to its magnificence, or mention its particular features—such details are simply assumed. After all, the property belongs to Duke Huan, whom the poem refers to as the "Sage Craftsman." Were this phrase uttered in the context of undeveloped wilderness, it could refer to the maker of the natural world, but here in the context of the estate, the concept of

[104] Li Shan's annotation cites the *Shui jing zhu* 水經註, which states that Tong Mountain 銅山 (located south of Danyang Lake 丹陽湖 in Gushu 姑孰) had nine wells connected to the Yangtze, and was also known as Nine Wells Mountain.

[105] *Analects* 9/28: "Only when the year grows cold do we see that the pine and cypress are the last to fade." (Trans. by Waley, 1939) *Zhuangzi*, 1A.11: "The morning fungi does not know the next month; the summer cicada does not know the ensuing seasons."

[106] Li Shan's annotation cites the *Record of Huan Xuan* 桓玄錄, which says that Huan Xuan hailed from Gushu, where he constructed a large estate. *Wen xuan*, 22.1032.

artisanship connects the land to its landscaper, the property to its owner.[107] It is this assumed relationship between property and proprietor that underlies the poem's transition from 'landscape' in its first half, to Huan Xuan in the second half.

Eschewing details, the poem regards the estate with a sweeping gaze that frames it with a broad significance. The opening couplet sets the terms by speaking of "pattern," "change," and "standard" evinced by autumn at the estate. The sweeping view of lines 5–6 attends to patterns of change and constancies of season:

5	景氣多明遠,	Sunlit airs are full of shimmer and expanse;
	風物自淒緊。	Breezy elements naturally turn and bracing.

Depicting autumn's clear sky and its stirring wind, the couplet deploys descriptors of a diffusive, highly suggestive generality. The term "airs" (*qi* 氣) suggests all the energies—ether, and vapors energized by sunlight—that animate the expansive scene; "airs" does not specify particular objects but a total "atmosphere." Likewise, the phrase "breezy elements" (*feng wu* 風物) does not isolate discrete objects but rather presents a gestalt of things that are unspecified (*wu* 物). Also, "brisk and bracing" describes the overall sensation of being exposed to elements of nature.[108] Through such diffusive descriptions, the poem presents a total vista for an encompassing gaze. Reinforcing the sense of beholding broad patterns, lines 7–8 draw upon the language of the *Zhuangzi* and *Laozi*.

7	爽籟警幽律,	Uneven reed-pipes agitate deep pitches;
	哀壑叩虛牝。	Wailing ravines strike open hollows.

The *Zhuangzi* distinguishes between man's panpipe instruments and the "pipes" of heaven and earth—the winds that, bellowing through hills and woods, sound through natural apertures.[109] The wind "agitates deep pitches" of heaven and earth that are animated by supra-human breath. Reverberate through the estate's wide ravines, gales strike open "hollows" (*pin* 牝) which correspond to the fundamental energies of *yin* in the *Laozi*: "The spirit of the valleys never perishes, and is called the profound hollow (*pin*). Its opening is called the root of heaven and earth."[110] Thus, the landscape is viewed as being connected to fundamental elements and patterns of the world. Accordingly, even pine and fungi (lines 11–12) are perceived are manifestations of, respectively, "firmness" and "fragility"— principles for both plant life and human existence. This viewed vista is a performance of *lan* 覽: to survey and take the panoptic view.

The poem's performer of *lan* is Duke Huan. From lines 13–14, we are given to understand that the aforementioned sights were viewed during an excursion (which is the *you* of *you-lan* 遊覽) led by Huan.

---

[107] In Chinese philosophy, the making of the world is conceived of as a shaping, like an artisan working his materials. The *Zhuangzi* refers to the maker of the world as *zaowuzhe* 造物者, which is not a Creator like God of the Old Testament but a "Fashioner of Things." *Zhuangzi jishi*, 3A.258. As regards my use of the term "property," we must keep in mind, as discussed above, that a landowner's *de facto* holdings could also include unregistered lands.

[108] I understand *jin* 緊 as referring to a tightening, and by extension a strengthening that feels invigorating. My translation, "bracing," describes the sensation of being swept by a strong, cool breeze. Li Shan explains *jin* as "satisfying" (*yu cheng* 欲成), which is not a conventional gloss but a reading of the term's contextual usage.

[109] *Zhuangzi jishi*, 1.45–51.

[110] "谷神不死，是謂玄牝。玄牝之門，是謂天地根." *Laozi jiaoshi* 老子校釋, 6.25.

13 哲匠感蕭晨，　The Sage Craftsman is moved by the desolate dawn,
肅此塵外軫。　He is somber in this ride beyond the dust.

If we consider the occasion, it is fitting that Huan—proprietor of the estate, and host for the social gathering— is called the "Sage Craftsman." As the estate's proprietor, Huan had fashioned the site to his liking; as the patron host, he had arranged the social gathering. The notion of sagacious craft also implies the capacity to manage men and remake the world. Li Shan's annotation alerts us to the connection here between control and the cavalcade: "The sage roams across the entire age, controlling and crafting the forms of the myriad things."[111] That is to say, the power to shape the world is associated with the ability to range freely—what the poem calls Huan's "ride beyond the dust." The phrase "beyond the dust," which derives from the *Zhuangzi*, suggests an elevated orientation vis-à-vis the 'dusty' earth of ordinary men. Annotating the *Zhuangzi* passage where the phrase appears, the medieval commentator Guo Xiang 郭象 (252–312) writes: "As for 'beyond the dust,' it means to not only lie below in mountains and forests (*shan lin* 山林)."[112] Thus, Huan's "ride beyond the dust" implies a ranging freedom that is, as it were, above it all, and the view from the ride sees not just "mountains and forests" but the fundamental elements and patterns by which they are constituted.

Also, by being elevated above "mountains and forests," the Sagely Craftsman is himself a more visible spectacle. Line 14: "He is somber in this ride beyond the dust." Huan looks upon the changes of autumn with a dignified gravity and stateliness and this look, in turn, is seen by the audience (and reader) witnessing his cavalcade. The poem's two halves can be divided by directions of looking: the first half shows what the Sagely Craftsman sees during his "ride beyond the dust," while the second half looks at the looker. The final couplets (lines 15–20) stage Huan as a patron host who appreciates, and is appreciated by his guests.

15 廣筵散汎愛，　Broad mats disperse his overflowing love;
逸爵紆勝引。　Exquisite cups tilt toward men superbly commended.[113]
17 伊余樂好仁，　I take pleasure in a such a man, good and humane,
惑袪吝亦泯。　For he dispels my confusion, and rids me of meanness.

The *Analects* says that a man "should overflow in love to all."[114] Here, such "overflowing love" is literally manifested by the wine "overflowing" in cups that Huan dispenses to seated guests. We previously saw how the concept of *shang* 賞, key in Xie's writings, joins the person who appreciates with the person appreciated in a mutually-affirming yet hierarchical relationship.

[111] "聖人逍遙一世之間，宰匠萬物之形." Li Shan's commentary attributes this saying to Dengxizi 鄧析子. The cited line does not seem to be preserved elsewhere. This seems to be a well known saying, as nearly identical phrasing is found in the précis for the *Huainanzi*: "逍遙一世之間，宰匠萬物之形，亦優遊矣."*Huainanzi jishi* 淮南子集釋, 21.1457.

[112] "所謂塵埖之外，非伏於山林而已." *Zhuangzi jishi*, 6.270. The Guo Xiang commentary is cited by Li Shan.

[113] Or, "persons who are superb and (re)commended." *Yin* 引 means to recommend (*yinjin* 引進). Li Shan understands *shengyin* 勝引 to refer to good friends, since "it is due to good friends that one is recommended 良友所以進己.") To translate *yin* generically as "friend" would elide Huan's role here as patron host. My translation, "superbly commended," carries both the general sense of fine guests who are well regarded, and the specific sense of someone suitable for being recommended by a sponsor.

[114] *Analects* 1/6, which Arthur Waley (1939) translates: "A youth, when at home, should be filial, and, abroad, respectful to his elders. He should be earnest and truthful. He should overflow in love to all, (汎愛眾), and cultivate the friendship of the good."

That hierarchical relationship is evident here. The host esteems his guests, and they in turn "take pleasure in such a man." Note also the term used here to refer to the esteemed guests: *yin* 引, which means to "pull" someone forth by commending his merits and recommending him for office. "Exquisite cups tilt towards those superbly commended." These worthy men are recognized as "superb" by virtue of commended and recommended by Huan. By "pulling" up and sponsoring these men, the sponsor's own status is elevated and, through a mutual affirmation, made "superb." We see thus how the recognition of landscape (in the poem's first half) transitions to a recognition of persons (in the poem's second half). As with Xie's performance of *shang*, recognition occurs in both directions. Here, Huan recognizes his "superb" guests, and they, as well as the reader, recognize him.

The penultimate line presents Huan Xuan as "the Counselor holding court." The verb is *chao* 朝, which refers to two types of "court" that are deliberately conflated in this line: to the throng of admirers and disciples gathered around Huan; and to the imperial court over which Huan presides. Thus, while this appreciative gathering takes place in the countryside, it is represented as a concentration of power that is equal to that of the imperial center.

The closing couplet to the poem, which is after all an encomium for Huan, may appear unusual for speaking of sneering.

19	猥首阿衡朝,	A plebeian, the Counselor holds court,[115]
	將貽匈奴哂。	Giving Xiongnu barbarians cause to sneer.[116]

However, we must understand the lack of a proper pedigree was a sore point for Huan, and the final couplet directly addresses this vulnerable aspect of his reputation. That he was the son of a concubine was one cause for ridicule. Another was his family lineage, which he insisted on concealing. When Huan usurped the throne, he honored only his father Huan Wen with a tablet in the ancestral temple; his grandfather and earlier ancestors were egregiously omitted. That Huan refused to supply a pedigree, even an invented one, was flagrantly uncustomary. (Contrast this with another imperial impersonator, Xie Lingyun, who celebrated his forebears in his poem, "Presenting the Virtues of My Ancestors."[117]) The historian Tian Yuqing has argued that Huan Xuan was covering up his ties to his five-generations-removed ancestor Huan Fan 桓范, who was killed in a political purge.[118] What is clear is that for Huan Xuan, who was so "fond of making a show," a proper pedigree was not something that could be easily bought or arranged.

---

[115] *E'heng* 阿衡 is the title of a Shang dynasty post responsible for teaching and guiding descendents of the royal house. Li Shan cites the Kong commentary to the *Shang shu* 尚書 which glosses *e* 阿 as *yi* 倚 (someone "to rely on"), and *heng* 衡 as *ping* 平 (someone who "stabilizes"). *Shang shu zhengyi*, 8.247. Here, the phrase refers to Huan Xuan, who presides over court and gives counsel to the young Emperor An 安. (In actuality, such "counsel" allowed little room for the young emperor to make his own decisions. Emperor An was only 21 years old when Huan declared his own dynasty in 403.)

[116] This alludes to the *Han shu* biography of Che Qiuqian 車秋千, who convinced Emperor Wu that the heir apparent had been wrongfully accused. For this single occasion of counsel, Che was promoted to the top position of Chancellor 丞相, in spite of his lack of prior experience and merits. When a Han emissary was dispatched to the Xiongnu, their leader inquired about how Che had advanced to his post. Upon learning the reason, the Xiongnu leader said that the Han did not employ men of merit but rather recklessly promoted anyone who submitted a memorial. *Han shu*, 66.2883–4.

[117] *Shu zu de* 述祖德, *Wenxuan*, 19.912.

[118] See: Tian Yuqing, "桓溫的先世和桓溫北伐問題" in *Dong Jin menfa zhengzhi* 東晉門閥政治 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe: 1996): 140–98.

The closing couplet therefore takes a different strategy in bolstering Huan's reputation with regard to pedigree: it cleverly preempts any criticism of Huan's background by implying that those who would "sneer" at his background are no better than savage barbarians. Only the uncouth would disparage Duke Huan as a "commoner." The centerpiece of this poem is not a wild landscape but the social status of the Duke, and his credentials for rulership.

h) Xie Lingyun and postures of the panoptic gaze

The following *youlan* poem by Xie Lingyun follows a trajectory that spans the most salient sites of the author's enormous Shi'ning estate, also the subject of Xie's "Mountain Dwelling Exposition": two separate mountain peaks and the lake separating them.[119] Each of the estate's two mountains, referred to as the North and South mountains, had a residential compound (*ju* 居), which included not only buildings but also fields replete with everything under the sun. The poem is undergirded by an important, and perhaps the most lauded, feature of the estate property: its manifest completeness. Producing harvests of crop, fruit, medicinal herbs, silk and other textiles, the estate property was economically self-sustaining. This material plenitude was also shaped— in landscaping design and textual representation—as an observable fullness. In the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition," Xie Lingyun sums up the two mountain sites thus:

北山二園，	At the two parks of North Mountain,
南山三苑。	and the three gardens of South Mountain
百果備列，	The hundred fruits are repletely arrayed,
乍近乍遠。	in the vicinity and in the distance.[120]

The word "replete" (*bei* 備) implies being fully-stocked in advance: it is to have everything before one needs anything. The phrase "repletely arrayed" emphasizes a fullness that is manifestly in display. The span of all available produce ("the hundred fruits") is arranged such that it is presented to one's eyes at varying depths of field: some shown "in the vicinity" and others "in the distance." Fullness is apparent by design.

Elsewhere, the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition"—preceding a litany of timber types, and after taking stock of the estate's fish kinds—repeats this motif of a manifest fullness.

植物既載，	Not only fully-loaded with flora,
動類亦繁。	profuse too are its animal kinds.
飛泳騁透，	Flying, swimming, galloping, burrowing—
胡可根源。	how could one fully track all the pedigrees?
觀貌相音，	I observe appearances and appraise sounds:
備列山川。	Repletely arrayed are the mountains and streams.[121]

While the text gestures at a teeming quantity—"fully-loaded" and "profuse"—the concept of fullness is ultimately expressed as something qualitative: as a controlled complementarity. The

[119] *SJF* cites two lakes, named the major and minor "Shamanka" (大小巫山).
[120] *Song shu*, 67.1768. Here, *zha* 乍 is a nonce word to fill the meter.
[121] *Song shu*, 67.1762.

profusion of animal kinds encompasses those that fly and gallop above the surface, and those that swim and burrow below. The scene is held in perception as an organization of balanced opposites—indeed as couplets. Sights are paired with sounds, mountains with streams, flora with fauna. With by the considerable human labor at Xie's disposal, the land was perhaps landscaped to better manifest this balanced complementarity. Regardless of the land's actual topography, this patterning of the site is the result of the structured perception called *lan.* Suggestively, the preface to the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition" refers to the reader of the text as *lanzhe* 覽者, "one who gazes panoptically." To read the exposition is in effect to see the site as Xie beheld it.

"I observe appearances and appraise sounds: repletely arrayed are the mountains and streams." The panoptic view's comprehensive reach is not just relegated to seeing farther and in more directions but, at its extreme expression, also penetrates patterns of cosmic correspondence such as typologies, genealogies, and complementary opposites. "Flying, swimming, galloping, burrowing—how could one fully track all the pedigrees?" The verb "appraise 相," which is associated with assessing an animal's quality of breed, reinforces the motif of tracing things to their beginnings and essence.[122] This motif of tracing origins is demonstrative of the exposition's impulse towards compiling a complete catalogue, and Xie's deployment of the exposition form to gesture at his estate's inestimable surplus. At the same time, we can discern in the patterned perception that Xie applies to his propertied "mountains and streams" to his landscapes at large.

The *youlan* poem about the estate is emblematic of the perception of patterns evident in the "Mountain Dwelling Exposition." Among the 23 poems collected in the *Wen xuan* as *youlan*, the term *lan* appears only in three pieces, all of which belong to Xie. This is an index of Xie's emphasis on the comprehensive reach of the commanding view; he did not simply write in the *youlan* genre but pressed its conventions to its limits. This poem uses the phrase "*lan wu* 覽物," which I translate as to "survey all things." From the most basic *lan* posture of seeing from a high vantage point, the poetic persona assumes a commanding view of the organic cosmos.

	於南山往北山 經湖中瞻眺	"Going from South Mountain towards North Mountain, crossing the lake, and gazing afar"
1	朝旦發陽崖， 景落憩陰峯。	At dawn, I set out from the sunlit cliff; At sunset, I rested on the shaded peak.[123]
3	舍舟眺迥渚， 停策倚茂松	Leaving my boat, I gazed at far islets; Halting my staff, I leaned on lush pines.
5	側徑既窈窕， 環洲亦玲瓏。	The slanting path is sequestered and unseen, While the circling shoal is lucid crystalline.
7	俛視喬木杪， 仰聆大壑淙。	I look below at tips of towering trees; I listen above to burblings of a vast ravine.
9	石橫水分流， 林密蹊絕蹤。	Stones jut out: the water splits its flow; Woods thicken: the trail cuts off footprints.
11	解作竟何感，	*Opening-forth* starts—what stirs?

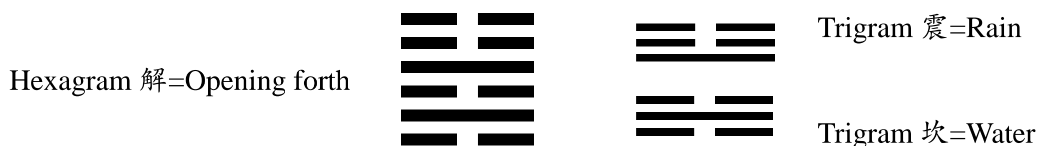
[122] The art of appraising horses is discussed in the "Observing appearances 觀表" section of the *Lüshi chunqiu*. Chen Qiqiu 陳奇猷 (annot.), *Lüshi chunqiu xinjiaoshi* 呂氏春秋新校釋 (Shanghai: Shanghai guiji chubanshe, 2002): 20.1423.

[123] A mountain's *yang* 陽 side is its south face, which receives more sunlight; the 'shaded peak' is the north face. This couplet corresponds to the title's "from South Mountain I headed towards North Mountain."

	升長皆丰容。	*Rising* and extending—everything burgeons.
13	初篁苞綠籜， 新蒲含紫茸。	Nascent bamboos wrapped in green sheaths; New cattails bear violet tufts.
15	海鷗戲春岸， 天鷄弄和風。	Egrets of the sea sport on spring shores; Pheasants of the sky play in balmy breezes.
17	撫化心無厭， 覽物眷彌重。	Consoled with change, my heart is unwearied; Surveying all things, my tender regard intensifies.
19	不惜去人遠， 但恨莫與同。	I do not rue I am far from others; I only regret there is no one to share it with.
21	孤遊非情歎， 賞廢理誰通。	Lone wandering is not what my feelings lament: With the appreciative one cast away, who is there to penetrate the patterns?

The opening couplet symbolically performs, through its organic pairing of opposites, a complete circuit of space: the journey encapsulates dawn and dusk, sun and shade, *yin* and *yang*. The movement "from South Mountain towards North Mountain" signaled in the title also reinforces the idea that the peak-to-peak journey is a progression from one pole to its antipode. Further imparting the sense of the journey's totality of experience, the ensuing couplets synthesize a range of complementary perceptions: travel by boat and by foot (lines 3–4); shaded trail and shining shoals (lines 5–6), stones jutting out and woods closing in (lines 9–10). A commonplace of the *youlan* genre is to situate the beholder at a high vantage point, and Xie's variation on this is to present an elevation so high that it disrupts the usual orientation one would have on ordinary ground. The viewer looks *below* at the *tops* of towering trees (line 7); and listens *above* to burbling waters flowing *downward* (line 8). Thus centrally situated, as if standing at the very heart of all that can be beheld, he performs the act of *lan wu* 覽物 (line 18), which, translated as "survey all things," implies taking a ranging and sweeping view of all phenomena.

Here, to *lan* is to see on multiple levels: it is to gaze afar and all around, as well as to discern patterns in small details and the larger order of things. Xie's performance of this multi-faceted vision is accomplished by fashioning the landscape according to hexagram images from the *Changes*, which are manifest as both concrete images and textual ciphers carrying additional significations. In line 11, the landscape's process of "opening-forth" also names hexagram 40 "Opening Forth 解," comprised by the trigram for rain on top, and the trigram for water on the bottom.[124]



The text of the *Changes* explains the significance of this water-suffused image:

天地解而雷雨作，雷雨作而百果草木皆甲	Heaven and Earth **open forth** 解, and thunder and rain start. When thunder and rain start, the **hundred fruits and flora all break open their husks**—the

[124] "The trigram *zhen* is rain 震為地"; "the trigram *Kan* is Water 坎為水." *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 9.389–90 (from the commentary "Explanations of the trigrams 說掛").

坼，解之時大矣哉。 timeliness of Opening-Forth is great indeed![125]

Rainwater, coming from the thunderous opening-forth of heaven above, gives succor to plants below, which, for their part, also opens forth with an effluence of flowers, fruit and foliage. The principle of "opening forth," like good rain, is timely. In lines 8–9 of Xie's poem, the spectator recognizes the image of "Opening Forth"—rain above, water below—by discerning the sounds of a vast ravine above and its currents below. (Just as one hears thunder before seeing rain, so also the spectator hears the ravine before observing its flow.)

7	俛視喬木杪,	I look below at tips of towering trees;
	仰聆大壑淙。	I listen above to *burblings* of a vast ravine.
9	石橫水分流,	Stones jut out: the *water* splits its flow;
	林密蹊絕蹤。	Woods thicken: the trail cuts off footprints.

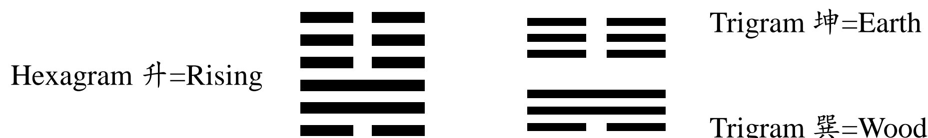
This place—Xie's estate—embodies the hexagram Opening-Forth. Rainfall need not actually occur here for the place to be ever like rain: water coming from the vast ravine above divides, diffuses and sprays during its downward descent—"Stones jut out: the water splits it flow." The landscape's suffusion of water, both materially and symbolically, sets up the ensuing lines in which verdure opens forth.

11	解作竟何感,	*Opening-forth* starts—what stirs?
	升長皆丰容。	*Rising* and extending—everything burgeons.
13	初篁苞綠籜,	Nascent bamboos are wrapped in green sheaths;
	新蒲含紫茸。	New cattails bear violet tufts.

The viewer recognizes "opening forth" on multiple levels. First, the canonical significance of the eponymous hexagram—"the hundred fruits and flora all break open their husks"— is evidenced by observed details. Line 13's "nascent bamboos," wrapped in layers newly sheathed and newly shed, are in the process of opening forth. Line 14's "new cattails," whose flossy violet fluff is not fully expressed but *han* 含: beginning to be born out—literally "held in the mouth." Opening forth, instantiated by such details, is the name of a natural process that is connected to another principle: that of line 12's "rising," which names another hexagram: *sheng* 升. The *Changes* explains the hexagram's significance thus:

地中生木，升。 Wood growing from within Earth is [the image of] Rising.[126]

The image of the hexagram *Rising* is comprised of the trigram for the earth element (*kun* 坤) above, and the trigram for the wood element (*xun* 巽) below.[127]



Rising is the image of underground "wood" moving upwards through the "earth": plants rise up

[125] From the *tuan* 象 commentary. *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 4.197.
[126] *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 5.225.
[127] "The trigram *kun* is earth 坤為地"; "the trigram *Xun* is Wood 巽為木." *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 9.389–90 (from the commentary "Explanations of the trigrams 說掛").

through the soil. Thus, to observe “nascent bamboos” and “new cattails” is not only to notice verdant life above ground but also to infer the emergent growth that is happening beneath the surface soil. The recognition of this subtle, even subterranean, process, together with its obvious manifestations, constitutes a totality of *lan* perception: “Rising and extending—everything burgeons.” Penetrating on multiple levels opening forth and rising, the gaze of *lan* beholds more than what eyes can see.

We see thus how the poem performs the act of *lan* through several postures: by gazing afar (at “far islets”); surveying comprehensively (across dusk and dawn, north and south); by looking closely (such as at bamboo sheaths); and lastly by an observation of phenomena that penetrates cosmic patterns (evinced by configurations of hexagram components).

While the poem does not explicitly reference imperial iconography—such as the sky and sun in Cao Pi’s version of *youlan* discussed earlier—its postures of viewing are no less magisterial and sweeping. The itinerary from South mountain to North mountain is in effect a pathway along a world-ordering axis; and elements of the landscape, manifest as images of the *Changes*, disclose the universal principle of growth.

The poem’s closing, which turns to the motif of communal enjoyment, also operates within *youlan* conventions. Representative of this motif is the following *Yiwen leiju* illustration of *youlan* in which the ruler is depicted as sharing his pleasures.

新序曰，晉平公遊西河，中流而歎曰，嗟乎，安得賢士，與共此樂乎。	*New Compilation*: When Duke Ping of Jin toured West River and sailed in the river current, he sighed, “Ah! How do I attain worthy men with whom to share this joy?”[128]

We see here a normative notion of enjoyment as communal: pleasure is consummated in partaking. Insofar as *youlan* is generically linked to the ruler’s tour, its form of communal pleasure takes place between the ruler and his officials (“worthy men”). As a variation on this, Xie closes the poem with the failure of such consummation in communality.

17	撫化心無厭， 覽物眷彌重。	Consoled with change, my heart is unwearied; Surveying all things, my sympathetic regard intensifies.
19	不惜去人遠， 但恨莫與同。	I do not rue I am far from others; I only regret there is no one to share [it] with.
21	孤遊非情歎， 賞廢理誰通。	Lone wandering is not what my feelings lament: With the appreciative one cast away, there is no one to penetrate the patterns.

The accumulation of viewing modes demonstrated hitherto (summed up in line 18 as “surveying all things”) is matched in the final lines by an intensification of feeling. Looking and feeling commingle in the visual-affective act of *juan* 眷: to turn back and regard with tender fondness.[129] I call this regard “sympathetic” for its sense of connectedness with what is seen. Even though this regard is not directed towards an actual human being, it is nevertheless felt to be social, and figured as the sociality of persons connecting.

---

[128] Cited in *Yiwen leiju*, 28.500.

[129] Compare the visual-affective action *gu* 顧, which also means “to look back at,” as well as “to care for” and “to attend to.” The philologist Duan Yucai 段玉裁 explained that *gu* is to turn one’s head but not one’s whole body, whereas *juan* is to fully turn around and look back. (眷者，顧之深也。顧止于側而已，眷則至于反.”)

The impulse towards sociality expressed in line 20, "I only regret there is no one to share [it] with," resonates with the commonplace illustrated in the *Yiwen leiju*, "How do I attain worthy men with whom to share this joy?" This commonplace sets in play not only the social nature of pleasure but also the particular roles of that social relation: namely, the ruler and his officials (his "worthy men"). While the poem makes no explicit reference to politics, the connotations of the verb *fei* 廢 are suggestive and compelling. Translated above as "cast away," it also carries the specific sense of being "ousted" or "expelled from office." Gu Shaobai dates this poem to 425, a year after the heir apparent Prince Yizhen 義真 was murdered in 424.[130] Prince Yizhen was indeed someone who "appreciated" Xie's talents; they belonged to a close-knit coterie, and it is said that the prince planned to raise Xie to the high position of chancellor upon his ascension to the throne.[131] Following this reading, the poem's references to "lone wandering" and being "separate from others" refer to Xie's forced exile to his estate after Prince Yizhen was killed. The final line thus laments the loss of his patron and favor at court. More importantly, it also reminds the reader that a failure of recognition has occurred. "With the appreciative one cast away, there is no one to penetrate the patterns." That is, there is no one to penetrate Xie's own capacity to penetrate patterns—so artfully demonstrated throughout the poem by its various postures of viewing.

Xie's most well-known poem, the *youlan* piece "Ascending the poolside belvedere 等池上樓," was written in exile at his estate in Yongjia, where he was registered before moving to, and re-registering at, Shi'ning.[132] Whereas "Going from South Mountain…" presents the Shi'ning estate as a cosmic center, "Ascending the poolside belvedere" meditates on his Yongjia dwelling as a remote periphery. Unlike the 'typical' *youlan* pieces (such as Cao Pi's poem on the imperial park, and Xie's on his Shi'ning estate), this work does not showcase a magisterial, kinglike gaze. Yet we can understand why the *Wen xuan* nevertheless categorizes the poem as *youlan* once we recognize exile as a variant of the capital motif. In Yongjia, which Xie's refers to in the poem as a "remote shore," Xie is nevertheless oriented in his thoughts towards the capital.

	登池上樓	"Ascending the poolside belvedere"
1	潛虬媚幽姿,	The submerged dragon attracts with its cloistered manner;
	飛鴻響遠音。	The soaring goose sounds out far-reaching tones.

[130] Gu also understands the last line as referring to the prince's death. This seems to be his reasoning for dating the poem to 425. Xie was indeed at his Shi'ning residence from 423 to 426, so the year 425 is a reasonable conjecture. *Xie Lingyun ji jiao zhu* (2004): 175; 178, n. 21; and as 591–2, which discuss the poems dated to the year 425.

[131] *Song shu*, 61.1635–6.

[132] Since Xie was exiled to Yongjia in 423, the poem is dated to that time. Li Shan's annotation to the poem title locates the belvedere in Yongjia commandery (*Wen xuan*, 22.1039). The local gazetteer *Yongjia xian zhi* 永嘉縣志, identifies a spot (retroactively) named "Duke Xie's Pond 謝公池" as the site where this poem was composed. Xie held various properties in Yongjia, where he was registered before transferring his registration to Shi'ning. For a review of the documents regarding Xie's landholdings in Yongjia and the sites commemorating his stay there, see: Chen Bingyuan 陳冰原, "*Xie Lingyun yiji he jinianxing jianzhu* 謝靈運遺跡和紀念性建築," in *Xie Lingyun zai Yongjia* 謝靈運在永嘉 of *Xie Lingyun yanjiu congshu* 謝靈運研究叢書 (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2001): Vol. 5, pp. 43–51.

3 薄霄愧雲浮, I draw near cirrus and am shamed by [the goose's] cloudlike buoyancy;
棲川怍淵沈。 I rest over streams and am chagrined by [the dragon's] abyssal depth.[133]

5 進德智所拙, As for advancing my merits, my intelligence botches it;[134]
退耕力不任。 As for withdrawing to plow fields, my strength can't take it.

7 徇祿反窮海, Chasing an officer's salary, I've turned about-face to the remotest shore;
臥痾對空林。 Bedridden by illness, I face empty woods.[135]

8 衾枕昧節候, Lying in covers, I've been in the dark about the season;
褰開暫窺臨 Lifting open the curtain, I momentarily peek out.[136]

11 傾耳聆波瀾, Ears cocked, I listen to rippling waves;
舉目眺嶇嶔。 Eyes raised, I gaze upon rugged crests.

13 初景革緒風, The emerging sun dispels lingering winds;
新陽改故陰。 New radiance alters old shadows.

15 池塘生春草, Pond banks sprout spring grasses;
園柳變鳴禽。 Garden willows change [to] singing birds.

17 祁祁傷豳歌, "Bountiful bunches"—I am pained at the song of Bin;
萋萋感楚吟。 "Lush and luxuriant"—I am moved by the chant of Chu.

19 索居易永久, Dwelling in isolation, my days easily become long;
離群難處心。 Split from the group, I find it hard to settle my heart.

21 持操豈獨古, "Holding firm" is not exclusive to those of the past;
無悶徵在今。 "Unperturbed" I substantiate in the present.[137]

The poem opens in lines 1–4 by contrasting two images: the soaring goose and the submerged dragon, which correspond to, respectively, center and periphery. The soaring goose stands for the high official whose achievements place him at the center of power; the submerged dragon is metaphor for the recluse who, withdrawn from political life, lies on the margins.[138] These two images mark extreme horizons that are viewed as unattainable from the mountain-and-water

---

[133] The verb "settle" (literally, to "perch 棲") is conventionally associated with hermit abodes, and is most commonly formulated in conjunction with mountains (e.g., "perching on cliffs"). Here, the verb is applied to "streams" since the water dragon is the operative metaphor for the recluse.

[134] From the fourth line to the *qian* 乾 hexagram: "The gentleman advances his merits and cultivates his occupation with the desire to meet with opportunity. So, he is without blame. 君子進德修業, 欲及時也, 故無咎。" *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 1.20.

[135] Zhang Xian 張銑 , one of the *Liu chen* 六臣 commentators, identifies the shore as Yongjia. *Liu chen zhu Wen xuan* 六臣注文選 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987): 22.408.

[136] Absent in the Li Shan edition of the *Wen xuan*, or in the *Yiwen leiju*, lines 8–9 have been reconstituted from other editions. Including the couplet does not affect my interpretation of the poem, but it supplies an easier-to-follow transition to the ensuing lines. For a comparison of the various editions regarding this couplet, see Hu Kejia 胡克家, *Wen xuan kaoyi* 文選考異, *juan* 4.

[137] *Wen xuan*, 22.1039.

[138] The image of the submerged dragon draws on the first line of the *qian* 乾 hexagram: "The submerged dragon is not plied to a purpose (潛龍勿用)." *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 1.17. The nineteen old poems and *yuefu* 樂府 are early examples in poetry of anthropomorphic animals paired into couplets. The closest antecedent for Xie's formulation is a Tao Qian 陶潛 couplet, which shares the same verbs and grammatical structure: "Gazing on the clouds, I am ashamed at the high birds; overlooking the water, I am chagrined by the cavorting fish. (望雲慚高鳥, 臨水愧遊魚)" *Jin shi*, 16.982.

vantage points on Xie's Yongjia estate. When he climbs the estate mountain and thereby "draws near cirrus," he feels ashamed that there still greater heights beyond his reach. When he withdraws to his remote dwelling to "rest over streams," he is chagrined that he cannot fully settle in—he occupies the posture of the recluse only superficially, however much he may be attracted to the depths of its "cloistered manner."

Lines 5–8 transpose the height-depth axis marked by the goose and dragon to the coordinates of center and periphery. The key verbs in lines 5 and 6—"advance 進" and "withdraw 退"—are oriented vis-à-vis the political center.[139] Xie explains that his exile to the marginal Yongjia was due to his inability to "advance" towards the center by presenting his merits at court; having botched his prospects at career advancement, he "withdraws" from court to plow the fields of backwaters. Line 7 emphasizes his spatial and political marginality: "Chasing an officer's salary, I've turned about-face to the remotest seashore." The adjective *qiong* 窮, translated as "remotest," primarily signifies the empire's farthest reaches. It also carries the secondary sense of a career dead-end. (In this latter sense, the opposite is *da* 達: unimpeded access and career advancement.) The verb "turn about-face 反" speaks to Xie's troubled orientation that still points to the capital: his mind looks towards the center, but his bodily person, chasing an exile's salary, heads in the opposite direction to the "remotest shore."[140]

This trope of dual orientation, in which one has turned about-face from where one yearns to face, resonates with the *Zhuangzi* formulation:

> My bodily person resides on *river and sea* (江海),
> but my heart abides below the palace towers.[141]

Line 7's "remotest shore"—literally, "remotest sea 窮海"—recapitulates the first half of the *Zhuangzi* formulation, and leaves the second half unsaid—just like the line from Xie's "intent to rebel" poem: "Always I have been a man of river and sea."[142] These are permutations of the same idea: one occupies the margins (the remotest sea) but is in fact preoccupied with the capital. Line 7's "turned about-face" sets up the observation of the ensuing line: now, he instead "faces empty woods"—a pointed contradiction of his inner compass.

Xie does not accept his marginal station, and articulates his refusal as an inability: "As for withdrawing to plow fields, my strength can't take it." Unfit for rustic life, or finding it unbefitting, Xie is no Tao Qian. The difference between their self-narratives is illustrative. For Tao Qian, going to the countryside would be *fan* 反 in the sense of "return," a homecoming for

---

[139] *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 7.308: "Transformations are 'images' of advancing and withdrawing. (變化者，進退之象也。)"
[140] The graph 反 is interchangeable with 返 ("to return"), but reading it this way does not clarify the line because it raises the question of why Xie would consider the exile to Yongjia a "return." On this point, I disagree with Gu Shaobai, who by taking 反 as "return," is pressed to reconcile his interpretation with the fact that Yongjia is nowhere near Xie's native home in Shi'ning. Unable to supply an explanation, he then concludes that Xie's choice of diction is "inappropriate 不宜" and "far-fetched 牽強." This conundrum is averted once we see that lines 7 and 8 form a parallel couplet that pair the verbs 反 and 對 as antonyms: the latter means "to face," the former, "to turn about-face." That the move to Yongjia is an exilic journey instead of a coming-home is reinforced by the word *qiong* 窮 ("remotest") which is used to describe the Yongjia shore. *Qiong* also carries the sense of a career dead-end, whose antonym is *da* 達 (unimpeded access and career advancement). Gu Shaobai is also mistaken in interpreting *qiong* as "poor 貧窮." Gu Shaobai, *Xie Lingyun ji jiaozhu*, *op. cit*, p. 96–7.
[141] *Zhuangzi jishi*, *op. cit.*, 9b.979.
[142] I discussed the "intent to rebel" poems in section II:e.

one's true disposition; for Xie, it is *fan* 反 in the sense of a "turning about-face" from one's inner compass. Accordingly, Xie's poem follows a narrative arc that finds resolution not by embracing his marginal circumstance but by a firm resolve against it.

The poem's narrative progression—its story of change—is structured by allusions to the *Changes*, whose passages bookend the poem at beginning and end. I will discuss the closing allusion later. For now, consider the opening allusion and how it is developed in the poem's middle section. The "submerged dragon" of lines 1 and 3 is the underlying protagonist in canonical traditions surrounding the *qian* 乾 hexagram, which takes the dragon as its dominant image.

子曰乾坤, 其易之門邪。 乾, 陽物也; 坤, 陰物也。	The Master said, "As for the [opening hexagrams] *qian* and *kun*, are they not the gateway to the Changes? *Qian* refers to things in which *yang* energy predominates; *kun* refers to things in which *yin* energy predominates.[143]
潛龍勿用, 陽氣潛藏。	The submerged dragon is not plied to a purpose: *yang* energy lies in hiding.[144]

That dragon's state of being *qian* 潛, "submerged" or "hidden," refers to a phase of inactivity ("not plied to a purpose") that waits upon the opportune time for renewed engagement. "*Yang* energy lies in hiding" signals an incipient emergence of *yang*. In Xie's poem, this principle of *yang*'s incipient emergence comes to be recognized when, in line 10, the viewer observes on his estate the arrival of spring. Spring, after all is, the season of *yang*: a phase of growth and generation. *Qian* is the "gateway" to the *Changes*; and spring marks the beginning of a new calendrical cycle. Lines 11–12 revisit the mountain and water scenes of lines 3–4 but they are now seen in the process of transforming.

11	傾耳聆波瀾, 舉目眺嶇嶔。	Ears cocked, I listen to rippling waves; Eyes raised, I gaze upon rugged crests.
13	初景革緒風, 新陽改故陰。	The emerging sun dispels lingering winds; New radiance (*yang*) alters old shadows (*yin*).
15	池塘生春草, 園柳變鳴禽。	Pond banks sprout spring grasses; Garden willows change [to] song birds.

With the rise of bright spring and the waning of winter winds, "new radiance (*yang*) alters old shadows (*yin*)." The verb "alters" implies that there is no discrete divide separating light and dark—"radiance" does not instantly replace "shadow" but transforms. The two meet, mix and transmute across shades of graduated alteration, like the *yin-yang* symbol shifting its proportions of black and white. Grasses too emerge. Verdant growth—a process otherwise imperceptible—appears manifest as a palpably ebullient metamorphosis: "pond banks sprout spring grasses."[145]

---

[143] *Zhouyi zhengyi*, *Xi ci* 繫辭, 1.23.

[144] *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 1.23 (from is from the "Commentary to the words 文言." *Cf.,* "The Master said, 'Aren't the [first hexagrams] *qian* and kun the gateway to the Changes?' *Qian* is the principle of things in which yang energy dominates; kun is the principle of things in which yin energy dominates.

[145] This line, perhaps Xie's most famous, is remarkable for combining an apparently simple directness with deftly crafted diction. When the verb *sheng* 生 is read as intransitive, the line is simple enough: "at pond banks, spring

In line 16, greenery also transforms: “garden willows change [or, become] singing birds.” Remarkably, the line suggests that the birds have appeared not through migratory flight but by the transformation of willows in the vernal garden.

Amidst flux, the observer remains unwavering in wanting to turn back towards the center. Birds react to spring’s changes with song, but he, as it were, sings to his own tune. He expresses his constancy of purpose by referring to classic songs that, like him, perpetuate unchanged.

17	祁祁傷豳歌,	“Bountiful bunches”—I am pained at the song of Bin;
	萋萋感楚吟。	“Lush and luxuriant”—I am moved by the chant of Chu.

The phrase “bountiful bunches” comes from Bin song “Seventh Month 七月” in the *Classic of Poetry.*

春日遲遲。	The spring days draw out,
采蘩祁祁。	And gather white aster in *bountiful bunches*.
女心傷悲。	A girl’s heart is *pained with sadness*,
殆及公子同歸。	Till she can together with her prince go home.[146]

In “Seventh Month,” the appearance of white aster in “bountiful bunches” marks time as both a term of the year and a phase in one’s life. Spring days feel “drawn out” because long deferred is the day of return to one’s home, and to one’s lord.[147] The accumulation of “bountiful bunches” points to durations endured, and to longings frustrated by long distance. Xie’s allusion to these lyrics about returning home with one’s prince—“till she can together with her prince go home”—holds a political valence: he may be exiled for now to the “remotest shore” but his aim still lies with the political center and his former patron prince Liu Yizhen. Line 18, which alludes to the Chu song “Summoning the Recluse 招隱士,” reiterates the normative urgency of return.

王孫遊兮不歸,	Scion of kings, you roam, yet to return;
春草生兮萋萋。	Spring grasses grow, lush and luxuriant.[148]

As one who has wandered from his proper station, he is like a royal heir deprived of the legacy that is his due. He may be a “scion of kings” but it is not his political career that flourishes but the irrelevant growth of “spring grasses” in the hinterlands. This exilic wandering is the opposite of Cao Pi’s tour in the imperial park, and Huan Xuan’s magisterial “ride beyond the dust”: it is the errant excursion of a scion who has “turned about face” from his rightful place.

The penultimate couplet laments a coterie that has been broken—a failed gathering of “superbly commended” around a patron figure (as in the above poem about Huan Xuan). In Xie’s poem, the group is sundered.

---

grasses grow.” Yet, the verb, situated in the active position between subject and object, can also be read as causative: pond banks “sprout” (or, literally, “grow”) spring grasses. This latter reading is corroborated by the couplet’s matching line, whose verb in the parallel position is *bian* 變, “change [into],” or “become.” To avoid leveling *sheng* to its most prosaic sense, I have opted to translate its more active and suggestive sense.

[146] My emphasis. Mao #154; *Maoshi zhengyi* 毛是正義, 8.578.

[147] In explaining Xie’s allusion to the “song of Bin 豳歌,” Liu Lü’s 劉履 commentary quotes this entire stanza of “Seventh Month” including the line about returning with the prince. See Liu Lü, *Feng ya yi* 風雅翼, collected in the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書.

[148] *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注, 12.233.

19	索居易永久， 離群難處心。	Dwelling in isolation, my days easily become long, Split from the group, I find it hard to settle my heart.

The phrase "settle (處) my heart" explains discontent as dislocation: misplaced, he is not at home here. This alienated orientation is felt as the desolation of social distance. It is the separation of being "split from the group, and "dwelling in isolation." If we situate this couplet among Xie's other works, and the *youlan* series at large, we can see that this isolation is not the absence of a general companionship but rather the lack of a particular sociality. This sense of isolation stems precisely from the failure to actualize what Xie elsewhere calls "appreciation": the hierarchical bond of recognition joining lord and servant. It is only in a network of "appreciation" that he could truly "settle" his heart, and find his place.

The closing couplet states that despite changes around him—the contingencies of his present station, and the shifts of seasonal cycle—he holds steadfast.

21	持操豈獨古， 無悶徵在今。	"Holding firm" is not exclusive to those of the past;[149] "Unperturbed" I substantiate in the present.

The lines speak of "past" and "present" only to immediately annul their difference. Constancy is precisely the sameness of past and present: he insists he will remain as he was. By maintaining a firmness that is "not exclusive to those of the past," he imagines himself as belonging to a community of like-minded persons, which are represented by the figures in the "song of Bin" and "chant of Chu." This imagined community of the resolute, for the time being, compensates for the unrealized coterie of appreciation and patronage from which he has been split.

Once we reach the poem's end, it becomes clear that the piece's opening and closing is organized around references to the *Changes*. The image in lines 1 and 3 of the submerged dragon is drawn from the first *yang* line of hexagram *qian* 乾: "The submerged dragon is not plied to a purpose." The poem's closing line—"'Unperturbed' I substantiate in the present"—alludes once again to the image of the submerged dragon in the *Changes*.

初九曰，潛龍勿用。何謂也。子曰，龍德而隱者也。不易乎世，不成乎名，遯世無悶，不見是而無悶。樂則行之，憂則違之，確乎其不可拔，潛龍也。	The hexagram's First *yang* line says, "The submerged dragon is not plied to a purpose." What does this mean? The Master said: It means he has a dragon's power (*de*) but is hidden. He does not change with the times, and does not find completion in fame. He has receded from the world but is *unperturbed*; he receives no affirmation but is *unperturbed*. If something pleases him, he does it; if it displeases him, he avoids it. Firmly unrootable is what characterizes the submerged dragon.[150]

[149] *Zhuangzi jishi*, 1B. 110: "Just now, you were sitting, and now you get up—how come you do not hold fast?" The received text of the *Zhuangzi* has the variant *te cao* 持操 while the *Wen xuan* (both the primary text and Li Shan's annotation) has the variant *chi cao* 持操. Regardless of the lexicographical variation, the phrase in the context of the *Zhuangzi* certainly means to remain constant and unchanging.

[150] *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 1.17. The phrase *wumen* also appears in the hexagram *Daguo* 大過, *Zhouyi zhengyi* 3.148: "The gentleman stands alone yet is not afraid; he has retreated from the world but is unperturbed. (君子以獨立不懼，遯世無悶)" *Cf., Quan Sanguo wen* 全三國文, 47.1319: "To dwell at an impasse in isolation, yet remain unperturbed… (處窮獨而不悶)"

"Firmly unrootable," the dragon is not pulled by external forces. Even when he has "receded" to the margins, he centered in his own sense of what is right—in what is pleasing and displeasing irrespective of the affirmation of others. Since "he does not change with the times," he is free of emotional disturbance ("unperturbed"). In the final line of Xie's poem, the narrator declares that he now demonstrates and substantiates (*zheng* 徵) this principle of "unperturbed" resoluteness. The narrator repeatedly evokes the *Changes* only to finally posit his own imperviousness to change.

Nevertheless, the poem holds an implicit narrative of change, which is reflected in the dragon image's shifting significance. At the poem's opening, the "submerged dragon" represented a marginal recluse, a life for which the narrator claims to be unfit; by poem's end, the narrator—through the declarative "I substantiate"—is invested with a "dragon's power (*long de* 龍德)" that is fit to be instrumental in shaping world affairs. Hidden potential comes to light like spring's transformations: "The submerged dragon is not plied to a purpose: *yang* energy lies in hiding" gives way to "New radiance (*yang*) alters old shadows (*yin*)." Thus, the poem does not simply repeat the dragon image but rectifies it: what was once *fan* 反 as having "turned about face" will be righted in due time as normative *fan*: to "return" to one's rightful place.

---

[i] In modern-day Ma'anshan 馬鞍山. Li Shan's commentary cites the *Record of Huan Xuan*, which states that "Huan Xuan hailed from Gushu, where he built a large manor compound." *Wen xuan*, 22.1032.

[ii] See commentary at *Wen xuan*, 22.1043. Several *li* north of Jiankang, A.K.A. Jinling 金陵. See: Liang Zhangju 梁章鉅 (1775-1849), *Wen Xuan Pangzheng* 文選旁證 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2000): 545.

[iii] Li Shan's commentary notes that the lake refers to the two Shamanka lakes cited in Xie Lingyun's "Mountain dwelling exposition." *Wen xuan*, 22.1036. I translated the *lou* 樓 (multi-story structure) in the title according to what it is called in poem itself: a *xie* 榭, which is a roofed room at the top of a tower used for viewing.

[iv] *Taiping huanyu ji* 太平寰宇記 , *juan* 99, says that Xishe Hall was two *li* southwest of the Wenzhou provincial capital, and is the latter-day location of West Mountain Monastery 西山寺.

[v] *Taiping huanyu ji*, *juan* 99, says that South Station was one *li* from (the administrative center of) Wenzhou 溫州. The *Wen xuan* commentator Zhang Xian 張銑 annotates the poem title, "The South Station where Xie Lingyun stayed. (靈運所居之南亭)" This 'station' seems to be a temporary lodging instead of a property registered with Xie.

[vi] Li Shan cites Xie's *Record of Roaming Famous Mountains* 游名山志: "Red Stone is southeast of the road between Yongning and Angu counties. (永寧、安固二縣中路東南便是赤石)" *Wen xuan*, 22.1042.

[vii] Based on the *Research on East Mountain* 東山考 by Sun Zhi 孫枝 (Song dynasty), Huang Jie 黃節 locates Stonewall Lecture Hall in Stonewall valley of Xie's Shi'ning estate. See: *Xie Kangle shi zhu* 謝康樂詩注 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1958).

[viii] The Yuan dynasty commentator Liu Lü understands that Xie Lingyun traveled to the Stonegate site because of his extended stay at the northern compound of his Shi'ning estate. The two references to Stonegate in Xie's "Mountain Dwelling exposition" also indicate that Stonegate was in the area of Xie's estate in Shi'ning. This site is not to be confused with the "Stonegate" of Lu Mountain 盧山.

[ix] *Xie Lingyun ji jiao zhu*: 76.

[x] *Xie Lingyun ji jiao zhu*: 77.

[xi] *Wen xuan*, 22.1059.

Chapter Four: Connecting passages and conclusion

I. Connecting passages of far roaming 127
II. The social encounter of landscape 133
III. Conclusion 143

I. Connecting passages of far roaming

Unlike poems discussed in previous chapters, Xie Lingyun's poem, "Surveying the fields and Climbing Panyu Mountain in Haikou 行田登海口盤嶼山," is not collected in the *Wen Xuan*, and the text as we have it is reconstructed from different sources and might be incomplete.[1] Aside from the dictates of happenstance that attend the survival of any text across centuries, its partial transmission may well be a function of the poem's failure to conform to conventional notions of what landscape poetry is, and Xie Lingyun's poetic legacy. Indeed, the poem devotes little attention to describing natural topography. However, as the title—"Climbing Panyu Mountain"—indicates, the poem works within the generic conventions of *youlan* 遊覽 ("excursion and the panoptic view"): taking an excursion and gazing out from a high vantage point. Its particular interest for us is the relationship between traditions of kingly roaming and Xie's formulation of excursion.

Specifically, a key couplet frames the practice of excursion as a compensation for a long frustrated desire.

年迫願豈申,	Old age encroaches—how could one's wish have ever reached forth (i.e., been fulfilled)?
游遠心能通。	In roaming far, the heart finds a way through.

This couplet speaks of a desire that has been thwarted over a lifetime, and made urgent with the onset of old age. This desire has remained unrealized—literally, unable to "reach forth" (*shen* 申)—as if it must be expressed and externalized in space to be sated.[2] Nevertheless, there is a kind of fulfillment—an opportunity for this desire to actualize in space—in the act of far roaming, which allows his heart to "to find a way through" (*tong* 通). The key term *tong* variously implies being able to "carry through, "find release," and "see through." The metaphors for desire and fulfillment are both spatial: the heart yearns to "reach forth"; finding the "way through" promises relief, a sense of connectedness, and perhaps the awareness of knowing through and through. Thus, what Xie calls "roaming

[1] Lines 9–14 are recorded in *Guang wenxuan*, *juan* 10, and *Shiji* 詩紀, *juan* 47 (Lu Qinli 逯欽立, *Song shi* 宋詩, 2.1168). Lines 1–8 are supplied by the *Qianlong Wenzhoufu zhi* 乾隆溫州府志, *juan* 8. See Gu Shaobo 顧紹柏, *Xie Lingyun ji jiaozhu* 謝靈運集校注 (Taibei: Liren shuju, 2004): 63, n. 1; *Sheng xian zhi* 剩縣志 (1934; rpt. Taipei: Chengwen, 1975), 130.

[2] This use of *shen* as a verb of fulfillment via excursion is part of Xie's poetic idiom. See Lu Qinli, 2:1160, 1173, 1178. *Cf.*, the similar verb *zhan* 展, "open forth," in Lu Qinli, 2:1160, 1161, 1166, 1169.

far” affords, if not complete fulfillment, at least a partial compensation, or a roundabout passage through.

What is his age-old desire? The answer is not stated outright but presented in the poem elliptically with references to ancient and mythic tours by kings. It is these references to kingly excursion that lead up to the above-cited couplet. Let us turn now to the fpoem’s first half, which corresponds to the words in the title “Surveying the fields.”[3] (The poem’s second half, which I will discuss later, corresponds to “Climbing Panyu Mountian in Haikou.”)

	行田登海口盤嶼山	“Surveying fields and climbing Panyu Mountain in Haikou”
1	齊景戀遄臺, 周穆厭紫宮。	Duke Jing of Qi couldn’t give up what he lovingly saw while touring Chuan Tower;[4] King Mu of Zhou was surfeited by staying at his Purple Palace.[5]
3	牛山空洒涕, 瑤池實歡悰。	At Ox Mountain, [Duke Jing] shed tears in vain; At Jade Pond, [King Mu] enjoyed conviviality in full.[6]
5	年迫願豈申, 游遠心能通。	Old age encroaches—how could one’s wish have ever reached forth? In far roaming, the heart finds a way through.
7	大寶不歡娛, 況乃守畿封。	If the Supreme Prize can fail to bring joy,[7] How much more so is watching over hinterland?

We can distinguish here two contrasting narratives of excursion: the tours undertaken by rulers, and Xie’s own present excursion, which we know from the title is that of “surveying fields.” The kingly excursions are represented by King Mu of Zhou who roamed amongst divinities and immortals in the otherworldly realms of Mount Kunlun, and Duke Jing of Qi who gazed upon the expanse of his kingdom. We infer that Xie’s own modest excursion of “surveying fields” is a far remove from what he truly desires,

[3] These eight lines have been reconstructed as a single chunk. It is possible that there are lines either preceding or following them that have not survived. See footnote 1.

[4] Among the extant texts, there is no single episode that links Duke Jing with both Chuan Tower and his feeling *lian* 戀 towards what he sees. It seems that Xie’s allusion to Chuan Tower has conflated it, or loosely lumped it together, with another episode about Duke Jing at Ox Mountain (see footnote 10). The only anecdote that mentions Chuan Tower comes from the *Yanzi chunchiu* 晏子春秋. The gist of that anecdote—which espouses the importance of “balanced harmony” (*he* 和), instead of “conformity” (*tong* 同), between ruler and minister—is not germane to understanding Xie’s allusion to Chuan Tower. *Yanzi chunqiu jishi* 晏子春秋集釋, 7.442.

[5] King Mu’s dwelling, the Purple Palace, is named after the constellation where the Sky God 天帝, or Taiyi 太一, dwells. *Huainanzi jishi* 淮南子集釋, 3.200.

[6] The Queen Mother of the West banqueted King Mu of Zhou at the Mount Kunlun’s Jade Pond. *Liezi jishi* 列子集釋, 3.98.

[7] The “Supreme Treasure” refers to the imperial throne. This phrase comes from the Appended Words to the *Changes*: “The supreme power of Heaven and Earth is called Life; the supreme prize of the sage is called the Ruling Seat (*wei* 位).” *Zhouyi zhengyi* 周易正義, 8.350.

since it is but the distant "hinterland" of Panyu Mountain that is surveyed.[8] By contrast, King Mu and Duke Jing were centrally positioned in the seat of power.

It is illustrative to compare this poem's treatment of the topic of surveying fields to another similarly titled poem by Xie: "Surveying farm fields along the path below Whitestone Ridge 白石巖下徑行田." As we recall from my analysis of that piece in Chapter Two, it narrates in detail the transformative projects that Xie envisioned for the land to make it productive and beneficial to the populace. The text attended to the concrete administrative works—agricultural and hydraulic—that would demonstrate his worthiness in governing a territory. For example:

千頃帶遠堤,	A thousand acres would be girdled by faraway levees;
萬里瀉長汀。	Ten-thousand miles drained into long shoals.
州流涓澮合,	Flowing among islets, tiny trickles would converge;
連統塍埒并。	Linked in networks, field paddies would combine.[9]

In comparison, Xie's poem about surveying the fields at Panyu Mountain does narrate the labors involved in surveying and developing land, but focuses instead on kingly excursions—which need not demonstrate that one is qualified to govern but simply presumes it. It is these kingly tours that Xie desires but has failed to actualize. We can regard these two "surveying fields" poems as flipsides of the same desire for territorial dominion: the Whitestone Ridge poem articulates this desire through his vision of concrete plans (in the yet-to-be-realized, subjunctive tense "would"); the Panyu Mountain poem takes the frustration of this desire as its point of departure, and looks towards the reference points against which his failure is measured.

One such reference point is the poem's allusion to Duke Jing of Qi. Not surprisingly, the same anecdote Duke Jing is also cited by the commonplace compendium *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 to illustrate the conventions of the *youlan* subgenre. This passage combines the topoi of touring, gazing, enjoyment, and immortality.

齊景公遊於牛山而北望齊曰，美哉國乎，鬱鬱蓁蓁。使古無死者，則寡人將去此而何之。	When Duke Jing of Qi toured Ox Mountain, he gazed to the north at Qi and exclaimed, "Lovely is the kingdom, lush and luxuriant! If no one has ever averted death, where could I possibly go upon leaving this behind (when I die)?"[10]

The state tour represents the height of enjoyment: to tour the kingdom is to look upon all that can be had in life—and even stirs thoughts about how such pleasure must, with death, cease. This paramount pleasure is a privilege of rulers, who— to use Xie's phrase in line 7—holds the "Supreme Prize." This supreme tour has continually eluded Xie. Instead of occupying the central seat of power, and the pleasures it affords, his station is merely that

---

[8] *Taiping huanyu ji* 太平寰宇記 states that Panyu Mountain is 70 *li* northeast of (the administrative center) of Yongjia 永嘉. Therefore, this poem seems to have been written during Xie Lingyun's exilic posting in Yongjia.
[9] Lu Qinli, *Song shi*, 2:1168.
[10] This passage comes from the *Han Shi waizhuan jishi* 韓詩外傳解釋, 10.350–1 (10/11); cf., *Liezi jishi*, 6.213. A shorter version of this episode is cited by the *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 to illustrate *youlan*; see my appendix.

of "watching over hinterland" (line 8). If even Duke Jing could "shed tears in vain" over the paramount pleasures of his tour, then Xie's own peripheral status and frustrated desire is shown all the more starkly.

For Duke Jing, what is found wanting in the present excursion leads to thoughts of another progression through space. Pondering mortality, Duke Jing wonders where he will go (*zhi* 之) when the life journey ends. He yearns to travel to immortal lands that lay beyond. For Xie, "surveying fields" and "watching over hinterland" is the frustrating predicament, and the solution, the "way through," is an alternative progress called far roaming. This solution can perhaps only be articulated in negative terms: it is not like this present excursion but rather must be something else, something far from the common path.

Insofar as the solution of "roaming far" is described in positive terms, it is articulated precisely through what lies between what is known and unknown: the age-old myths surrounding King Mu. He too undertook excursion after becoming unsatisfied ("surfeited by") by his residence at the Purple Palace. Line 4—"At Jade Pond, he enjoyed conviviality in full"—describes King Mu's legendary journey that took him to Mount Kunlun where he was received by the goddess Queen Mother of the West. The Jade Pond episode, which comes from the *Traditions of the Mu Son-of-Heaven* 穆天子傳, is worth citing at length since it sets in play a key idea that is carried up in the poem's latter half: that roaming far in landscapes—what the text calls "mountains and streams" in the "outer reaches"—is the exclusive privilege of kings.

> 天子觴西王母于瑤池之上。西王母為天子謠，曰：白雲在天，丘陵自出。道路悠遠，山川間之，將子無死，尚能複來。天子答之曰：予歸東土，和治諸夏。萬民平均，吾顧見汝。比及三年，將複而野。

> The Son-of-Heaven [King Mu] toasted the Queen Mother of the West at the Jade Pond. She sang a capella for him: "White clouds are in the sky, and the hills naturally emerge. The road is distant, and is separated in between by mountains and streams. I ask that you will never die, so that you may come again." The Son-of-Heaven replied, "I return to the lands in the east to administer the domains of Xia. People are all ordinary, yet I alone get to meet you. In three years, I will come back again to these outer reaches (i.e., to Mount Kunlun)."[11]

As the Son of Heaven, King Mu is able to enjoy the company of immortals: "People are all ordinary, yet I alone get to meet you." The pathway to such supreme enjoyment is "landscape" (*shanchuan* 山川, lit. "mountains and streams"), which the goddess calls the "middle space" (*jian* 間) that separates the eastern domains that King Mu governs from her immortal lands in the west. "Mountain and streams" are in effect both the obstacle and the gateway to the exclusive pleasure enjoyed by rulers.

Using the language of the *Record of King Mu* and Xie's poem, we can say that "mountains and streams" is both the problem and the solution: landscape is both the "separating middle space" (*jian*) as well as the "way through" (*tong*). In the context of the King Mu legend, the periphery—what King Mu calls the "wilds" or "outer reaches" (*ye* 野)—is not a backward and limited "hinterland" like the one that Xie watches over, but

---

[11] *Mutianzi zhuan* 穆天子傳, 3.23. *Cf.*, parallel text in *Liezi jishi*, 3.98.

rather the extreme pleasure available at the extreme limits of the world. It is something other and greater than even the “Supreme Prize” that is rulership.

It is precisely this kind of otherworldly excursion, in which landscape is the gateway of kings to other realms, that the second half of Xie’s poem re-stages. Just as King Mu had encountered the Queen Mother of the West at the outer limits of the world, so also Xie imagines meeting a goddess at the edge of his field of vision.

9	羈苦孰云慰,	The wayfarer’s hardship no one can console,
	觀海藉朝風。	Gazing over the sea, I hitch on dawn’s winds.[12]
11	莫辨洪波極,	None can discern the vast tide’s outer limit,
	誰知大壑東。	Nor know the great gully’s eastward end.[13]
13	依稀採菱歌,	Hazy and indistinct, the “Plucking Chestnuts” song [I hear],[14]
	彷彿含嚬容。	In likeness, a countenance with furrowed brows [I see].[15]
15	遨遊碧沙渚,	I range islets of emerald sand;
	遊衍丹山峰。	I roam peaks of cinnabar hills.[16]

Whereas the poem’s first half (which corresponds to the title’s “Surveying the Fields”) was about the dissatisfaction of watching over hinterland, the second half (which corresponds to the title’s “Climbing Panyu Mountain”) stages a meeting with a goddess. Using the *youlan* commonplace of performing a sweeping gaze from a mountaintop, the poem has the viewer looking out over the expansive sea. The sea’s vastness elicits the musing in lines 11–12 that there is indeed more out there beyond man’s ken. This in turn sets up the closing couplet which imagines contact with a goddess—precisely what is outside the realm of what can be known. The poem’s latter half thus performs a semblance of the otherworldly journey associated with the legendary King Mu.

In moving from “surveying fields” to “climbing Panyu Mountain,” the poem crosses over into the subgenre *youxian* 遊仙 (“roaming among immortals”), in which a typical move is to describe the divine encounter with a willing suspension of disbelief. In that vein, the closing couplet emphasizes the ethereal and tenuous quality of what he hears and sees: the goddess is “hazy and indistinct,” and appears merely “in likeness,” as

---

[12] *Jie* 藉 can mean “to make use of for the time being,” or more concretely, “to lay a sitting mat upon.”

[13] The east ocean into which the great gully flows represents what lies beyond man’s ken. *Zhuangzi, Tiandi* 天地 chapter: “The great gully is such that streams flow into it yet it does not fill up, it pours out yet it does not dry up. This is where I am about to roam.夫大壑之為物也，注焉而不滿，酌焉而不竭，吾將遊焉.” *Zhuangzi jishi* 莊子集釋, 5.440.

[14] “Plucking Chestnuts” is the name of a song in the Chu style that invokes a banquet in which a goddess or fairy is encountered. From the “Summoning the Recluse 招魂” in the *Chuci*: “Bells and drums are played, making new songs: “Crossing the River,” “Plucking Chestnuts,” “Yangye” sound out.” When the lovely one is tipsy, it let us her red cheeks show.” *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注, 9.209. *Cf.,* the *yuefu* 樂府 tune title “Jiangnan 江南” in Lu Qinli, *Han shi*, 9.256; *Jin shi*, 19.1039; *Liang shi*, 1.1521.

[15] The beauty Xishi 西施 was said to be lovely even when she furrowed her brows in consternation. The phrase is used here to simply refer to an especially lovely countenance.

[16] According to legend, the cinnabar hills are where the sun sets in the south. See annotation on *danxue* 丹穴 by Gao You 高誘 in *Huainanzi jishi* 淮南子集釋, 13.940. An example of *danshan* used in the context of a goddess encounter is the “Exposition of the goddess on the water 水上神女賦” by Jiang Yan 江淹. *Quan Liang wen*, 34.3148.

simulacra. This suspension of disbelief takes on special significance in Xie's poem because this *youxian*-like excursion is embedded within a narrative that frames it as a compensation for what he desires but cannot have. We recall the frame narrative: "In roaming far, the heart can find a way through." The poem's embedded *youxian* narrative is a kingly excursion "in likeness." As such, it affords Xie's desire for kingly excursion a channel for "release" (*tong*) and "fulfilled expression" (*shen*) even if it is but a compensatory, partial substitute.

The poem's arc follows the vicissitudes of this desire in response to different types of excursion: from frustration at watching over hinterland to a semblance of satisfaction that comes from staging an excursion exclusive to kings. The significance of this staging can be articulated through the lyrics sung by King Mu for the goddess: "People of the world are all ordinary, yet I alone get to meet you." The poem's second half substitutes legends about meeting the Queen Mother with the goddess encounters of the *Chuci*. The poet hears the "Plucking Chestnuts" song, which, in the *Chuci* piece "Summoning the Recluse 招魂," is part of the aural experience of a goddess tryst: "Bells and drums are played, making new songs. The tunes 'Crossing the River,' 'Plucking Chestnuts,' 'Yangye' sound out. When the lovely one is tipsy, it let us her red cheeks show."[17] The concerted harmonies, convivial joys and even erotic connotations of banquet music conjure up an experience of communion at its most transcendent—entering the company of a goddess. The poem's closing encounter consummates the cathartic "release" (*tong*) ascribed to excursion. "In far roaming, the heart-mind can *tong*."

Coinciding with emotional release is also an awareness of seeing "the way through" (also, *tong*). In the language of scriptural exegesis, *tong* refers to a synthesis that is able to connect explanations that otherwise seem unrelated and even contradictory. *Tong* is the passageway—and passage of text—that clears away dividers between points and shows them as connected. We can constructively apply this concept of the connecting passage to Xie's deployment of different kinds of excursion narratives. The possibility of *tong* in far roaming can also refer to the task of the reader, who must find the connecting passage. Without reducing Xie's landscape poetry to kingly tours, we can nevertheless recognize underlying passages, like the King Mu text, that connect landscape viewing with gestures of kingship. Far roaming is not a concrete excursion but an experience—posited by the poet to be shared by the reader—that occurs at the level of text, and is constituted by particular poetic textures.

Xie's poem layers various excursion traditions: the prosaic "surveying of fields" and "watching over hinterland," Duke Jing's tour of his kingdom, and King Mu's roaming in immortal lands. These various subgenres of excursion, seemingly incongruous, are in Xie's synthesis joined in configurations of blockage and release, contrast and connection. Ordinary hinterland becomes the exalted "outer reaches" (*ye*) that reveals a divine encounter; the desire for kingly excursion, hitherto unable to "reach forth," is externalized in gestures that emulate kings. The kingly tour and the *youxian* excursion are

[17] *Chuci buzhu*, 9.209. *Cf.*, the *yuefu* 樂府 tune *Jiangnan* 江南 in Lu Qinli, Han shi, 9.256; Jin shi, 19.1039; Liang shi, 1.1521.

by no means the same but they are connected—to borrow Xie's language— in "likeness" (*fangfu* 彷彿).

II. The social encounter of landscape

The goddess encounter in "Surveying the fields and climbing Panyu Mountain" is a sketchy and undeveloped permutation of the viewer-landscape dynamic in Xie's better known poetry. To formulate this dynamic in terms of the lyrics sung by the Queen Mother of the West, mountains and streams "separate" (*jian*) King Mu from an exclusive and generally inaccessible realm, yet also mediate entrance into that realm. To enter that other realm is to *tong*, "find a way through." In short, landscape is the gateway to a meeting. In the more developed permutations of this idea, Xie's poetry anthropomorphizes landscape such that to view a space is to—"in likeness"—meet another. Even when the landscape is not explicitly figured as a person, the viewer-landscape dynamic is described in social terms.

As I discussed in Chapter Two, Xie's conception of the viewer-landscape interaction is encapsulated by the term "appreciation" (*shang* 賞), which is a hierarchical relationship of gratified recognition. The core trope of *shang* is that of a lord "conferring a reward" (*shangci* 賞賜) to a subject; this reward expresses the ruler's gratitude and "gratification" (*shangshi* 賞適) for the subject's special talents.[18] (This hierarchical dimension of *shang* is elided by the modern Chinese explication of *shang* as *xinshang* 欣賞—"to admire and enjoy"—which emphasizes the elevated status of what is *shang*-ed instead of the person who performs the act *shang*.) For Xie, the elevated side of the viewer-landscape relation is the one who performs *shang*, which is normatively played by a ruler or princely patron. As we recall from Chapter Two, Xie's concept of *shang* is exemplified by his Ye suite of poems, in which he adopts the persona of the emperor-patron Cao Pi who recognizes and "appreciates" his coterie of worthy officers and writers. Xie also performed *shang* in his actual excursions and social practices. We recall from Chapter Three that Xie modeled himself on Prince Yizhen 義真(who originally had sponsored Xie as Chancellor) by plucking talented men such as Xie Huilian 謝惠連 and bringing them to his estate, where he kept several hundred retainers and clients. The import of *shang* in Xie's landscape poetry is that landscape too is spoken of in human terms, like a talent that is unknown and unrecognized until it is discovered by a discerning patron. *Shang* is thus as much a hierarchical performance as an aesthetic mode that confers value on what is seen: appreciation presumes the higher station of the evaluator.

The following poem, "Climbing the alluvial isle in the middle of the river," one of Xie's most anthologized pieces, exemplifies how Xie transposes the socially-predicated *shang* dynamic to landscape. Like the previous poem, "Surveying fields and climbing Panyu Mountain in Haikou, "this piece has aspects of *youxian*, since it stages an

[18] The phrase *shangshi* is taken from the Yuan dynasty commentator Liu Lü 劉履, who uses the term in his exposition of Xie's poem "Following Jinzhu Gully, I cross the ridge and stroll along the stream 從斤竹澗越嶺溪行." See Liu Lü's *Feng ya yi* 風雅翼, collected in the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書.

encounter with a female-gendered divine being that, like the Queen Mother of the West, dwells at Mount Kunlun. We should understand the poem's adoption of *youxian* conventions as a transposition of the desire for kingly excursion. While this poem makes no explicit reference to kingly tours, its staging of far roaming echoes the tours of King Mu in its far roaming and its special access to the divinity of Mountain Kunlun.

	登江中孤嶼	"Climbing the lone isle in the middle of the river"
1	江南倦歷覽, 江北曠周旋。	South of the river, I've grown tired of sightseeing; North of the river, I've given up circumambulating.
3	懷新道轉迥, 尋異景不延。	Yearning for the novel, my route turns far away. Seeking the unusual, daylight lasts not long enough.
5	亂流趨正絕, 孤嶼媚中川。	Transverse currents hasten my passing across— A lone alluvial-isle enchants in mid-stream:
7	雲日相輝映, 空水共澄鮮。	Mist and sun upon it scintillate and shine;[19] Open sky and water together cleanse and brighten.
9	表靈物莫賞, 蘊真誰爲傳。	The isle expresses sentience—none appreciate it; It holds in reserve what is real—who can transmit it?[20]
11	想像崑山姿, 緬邈區中緣。	I imagine seeing the demeanor of Mount Kunlun, Far and remote from this world's karmic bonds.
13	始信安期術, 得盡養生年。	I begin to believe in the techniques of Anqi Who was able to fully nurture his life span.[21]

The opening couplets emphasize the vast coverage of his far roaming. Having seen everything under the sun—comprehensively explored the lands both north and south of the river—he now "turns far away" to "seek the unusual." Like King Mu, the only thing left are exotic lands unseen by the likes of ordinary men. Xie gives a twist to the *youxian* narrative by placing Kunlun not at the edges of the world but as it were in the middle, between the north and south banks of the river. It is no less hidden away for being so close by; only the discerning find the way through.

Mountain and water mediate the divine encounter. Fortuitous transverse currents usher him across the river towards the mountain isle. At the stunning confluence of elements like cloud, sun, sky, and water, the isle carries his thoughts to Mount Kunlun—"In roaming far, the heart-mind can find a way through." The isle reveals a deeper encounter with a divinity, which is experienced in human terms. Gendered as female, it has charms that "enchant" (*mei* 媚), and imparts the "demeanor" (*zi* 姿)" of Mount Kunlun—which we are given to understand is the true manner and appearance of the Queen Mother of the West herself.

---

[19] *Ying* 映 could just as well be taken as "to cover." Either way, the verb describes the shimmering play of light on the isle by cloud and sun.

[20] The word *zhen* 真 ("real") is associated with immortality: a *zhenren* 真人 is a person who has attained immortality.

[21] This piece is collected in the *Wen xuan* 文選, *Shi ji* 詩紀, *San Xie shi* 三謝詩, and *Yongjia xian zhi* 永嘉縣志. Lu Qinli, 2:1162.

The poem anthropomorphizes the isle and frames the encounter in the social dynamic of "appreciation."

7	雲日相輝映,	Mist and sun upon it scintillate and shine;
	空水共澄鮮。	Clear sky and water together cleanse and brighten.
9	表靈物莫賞,	The isle expresses sentience—none appreciate it;
	蘊真誰爲傳。	It holds in reserve what is real—who can transmit it?
11	想像崑山姿,	I imagine seeing the demeanor of Mount Kunlun,
	緬邈區中緣。	Far and remote from this world's karmic bonds.

Lines 7–8 conform to the notion of landscape poetry as nature writing. The isle shimmers in the play of light of sun and cloud, clarified by sky's open expanse and cleansed in river currents.[22] However, this description of natural elements is not presented for its own sake but serves to produce a characterization: revealed is the isle's human-like character. Unlike inanimate things, the isle seems to possess "intelligence" and "sentience" (*ling* 靈) just as animate beings, and humans especially, do.[23] Seeing the isle, the poet imagines Mount Kunlun, but the image invoked is not of Kunlun's shape or topography but rather its personality. "I imagine seeing the demeanor (*zi* 姿) of Mount Kunlun." What is discerned is the isle's personal character, countenance, and comportment.

An isle is not supposed to have a human-like demeanor and that is precisely the point: "It expresses sentience—none appreciate it." Ordinary onlookers only register the isle's outward form, but what Xie calls "appreciation" connects the viewer with the landscape in a socially-predicated relationship. Like a patron who can recognize a person's hidden talents, the one who "appreciates" can see qualities "held in reserve" (*yun* 蘊). While not immediately apparent, what is held in reserve is nevertheless "expressed in outward signs" (*biao* 表) that can be penetrated to reveal inner characteristics. The poem's celebration of the isle ultimately serves to elevate the viewer. Lines 9–10 ("none appreciate it" and "who can transmit it?") emphasize the necessity of the "appreciating" person, who is needed to disclose what is otherwise hidden away.

We recall from Chapter 3 that Xie performed (i.e., carried out, and staged for public view) *shang* in his social excursions.

惠連幼有才悟，而輕薄不為父方明所知。靈運去永嘉還始始寧，時方明為會稽郡。靈運嘗自始寧至會稽造方明，過視惠連，大相知賞。	Xie Huilian at youth showed talent and intelligence, but he was unrecognized by and looked upon lightly by his father Xie Fangming. When Xie Lingyun left Yongjia for Shi'ning, Fangming at the time governed Kuaiji province. On one occasion, Xie Lingyun went from Shi'ning to Kuaiji to visit Fangming, and, while passing through, looked closely at Huilian, greatly recognizing and appreciating (*shang*) him.[24]

[22] If the isle is reflected on the water's surface, then it would literally be bathed in the water.

[23] *Han shu* 漢書, 23.1079: "Man…has the most intelligence and sentience of life forms 有生之最靈者."

[24] *Song shu*, 67.1774. I did not translate the adverb *xiang* 相 as "mutually" because of Huilin's lower status in this situation, which clearly foregrounds Xie Lingyun as the one who recognizes. The verb *shang* is uni-directional here.

The emphasis of this performance is not on Xie Huilian's intelligence but rather Xie Lingyun's perspicacity, which discovers capacities held in reserve that even Huilian's own father could not see. Xie Lingyun's appreciation of Huilian's intelligence and his appreciation of the isle's sentience are permutations of the same performance: the patron-ruler confers recognition and value as he tours the treasures of the land.

The hierarchical implications of *shang* are most strongly reinforced by the poem's underlying excursion narrative: the King Mu passage. It is only by reading the poem as a restaging of the King Mu excursion that the poem's closure makes sense.

11	想像崑山姿,	I imagine seeing the demeanor of Mount Kunlun,
	緬邈區中緣。	Far and remote from this world's karmic bonds.
13	始信安期術,	I begin to believe in the techniques of Anqi
	得盡養生年。	Who was able to fully nurture his life span.

The closing topic of nurturing one's life span iterates the endpoint of the King Mu excursion narrative: to attain immortality is to finally enter into a realm "far and remote."[25] Access to this realm is exclusive and signifies the sojourner's elevated status. In meeting the Queen Mother of the West, King Mu received both lasting life and a confirmation of his place as Son-of-Heaven: "The people of the world are all ordinary, yet I alone get to meet you." King Mu's singular enjoyment is, in Xie's poetic closure, transposed to the rarified gratification called "appreciation" through which far roaming is fulfilled.

The closing does not simply repeat the King Mu excursion but also foregrounds the repetition as restaging a precedent. Line 11's "I imagine seeing" and line 13's "I begin to believe" highlight that the likeness between the old legend and the new excursion is performed by the viewer himself. The isle is, in fact, not Mount Kunlun but "in far roaming, the heart-mind can *tong*"—it is the viewer's heart mind that finds a "way through" that connects the isle in the middle with Mount Kunlun in the far west. In the King Mu text, the goddess said that Kunlun is distant because of the mountains and streams "in between" (*jian*). Xie's act of *tong*—finding release via the connecting passageway—traverses the in-between landscape by visualizing the King Mu textual passage. What is ultimately traversed is a performed literary space, whose significance lies in its display of a characteristic manner. Just as the poet finally imagines the goddess' "demeanor" or "manner" (*zi*), so also the reader must ultimately register the poet's supreme gesture: emulating the passage of kings.

We know that, for Xie, far roaming was indeed a kingly gesture. In a poem that Xie wrote to extol an actual imperial tour, "Written to match the emperor's poem while attending Him on an excursion to Jingkou's Beigu Mountain 從遊京口北固應詔," the emperor's excursion is lauded precisely in terms of otherworldly roaming. Let us focus on lines 5–6.

1	玉璽戒誠信,	The jade seal alerts [all to be] wholehearted and trustworthy;
	黃屋示崇高。	The yellow canopy shows His exalted rank.

[25] The immortality motif is subtly introduced by the word *zhen*: "The isle holds in reserve what is real (*zhen*)—who can transmit it?" A *zhenren* 真人 is a person who has become undying.

3	事爲名敎用,	His conduct is applied to the Teaching of Designations;[26]
	道以神理超。	His way surpasses due to Superhuman Patterns.[27]
5	昔聞汾水游,	In the past, I heard of [Yao's] roaming the River Fen,[28]
	今見塵外鑣。	Today, I witness His Bridle racing beyond the dust. [29]
7	鳴笳發春渚,	Playing pipes, we set out from springtime islets;
	稅鑾登山椒。	Releasing bells, we ascend the mountain summit.[30]
9	張組眺倒景,	Spreading chromatic [tents], we gaze upon inverted reflections.[31]
	列筵矚歸潮。	Arraying seating mats, we focus our eyes on returning tides.
11	遠巖映蘭薄,	Distant peaks contrast with orchid bunches;
	白日麗江皋。	The white sun complements the [gleaming] river bank.
13	原隰荑綠柳,	Flatlands and marsh spread green willows;
	墟囿散紅桃。	Homes and parks splay pink peaches.
15	皇心美陽澤,	The Majestic Mind beautifies the sunlit marsh:
	萬象咸光昭。	The myriad forms are all illuminated.
17	顧己枉維縶,	Turning to look at myself, I cow towards "tethered [horses]";
	撫志慙場苗。	Placating my aims, I am ashamed before "fields of sprouts."
19	工拙各所宜,	Skilled or clumsy, each [does] what is appropriate to him;
	終以反林巢。	In the end, I will return to thickets and nests.
21	曾是縈舊想,	In times past, I was bound by old visions,
	覽物奏長謠。	I panoptically behold all things and play this long tune.[32]

Line 5 likens the Song emperor[33] to the sage Yao, who had roamed beyond the River Fen to meet the divine beings on Mount Miaogushe. In line 6, the imperial retinue is described in terms of an otherworldly journey: "racing beyond the dust." This language is borrowed from the *Zhuangzi* for its connotations of transcendent attainment. However, its import here is not Daoist per se, and does not concern religious belief or cultivation

[26] The *ming* 名 are "designations" (i.e., both the naming and assigning) of social roles, such as a subject's place in relation to his ruler, a son to his father, and so on.

[27] *Li* 理 refers to patterns engraved onto jade (and, here, the imperial jade seal) and, by extension, the governing order imposed on the kingdom by a ruler.

[28] The Fen River reference derives from the *Zhuangzi*, where Yao roamed beyond the Fen River near his capital to Mount Miaogushe 藐姑射, the dwelling place of "four masters" (*sizi* 四子) and "divine beings" (*shenren* 神人). *Zhuangzi jishi*, 1.31; *cf.* 1.28.

[29] *Biao* 鑣, the bit of a horse bridle, is a synecdoche for the ride on horseback and carriage. The phrase "beyond the dust 塵垢之外" appears in *Zhuangzi jishi*, 1.97; 3.268; 7.663; 8.832; and 9.966.

[30] *Luan* 鑾 are decorative tinkering bells attached to horses, used here as a synecdoche for horse and carriage. To "release" the horse-bells is to set the mounts and vehicles aside and proceed by foot.

[31] The "inverted reflections" are terrestrial shapes reflected on the river's mirror-like surface, which render them upside-down. The phrase "張組" seems to be an ellipsis for "張組帷" ("spreading chromatic tents"), a usage for which Li Shan cites Zuo Si's 左思 (*ca.* 250-305) "Wu capital exposition" (in *Wen xuan* 5.20). While, "組" by itself may refer to the strings by which jade pendants are attached to one's waist sash, this reading makes for an awkward parallel with the "mats" (筵) of the subsequent line.

[32] *Wen xuan*, 22; Lu Qinli 2:1138.

[33] The Song emperor is identified by Li Shan as Liu Yu 劉裕 (363/420–422), and by the Yuan commentator Fang Hui 方回 as Liu Yilong 劉義隆 (407/424–453). See Wen xuan *Xie Yan Bao Xie shi ping* 文選顏鮑謝詩評 collected in the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書.

practice. Rather, this otherworldly language of a journey "beyond" is used as a mark of political supremacy, which is figured as far roaming. Far roaming is a key component of imperial iconography, no less salient than the "jade seal" (in line 1) and the "yellow canopy" of his carriage (in line 2) that panegyrically showcased as part of the ruler's regalia. The "yellow canopy" that "races belong the dust" displays the emperor as literally "surpassing" (*chao* 超) ordinary men—a concretely perambulatory demonstration of line 4's statement that "his way surpasses by virtue of Superhuman Patterns 道以神理超." Likewise, when Xie describes his own journey to the isle in the river as "far and remote from this world's karmic bonds," we must register this not as the language of religious truth but rather that of royal tours.

J.D. Frodsham has approached Xie Lingyun works as a nature poetry informed by Xie's Buddhist beliefs.[34] Indeed, we can see how the line "far and remote from this world's karmic bonds" might lend itself to this interpretation. Like the phrase "racing beyond the dust," such language may have had Daoist or Buddhist connotations for medieval readers. However, the invocation of such language need not entail Daoist-Buddhist commitments on the writer's part. The trappings of kingship constitute an important underlying motif in both the panegyric for the Song emperor and Xie's own river excursion, and it is within this economy of meaning that such language should be situated. The emphasis of the phrase "beyond the dust" is not on religious belief or self-cultivation practice but rather on the traveler's elevated status.[35] The more otherworldly the roaming, the more superhuman the traveler. Likewise, the most germane context for understanding the penultimate line, "I begin to believe in the techniques of Anqi," is not so much spiritual enlightenment as the immortal sojourns of legendary kings. Unpacking the basic meaning of Xie's allusions is but a first step; just as important is attending to the particular texture of the allusions and the field of commonplaces in which they are embedded. How things are said directly bears on our understanding of what is uttered.

Xie's widely anthologized poem "Seven-Mile Rapids 七里瀨" also deploys allusions, and interweaves a texture of language, invocative of kingship.

1	羇心積秋晨，	The wayfarer's weary heart is heaped heavy this autumn dawn;
	晨積展游眺。	Heaped heavy at dawn, it opens forth a roaming gaze.
3	孤客傷逝湍，	The lone wanderer is pained by rushing torrents;
	徒旅苦奔峭。	The traveler on foot is embittered collapsing crags.
5	石淺水潺湲，	Stones are shallow: currents burble and gurgle;
	日落山照曜。	Sun sets: the mountains beam and gleam.
7	荒林紛沃若，	Desolate woods glisten in profusion,
	哀禽相叫嘯。	Mournful birds cry out to each other.
9	遭物悼遷斥，	In encountering such things, I grieve at my exile;
	存期得要妙。	In harboring an appointment, I glean the lovely manner.

[34] J.D. Frodsham, The Murmuring Stream: The Life and Works of the Chinese Nature Poet Hsieh Ling-yün (385-433), Duke of K'ang-Lo (London: Oxford University Press, 1967).

[35] The medieval commentator Guo Xiang 郭象 explains the *Zhuangzi* phrase "beyond the dust"as "to not lie below in mountains and forests 非伏於山林也." That is, roaming occurs on an elevated plane that surpasses ordinary landscapes. *Zhuangzi jishi*, 3.268.

11	既秉上皇心，	Since I bear the heart-mind of the Highest Majesty,
	豈屑末代誚。	Why should I be bothered by the ridicule of a fallen age?
13	目覩嚴子瀨，	My eyes look at the rapids of Yan Guang;
	想屬任公鉤。	My imagination connects to the hook of Ren Gong.
15	誰謂古今殊，	Who should regard past and present as disconnected?
	異代可同調。	With a different epoch, one can be attuned.[36]

The poem passes through relative distances of near and far, which correspond, respectively, to toil and release. Experienced in the near distance are wearisome obstacles to travel ("rushing torrents" and "collapsing crags"), the troubled isolation of the "lone wanderer" in exile, and markers of autumn, the season of decline ("desolate woods" and "mournful birds"). The toil of what is near, "heaped heavy this autumn dawn," presses him to release a "roaming gaze" that looks afar. Lines 9–10 encapsulate the opposition of near and far:

9	遭物悼遷斥，	In encountering such things, I grieve at my exile;
	存期得要妙。	In harboring an appointment, I glean the free-floating manner.

To find release from what is immediately encountered, the poet harbors an "appointment" that will take him elsewhere. This couplet contrasts two types of movement: "exile" and *yaomiao*, a phrase associated with free roaming.

Let us pause here and consider the texture of the phrase *yaomiao*, because it is representative of the register of language invoked throughout the poem. The *Wen xuan* commentator Li Shan 李善 annotates the phrase thus: "The *Zhuangzi* says, 'This is called *yaomiao*.'"[37] The point of this annotation is not to offer a definition but to cite a precedent for the phrase's usage, and perhaps to indicate that this is the kind of language that is found in the *Zhuangzi*. As it happens, *yaomiao* does not appear in the received text of the *Zhuangzi*, but it does appear in the *Laozi* (which Li Shan has perhaps conflated with the *Zhuangzi*). The relevant *Laozi* passage reads: "Although one may be intelligent, one is nevertheless confused by it. This is called *yaomiao*."[38] In the context of the *Laozi*, *yaomiao* is a philosophical concept that refers to a truth so profound that it confounds even the most intelligent. (However temping it may be to read *miao* 妙 as meaning "wondrous"—a truth too wondrous to be comprehended— we must bear in mind that *yaomiao* is a binome, so its meaning cannot be derived from its individual graphs.)[39] Clearly, the *Laozi* usage of *yaomiao* is not relevant to understanding Xie's couplet. Within the parallelism of the couplet, *yaomiao* is directly contrasted with "exile" and thus must be a term associated with spatial movement.

---

[36] *Wen xuan*, 26.1241; Lu Qinli, 2:1160.

[37] "此謂之要妙." *Wen xuan*, 26.1241.

[38] "雖智大迷，是謂要妙." Zhu Qianzhi 朱謙之, *Laozi jiaoshi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984): 27.110.

[39] The binome can be represented by various homophonous or phonetically related graphs: the first syllable can also be written as 幽 and 幼, and the second syllable can also be written as 眇. There are *Laozi* commentarial traditions that draw upon the connotations of the binome's individual graphs so that, e.g., 要 refers to the essential, 幽 suggests dark mystery, and 眇 implies something remote. However, from a philological point of view, such interpretations are unsound because of the binome's lexicographical instability. For notes on variants, see *ibid.*, 27.110.

The relevant register for *yaomiao* is not the abstract philosophical vocabulary of the *Laozi or Zhuangzi* but rather *Chuci* 楚辭 traditions of far roaming and spirit journeys. The binome appears twice in the *Chuci*. The first instance is in the "Nine Songs" and describes the Xiang 湘 river goddesses:

美要眇兮宜修　Beautiful: of a lovely manner, and fittingly adorned.

The Han dynasty commentator Wang Yi 王逸 glosses *yaomiao* as "of a lovely manner 好貌."[40] Note that Wang Yi does not define *yaomiao* as "lovely" per se, but associates it with a certain kind of beautiful manner.[41] Wang Yi gives a more specific explanation of the binome as it appears in the song "Far Roaming 遠遊." Here, *yaomiao* is contrasted with the appearance of the body, and describes a manner of the spirit that is ranging and free.

質銷鑠以汋約兮，　In body: rendered and refined, warm and supple;
神要妙以淫放。　In spirit: free-floating, released faraway.[42]

Wang Yi gives a paraphrastic annotation of the second line that equates 要眇 with 飄然 and interprets 淫放 as 遠征: "The spirit has a floating manner and travels far (魂魄飄然而遠征也)."[43] Clearly, it is this usage of *yaomiao*, associated with the spirit's capacity to range effortlessly, that Xie's poem references.

9　遭物悼遷斥，　In encountering such things, I grieve at my exile;
存期得要妙。　In harboring an appointment, I glean the free-floating manner.

Xie's formulation places in opposition two kinds of movement: "I grieve at my exile" and "I glean the free-floating manner (*yaomiao*)." Exile is the state of being cast away to the periphery; *yaomiao* is the manner of roaming effortlessly in a realm that lies beyond. Each movement entails a different encounter: there are the immediacies of the exilic path whose confrontation makes him grieve; and then there is the socially-predicated encounter of "harboring an appointment," a phrase that calls to mind the generic trysts of the *Chuci.* While "harboring an appointment" states the intent to roam far, *yaomiao* suggests the manner that is adopted. The "free floating manner" suggests a light-as-ether freedom of movement that allows one to escape what is near. This orientation of the self, intent on excursion, can be understood as a permutation of "In far roaming, the heart-

[40] I read 要眇 as interchangeable with 要妙. See notes on variants by Wang Yi and Hong Xingzu 洪興祖 in *Chuci buzhu*, 2.60; and Jiang Liangfu 姜亮夫, *Chuci tonggu* 楚辭通故 (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 2000): p. 486. For a compilation of traditional annotations for this line, see Cui Fuzhang 催富章, and Li Daming 李大明 eds. *Chuci jijiao jishi* 楚辭集校集釋 (Wuhan: Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2002): pps. 770–3.

[41] Wang Yi's paraphrastic explanation suggests that *yaomiao* is not the same as *hao* but rather modifies it: "The line describes the appearance of the two goddesses. They are lovely in a way that is *yaomiao*, and are fittingly adorned. 言二女之貌，要眇而好，又宜修飾也." *Ibid.*

[42] *Chuci buzhu*, 5.168. I read 要眇 as interchangeable with 要妙; see the note on variants in *Chuci buzhu*, 2.60.

[43] *Chuci buzhu*, 5.168. Zhu Xi 朱熹 glosses *yaomiao* similarly as "a remote and distant manner 深遠貌." The *Guang ya* 廣雅 glosses *yin* 淫 as *you* 遊. See *Chuci tonggu*, *op cit*., p. 486; and *Chuci jijiao jishi*, *op. cit*., 1939–41.

mind can find a way through." To "glean the free-floating manner" is to find "the way through" that offers release. Xie's poetic register is not the conceptual vocabulary of the *Laozi* but a literary texture that invokes spirit travel and encounters with divine beings.

In this poem, the posture of far roaming is once more a supremely kingly gesture.

11	既秉上皇心, 豈屑末代誚。	Since I bear the heart-mind of the Highest Majesty, How am I bothered by the ridicule of these fallen times?

Contrasted with line 1's "wayfarer's heart" (*jixin* 羇心), which wanders in exile, is the heart-mind of the "Highest Majesty," which is associated with the supreme beings of heaven and earth—gods and rulers. In the *Chuci*, "Highest Majesty" refers to the supreme god of heaven.[44] In the *Zhuangzi*, "Highest Majesty," still colored with the aura of divinity, refers to the exemplary rulers of antiquity.

天有六極五常，帝王順之則治，逆之則凶。九洛之事，治成德備，監照下土，天下戴之，此謂上皇。	Heaven has six directions and five constants. When emperors and kings go along with them, there is order; when they go against them, there is calamity. With the Nine Plans of the Luo River, order is achieved and virtue made complete.[45] He perceives like a mirror the lands below, and the world bears him up—such a person is called the Highest Majesty.[46]

The Highest Majesty is marked by his perspicacious gaze: he overlooks his lands below and perceives them with an accuracy that is like a mirror faithfully reflecting an image. This motif of the imperial gaze picks up an earlier thread in the poem: it is the poet's roaming gaze, "opened forth" in line 2, that culminates in this gaze of the Highest Majesty that spans the entire world.

The phrase "Highest Majesty" also introduces a distinction between the past (where Xie situates his heart-mind) and the present (where Xie is exiled). The word "highest 上" is both a hierarchical and temporal concept. Lines 11–12 pair *shang* 上 and *mo* 末 in opposition: the former connotes the rulers of "high" antiquity such as Yu 禹 who received the Nine Plans for proper governance; the latter refers to the latter days of a fallen age, far removed from the majestic models of the past, and one which has abandoned Xie to the margins. The self-regard professed by the phrase "Highest Majesty" allows Xie to dismiss the ill regard of those in power in his time: "Why should I be bothered by the ridicule of a fallen age?"

Again, it is instructive to compare Xie's use of "Highest Majesty" here to Xie's description of the imperial tour in his poem "Written to match the emperor's poem while attending Him on an excursion to Jingkou's Beigu Mountain," which opts for the functionally equivalent phrase "Majestic Mind 皇心." His Majesty is here explicitly endowed with an all-encompassing gaze.

11	遠巖映蘭薄,	Distant peaks contrast with orchid bunches;

---

[44] *Chuci tonggu*, *op. cit*., p. 204.
[45] When Yu 禹 ascended the throne, heaven showed him Nine Plans 九疇 for proper governance on the back of a tortoise that emerged from the Luo River. *Shangshu zhengyi* 尚書正義, 12.353.
[46] *Zhuangzi jishi*, 5.496. Translation adapted from Burton Watson.

	白日麗江皋。	The white sun complements the [gleaming] river bank.
13	原隰荑綠柳,	Flatlands and marsh spread green willows;
	墟囿散紅桃。	Homes and parks splay pink peaches.
15	皇心美陽澤,	The Majestic Mind beautifies the sunlit marsh:
	萬象咸光昭。	The myriad forms are all illuminated.

The gaze of the "Majestic Mind," like the white sun in the sky, is cast over the entire world, and renders all things, such as the marsh, "sunlit" and "beautified." It is only by virtue of the sun-like Majestic Mind that "the myriad forms are illuminated," as if the ruler's vision is the precondition for true sight. We are given to understand that the extensive landscape descriptions of lines 11–14 become visible and fully disclosed only through this Majestic Mind. The landscape is, in effect, a stage for rehearsing the emperor's comprehensive survey of lands. The ultimate spectacle of this landscape is not natural scenery, but the imperial gaze. In this panegyric, the phrase "Majestic Mind" could just as well have been written as "Highest Majesty," as there is indeed nothing higher than the sun.

In the closing lines of "Seven-mile Rapids," the gaze that belongs to the Highest Majesty turns to view the titular rapids (line 13's "my eyes look at…").

11	既秉上皇心,	Since I bear the heart-mind of the Highest Majesty,
	豈屑末代誚。	Why should I be bothered by the ridicule of a fallen age?
13	目覩嚴子瀨,	My eyes look at the rapids of Yan Guang;
	想屬任公鉤。	My imagination connects to the hook of Ren Gong.
15	誰謂古今殊,	Who should regard past and present as disconnected?
	異代可同調。	With a different epoch, one can be attuned.

Seven-mile Rapids was also called the "Rapids of Yan Guang 嚴光 (d. 41)," named after a recluse who refused to serve the new Eastern Han dynasty of Emperor Guangwu 光武帝 (5/25–57).[47] Withdrawn from state service, Yan Guang retired to the area of these rapids to fish. Xie's allusion to Yan Guang may carry a note a political protest, but the allusion seems largely opportunistic, and serves ultimately to introduce, by way of the fishing leitmotif, another reference. The emphasis of lines 13–14 lies instead with the figure Ren Gong, with whom the poet's heart-mind is "attuned."

Yan Guang is small fry in comparison to Ren Gong, a figure from the *Zhuangzi*. Ren Gong had cast an enormous fishing pole and bait into the eastern sea, and after waiting for a year, he finally caught a gigantic fish. In describing the fish's immensity, the *Zhuangzi* employs the language of mountains and waters, and the gods traditionally said to inhabit them: the fish stirred up "white waves like [snow-capped] mountains, and sea waters heaved. The sound was prodigious as a spirit or god."[48] As the end of the *Zhuangzi* passage explains, the gargantuan fish represents what cannot be comprehended by lesser minds.

夫揭竿累,趣灌瀆,守	Casting fishing poles and fine nets along ditches and

[47] *Hou Han shu* 後漢書, 83.2763–4.

[48] "白波若山,海水震蕩,聲侔鬼神." *Zhuangzi jishi*, 26.925.

鯢鮒，其於得大魚難矣。飾小說以干縣令，其於大達亦遠矣。是以未嘗聞任氏之風俗，其不可與經於世亦遠矣。	canals to look for small fry—to get a big catch this way is difficult indeed. Cultivating minor arts to pursue a lofty reputation—the chances of achieving great understanding this way is remote indeed. That is why no one has heard of the tale of Ren Gong, and it is even a more remote possibility that it would be regarded by the world as canonical.[49]

To read the significance of Ren Gong's hook back into Xie's poem, the hook's prodigiousness stands for the greatness of the Highest Majesty. Its greatness exceeds lesser minds, so it is naturally misunderstood by the small fry of a fallen age who would ridicule it. To "connect with the hook of Ren Gong" is also to connect to the past: it is to "harbor an appointment" with high antiquity, whose rulers bear the heart-mind of the Highest Majesty. Hence, the closing couplet affirms the poet's connectedness to the past: "With a different epoch, one can be attuned."

III. Conclusion

I have given close readings of the poems above to show what can be gained by framing Xie Lingyun's poetry within generic excursion traditions instead of reading it as nature poetry. This approach focuses not on the spaces of nature but the significance of roaming through space—in particular how such journeys rehearse traditions of kingly roaming. By attending to the significance of spatial movement, we are in effect approaching landscape as a performance space. In this space, the primary spectacle is not the landscape but the wayfarer and his codified postures staged against landscape. The repertoire of such postures is encapsulated by the subgenre called *youlan*: the enactment of excursion and a sweeping gaze.

Xie Lingyun is widely hailed as the progenitor of landscape poetry, but the bounds and terms of this genre did not begin with him. As we have seen, Xie Lingyun's poetry cites, iterates, and appropriates earlier traditions about excursion. In his words: "With a different epoch, one can be attuned." Xie understood his literary performance as "attuned" with, and directly evocative of, established precedents. The commonplaces of *youlan* can be traced back to early texts such as the *Traditions of King Mu*, *Zhuangzi*, *Chuci*, *Shiji*, *Huainanzi* and others. The story of *youlan*'s development is embedded within a larger process during the medieval period of formulating genres and identifying literary lineages. It is this process by which *youlan* came to be delineated and retroactively distilled as a literary category in the Six Dynasties that I discussed in Chapter One. Xie Lingyun produced his landscape poetry when *youlan* was in the process of being formulated as a category of textual production and interpretation. For Xie Lingyun and medieval audiences, the operative category was not *shanshui* 山水 ("landscape" literally, "mountains and waters"), but rather *youlan.*

In Chapter One, I traced the articulation of *youlan* as a literary topic in two medieval compilations: the *Wen xuan* 文選, an anthology that classified literary selections under genres and subgenres, and the *Yiwen leiju*, a commonplace compendium

---

[49] *Zhuangzi jishi*, 26.925.

that attempted to summarize and illustrate all the main literary topics required for proficiency in writing. By joining together the outline of *youlan* traditions found in these two systematic compilations, we can track what, for medieval readers, constituted a literary lineage that ran from pre-imperial texts through Six Dynasties writings, including the poetry of Xie Lingyun. In illustrating the commonplaces of *youlan*, the *Yiwen leiju* cites non-poetry texts that predate the Six Dynasties period. (See the Appendix for a complete translation of passages cited by the *Yiwen leiju* to illustrate the *youlan* topic.) The *Wen xuan*, which furnishes the later Six Dynasties part of this lineage, presents selections of exemplary *youlan* poems, and it is under this subgenre that most of Xie Lingyun's poems were anthologized. Nowhere in Six Dynasties anthologies do we find a topic called *shanshui.*

An example of a touchstone text in *youlan*'s literary lineage—or, more precisely, in the medieval conception of *youlan*'s precedents and later instantiations—is the *Traditions of King Mu*, which the *Yiwen leiju* cites to illustrate *youlan* commonplaces, and was also, as we have seen, a prominent reference point for Xie Lingyun. Once we approach Xie Lingyun's poetry as participating in *youlan*, the meaningful question to pose is not "How is nature treated and described in this poetry?" but rather "What kind of performance is staged through the act of excursion in landscape?" The stage and actor of this performance space are, respectively, landscape and the kingly persona. King Mu is but one instance of a persona to be enacted. In the case of Xie Lingyun, it is the figure of Cao Pi that served as Xie's alter-ego and favored persona of excursion performance.

If we take the *Wen xuan* as outlining a literary history through exemplary selections, then the Wei dynasty emperor Cao Pi stands out as *youlan*'s first poetic personality.[50] Cao Pi's poem "Composed at Lotus Pond" is the opening piece in the *Wen xuan*'s selections of *youlan*. In keeping with earlier traditions of kingly roaming, the poem is set at the imperial park, which was both a playground and a monument of imperial power. As befits a poem written by a ruler about the preeminent institution he embodies, the poem's governing trope is one that describes the progression of the emperor and his entourage through the park as an upward ascent through the heavens. Xie Lingyun appropriated Cao Pi as his own authorial persona.

In Chapter Two, I analyzed the importance of Xie Lingyun's Ye 業 suite of poems, where Xie impersonates Cao Pi, in thinking about Xie's landscape poetry. The Ye suite is not, I argue, an exercise of literary imitation isolated from Xie's other output; rather, imperial impersonation is central to Xie Lingyun's fashioning of his poetic persona and the primary gestures of his excursion performance. For the historical Cao Pi, excursion was a social practice and state spectacle that demonstrated his role as the patron of a literary salon: his sagely authority was bound up with his performance as a recognizer of talented men, enacted in group excursions. Xie Lingyun appropriates the persona of Cao Pi as imperial patron to articulate his concept of "appreciation" (*shang*

[50] Note that the *Yiwen leiju* does cite texts that predate Cao Pi, but they are largely passages of discursive prose instead of poetry selections. (See the Appendix for a complete translation of the *Yiwen leiju* illustrations of *youlan*.) As a commonplace compendium, its aim is to isolate generic topoi; whether the cited source texts rhyme (i.e., belong to poetry) is incidental. Also, unlike a poetry anthology, the *Yiwen leiju* is concerned with identifying the names of sources text instead of the names of particular authors. For its purposes, the identity of the author as a personality is moot.

賞), which uses the hierarchically-embedded patron-client dynamic as a trope for the relationship between viewer and landscape.

This trope draws on the discourse of personnel evaluation that, as evidenced in "Appreciation and Appraisal" (*shangyu* 賞譽) chapter of the *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語, had conventionally used landscape epithets to characterize the special qualities and talents of a person. Whereas the discourse of personnel evaluation applied landscape descriptions to persons, Xie Lingyun's concept of *shang* transposed the patron's appreciation of persons to the appreciation of landscape. It is through this transposition that Xie Lingyun's excursions in landscape perform what formally resembles a social encounter. The typical persona of such encounters is, in Xie's poetry, that of the touring ruler. As we have seen in the poems discussed above, the most fitting social counterpart for a ruler is a divinity such as the Queen Mother of the West. "I imagine seeing the demeanor (*zi* 姿) of Mount Kunlun"—the landscape reveals its inner qualities only to one who, like a perspicacious patron evaluating a person, can see its characteristic "demeanor."

While Chapter Two analyzed how the persona of Xie Lingyun's landscape was fashioned with postures of imperial impersonation, Chapter Three attends to the resemblances between Xie Lingyun's mountain estate and the imperial capital. Even though Xie professes that his "Mountain dwelling exposition" concerns rural space, the text is nevertheless embedded within, and in many respects succeeds, a tradition of expositions (*fu* 賦) about the imperial capital. The preface states that the exposition is about "matters of mountain and wilderness, trees and fauna, water and stone, planting and sowing" and not "the capital metropolis and palace miradors, nor the splendid sights and sounds of tours and hunts." However, the magnificent scope and tenor of Xie's exposition bears striking resemblances to capital expositions. What's more, Xie's actual excursion practices positioned his "mountain dwelling" as a shadow double of the capital.

The similarities between Xie's estate and the capital occur on the level of performance as well as concrete realities—political, economic, and military. Excursions based from, and provisioned by, Xie's estate enabled him to recruit men for his literary salon, which was a literary as well as political activity. Recruitment tours—termed "appreciation" excursions—staged Xie as a supreme figure of patronage. This was a paradigm of political authority that was modeled on the emperor cum literary critic Cao Pi, as well as Xie's former patron, Prince Liu Yizhen 劉義真. Xie's excursion practices attempted to realize a model of aristocratic refinement that combined sightseeing in landscape with the assemblage of the royal retinue.

What Xie inherited from his prestigious forebears was not just his enormous estate but also excursion practices that continually expanded his private land holdings and economic base. The Wang and Xie clans naturalized the occupation and development of frontier lands as an activity of the genteel. In addition to being social gatherings, the excursions celebrated by the Wang and Xie clans also served as inspection tours to prospect land for development. The central government branded such excursions as incursions into unregistered lands it claimed by fiat; the Xie clan looked upon the "mountains and waters" as resources to be appreciated both aesthetically and economically. Once we track the term "mountains and waters" (*shanshui* 山水) in the Six

Dynasties, we find that it was not yet a codified category of literary analysis but circulated instead as a term denoting an extralegal space of contested territories. Clans such as the Xies vied with the imperial center for control of these landscapes, and their boundaries were drawn, debated and negotiated up to the highest levels of government.

The fact that Xie Lingyun, during one of his excursions with an expeditionary force of hundreds of retainers, was regarded by a local governor as a "mountain bandit 山賊" is a not an incidental biographical detail. "Banditry" lies on a continuum of state-defying activities that ranges from "theft"— the arrogation and occupation of frontier lands—to, at its extreme, "rebellion." In the end, Xie was indeed executed on charges of rebellion. Therefore, imperial impersonation was not limited to Xie's fashioning of an authorial persona, but part of a gestalt of excursion activities—literary and practical—that rehearsed and doubled the political center.

That Xie Lingyun performed imperial postures in his landscape poetry was not lost on medieval audiences, who read his poetry against his biography. Representative of a traditional hermeneutic strategy that read texts as extensions of the author's personality, Wang Tong 王通 (584–617) singles out Xie's presumptuousness.

子谓，文士之行可見，謝靈運小人哉。其文傲，君子則謹。	The Master said, "The conduct of men of letters can be discerned. Xie Lingyun was a petty man. His writing is arrogant, whereas the gentleman's is prudent.[51]

Arrogance is arrogating for oneself unwarranted status and privilege. While we may not be invested in the ethical judgments, and views about political legitimacy, that Wang Tong wished to propound in his literary criticism, the unity he assumes between text and context is immensely useful for approaching the case of Xie Lingyun, in which imperial impersonation is a central organizing principle for both his landscape poetry and actual excursion practices. Attending to imperial impersonation in Xie's life and literary output does not merely serve to, as was Wang Tong's purpose, discern Xie the individual but also allows us to situate him within broader narratives about literary lineage, and the political-economic implications of landscape tours. Xie is conventionally regarded as the first Chinese landscape poet, but his landscapes were not created *sui generis*. They were literary performances that rehearsed earlier commonplaces surrounding royal excursion and the kingly gaze. I use the term "rehearse" to highlight not only repetition, but also the performativity of landscape poetry in staging postures of excursion and viewing. To approach Xie's landscape poetry as *youlan* instead of *shanshui* is to see landscape not as pristine nature but as a performance space with an established repertoire. In this literary space, capital and countryside as not opposites but joined by complicities. In Xie's words: "In far roaming, the mind can find the way through (*tong*)."

[51] *Wenzhongzi zhong shuo* 文中子中說, 事君 chapter, *juan* 3. *Jin* 謹 connotes being prudent and respectful in speech.

Bibliography

Western Sources:

Acker, William R. B. *Some T'ang and Pre-T'ang Texts on Chinese Painting*. Westport, Conn.: Hyperion Press, 1979.

Allen, Joseph Roe. *In the Voice of Others: Chinese Music Bureau Poetry*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1992.

Ashmore, Robert. *The Transport of Reading: Text and Understanding in the World of Tao Qian (365–427)*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2010.

Bal, Mieke. "Dispersing the Gaze: Focalization." In *Looking In*, 41–65. Singapore: G+B Arts International, 2001.

Berkowitz, Alan. "Courting Disengagement: "Beckoning the Recluse" Poems of the Western Jin." In *Studies in Early Medieval Chinese Literature and Cultural History: In Honor of Richard Mather & Donald Holzman*, edited by Paul Kroll & David R. Knechtges, 81–116. Boulder: The T'ang Studies Society, 2003.

———. *Patterns of Disengagement: The Practice and Portrayal of Reclusion in Early Medieval China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

Berquist, Jon L., and Claudia V. Camp. *Constructions of Space I: Theory, Geography, and Narrative (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies)*. New York: T&T Clark International, 2007.

Bielenstein, Hans. "Lo-Yang in Later Han Times." *Museum of Far Eastern antiquities* 48 (1976): 1–142.

Bodde, Derek. *Festivals in Classical China*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975.

Bush, Susan, and Hsio-yen Shih, eds. *Early Chinese Texts on Painting*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985.

——— and Murck, Christian (eds.). "Tsung Ping's Essay on Painting Landscape and the 'Landscape Buddhism' of Mount Lu." In *Theories of the Arts in China*, 132–64. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.

Casey, Edward S. *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, Studies in Continental Thought. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.

———. *Imagining: A Phenomenological Study*, Studies in Continental Thought. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000.

Chang, Kang-i Sun. *Six Dynasties Poetry*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.

Ch'en, Ho-hsien, Hartmut Walravens, M. Kenneth Starr. *Catalogue of Chinese Rubbings from Field Museum*. Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History, 1981.

Cheng, Yü-yü. "Bodily Movement and Geographic Categories: Xie Lingyun's 'Rhapsody on Mountain Dwelling' and the Jin-Song Discourse on Mountains and Rivers." *The American Journal of Semiotics* 23.1 − 4 (2007): 193 − 219.

Chennault, Cynthia L. "Lofty Gates or Solitary Impoverishment? Xie Family Members of the Southern Dynasties." *T'oung Pao* 85 (1999): 249–327.

Clunas, Craig. *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996.

———. Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.

Cullen, Christopher. "The Birthday of the Old Man of Jiang County and Other Puzzles: Work in Progress on Liu Xin's Canon of the Ages." *Asia Major* xiv, no. 2 (2000): 27–70.

DcDermott, Joseph P., ed. *State and Court Ritual in China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

de Crespigny, Rafe. "Portents of Protest in the Later Han Dynasty: The Memorials of Hsiang K'ai to Emperor Huan." *Faculty of Asian Studies: Oriental Monograph Series* 19 (1976).

———. "The Recruitment System of the Imperial Bureaucracy of Later Han." *The Chung Chi Journal* VI.1 (November 1966): 67–78.

DeWoskin, Kenneth J. *Doctors, Diviners, and Magicians of Ancient China: Biographies of Fang-Shih, Translations from the Oriental Classics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.

Eagleton, Terry. *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990.

Ebrey, Patricia. "Patron-Client Relations in the Later Han." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103, no. 3 (1983).

Edwards, E.D. "Liu Tsung-Yuan and the Earliest Chinese Essays on Scenery." *Asia Major* I, no. 2 (1949): 147–57.

Elvin, Mark. *The Retreat of the Elephants: An Environmental History of China*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004.

Fong, Wen. Art Museum. *Images of the Mind: Selections from the Edward L. Elliott Family and John B. Elliott Collections of Chinese Calligraphy and Painting at the Art Museum, Princeton University*. Princeton, N.J.: Art Museum, Princeton University in association with Princeton University Press, 1984.

Frodsham, J. D. *The Murmuring Stream: The Life and Works of the Chinese Nature Poet Hsieh Ling-Yün (385–433), Duke of K'ang-Lo*. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1967.

———. "The Origins of Chinese Nature Poetry." *Asia Minor* 8.1 (1960): 68–104.

Goodman, Howard L. *Ts'ao P'i Transcendant: The Political Culture of Dynasty-Founding in China at the End of the Han*. Seattle: Script Serica, 1998.

Hawkes, David. *The Songs of the South: An Ancient Chinese Anthology of Poems by Qu Yuan and Other Poets*. New York: Penguin Books, 1985.

Hightower, James R. "The Wen Hsuan and Genre Theory." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 20, no. 3/4 (1957): 512–33.

Ho, Ping-ti. "Lo-Yang, A. D. 495–534: A Study of Physical and Socio-Economic Planning of a Metropolitan Area." *Harvard-Yenching Institute* 26 (1966): 52–101.

Holzman, Donald. *Landscape Appreciation in Ancient and Early Medieval China: The Birth of Landscape Poetry*. Hsin-chu: Program for Research of Intellectual-cultural History, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Tsing Hua University, 1996.

———. "Les Débuts Du Système Médiéval De Choix Et De Classement Des Fontionnaires: Les Neuf Catégories Et L'impartial Et Juste." (1957): 287–414.

Huang, Chün-chieh, and Erik Zürcher. *Time & Space in Chinese Culture.* Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1995.

Hucker, Charles O. *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985.

Hulsewé, A. F. P. Hulsewé, *Remnants of Han Law*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1955.

———. *Remnants of Ch'in Law: An Annotated Translation of the Ch'in Legal and Administrative Rules of the 3rd Century B.C., Discovered in Yün-Meng Prefecture, Hu-Pei Province, in 1975*. Sinica Leidensia; Vol. 17. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985.

———, W. L. Idema, and E. Zürcher. *Thought and Law in Qin and Han China: Studies Dedicated to Anthony Hulsewé on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*. Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1990.

Hurvitz, Leon. "Tsung Ping's Comments on Landscape Painting." *Artibus Asiae* XXXII, no. 2/3 (1970): 146–56.

Kern, Martin. *The Stele Inscriptions of Ch'in Shih-Huang*. New Haven: American Oriental Society, 2000.

Knechtges, David R. "Early Medieval Chinese Estate Culture: The Mountain Dwelling of Xie Lingyun." Conference paper.

Knechtges, David R. *The Han Rhapsody: A Study of the Fu of Yang Hsiung (53 B.C.–A.D. 18)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

———. *Wen Xuan, or, Selections of Refined Literature*. 3 vols, Princeton Library of Asian Translations. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982.

Kroll, Paul W. "On 'Far Roaming.'" *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 116, no. 4 (1996).

———. "Verses from on High: The Ascent of T'ai Shan." *T'oung Pao*, Vol. 69, Livr. 4/5 (1983): 223–60.

Kuriyama, Shigehisa. *The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine*. New York: Zone Books, 1999.

———. "The Imagination of the Body and the History of Bodily Experience, International Symposium." Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 2001.

Kwong, Charles. "The Rural World of Chinese 'Farmstead Poetry' (Tianyuan shi): How Far Is It Pastoral?" *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)*, no. Dec. (1993): 57-84.

Lewis, Mark Edward. *The Construction of Space in Early China*. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2006.

Liang, Yue-June. "Xie Lingyun: The Redefinition of Landscape Poetry." Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1999.

Lin, Shuen-fu, and Stephen Owen. *The Vitality of the Lyric Voice: Shih Poetry from the Late Han to the T'ang*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.

Liu, Lydia. *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900–1937*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

Loewe, Michael. *Records of Han Administration*, University of Cambridge Oriental Publications, No. 11–12. London: Cambridge U.P., 1967.

———. *Ways to Paradise: The Chinese Quest for Immortality*. London; Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1979.

Malay, Jessica L. *Textual Construction of Space in the Writing of Renaissance Women: In Habiting Place*. Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006.

Mather, Richard. "The Landscape Buddhism of the Fifth-Century Poet Hsieh Ling-Yun." *Journal of Asian Studies*, no. 18 (1958–1959): 67–79.

———. "The Mystical Ascent of the T'ien-T'ai Mountains: Sun Ch'o's Yu-T'en-T'ai Shan Fu." *Monumenta Serica* 20 (1961): 226–45.

———, trans. *A New Account of Tales of the World*. 2nd ed. Ann Arbor: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.

Mitchell, W. J. Thomas. *Landscape and Power*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Naquin, Susan, and Chün-fang Yü. *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China*. Vol. 15, Studies on China. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Needham, Joseph. "Hydraulic Engineering: Control, Construction, and Maintenance of Waterways." In *Science and Civilization*, Vol. 5, pps. 211–378. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Nylan, Michael. *The Five "Confucian" Classics*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.

———, and Harrison Huang. "Mencius on Pleasure." In *Polishing the Chinese Mirror: Essays in Honor of Henry Rosemont, Jr*., edited by Marthe Chandler and Ronnie Littlejohn, 244–69. New York: Global Scholarly Publications, 2008.

Owen, Stephen. "Imitation." In *The Making of Early Chinese Classical Poetry*, 260–97. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006.

———. "The Librarian in Exile: Xie Lingyun's Bookish Landscapes." *Early Medieval China* 10–11 (2004): 203–26.

———. *Remembrances: The Experience of the Past in Classical Chinese Literature*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986.

———. *Traditional Chinese Poetry and Poetics: Omen of the World*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.

Qian, Nanxiu. *Spirit and Self in Medieval China: The Shih-Shuo Hsin-Yu and Its Legacy*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001.

Schaefer, Edward H. "Hunting Parks and Animal Enclosures in Ancient China." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 11, no. 3 (1968): 318–43.

Strassberg, Richard E. *Inscribed Landscapes: Travel Writing from Imperial China*. Berkeley: University of Calif. Press, 1994.

Sullivan, Michael. *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China, California Studies in the History of Art*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962.

Tian, Xiaofei. *Tao Yuanming & Manuscript Culture*. Seattle: University of Washington, 2005.

Van Zoeren, Steven Jay. *Poetry and Personality: Reading, Exegesis, and Hermeneutics in Traditional China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991.

Varsano, Paula M. "Getting There from Here: Locating the Subject in Early Chinese Poetics." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 56, no. No. 2 (Dec., 1996) (1996): 375–403.

Westbrook, Francis A. "Landscape Transformation in the Poetry of Hsieh Ling-Yun." *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, no. 100 (1980): 237–54.

Wilson, Thomas A. *On Sacred Grounds: Culture, Society, Politics, and the Formation of the Cult of Confucius*, Harvard East Asian Monographs; 217. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002.

Yang, Lien-sheng Yang. "Notes on the Economic History of the Chin Dynasty." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* Vol. 9, no. 2 (1946).

Yang, Xiaoshan. *To Perceive and to Represent: A Comparative Study of Chinese and English Poetics of Nature Imagery*. Vol. 24. New York: Peter Lang, 1996.

Chinese Sources:

Chen Qiaochu 陳喬楚 (annot.). *Renwu zhi jinzhu jinyi* 人物志今註今譯. Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1996. Reprint, 2002.

Chen Yinke 陳寅恪. *Sui Tang zhidu yuanyuan lüelun gao* 隋唐制度淵源略論稿. Bejing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974.

Chen Zumei 陳祖美, ed. *Xie Lingyun zai Yongjia* 謝靈運在永嘉. Vol. 5, *Xie Lingyun nianpu huibian* 謝靈運年譜匯編. Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2001.

Chen Zhengxiang 陳正祥. *Zhongguo youji xuan zhu* 中國遊記選注. Hong Kong: Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1979.

Cheng Guangyu 程光裕, and Xu Shengmou 徐聖謀. *Zhongguo lishi ditu* 中國歷史地圖. Taibei: Zhongguo wenhua daxue chubanbu, 1992.

Cheng Yü-yü 鄭毓瑜. *Liuchao qingjing meixue zonglun* 六朝情境美學總論. Taibei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1996.

———, ed. Zhongguo wenxue yanjiu de xin quxiang: Ziran, shenmei yu bijiao yanjiu 中國文學研究的新趨向：自然、審美與比較研究. Taibei: Guoli Taiwan Daxue chuban zhongxin, 2005.

Cheng Zhangcan 程章燦. *Wei Jin Nanbeichao fu shi* 魏晉南北朝賦史. Huaiyang: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1992.

Cui Fuzhang 催富章, and Li Daming 李大明, eds. *Chuci jijiao jishi* 楚辭集校集釋. 2 vols. Wuhan: Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2002.

Dong Lianchi 董蓮池. *Shuowen jiezi kaozheng* 說文解字考證. Beijing: Zuojia chubanshe, 2005.

Fang Hui 方回. "Wen Xuan Yan Bao Xie shi ping 文選顏鮑謝詩評." In *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書.

Fei Zhengang 費振剛, Chou, Zhongqian 仇仲謙, and Liu Nanping 劉南平. *Quan Hanfu jiaozhu* 全漢賦校注. 2 vols. Guangzhou: Guangdong jiaoyu chubanshe, 2005.

Ge Xiaoyin 葛曉音. "Shanshui fang zi Zhang Lao wei tui 山水方滋 庄老未退." *Xueshu yuekan* 学术月刊 189, no. 2 (1985): 68–75.

———. *Shanshui tianyuan shipai yanjiu* 山水田園詩派研究. Shenyang: Liaoning daxue chubanshe, 1993.

———, ed. *Xie Lingyun yanjiu lunji* 謝靈運研究論集. In *Xie Lingyun yanjiu congshu* 謝靈運研究叢書, Vol. 2. Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2001.

Gu Shaobai 顧紹柏. *Xie Lingyun ji jiaozhu* 謝靈運集校注. Taibei: Liren shuju, 2004.

Guo Moruo 郭沫若. *Zhongguo shigao ditu ji* 中國史稿地圖集. 4th ed. 2 vols. Beijing: Zhongguo ditu chubanshe, 1996.

Guo Qingfan 郭慶藩. *Zhuangzi jishi* 莊子集釋. 4 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961. Reprint, 1997.

Hao Bingheng 郝昺衡. "Xie Lingyun nianpu 謝靈運年譜." Huadong shida xuebao 華東師大學報 3 (1957).

He Ning 何寧. *Huainanzi jishi* 淮南子集釋. 3 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998.

Hong Shunlong 洪順隆. *You yinyi dao gongti* 由隱逸到宮體. Taibei: Wenshizhe chuban, 1984.

Hong Xingzu 洪興祖 (1746–1155). *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983.

Huang Jie 黃節. *Cao Zijian shi zhu* 曹子建詩註. Taibei: Dingwen shuju, 2001.

———. *Xie Kangle shi zhu* 謝康樂詩註. Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1958.

Huang Shizhong 黃世中, ed. *Xie Lingyun zai Yongjia* 謝靈運在永嘉. Vol. 4, *Xie Lingyun yanjiu congshu* 謝靈運研究叢書. Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2001.

Huangfu Mi 皇甫謐 (215–82). *Gaoshi zhuan* 高士傳, Sibu beiyao 四部備要 2.185.

Li Fengmao 李豐楙. *You yu you: Liuchao Sui Tang youxianshi lunwen wenji* 遊與憂：六朝隋唐游仙詩論文集. Taibei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1996.

——— and Liu Yuanju 劉苑如, eds. *Kongjian diyu yu wenhua* 空間、地域與文化. Taibei: Zhongyanyuan wenzhesuo, 2002.

Li Shan 李善, Lü Yanji 呂延濟, Liu Liang 劉良, Zhang Xian 張銑, 呂向 Lü Xiang, and Li Zhouhan 李周翰, annot. *Liu chen zhu Wen xuan* 六臣注文選. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987.

Li Xueqin 李學勤 (ed.). *Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏. 整理本 ed. 10 vols. Taibei: Taiwan guji chuban gongsi, 2001.

Li Yunfu 李運富. *Xie Lingyun ji* 謝靈運集. Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1999.

Liang Zhangju 梁章鉅 (1775–1849). *Wen xuan pangzheng* 文選旁證. Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2000.

Liao Weiqing 廖蔚卿. "Cong wenxue xianxiang yu wenxue sixiang de guanxi tan Liuchao "qiaogou xingsi zhi yan" de shi 從文學現象與文學思想的關係談六朝「巧構形似之言」的詩." In *Han Wei Liuchao wenxue lunji* 漢魏六朝文學論集, 537–78. Taibei: Daan chubanshe, 1997.

Lin Wenyue 林文月. *Shanshui yu gudian* 山水與古典. Taibei: Xialin hanying, 1976.

Liu Lü 劉履. *Fengya yi* 風雅翼, Siku quanshu 四庫全書.

Liu Wendian 劉文典. *Huainan honglie jijie* 淮南鴻烈集解. 2 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989.

Liu Yuanru 劉苑如, ed. *Inner Landscape Visualized: Techniques of the Body in Medieval Chinese Literature and Religion* 遊觀作為身體技術的中古文學與宗教. Taibei: Zhongyanyuan wenzhesuo, 2009.

Liu Yiqing 劉義慶, and Liu Xiaobiao 劉孝標. *Shishuo xinyu jiaojian* 世說新語校箋 [Collated Editions and Annotations to New Account of Tales of the World]. Edited by 楊勇 Yang Yong. Taibei: Guojia tushuguan, 1999.

Lu Deming 陸德明 (陸元朗). *Jingdian shiwen huijiao* 經典釋文匯校. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006.

Lü Simian 呂思勉 (1884–1957). *Liang Jin Nanbeichao shi* 兩晉南北朝史. 2 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1983. Reprint, 2006.

Luo Hongkai 駱鴻凱. *Wen xuan xue* 文選學. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1937.

Mei Jialing 梅家玲. Han Wei Liuchao wenxue xinlun 漢魏六朝文學新論. Taibei: Liren shuju, 1997.

Mei Xinlin 梅新林, and Yu Zhanghua 俞樟華. *Zhongguo youji wenxue shi* 中國遊記文學史. Shanghai: Shanghai shiji chuban jituan, 2004.

Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢, ed. *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚. 2 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1965.

Qian Zhongshu 錢鐘書 (1910–88). "Zuozhuan: yi kongjian shi shijian 左傳：以空間示時間." In *Guanzhui bian* 管錐編, 1:335–40. Beijing: Shenghuo dush xinzhi sanlian shudian, 2001.

Ruan Yuan 阮元. *Jingji zuangu* 經籍纂詁. Taibei: Hongye chubanshe, 1972.

Song Hong 宋紅, ed. *Rihan Xie Lingyun yanjiu yiwen ji* 日韓謝靈運研究譯文集. Vol. 3, *Xie Lingyun yanjiu congshu* 謝靈運研究叢書. Guilin: Guangxi Shifan Daxue chubanshe, 2001.

———, ed. *Tiandi yi ke'er* 天地一客兒. Vol. 1, *Xie Lingyun yanjiu congshu* 謝靈運研究叢書. Guilin: Guangxi Shifan Daxue chubanshe, 2001.

Takigawa Kametarō 瀧川亀太郎 (1865–1946). Shiji huizhu kaozheng 史記會注考證. Taibei: Daan shuju, 2000. Reprint, 2006.

Tan Qixiang 譚其鑲. Zhongguo lishi ditu ji 中國歷史地圖集. Taibei: Xiaoyuan chubanshe, 1991.

Tang Changru 唐長孺. "Jiuzheng zhongzheng zhidu shi shi 九正中正制度試釋." In Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi lun cong 魏晉南北朝史論叢, 81–121. Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000.

———. "Nan Song de tun di bieshu ji shanze zhanling 南宋的屯、邸、別墅及山澤佔領." In Shanju cungao 山居存稿. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989.

———. *San zhi liu shiji jiangnan suoyou zhi de fazhan* 三至六世紀江南所有制的發展. Shanghai : : Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1957.

———. "Xi Jin tianzhi shi shi 西晉田制試釋." In Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi lun cong 魏晉南北朝史論叢. Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000.

Tang Yongtong 湯用彤. *Weijin xuanxue* 魏晉玄學. Taibei: Foguang wenhua shiye youxian gongsi, 2001.

Tao Wenpeng 陶文鵬, and Wei Fengjuan 韋鳳娟. *Zhongguo gudai shanshui shi* 中國古代山水詩史. Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2004.

Tian Yuqing 田余慶. *Dong Jin menfa zhengzhi* 東晉門閥政治. Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1996.

Wang Cicheng 王次澄. *Nanchaoshi yanjiu* 南朝詩研究. Taibei: Sili dongwu daxue, 1984.

Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619–92). *Gushi pingxuan* 古詩評選. Vol. 14, Chuanshan quanji 船山全集. Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1996.

Wang Guoying 王國櫻. *Zhongguo shanshui yanjiu* 中國山水研究. Taibei: Lianling chuban shiye gongsi, 1986.

Wang Li 王力. *Wang Li gu Hanyu zidian* 王力古漢語字典. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000.

Wang Shumin 王叔岷. *Zhong Rong Shipin jianzheng gao* 鍾嶸詩品箋證稿. Taibei: Zhongyanyuan wenzhesuo, 2004.

Wang Xianqian 王先謙. *Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解. 2 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1988.

Wang Yao 王瑤. "Nigu yu zuowei 擬古與作偽 [Imitation and forgery] " In *Zhongguo wenxueshi lunji* 中古文学史論集 Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982.

Wang Yunxi 王運熙, and Gu Yisheng 顧易生, eds. *Zhongguo wenxue piping shi* 中國文學批評史. 2 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002.

Wu Jiaju 吳家駒, annot. *Xin yi ren wu zhi* 新譯人物志. Taibei: Sanmin shuju, 2003.

Xiao Tong 蕭統. *Wen xuan* 文選. 6 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1985.

Xu Fuguan 徐復觀. *Liang Han sixiang shi* 兩漢思想史. Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1976.

———. *Zhongguo wenxue jingshen* 中國文學精神. Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2004.

Xu Jian 徐堅. *Chuxue ji* 初學記. Tokyo: Zhongwen chubanshe, 1978.

Xu Wenyu 許文雨. *Wen lun jiangshu* 文論講疏 [Writings on literature explicated]. Nanjing: Zhengzhong shuju, 1937.

Xu Weiyu 許維遹, annot. "Hanshi waizhuan jishi 韓詩外傳集釋." Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980. Reprint, 2005.

Yan Kejun 嚴可均 (1762–1843). *Quan shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen* 全上古三代秦漢三國六朝文. 4 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996. Reprint, 6th.

Yang Bojun 楊伯峻. *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhu* 春秋左傳注. 4 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990. Reprint, 2006.

———. *Liezi jishi* 列子集釋 Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979.

Yang Shoujing 楊守敬, ed. & comm., and Xiong Huizhen 熊會貞, coll. *Shuijing zhushu 水經注疏*. Nanjing: Jiangsu guiji chubanshe, 1989.

Yang Xuanzhi 楊眩之 (d. 555), and Zhou Zumou 周祖謀, annot. *Luoyang qielan ji jiaoshi* 洛陽伽藍記校釋. Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2004.

Yang Yong 楊勇, ed. *Shishuo xinyu jiaojian*. 2 vols. Taibei: Zhengwen shuju, 2000.

———. "Xie Lingyun nianpu 謝靈運年譜." In *Yang Yong xueshu lunwen ji* 楊勇學術論文集 548. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006.

Yu Shinan 虞世南 (558-638). *Beitang shuchao* 北堂書鈔. Taibei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1966.

Yu Xin 庾信 (513-581). *Yu Zishan jizhu* 庾子山集注. 4 ed. 3 vols. Beijng: Zhonghua shuju, 1980. Reprint, 2006.

Zhan Yang 詹鍈, ed. *Wenxin diaolong yizheng* 文心雕龍義證 Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1999.

Zhang Bowei 張伯偉. *Zhongguo gudai wenxue pipingfa yanjiu* 中國古代文學批評方法研究. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002.

———. *Zhongguo gudai wexue piping fangfa* 中國古代文學批評方法研究. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002.

Zhang Shaokang 張少康. *Wenfu jishi* 文賦集釋. Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2002. Reprint, 2005.

Zhao Changping 趙昌平. "Xie Lingyun yu shanshui shi qi yuan 謝靈運與山水詩起源." Vol. 4, *Xie Lingyun yanjiu congshu* 謝靈運研究叢書. Guilin: Guangxi Shifan Daxue chubanshe, 2001.

Zhong Jingduo 鐘京鐸. *Ruan Ji yonghuai shi zhu* 阮籍詠懷詩注. Taibei: Xuehai chubanshe, 2002.

Zhong Jingduo 鐘京鐸. *Zuo Si shi jishi* 左思詩集釋. Taibei: Xuehai chubanshe, 2001.

Zhu Dawei 朱大渭 ed. "Chengshi gongyuan yu yuanzhai 城市、宮苑與園宅." *In Wei Jin Nanbeichao shehui shenghuo shi* 魏晉南北朝社會生活史, 110–43. Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1998.

Zhu Qianzhi 朱謙之, *Laozi jiaoshi* 老子校釋. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984.

Appendix: Illustrations of *youlan* 遊覽 in the *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚[1]

1 家語曰，孔子北遊，登農山。子路、子貢、顏回侍。孔子四望，喟然歎曰，二三子各言爾志。

School Sayings of Master Kong: Master Kong traveled north and ascended Mount Nong, with his disciples Zilu, Zigong and Yan Hui in attendance. He gazed out on all four directions and sighed, "My little ones, each of you articulate [for me] your aim."[2]

2 穆天子傳曰，天子遂襲崑崙之丘，遊軒轅之宮，眺望鍾山之嶺，玩帝者之寶，勒石王母之山，紀迹玄圃之上。乃取其嘉木豔草，奇鳥怪獸，玉石珍瑰之器，重膏銀燭之寶。

Traditions of King Mu: The Son of Heaven then went to the Kunlun mountains. He toured (*you*) the palaces of the Yellow Emperor; gazed over the ridges of Mount Zhong; fondled jewels of the gods; inscribed stones atop the mountains of the Queen Mother [of the West]; and set down his tracks upon the Dark Orchards. He then took its fine timber and herbs, strange birds and beasts, implements of precious jade and stones, and treasures of golden lamp oil and silver candlesticks.[3]

3 又曰，天子北昇于舂山之上，以望四野。舂山是惟天下之高山也。天子五日觀于舂山之上。

Ibid. The Son of Heaven ascended in the north to the top of Mount Chong to gaze upon the four expanses. Mount Chong is indeed the highest mountain in all under heaven. For five days, the Son of Heaven observed from atop Mt. Chong.

4 史記曰，始皇三十七年，上會稽山，望于南海，立石刻，頌秦德。還過吳，從江乘渡，傍海上，北至琅邪。

Records of the Grand Historian[4]: In Qin Shihuang's thirty-seventh year (211 BC), he ascended Mount Kuaiji and gazed upon the Southern Sea. He erected a stone inscription that eulogized the virtues of Qin. On his return, he passed through Wu and forded at Jiangcheng county. He flanked Haishang and went north to Langye province.

5 又曰，太史公登會稽山，探禹穴，登姑蘇，望五湖。

Ibid.[5] The Grand Historian ascended Mount Guiji; searched for Yu's cave[6]; ascended Gusu[7] and gazed upon the Five Lakes.

---

[1] Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 et al. (557 − 641), *Yiwen leiju* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1965): 28.499 − 500.
[2] *Kongzi jiayu* 2/8.
[3] The *Yiwen leiju* edition reads "重膏," "heavy (?) oil." For the sake of parallelism, with "silver candlesticks," I follow the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 which reads "golden oil (金膏)."
[4] *Shiji* 6.260.
[5] *Shiji*, 29.1415.
[6] The dwelling of the ancient sage-king Yu at Mount Lu 廬. *Shiji* 29.
[7] Gusu Terrace, on Mount Gusu, was built by King Helu 闔廬 of Wu 吳, which was destroyed by Yue 越.

6	莊子曰，莊子與惠子遊濠梁之上。莊子曰，儵魚出遊從容，是魚樂也。惠子曰，子非魚，焉知魚之樂也。莊子曰，子非我，焉知吾不知魚之樂也。	*Zhuangzi*[8]: Zhuangzi and Huizi roamed on the Hao and Liang rivers. Zhuangzi said, Quickly the fish come out to play freely—this is the joy of fish. Huizi said, "You are not a fish, how then do you know the joy of fish?" Zhuangzi said, "You are not I, how then do you know I don't know the joy of fish?"
7	楚辭曰， 覽冀州兮有餘。 橫四海兮焉窮。	*Verses of Chu*[9]: I survey the land between the rivers[10]—and more lies beyond. [My gaze] sweeps across [the world within] the four sees—how can it be exhausted?
8	又曰， 登崑崙兮四望。 心飛揚兮浩蕩。 日將暮兮悵忘歸。 惟極浦兮寤懷。	*Ibid.*[11] I ascend Mount Kunlun— gazing in the four directions. My heart soars —unfettered and free. Sunset nears —in sadness, I forget to return. I wish to reach the far bank—longing stirs.
9	韓詩外傳曰，齊景公遊於牛山而北望齊曰，美哉國乎，鬱鬱蓁蓁。	*Outer Traditions of Master Han's Odes*[12]: When Duke Jing of Qi toured Ox Mtn, he gazed northward at Qi and exclaimed, "Lovely is the kingdom, lush and luxuriant!"
10	淮南子曰，所謂樂者，遊雲夢，陟高丘，耳聽九韻六莖，口味煎熬芬芳。馳騁夷道，釣射鷫鷞，之謂樂乎。	*Huainanzi*[13]: So-called "pleasure" is to: roam (*you*) Yunmeng and ascend its high hills; have one's ears listen to the nine harmonies of six woodwinds and have one's mouth savor fragrant flavors of cooked delicacies; race over level roads and shoot wild geese—is this really what pleasure consists of?
11	戰國策曰，昔楚王登彊臺而望崇山，左江右湖，以臨方淮。其樂忘死。	*Intrigues of the Warring States*: Once, the King of Chu ascended the Qiang Tower and gazed upon Mount Chong. Facing rivers on the left and lakes on the right, he looked out over Fanghuai. His joy was such that he forgot about death.
12	說苑曰，齊景公遊海上，樂之。六月不歸。	*Park of Explanations*, ed. by Liu Xiang (79–9 BC): Duke Jing of Qi toured the seas. He delighted in them and for six months and did not return.

[8] Guo Qingfan 郭慶藩, *Zhuangzi jishi* 莊子集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961): 6.606.
[9] From "雲中君" in the Nine Songs. *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注, 2.59.
[10] I follow Wang Yi's 王逸 gloss, "兩河之間曰冀州."
[11] From "河伯" in the Nine Songs. *Chuci buzhu*, 2.77.
[12] *Han Shi waizhuan jishi* 韓詩外傳解釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005): 10/11 (10.350–1). Cf., *Liezi jishi* 列子集釋, 6.213.
[13] He Ning 何寧, *Huainanzi jishi* 淮南子集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998): 1.66.

13	又曰，楚昭王欲之荊臺遊。司馬子綦進諫曰。荊臺之遊，左洞庭之波，右彭蠡之水，南望獵山，下臨方淮，其樂使人遺老而忘死。	*Ibid.*: King Zhao of Chu wished to go tour the Jing Tower. Sima Ziqi presented himself and remonstrated, "Roaming (*you*) from Jing Tower is such that, facing the waves of Dongting Lake on the left and the waters of Pengli to the right, one gazes southward towards Mount Lie, and looks out over Fanghuai. Its pleasure is such that it makes people leave behind old age and forget death.
14	新序曰，晉平公遊西河，中流而歎曰，嗟乎，安得賢士，與共此樂乎。	*New Compilation*[14]: When Duke Ping of Jin toured West River[15] and sailed in the river, he sighed, "Ah! How do I attain worthy men with whom to share this joy?"
15	列女傳曰，楚昭王燕遊，蔡姬在左，越姬參乘，王親乘駟以逐。登附莊之臺，以望雲夢之囿。乃顧謂二女曰，樂乎。吾願與子生若此。	*Biography of Honorable Women*: When the King Zhao of Chu went on banquet outings and leisure excursions (*yan-you*), Consort Cai sat [in the seat of honor] on the left, Consort Yue attended him on the right, while the king personally steered the four-horse chariot. When he ascended the Terrace of the Appended Villa to gaze at Yunmeng park, he turned around to address his two consorts, "Isn't it joyous? I wish to live like this with you."
16	世說曰，過江諸人，每暇日，輒相邀新亭，藉卉飲宴。周侯（周顗）中坐而歎曰，風景不殊，舉目有江河之異。	*A New Account of Tales of the World*[16]: On days of leisure, those who crossed south over the river would always take a trip to The New Pavilion,[17] lay mats upon the grass and banquet. Amongst those seated, Zhou Yi sighed, "The elements of the scene are the same, [yet] when I raise my eyes there is a difference between the Yangtze and the Yellow river.

[14] *Xin xu*, *juan* 1.
[15] I.e., the stretch of the Yellow River between Shanxi 山西 and Shanxi 陝西 that runs from north to south.
[16] *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語, 3/31.
[17] The "New Pavilion," located in the capital prefect of Danyang 丹陽 was built on the foundation of an old Wu 吳 terrace that had fallen to ruin.