

Guo Pu's Sorrow of Immortal Landscape

— on the Orthodox Style of *Youxian* Poetry —

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. The Origin and Development of *Youxian* Poetry
3. Immortal Landscape and Disquieting Mentalscape
4. Orthodoxy of Guo Pu's *Youxian* Poetry
5. Concluding Remarks

1. Introduction

Youxian poetry 遊仙詩 can be rendered as either Wandering Immortals' Poetry or Poetry of Wandering in Immortality. The former focuses on immortals in and of themselves while the latter pays more attention to aspiration or imagining of the immortal world. This is not just a matter of interpretation but also help understand two kinds of *youxian* poetry: the orthodox style (*zheng ti* 正體) and the modified style (*bian ti* 變體).

Conventionally, the orthodox style was considered to be those written by the wealthy and noble.¹⁾ They did not need to worry about material

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1) Zhan Shichuang 詹石窗, Lian Zhenpiao 連振標, eds., *Lidai youxian shiwen shangxi* 歷代遊仙詩文賞析 (Hong Kong: Xianggang xuelin shudian 香港學林書店, 1989): 5.

matters and thus sought after fantastic realms. Their imaginary paradise was no more than the continuation of their pleasant life in this world. On the other hand, the modified style was favored by literary men, whose lives were often unfortunate due to political circumstance. To sum up, the so-called orthodox and modified styles are essentially the product of aristocratic and literary culture.

In this context of the un/orthodoxy arises one question regarding Guo Pu 郭璞 (276-324).²⁾ It is generally agreed that Guo Pu was the most acclaimed *youxian* poet in the early medieval or, perhaps, all of Chinese history. His *youxian* poems not only single out as the main theme of his poems, but also take up a majority portion of the *youxian* section of the *Wen xuan* 文選.³⁾ The compiler Xiao Tong 蕭統 (501-531) included seven of Guo Pu's poems in the *youxian* section, which had only nine poems in total. This means that he was considered the most celebrated *youxian* poet during the early medieval period. However, his poems were often criticized as the modified style because he often reflected his emotion in his poetry. Then how do we understand this ironic situation that the foremost *youxian* poet was a man of the modified style. This paper will focus on the argument of the orthodox and modified styles in relation to Guo Pu's works.

Section 2 will examine the three categories of *youxian* poetry before

2) Guo Pu and his *youxian* poetry have been studied in various aspects. For more information on Guo Pu and his literature, see Wu Yun 吳雲, *Wei Jin Nanbei chao wenxue yanjiu* 魏晉南北朝文學研究 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 2001): 297-301.

3) *Wen xuan*, 3:21.1018-25. Strangely, the *youxian* section does not contain early *youxian* poems, such as Cao Zhi's work in the Wei Dynasty (220-265). Li Fengmao's explanation of it is that their *youxian* works are *Qing Shang yuefu* 清商樂府 style and the *Wen xuan* selects only new style, pentasyllabic verse (1984, 146).

Guo Pu in order to understand the root of the un/orthodox styles. Section 3 will analyze Guo's description of immortal landscape filled with various plants and animals. By doing so I will assert that those strange creatures represent Guo's discontent with this world. Section 4 will discuss various assessments of Guo's poems with attention to two opposing views. Guo Pu was not highly valued by Zhong Rong, a typical aristocratic critic, but scholars of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) did not agree with Zhong Rong. I will delve into this issue in the context of description and lyrical expression. This article will contribute to the discussion of un/orthodoxy and its changing criteria over time.

2. The Origin and Development of *Youxian* Poetry

Often described as a man dwelling in the mountains, the immortal *xian* 仙 attains long life and keeps himself ageless.⁴⁾ The cult for immortality began in the Spring and Autumn period (722-481 B.C.E.). The earliest records of immortality-seeking come from the northeastern China in the 4th century B.C.E.⁵⁾ As this cult spread around the China, everlasting life and immortal realms gradually became major themes of poems.

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- 4) Duan Yucai 段玉裁 (1735-1815), comm., *Shuowen jiezi zhu* 說文解字注, 1981, 8a.38b. Xu Shen 許慎 (30-124) explains the composition of the character *xian* 仙 as "a man in the mountain." 人在山上貌 Xu also glosses its interchangeable character *xian* 僊 as "to attain long life and fly away." 長生僊去 Long life in this context may not refer to mere longevity, rather it has the implication of immortality based on another gloss on *xian* in Liu Xi 劉熙 (ca. 200 C.E.), *Shi ming* 釋名, 1959, 3.41: "to live to an old age without dying is called *xian*." 老而不死曰仙
- 5) See the *Shi ji*, 28.1368-70. For more information, see Yu Ying-shih, 1964-5, 88-9; Holzman 1994, 104.

Youxian poems includes various themes, such as imaginary communication with immortals, collecting herbs and cinnabar, as well as the lives of immortals and the passion to contact them. They were initially written by ancient rulers. The earliest poem was recorded in the biography of The First Emperor (reg. 221–209) in the *Shi ji* but the poem has been lost to us.⁶⁾ The poems of Emperor Wu (reg. 122–87 B.C.E.) of the Han dynasty, another notorious immortality-seeker, have not come down to us, either. What remains to us now is only the works of Cao Cao 曹操 (155–220), the de facto ruler at the end of the Han Empire (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.), posthumously known as Emperor Wu. In his “Qi chu ge,” 氣出喝 “Qiu hu xing,” 秋胡行 and so forth. Cao Cao wished to cultivate prosperity without dying.

Relatively speaking, folk ballads (*yuefu* 樂府) on the theme of immortality are more common. They take the form of popular songs but many of them are considered to have been written by learned men, who disguised themselves commoners. One main theme was escape from this troubled world.⁷⁾ Another is disillusion with paradise and the loss of faith

6) *Shi ji*, 6.259. “In the thirty sixth year (208 B.C.E.), Mars was near Antares (αSco). A shooting star fell down to the Dong Commandery (southwest of Puyang 濮陽 in Henan). It became a meteoric boulder as it landed. A commoner carved a sentence on it, which read: “The First Emperor will die, the country will fall apart.” The emperor heard of it and dispatched the Royal Scribe to investigate it but nobody was obeyed. He arrested all the residents around the boulder and executed them. He burned and crushed the massive stone. The emperor was displeased and made the Erudite write “The Poem of the True Immortal Man.” While he traveled over the world, he ordered musicians to perform the song.” 三十六年，熒惑守心。有墜星下東郡，至地爲石，黔首或刻其石曰：始皇帝死而地分。始皇聞之，遣御史逐問，莫服，盡取石旁居人誅之，因燔銷其石。始皇不樂，使博士爲仙真人詩，及行所游天下，傳令樂人弦之。

7) Guo Maoqian 郭茂倩, *Yue fu shi ji* 樂府詩集, 1979, 37.545, “As I Stepped Out the Summer Gate” (“Bu chu xiamen xing” 步出夏門行): “On a side road, I passed an empty hut, / where a virtuous man had lived alone. At last he attained the

in cinnabar. Their disappointment when confronted with the unrealistic expectation of immortality develops into a momentary joy without concern for the unpredictable future, i.e., *carpe diem*.⁸⁾

Some poets did not hide their names when dealing with immortality in their poems. Their poems were more complicated and important than the two previous styles. Among them, the earliest poet was Qu Yuan 屈原 (ca. 340–278 B.C.E.), who wrote “Encountering Sorrow” (“Li sao“ 離騷) in the *Chu ci* 楚辭. Elements of the immortal topos are found, for example, in the poetic persona’s visit to Xiwangmu’s residence on Mount Kunlun and the occasional meeting with various supernatural beings along his imaginary journey.⁹⁾ “Yuan you” 遠遊 (Distant Voyage) more directly relates to immortals, such as Red Pine Cone 赤松子, Han Zhong 韓衆, Xuanyuan 軒轅, Prince Qiao 王子喬.¹⁰⁾

Qu Yuan’s theme of spirituality was further developed by Cao Zhi 曹植 (192–232). Among his ten ballads of immortals, Holzman notes that the four ballads frequently use allegorical complaints about his fate, while six

principle of immortality / and rose to take his place in heaven.” 邪徑過空虛，好人常獨居。卒得神仙道，上與天相扶； *Song shu*, 22.641, “Going Up the Hill” (“Shangling qu” 上陵曲): “The Ganoderma is his cart / a dragon replaces his horse. He roams free and confident, / outside the Four Seas. Sweet Dew is the first two years/ mushrooms grow in the Copper Pond. An immortal descends and drinks it / his age reaches up to a thousand and ten thousand years.” 芝爲車，龍爲馬。覽遨遊，四海外。甘露初二年，芝生銅池中，仙人下來飲，延壽千萬歲。

- 8) *Wen xuan*, 29.1348, “Nineteen Old Poems,” #13: “Those who take chemical medicine in pursuit of immortality, Often end up with adverse reaction of their drugs. / It is not the same to drink refined ale And put on white silk clothes.” 服食求神仙，多爲藥所悞，不如飲美酒，被服紈與素。
- 9) Li Fengmao 李豐楙, 1996, 9.
- 10) David Hawkes, 1985, 193–5. Since these names usually appear in the Han texts, reflecting the Han cosmology, David Hawkes credits the work as being written around 140 B.C.E., although it was traditionally attributed to Qu Yuan.

works contain almost no dissatisfaction. Then he reasonably concludes that Cao Zhi was sympathetic with immortality especially in his unfortunate latter days, though he was hostile to it as a religious cult(1988, 56-7). Cao Zhi's sympathy with immortality arose from a series of unfortunate events in his life, just as Qu Yuan sought for spiritual existence in his exile. On the other hand, his brother Cao Pi 曹丕 (187-226) adopted immortality mainly for ornamental purposes, and even went so far as to laugh at immortality-seekers in his famous poem "The Lotus Pond." 芙蓉池 The two brothers' different attitudes are obviously related to their respective political success and failure.¹¹⁾ What matters here, however, is that they both began to pay much attention to beautiful scenery. This value of landscape became more significant in Guo Pu's *youxian* poetry

3. Immortal Landscape and Disquieting Mental Scape

Guo Pu, *zi* Jingchun 景純, a native of Wenxi 聞喜, Hedong 河東 (modern Wenxi, a valley off the Fen River in Shanxi). His family was literate but not of the aristocratic class. His father Guo Yuan 郭瑗 served as the Imperial Secretariat 上書都令史 on the staff of the Grand Secretary Du Yu 杜預 (222-284). In 311, he crossed the Yangzi River in the aftermath of the northern tribe's attack on China in 310 and later served as the Governor of Jianping 建平 in Sichuan. At that time he earned a reputation

11) For a discussion of early Daoist poetry, see Ryu Sungjun 柳晟俊, "Jindae Guo Pu gwa gui cheonhu ui yuseon si gango", 晉代 郭璞과 그 前後의 遊仙詩 簡考, *Chungguk yon'gu* 中國研究 28 (2001): 106-13.

as a prognosticator but failed to produce a favorable divination for Wang Dun 王敦 (266-324), who planned to rebel against Emperor Ming 明帝 (reg. 323-325). On account of this, he incurred Wang's enmity and was tragically executed in 324, the 2nd year of the Taining 泰寧 reign period of Emperor Ming.¹²⁾ Guo Pu was also the most learned man of the Six Dynasties. He was known to annotate important texts, including the *Chu ci* 楚辭, *Shang hai jing* 山海經, *Erya* 爾雅, *Fangyan* 方言, and so on.

Guo Pu also left us twenty poems; among them are sixteen *youxian* poems, including some fragments.¹³⁾ Many of his *youxian* poems depict the beautiful landscape of the immortal realm. Lin Wenyue, as far as I know, is the first to pay attention to Guo's influence on the emergence of landscape verse. In her pioneering article (1976, 10-2), she first documents that Guo's command of the landscape is more detail and vivid than previous poets' sketch of the nature."¹⁴⁾ She then points out his limitations in the development from *youxian* poetry to landscape verse: Guo's landscape-setting is foregrounded to highlight the figures and the

12) For more biographical information, see *Jin shu*, 72.1899-1910; Jonathan Pease, 1980, 23-166.

13) *Quan Jin shi*, 1: 5.421-5. The numbering of Guo's poems is based on the order in *Wen xuan* (# 1-7) and *Quan Jin shi* (# 1-12). Lu Qinli uncovered the four fragmentary passages (2: 11.895-7). For the citation of Guo Pu's poems, I will use poem number instead of page number. His *youxian* poems were initially individual works and later were compiled in the form of Linked Poems (*zu shi* 組詩). Most of them are considered to have been written in Guo's later days in Jingzhou (Li Fengmao, 1984, 138).

14) He Shao 何劭, *Wen xuan*, 3: 21.1017-8: "Green, green, pine trees on the hill / Lofty, lofty, cedar [Chinese arborvitae] in the high mountain. Dense forest radiates brilliant color in winter and summer / their roots are not withered." 青青陵上松，亭亭高山栢。光色冬夏茂，根柢無凋落。; Xi Kang 嵇康, Yan Kejin, 4.209: "Distantly I look over the pine trees on top of the mountain. In a high valley, blue leeks are dense." 遙望山上松，隆谷鬱青蔥。

nature scenes are not independently appreciated.

Though her observation is relevant, the functional load of the landscape is still important. Guo's poems, as we will read soon, mainly center on the scenery, the recluses being part of it. This unbalanced composition is comparable with a dot-like human figure almost indistinguishable in the monumental landscape paintings (*daguan shanshui hua* 大觀山水畫) starting from the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127).¹⁵⁾ The dominance of landscape in the entire scene is well observed in many of Guo's poems, for one example, a passage in Poem Three:

Jade-colored birds romp in the field of thoroughwort,¹⁶⁾
 Which sets off their charming appearance to advantage.
 Green ivies entangle the tall woods,
 Covering and veiling the whole mountain.
 In the midst is a quiet and mysterious man,
 Serenely whistling, plucking the pure strings.
 He expresses his sentiment outside the sky,
 Chewing flowerbuds and drinking the soaring spring [geyser].
 翡翠戲蘭苕 容色更相鮮
 綠蘿結高林 蒙籠蓋一山
 中有冥寂士 靜嘯撫清絃
 放情凌霄外 嚼蕊挹飛泉

The passage is composed of natural scenery as a background in the first two couplets and a reclusive figure there in the next two couplets. The objects in the scene are consistently represented with green tones:

15) One example is "Summer Mountains" ("Xia shan tu" 夏山圖), attributed to Qu Ding 屈鼎 (fl. ca. 1023-ca. 1056), immeasurably high mountains are juxtaposed with minute details of human figures. See the picture attached to the end of the paper.

16) Jonathan Pease, 1980, 219. *Lan tiao* 蘭苕 can be rendered as "orchid and begonia" (Yip Wai-lim) or as "orchids and trumpet vines" (*campsis grandiflora*).

jade-colored birds (*feicui* 翡翠), the thoroughwort field (*lantiao* 蘭苕), green ivies (*liluo* 綠蘿), and tall woods (*gaolin* 高林). All kinds of green colors place the scene in the heart of pristine nature, far away from the civilized world, which naturally anticipates the existence of a mysterious man (*ming di shi* 冥寂士) in the next couplet. The combination of the green scenery and the recluse in the background is similarly observed in Poem Three.¹⁷⁾

Guo portrays the scenery with green tones, before introducing the recluses, who resides somewhere in this world. By contrast, he creates the unworldly atmosphere in the case of the immortal Prince Qiao:

The Jade Terrace crowns Mt. Kunlun,
 In the West Sea coast I stride.
 Agate forest cages water plants' reflex,
 In jade trees, flowers fly away sparsely.
 Cinnabar Spring gushes up reddish bubbles, 5
 Ebony water drums forth nebulous waves.
 Seeking for immortals over ten thousand days,
 Now I encounter Prince Qiao.
 璇臺冠崑嶺 西海濱招搖
 瓊林籠藻映 碧樹疏英翹
 丹泉溼朱沫 黑水鼓玄濤
 尋仙萬餘日 今乃見子喬

The passage in Poem Ten employs the compositional strategy of a nature scene with a lone, solitary figure. The first couplet introduces background of the Kunlun mountains 崑嶺 and West Sea. 西海 The second

17) "Green Gorge is deeper than a thousand *ren*, Wherein is a seeker of the Dao." 青谿千餘仞 中有一道士 One *ren* 仞 is seven *chi*. 尺 One *chi* is 24.5 cm in the Eastern Jin time (*Hanyu da cidian suoyin*, 1: 4).

and third couplets describe the landscape and waterscape, respectively. Guo enchants readers with the fantastic atmosphere filled with the colorful objects: jade woods and trees (*bishu* 碧樹 and *qionglin* 瓊林), Cinnabar Spring (*danquan* 丹泉), reddish foam (*zhumo* 朱沫), ebony water (*moshui* 黑水), and nebulous wave (*xuantao* 玄濤). All these colorful illusionary objects contribute to making the image of Prince Qiao, a more transcendental figure than the recluses behind the foreground of uninhabited nature cited in the previous poems. We can see from this that Guo employs the two different landscapes depending on the figures he intends to portray.

A more important feature of his landscape is to reveal his sentiment within the scenery. In his imaginary journey in Poems Nine and Twelve, for example, Guo expresses his sorrow in the panoramic view looking down at the earth from the celestial realm:

The Eastern Sea no more than a hoof-pond,
The Kunlun Mountains, mounds of mole-crickets and ants.
Amidst the distant, remote, dim, and vast-
To look down makes a man sad.¹⁸⁾
東海猶蹄涔 崑崙螻蟻堆
遐邇冥茫中 俯視令人哀

The Four Ditches [Rivers] flow like tears,
The Five Sacred Peaks outspread like ant hills.
I seek for my blue-cloud friend-
And sever forever the relation with the people of this world.
四瀆流如淚 五嶽羅若垤
尋我青雲友 永與時人絕

18) Translation from Jonathan Pease, 1980, 245-6.

The wide rivers and mountains are seem like tears and tiny mounds from a bird's eye view. Even the immortal's residences such as Kunlun and East Sea look like a puddle and a ball of mud on the road in his vista. Guo belittles the enormous sites in order to underscore his fantastic journey in flight. Despite his fabulous journey, however, the landscape does not look cheerful: "the Four Ditches flow like tears" 四瀆流如淚 and "to look down makes a man sad." 俯視令人哀 Guo often represents the landscape of melancholia in his poems. Not only landscape but wild animals also betray the unfulfilled emotion:

The great wing yearns to brush the cloud,
The nimble beast is eager to roam away.
The Clear springs have no layered waves,
How can it accommodate boat-swallowing, gigantic fish?
逸翮思擲霄 迅足羨遠游
清源無增瀾 安得運吞舟

The Zaxian bird perches on the gate of Lu,
The warm wind brings about disaster.
The ship-swallower surges from the bottom of the sea,
The high waves rush up Penglai Mountain.¹⁹⁾
雜縣寓魯門 風煖將爲災
吞舟涌海底 高浪駕蓬萊

Poems Five and Six present various mythical beasts and birds in an adverse situation. The great wing (*yige* 逸翮), the nimble feet (*xunzu* 迅足), and the boat-swallower (*tanzhou* 吞舟) are synecdoche for wildlife which cannot free itself from external restrictions. The image of the Zaxian bird telegraphs the inauspicious future. Ominous signs are equally

19) Translation from Jonathan Pease, 1980, 251.

observed among the wild plants. In the third and fourth couplets of Poem Seven, the personified plants are all in a fluster under the difficult circumstances:

The God of Autumn cleans up the western land,
 The blazing summer sun will fade away.
 Cold dew drop from the trumpet creepers,
 Ivies bid farewell to pine trees.
 蕝收清西陸 朱羲將由白
 寒露拂陵苕 女蘿辭松栢

Annual plants such as creepers begin to decline during the transitional period from summer to autumn. The verb “farewell” (*ci* 辭) effectively delivers the sentiment of the withering and falling creepers. Even the inanimate dew feels sad for its ephemeral being. The verb “shake off” (*fó* 拂) reveals the pitiful destiny of the unbearable lightness under the ruthless law of gravity. The hopeless beings before the approaching gloom are more miserably presented in the next passage of Poem Five:

Plants in the shade resent [the late arrival of] green light in spring.
 Plants in the highland lament [the early coming] of the white spirit of fall.
 潛穎怨青陽 陵苕哀素秋

Guo personifies the plants in the shade and highland: the former complains (*yuan* 怨) of the inaccessibility of light, and the latter grieves (*ai* 哀) at the arrival of the cold season.

Guo Pu also makes mournful stories with mythical explanation in his annotation of *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* (*Shan hai jing* 山海經),

for one example:²⁰⁾

Trees grow on top of Song Mountain. 宋山 Their name is Feng (the maple tree). They used to be Chiyou's shackles and handcuffs. They are thus called the Feng trees.

有木生山上, 名曰楓木。楓木, 蚩尤所棄其桎梏 是謂楓木。

The *Shan hai jing* introduces maple trees on top of the Song Mountain as the incarnation of Chiyou 蚩尤, who was defeated by the Xuanyuan 軒轅 at the legendary epic battle around the third century B.C.E. at Zhuolu 涿鹿 near Xiezhou 解州 (southwest of Linyi 臨猗 in Shanxi).²¹⁾ Guo Pu develops it into the story of metamorphosis, linking the color of leaves with the color of his blood as he was fettered and executed by the Yellow Emperor:²²⁾

Chiyou was captured by the Yellow Emperor. He was bound to the wooden rack (implement of punishment) and executed. Later the wooden frame was thrown away and it transformed into a tree.

蚩尤爲黃帝所得, 械而殺之, 已摘棄其械, 化而爲樹也。

Guo attributed spirit to natural objects in other writings as well. In the following line, the woods and brooks make a tumult of sounds. It happens, reasonably due to a rattling wind and rainy weather but Guo captures the vital force behind the trees and brook:²³⁾

20) Yuan Ke 袁珂, ed., *Shan hai jing jiao zhu* 山海經校注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985), 15.260.

21) *Shi ji*, 1.3. Xuanyuan conquered Chiyou who rampaged at the end of Emperor Shennong's 神農 reign period. For his meritorious service, Xuanyuan succeeded to Shennong as the next emperor.

22) Guo Pu, comm., *Shan hai jing*, 1781, 15.6a.

23) *Shi shuo xin yu*, 1993, 4.257, #76.

There is a poem by Guo Pu which reads: “In the forest there are no quiet trees. The brook has no stagnant flows.” Ruan Fu 阮孚 (ca. 278-ca. 326) said of it:²⁴⁾ “The deep water is babbling and high peaks are rustling, which truly invoke an ineffable feeling. Whenever I read this passage, instantly I feel my spirit transported and my body far removed.”

郭景純詩云：“林無靜樹，川無停流。”阮孚云：“泓崢蕭瑟，實不可言。每讀此文，輒覺神超形越。”

Guo Pu uncovers spirituality from whistling trees and an unceasing flow as Gu Kaizhi 高愷之 (ca. 345-ca. 406) represents the figure’s spirit in painting a portrayal (*Chuan shen xie zhao* 傳神寫照) (Bush, 1985, 20). The poet’s intuitive contemplation on natural objects helps us to understand Ruan Fu’s mysterious confession that his soul transcends from his corporeality upon reading the passage. This explains why the story is included in the chapter name of “Mysterious Contemplation” 幽思 of *Shi shuo xin yu*.

To sum up, Guo filled the landscape with a variety of the real and imaginary creatures based on his erudite knowledge of myths and history. However, they do not appear cheerful in spite of living in the beautiful landscape, because they are the embodiment of the sorrowful poet. The poet’s melancholia is therefore a key to understand and evaluate of Guo’s poetry.

4. Orthodoxy of Guo Pu’s *Youxian* Poetry.

24) Ruan Fu, *zi* Yaoji 遙集, is a grand-nephew of Ruan Ji 阮籍 (210-263). He was born between Ruan Xian 阮咸 (234-305) and his Xianbei slave woman. For more information, see *Jin shu*, 49.1364-5.

The assessment of Guo's *youxian* poems started from the Liang dynasty (502-557). The two major critiques are *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 by Liu Xie 劉勰 (ca. 465-522) and *Shi pin* 詩品 by Zhong Rong 鍾嶸 (ob. ca. 518). Both critics acknowledge the significance of Guo Pu's works overall but with different views. Liu Xie's comments are more comprehensive and less controversial than Zhong Rong's:²⁵⁾

During the period of the Eastern Jin (317-420), literary writings were mired in Neo-Taoistic discussions. They ridiculed the devotion to worldly matters and lauded the discourse for abandoning the calculating mind. Though Yuan Hong 袁宏 (328-376), Sun Chuo 孫綽 (320-377, alt. 314-371), and others had embellished styles, their poetic flavors were equally [plain]. No one was qualified to be the foremost poet of the time. Therefore Guo Pu's *youxian* poems stood out and became paramount [among them].

江左篇制，溺乎玄風，嗤笑徇務之志，崇盛忘機之談，袁孫已下，雖各有雕采，而辭趣一揆，莫與爭雄，所以景純仙篇，挺拔而為俊矣。

Liu Xie denounces the *xuanyan* poets in the Eastern Jin for their recurring Daoist themes and monotonous language. Among these dwarfs, Guo Pu attained the stature of the great poet. Liu Xie characterizes Guo's literary talents as follows:²⁶⁾

Guo Pu's poems are stylish yet unworldly. They deserve to be crowned for the restoration of the Eastern Jin literature. His "Jiao fu" is brilliant and worth contemplating. *Youxian* poems also invoke a feeling of floating in the sky and soaring through clouds.

景純艷逸，足冠中興，郊賦既穆穆以大觀，仙詩亦飄飄而凌雲矣。

25) Liu Xie 劉勰, *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍, 1989, 1: 6.202-7.

26) Ibid., 47.1824.

Liu Xie first designates Guo Pu *summa cum laude* for his contribution to the Eastern Jin literature. He then labels Guo's two styles: grandiloquence for "Nan jiao fu" and high-spiritedness for *youxian* poems.²⁷⁾ In his *Shi pin*, however, Zhong Rong evaluates Guo Pu as second rate and then criticizes Guo's lyricism.²⁸⁾

Guo Pu, the governor of Hongnong (modern Lingbao 靈寶 northwest of Henan) in the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420), succeeded to the style of Pan Yue 潘岳 (247-300). Both style and content are splendid. His ornate writings are delightful. He was the first to change the plain Yongjia (307-312) style [*xuanyan shi*] of the Central Plain. Therefore he is called the greatest poet of the restoration. In Li Chong's 李充 (fl. ca. 320) view, his poems are the best. Many of his *youxian* poems, however, are heroic and impassioned and thus deviate greatly from the Profound Learning tradition. He says: "What avails your tiger-and-panther-like bearing?" He also says "A Bird folding his wings roost in the thorny thickets." These lines vent his frustrated feeling, which is not the immortal flavor.

晉弘農太守郭璞。憲章潘岳，文體相輝，彪炳可玩。始變永嘉平淡之體，故稱中興第一。翰林以爲詩首。但遊仙之作，詞多慷慨，乖遠玄宗而云：“柰何虎豹姿。”又云：“戢翼棲榛梗。”乃是坎壈詠懷，非列仙之趣也。

Similar to Liu Xie, Zhong Rong at first lauds Guo's role in changing the vogue for the *xuanyan* poems in the late Western Jin (265-317) period. Next, he raises the new issue of impassioned diction (*kangkai* 慷慨), which

27) "Jiao fu" 郊賦 is considered to be "Nan jiao fu." 南郊賦 Its fragmentary remains are in the *Yi wen lei ju* and Li Shan's 李善 (630-689) commentary in *Wen xuan*. *Yi wen lei ju*, 10.187: "A withered tree of uglans mandshurica became lush in the town of the ancestor [Emperor Xuan] (reg. 73-49 B.C.E.)" 弊梓擢秀于祖邑也; *Wen xuan*, 22.1052. "The place is located in the first xingci 星次. It is covered by Mount Heng." 宅是星紀，奄有衡霍。

28) *Shi pin* 詩品, 1994, 247.

deviates from the Profound Learning tradition.²⁹⁾ 乖遠玄宗 Zhong's negative view apparently contradict Liu Xie's praise of Guo's poems for his immortal's atmosphere, "floating in the sky and soaring through the clouds." 飄飄而凌雲矣 A more controversial comment comes in the last sentence of the passage: Guo's frustration 坎壈詠懷. Although what Zhong Rong faults for the lack of immortal flavor 非列仙之趣 were the two fragmentary passages that he cites, many later critics have had applied his criticism to Guo's entire oeuvre. His criticism, thus, brought about a tremendous amount of response from later commentators both in positive and negative ways.

Zhong Rong's view was first supported by Li Shan, who commented that Guo Pu was narrow-minded and many poems involved his own life story, instead of the transcendental realm.³⁰⁾ He Zhuo 何焯 (1661-1722) was also in line with Zhong Rong. He defined Guo's poems as modified style (*bian ti* 變體), apparently, on the basis of Zhong's aristocratic view.³¹⁾

29) This passage is understood to mean that Guo's refreshing (*xin xian* 新鮮) and impassioned (*kang kai* 慷慨) styles are distinctive from the *xuanyan* poets' plain (*ping dan* 平淡) and shallow (*fu qian* 浮淺) styles in the late Western Jin (Fan Wenlan, 1978, 2: 544).

30) *Wen xuan*, 3: 21.1018: "In all the *youxian* poems, the secular net of this world is regarded filthy, officialdom is considered trivial; they drink dew in the highest realm, and take elixir at the profound capital. But many of Guo Pu's poems have his own story. Though his intent is limited in the human world, his words contains worldly dust. He was criticized by his predecessors [Zhong Rong]. Indeed, there is a reason for that." 凡游仙之篇, 皆所以滓穢塵網, 錙銖纓絨, 餐霞倒景, 餌玉玄都, 而璞之制, 文多自敘. 雖志狹中區, 而辭無俗累, 見非前識, 良有以哉! Cf. *Ibid.*, 21.1024. In his *Wen xuan kaoyi*, 文選考異 Hu Kejia 胡克家 (1757-1816) claims that *wu* 無 should be replaced by *jian* 兼; He Zhuo 何焯, *Yimen dushu ji* 義門讀書記, 1987, 3: 46.895.

31) He Zhuo 何焯, *Yimen dushu ji* 義門讀書記, 1987, 3: 46.895: [He Shao's] *youxian* poems are orthodox style. Guo Pu's are its variation." 何敬祖遊仙詩, 遊仙正體, 弘農其變.

On the other hand, Zhong Rong was questioned by many scholars of the Qing Dynasty, such as Chen Zuoming 陳祚明 (fl. 1655-1673), Yao Fan 姚範 (1702-1771), and Chen Hang 陳沆 (1785-1826).³²⁾ Shen Deqian 沈德潛 (1673-1769) even rebuts Zhong Rong directly:³³⁾

Youxian poetry relies on allegorical devices when saying something. Venting their frustration and expressing inner feeling are its original intent. It is wrong that Zhong Rong degrades Guo Pu's poems for the lack of immortal flavor.
遊仙詩本有托而言，坎壈詠懷其本旨也。鍾嶸貶其少列仙之趣，謬矣。

Shen Deqian had Confucian view of literature. He developed the theory of form and tune (*ge tiao shuo* 格調說) that emphasized the moderate and learned (*wenrou dunhou* 溫柔敦厚) style and the pursuit of elegance (*ya* 雅).³⁴⁾ With such a typical Confucian view Shen was sympathetic with Guo

32) *Caishu tang gushi xuan* 采菽堂古詩選, 12 in *Wei Jin Nanbei chao wenxue shi cankao ziliao*, 1973, 331. "The works of Wandering Immortals are undoubtedly the style that borrows immortal's words for their own sentiment. If we try to understand *youxian* poems having the flavor of immortals, it would not be its original intent." 遊仙之作，明屬寄託之辭，如以列仙之趣求之，非其本旨矣； Fang Dongshu 方東樹, *Zhaomei zhanyan* 昭昧詹言 in *ibid.*, 331. "This poem written by Guo Pu properly relates the fundamental matter. Zhong Rong and Li Shan's criticisms were wrong; He Zhao was even more incorrect." 若景純此詩，正道其本事。鐘、李乃譏之，誤也；義門更失之矣； Chen Hang 陳沆 (1785-1826), *Shi bi xing jian* 詩比興箋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), 62. For more discussion, see Jonathan Pease, 1980, 196-201.

33) Shen Deqian 沈德潛, *Gushi yuan* 古詩源 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuji, 2006), 8.154. Shen Deqian, *zi* Queshi 確士, *hao* Guiyu 歸愚, was a native of Changzhou 長洲 (modern Suzhou 蘇州). He served three emperors, and among them Emperor Gaozong especially favored his literary talents.

34) *Ibid.*, 1-2: "The book consists of fourteen chapters. It contains most of the elegant ancient poems though I cannot enumerate all of them. It should be a common source for students of poetry." 成得一十四卷，不敢謂已盡古詩，而古詩之雅者略盡於此。

Pu's hesitation and thus disagreed with Zhong Yong on Guo's poems. Another similar view was presented by Liu Xizai 劉熙載 (1813-1881), who in his *Ye gai* 藝概 believes the real intention of *youxian* poetry was the indirect expression of frustration.³⁵⁾

The two opposite approaches to Guo's poems result from the interpretation of Guo's hesitation between this world and immortal world. I argue that hesitation was a critical component of *youxian* poetry from the beginning, such as Qu Yuan's "Li sao." As was already discussed in the second section, *youxian* poets frequently express discontent with the world. For example, half of Cao Zhi's *youxian* poems, five out of ten works, allegorically describe his political aspirations and fears (Holzman, 1994, 114). Xi Kang also resents the topsy-turvy world in his *youxian* poem "Qiu hu xing." 秋胡行 The allegorical expression of inner feeling was held in esteem by Confucian critics although it was dismissed as a modified style by He Zhuo and other aristocratic poets. Therefore, the weary, distressed men's pursuit of immortalhood is to be considered the main theme of *youxian* poetry.

The biography of Prince Qiao also tells the significance of a difficult life before Daoist enlightenment.³⁶⁾ He was initially Crown Prince Jin 太子晉 in the Eastern Zhou dynasty (770-256 B.C.E.), but he was demoted to

凡爲學詩者導之源也。

35) Xue Zhengxing 薛正興, ed., *Liu Xizai wenji* 劉熙載文集 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 2000), 2.97: "Xi Kang and Guo Pu all were the men of purity and honor. Though Xi Kang's "Qiu hu xing" values the flavor of the profound silence and Guo's *youxian* poems borrow the word of reclusion, their passion and frustration spontaneously manifest in the words. Thus one should know their indirect way and listen to their real intention." 嵇叔夜, 郭景純, 皆亮節之士。雖秋胡行, 貴玄默之趣, 遊仙詩, 假樓遜之言而激烈悲憤, 自在言外, 乃知識曲宜聽其真也。

36) Liu Xiang 劉向 (ca. 77-6 B.C.E.), *Lie xian zhuan* 列仙傳, 1975, 673. For more biographical information, see Min Zhiting 閔智亭, et al., 1994, 202, 211.

commoner for his direct remonstrance against King Ling 靈王 (reg. 571–545 B.C.E.).³⁷⁾ While wandering around the Luo 洛 and Yi 伊 rivers, he ran into the immortal Mr. Floating Hill 浮丘公, who took him to Mt. Song 嵩山. Ten years later, Prince Qiao transformed into an immortal as well. Thereafter, he became the figure most venerated by *youxian* poets and even mythified in the Daoist text *Shidichen donghua shangzuo wu mingyangjun chuanshuo*.³⁸⁾ 侍帝晨東華上佐悟命楊君傳說 This legend tells us that even the most admired immortal experienced hardship in the human world. From the cases of the unfulfilled *youxian* poets and Prince Qiao, therefore, we can conclude that conflict with the world is prerequisite condition for achieving great poems, and, perhaps, for immortality.

5. Concluding Remarks

Guo Pu's sorrowful sentiments are reflected in his landscape images, such as tear-like streams and dazzling yet gloomy vistas. He also

37) At the time of Emperor Ming (reg. 58–75 C.E.) was a near homonym, Wang Qiao, who was believed to be the reincarnation of Prince Qiao (*Hou Han shu* 82.2712). However, Holzman (1991, 77–8) argues that the figure cited in all the *youxian* works, is Prince Qiao, not Wang Qiao, including Cai Yong's 蔡邕 (133–192) the Wang Ziqiao Stele 王子喬碑 in Meng in Henan (*Quan Hou Han wen*, 1958, 3ab).

38) Among numerous poems of Prince Qiao, a few examples are taken here. *Wen xuan*, 29.1349. “Gushi shijiu shou,” 古詩十九首 #15: “Duped people are stingy with their resources, But become the laughing-stock of later people. The immortal Prince Qiao Is difficult one that you wish for.” 愚者愛惜費 但爲後世嗤 仙人王已喬 難可與等期; Xi Kang, *Quan Jin shi*, 1: 4.209: “Prince Wang left me. He rode on cloud, driving six dragons.” 王喬棄我去, 乘雲駕六龍; Guo Pu, *youxian* poem, #10: “Seeking for immortals over ten thousand days, Now I encounter Prince Qiao.” 尋仙萬餘日, 今乃見子喬.

indirectly expresses his melancholia through his observations of a number of real and mythical beasts. In spite of extraordinary abilities, they are unable to escape from their restricted circumstances. Annual plants worry about their futile destinies in the flux of time. The flora and fauna in the landscape are the manifestation of Guo's discontent with reality.

The poet's sorrowful landscape may come from his lower social status and tragic fate. He was gifted with great literary talents but could not find his way into the aristocratic hierarchy. His life was unsuccessful even in the South after he escaped to the Yangtze River on account of invading nomadic tribes. He was eventually executed after incurring Wang Dun's enmity. Guo's pursuit of the immortal world, in this sense, was initiated by his mental stress as a mortal.

Guo's *youxian* poetry has been considered the highest in the history of Chinese literature but Zhong Rong raised a controversial issue by criticizing that Guo's hesitation and frustration lacked the flavor of an immortal realm. 坎壈詠懷 非列仙之趣也 However, dissatisfaction and disillusion with the chaotic world had been essential subject matters of *youxian* poetry from the beginning. The unrecognized vassal Qu Yuan and powerless prince Cao Zhi had already vented their anger against a corrupt world while struggling after immortality. Such an indirect mode of expression was greatly acclaimed in traditional Chinese literature. Guo Pu, therefore, should be understood as the legitimate successor of *youxian* poetry.

Different literary views make different assessment. Guo Pu's *youxian* poetry is one exemplary case. They were criticized by Zhong Rong but greatly welcomed by Shen Deqian and other Qing dynasty scholars. Zhong Rong favored aristocratic, descriptive literature, whereas Shen Deqian

praised the lyrical mode of Tang poetry quite highly from the Confucian perspective. Such a different literary minds would lead the two critics to develop opposite views of Guo Pu's poems.

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<논문 초록>

遊仙은 천지를 주유하는 '신선'이나 선계를 '유람하기'로 해석된다. 이는 단순히 번역상의 차이일 뿐만 아니라 두 종류의 遊仙詩를 이해하는 실마리이다. 제왕이나 귀족들은 현세의 영달을 내세로 이어가려는 욕망으로 선선을 환상적으로 묘사했으며 심지어 자신과 동일시하였다. 반면 불우한 문인들은 현실을 초극하고자 함원으로 선계에서 노닐고자 하였다. 중국 고전문학사에서 전자와 후자는 각각 正體와 變體로 평가받았다. 이러한 구별은 광박의 유선시가 坎壈詠懷하여 선선의 정취가 없다고 지적한 종영의 문학관에서 시작되었다. 종영은 당시 팝진성을 강조하는 남조의 귀족주의 문학관에 입각하여 광박의 유선시를 중품으로 평가하였다. 본고는 이러한 종영의 시각을 재검토한다.

조식, 완적 등 중국문학사에서 가장 대표적인 유선시 작가들은 불행한 삶에서 연원하는 상실감 속에서 선계를 강렬히 회구하였다. 광박은 이들의 계보를 이으며 현실불만과 비애감을 작품 속에서 오롯이 투영하였다. 따라서 본고는 광박의 詠懷를 평가절하한 종영보다 유선시의 본령으로 간주한 유희재, 심덕잠 등 청대 문인들의 평가가 타당한 것으로 본다. 그러므로 문인들의 유선시는 유토피아의 재현과 디스토피아적인 현실투영을 동시에 보여주고 있으며 광박은 이러한 두 가지 측면을 모두 보여주었다는 점에서 높은 평가를 받아야 한다.

중심어 : 유선시, 광박, 종영, 이선, 유희재, 심덕잠, 정체, 변체.

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