

About the Relationship between the Authors and the Implied Readers of Imaginary Journeys in *Chu Ci* and *Han Fu*

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1. Introduction

In this paper, I compare three Chinese literary works on their imaginary journeys. I argue that a different setting for the relationship between the author and the protagonist (or the implied reader) creates a different attitude in the protagonist toward his imaginary journey, which eventually brings about different endings for the imaginary journeys.

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David Hawkes divided journey pieces in early Chinese literature into two types: the imaginary journey and the real journey. According to him, when the protagonist takes a real journey, he often visits historical sites. Liu Xin's 劉歆 (d. 23 A.D.E.) "Sui chu fu" 遂初賦, Ban Biao's 班彪 (3-54 A.D.E.) "Bei zheng fu" 北征賦, and Cao Dagu's 曹大家 (ca. 49-ca. 120) "Dong zheng fu" 東征賦 are fu poems that represent this category of real journeys.

For the imaginary journey, an author describes travel to a supernatural realm or a celestial body.¹⁾ This paper focuses on one Chu ci 楚辭 and two fu 賦 poems about imaginary journeys: "Yuanyou" 遠遊 by Qu Yuan 屈原 (ca. 340-278 B.C.E.), "Daren fu" 大人賦 by Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 (179-117 B.C.E.), and "Si xuan fu" 思賢賦 by Zhang Heng 張衡 (78-139). These poems are similar to each other in that: (1) the protagonist is frustrated with his current circumstances and tries to escape the reality that he finds himself in; (2) the protagonist journeys to an imaginary realm, especially in the celestial sphere; and (3) the journey is made with a dragon-drawn chariot, which is particularly exciting. However, despite sharing these traits, each poem is also different from the other two in certain specific ways. This paper identifies these differences and seeks to describe the factors that led to these differences.

1) David Hawkes, "Quest of the Goddess." *Asia Major*, n.s. 13.1-2 (1967): 71-94; rpt. in *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974. 42-68.

2. Three Poets and the Factors that Shaped Their Imaginary Journey Poems

We can learn about how and why these three poems were written from information such as historical records related to the authors and their literary works, as well as clues provided in the first lines of the poems themselves.

The “Yuanyou” is reputed to have been written by Qu Yuan 屈原 (340-278 B.C.E.),²⁾ who was a great scholar-official as well as a *Chu ci* poet. He was from a *Chu* 楚 noble clan and was a high official of King Huai 楚懷王 (r. 328-299 B.C.E.). Qu Yuan drafted laws and engaged in important diplomatic missions and discussions. However, slandered by treacherous vassals, Qu Yuan was exiled at three different times. He reputedly wrote most of his poems while he was in exile. Therefore his poems reflect a complicated mixture of feelings: concerns for his state, resentment toward his ruler, and anger toward those who slandered him. He wrote the “Yuanyou” during this period, which is revealed in the beginning of the poem:

I deplored the world's ways: they hampered and hemmed me,
I wished to rise lightly go roaming afar.
Yet this flesh was crude stuff: I had not the means,

2) According to David Hawkes, it is likely that the “Yuanyou” was written by someone else not much earlier than the beginning of the first century B.C.E. David Hawkes, “Ch’u tzu.” In *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide* (Berkeley: The Society for the Study of Early China and The Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1993), 81.

What carriage would bear me floating up and away?
 I was drowning in filth soiled by things rotting,
 Locked lonely in torment with no one to tell.
 In the night I tossed restless: I did not sleep,
 A fretfulness of soul that lasted to dawn.³⁾ (Stephen Owen, 176)

In this poem the protagonist is betrayed by the world, and he suffers loneliness without any one to talk to about his problem. He wants to fly up to heaven to roam about, but he is bound to the everyday world. Such circumstances cause him to try to experience Daoist transcendence later.

The “Daren fu” was written by Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 (179-117 B.C.E.), a native of Chengdu 成都, Shu 蜀. Under Emperor Jing 景帝 (r. 157-141 B.C.E.) he served as a military mounted attendant-in-ordinary. Emperor Jing hated *fu*, so Sima left the imperial court to become a guest scholar at the court of Liu Wu 劉武 (d. 144 B.C.E.), Prince of Liang. After Liu Wu’s death, Sima returned to Shu. In the imperial court, Emperor Jing was succeeded by Emperor Wu 漢武帝 (r. 141-87 B.C.E.), who was fond of *fu*. Sima Xiangru then naturally had an opportunity to be appointed to a position at the imperial court, where he wrote many *fu* pieces for court occasions. He wrote “Daren fu” around 120 B.C.E. Around this time, Emperor Wu had a great interest in Daoist immortality. According to his biography in the *Shi ji*, Sima Xiangru’s “Daren fu” was created to help the emperor understand immortals. The beginning of his poem shows that.

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3) 《楚辭》卷5, <遠遊>, “悲時俗之近陋兮, 願輕舉而遠遊。質非薄而無因兮, 焉托乘而上浮? 遭沈濁而污穢兮, 獨鬱結其誰語! 夜耿耿而不寐兮, 魂營營而至曙。”

There was a Great One in this age,
He was here in the very heart of the land.
His dwelling filled thousands of miles,
but too paltry to hold him even a while.
Oppressed by this age's ways crimping and curbing,
He rose lightly aloft and traveled afar.⁴⁾ (Owen, 182)

This protagonist faces circumstances that are different from those described in the "Yuanyou." The "Daren fu" protagonist must be a powerful man, because his dwelling covers "more than thousands of miles." This expression means that the great one rules a state that extended for thousands of miles.⁵⁾ Although the Great One is powerful enough to rule such a vast territory, he still thinks that it is not big enough for him. He becomes tired of this reality that restricts him, and attempts Daoist transcendence. Unlike the "Yuanyou" protagonist, the Great One never experiences any hardships when he attempts a heavenly journey.

The "Si xuan fu" was written by Zhang Heng 張衡 (78-139), who was from Xi'e 西鄂 in Nanyang 南陽. In his time, he was a man of many talents: astronomy, mathematics, geography, cartography, art, and poetry; and he was a great inventor. When Zhang was about seventeen, he traveled to Chang'an and Luoyang. In Luoyang, he studied at the imperial university where he soon mastered the classics. Zhang started

4) 《史記》卷 117, <司馬相如列傳>, "世有大人兮, 在乎中州。宅彌萬里兮, 曾不足以少留。悲世俗之迫隘兮, 搦輕舉而遠遊。"

5) Some scholars think that the Great one is a metaphor for Sima Xiangru himself, but it is unlikely because of the *Shi ji* record, which clearly shows that the poem was shown to Emperor Wu. This line describing the Great one as a powerful person is further evidence that the Great one was a ruler not a scholar-official like Sima Xiangru. Furthermore, the protagonist is usually assumed to be Emperor Wu himself.

his official career in the Nanyang commandery, but eventually served in the imperial court. He wrote many fu pieces. Among them, “Si xuan fu” is a long poem in sao-style. The *Hou Han shu* passage describes the situations that led him to write this *fu*:

The emperor took him behind the palace curtains, where Zhang gave criticism and advice. The emperor once asked Heng who were the most hateful men in the empire. Fearing that he would malign them, the eunuchs all glared at him. Heng gave an evasive response and left. Still fearing that Heng would make trouble for them, the eunuchs all slandered him. Heng constantly pondered the question of how he should act. He believed that good and bad fortune were intertwined and their dark subtleties were hard to understand. He then wrote the ‘Si xuan fu’ to express his thoughts and feelings.⁶⁾

According to this passage, when the emperor asked Zhang Heng to point out the enemies of the empire, Zhang Heng faced a dilemma. The court was under the powerful influence of the eunuchs. They manipulated the court policies in ways that would harm the state. The eunuchs were the greatest threat to the empire, and they possessed this great power, which Zhang Heng was not able to stand against. However, as an upright Confucian scholar, he did not want to lie. All he could do was to give an indirect answer, but the eunuchs began to criticize him. He pondered upon his dilemma, and put his thoughts into a poem:

6) 《後漢書》卷59, “後遷侍中, 帝引在帷幄, 諷議左右。嘗問衡天下所疾惡者。宦官懼其毀己, 皆共目之, 衡乃詭對而出。闢豎恐終為其患, 遂共讒之。衡常思圖身之事, 以為吉凶倚伏, 幽微難明, 乃作思玄賦, 以宣寄情志。” For translation see David Knechtges, *Wen Xuan, or Selection of Refined Literature*, vol. 3 (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 105.

My raiment is truly fair and without peer,
But it is not prized in this present age.
I scatter my blossoms but no one sees them:
I waft my sweet scent but no one smells it.
Quiet and content, I abide in this lowly place:
But dare I shirk hard work for idleness and sloth?
I felicitate the Two Eights for meeting Shun,
Rejoice that Fu Yue lived in the time of Yin.
I revere the mores handed down by former worthies,
Sorrow that I am born too late to meet them.
Why do I walk alone in solitude?
Why do I stand apart, cut off from the crowd?
I am moved by the simurgh and phoenix, who nest alone,
And grieve that the good man rarely accords with the world.⁷⁾ (David
Knechtges, 107)

This passage forms the beginning of Zhang Heng's "Si xuan fu." The protagonist complains about his unfortunate fate. He envies people who were well treated by their lords in the past. Zhang thinks that he is as good as those talented people, but feels sad that no one has recognized him during his time. As he ponders the past, he realized that many people with their outstanding talents (simurgh and phoenix) lost the chances to display their abilities. He identifies himself with those people, and begins to feel sympathy towards them.

In conclusion, in all three poems the protagonists seek to take imaginary journeys for the same reason — they feel detached from their realities. The "Yuanyou" and the "Si xuan fu" are similar in that the authors were scholar-officials who were mistreated by their rulers. The

7) 《文選》卷15, <思賢賦>, “奮余榮而莫見兮, 播余香而莫聞。幽獨守此仄陋兮, 敢怠惰而舍勤? 幸二八之遺處兮, 嘉傳說之生殷。向前良之遺風兮, 惆後辰而無及。何孤行之熒熒兮, 予不羣而介立? 感鸞鷲之特棲兮, 悲淑人之稀合。”

“Yuanyou” and the “Daren fu” are similar because the protagonists in these two poems engage in Daoist transcendence as a form of escape from their realities.

3. How to Relieve the Protagonist's Frustration

This section focuses on the descriptions in each poem before and immediately after the protagonists' departure on their journeys. The “Daren fu” describes the protagonist's unwillingness to remain in this world, while the authors of the “Yuanyou” and the “Si xuan fu” concentrate on the protagonists' feelings of despair and frustration arising from actual events or situations. Such a difference reflects the protagonists' different statuses. Since the protagonist, or the implied reader, of the “Daren fu” is the Emperor Wu, the author describes a rare experience of an imaginary journey to the protagonist, who is fed up with the usual entertainment. In contrast, the protagonists of the other two poems are scholar-officials, and their agony stems from the reality that they are unfavored by their rulers.

Like the protagonists of other *Chu ci* poems, the protagonist of the “Yuanyou” begins to roam, probably in search of a solution to his sufferings. He first wanted to learn lessons from his ancestors or from historic figures such as Gao-yang 高陽 and the Yellow Emperor 皇帝. But he found that they were not helpful in relieving his sufferings. Recalling the legendary figures of the Red Pine 赤松子, Fu Yue 傅說, and Han Zhong 韓衆, he becomes interested in the secluded life and Daoist

transcendence. He finally decides to follow Qiao the Prince's Way 王子喬:

What I heard was much treasure: I then set to go,
And all at once I was on my way.
Nigh to the feathered men on Cinnabar Hill,
I lingered in that olden land of the Undying
At dawn I washed my hair in Sun Gorge's clefts
At twilight, dried my body beneath its nine suns.
I sucked subtle distillates from the cascades,
Clasped to bosom the sparklings of diamonds.
Jade complexion grew ruddy: my face began to glow,
With essence strained pure, I first felt my vigor.
All flesh-firmness melted, I began to grow pliant,
The spirit grew slender, moved with wanton abandon.⁸⁾ (Owen, 178)

This passage is followed by Qiao the Prince's explanation of how one can achieve the Way. The protagonist follows Qiao the Prince's directions, and finally grasps the Daoist principles of transcendence. The passage describes the physical and psychological changes that occur as the protagonist experiences the process of becoming a Daoist immortal.

The "Daren fu" does not include such a vivid and detailed description of becoming a Daoist immortal as does the "Yuanyou." The "Daren fu" instead assumes that its protagonist had become a Daoist immortal a long time ago, possibly from birth. I think that this difference is due to the following reason: the protagonists in each of the two poems are

8) 《楚辭》卷5, <遠遊>, “聞至貴而遂徂兮, 忽乎吾將行。仍羽人於丹丘, 留不死之舊鄉。朝濯發於湯谷兮, 夕晡余身兮九陽。吸飛泉之微波兮, 懷琬琰之華英。玉色頰以晚顏兮, 精醇粹而始壯。質銷鑠以汙約兮, 神要眇以淫放。”

different. The “Yuanyou” was written from the perspective of a scholar-official, who wants to find a solution to his frustration of not being recognized by his ruler. In contrast, the “Daren fu” was written by a scholar-official who wants to entertain his ruler or Emperor Wu of Han 漢武帝 (r. 141-87 B.C.E.) with refreshment.

The format of the “Si xuan fu” is similar to that of the “Li sao.” The protagonist’s narration often involves his studies of history and divination. These scenes also remind us of the poem’s relation to other literary pieces such as Jia Yi’s 賈誼 (200-168 B.C.E.) “Funiao fu” 鵬鳥賦 and Ban Gu’s 班固 (32-92) “You tong fu” 幽通賦. For example, the passage describing the protagonist’s dress with thoroughwort fragrance is very similar to Qu Yuan’s description of the protagonist in the “Li sao” 離騷. These images are a device for showing the “Si xuan fu” protagonist’s intention of following the past models. The “Si xuan fu” protagonist, then, begins to think about one’s fate in history. In this thoughts he looks for ancients as his models: “Deep in my soul I remain true and good./And yearn for the upright integrity of the ancients.” This is related to the historical insights of the “Li sao” protagonist. He declares not to follow Jie 桀 or Zhou 紂 but to follow sage kings of Yu 禹, Tang 湯, and Wen 文. The “Si xuan fu” protagonist, however, reflects further into history. In the same passage cited above, the protagonist of the “Si xuan fu” likens himself to historical characters who were not recognized by the world. Following this paragraph, he enumerates historical figures who encountered unpredictable incidents. The author juxtaposes good and bad examples explaining the vagaries of fate. Such introspection on history is very similar to that of Jia Yi’s “Funiao fu” and Ban Gu’s “You tong fu.”

In addition, the scenes of performing divination resemble those of the “*Li sao*,” the “*Funiao fu*,” and the “*You tong fu*”:

Alas, it's hard for evil and goodness to coexist:
I would like to follow Han Zhong and flow off into oblivion.
I feat that even with time I could not emulate him:
Yet by remaining in the world I shall be obscured and unnoticed.
My heart still is undecided, uncertain,
And thus to Mount Qi I go and unfold my feelings.
Lord Wen lays out the milfoil stalks for me:
“’Tis favorable to fly and flee to preserve your good name.
Cross the mountains and travel far and wide:
Wing on the swift wind to spread your fame.
Two Maidens are aroused on a lofty peak:
Perhaps ice breaks and is not repaired.
The canopy of Heaven is high, yet becomes a lake:
Who says the road is not smooth?
Strive unceasingly to strengthen yourself:
Tread the towering steepness of the jade stairs.”
Fearing the “long and short” of the milfoil diviner,
I drill the eastern tortoise to view my fortune.
I meet the great bird of the ninth marsh:
He complains that his basic wished are unfulfilled.
He roams beyond the dusty world and touches the heavens:
Clinging to the gloomy darkness, he sadly cries.
The eagle and osprey pursue their greedy desires,
While I cultivate purity to enhance my fine name.
“Thou hast affinity with the dark bird:
Return to the Mother and thou shalt find peace.”
Since the oracle is auspicious and predicts no harm,
I choose a propitious time and make ready to depart.⁹⁾ (Knechtges,

9) 《文選》卷15, <思賢賦>, “咨姤媼之難並兮, 想依韓以流亡。恐漸染而無成兮, 留則蔽而不章。心猶豫而狐疑兮, 卽岐陟而據情。文君爲我端著兮, 利飛遁以保名。歷衆山以周流兮, 翼迅風以揚聲。二女感於崇岳兮, 或冰折而不營。天蓋高而爲澤兮, 誰云路之不平! 勵自強而不息兮, 蹈玉階之嶢崢。懼筮氏之長短兮, 鑽東龜以觀禎。遇九臯之介鳥兮, 怨素意之不逞。遊塵外而暫

111-113)

The "Si xuan fu" protagonist wants to hide himself in a secluded world like Han Zhong, but he hesitates. Then he performs the Classic of Changes divination. The result is good, but he still hesitates, so he then practices oracle divination. His behavior is similar to that of the protagonist in the "Li sao." The "Li sao" protagonist hesitates to marry; he is eventually persuaded by Lingfen's 靈氛 divination and Wuxian's 巫咸 interpretation and sets off on his journey. In both the "Si xuan fu" and the "Li sao," before their imaginary journeys, the protagonists practice divination. Both protagonists of the "Funiao fu" and the "You tong fu" practice divination, but the occasions are different. Their purposes for divination are to figure out interpretation of actual phenomena or dreams. In other words, the divination practices in the "Si xuan fu" and the "Li sao" are not performed but are imagined, while the divination practices in the "Funiao fu" and the "You tong fu" could be based on actual divination.¹⁰⁾

天兮，據冥翳而哀鳴。鵬鷲競於貪婪兮，我修絮以益榮。子有故於玄鳥兮，歸母氏而後寧。占既吉而無悔兮，簡元辰而俶裝。

- 10) In Zhang Heng's poem, it is unlikely that he went to Mount Qi and asked Lord Wen for practicing the divination, because Lord Wen was a dead figure and the Mount Qi is several hundred of miles away from Luoyang where Zhang Heng was. The result of the divination also suggests that the divination was symbolic not based on an actual practice. From the expression of "favorable to fly and flee 利飛遁," we can figure out that it was the sixth line of hexagram 33, *Dun* 遁 in the Classic of Changes. It reads "To be retired until one gets fat. Nothing unfavorable 肥遁。無不利。" *Fei* 飛 in the original line is replaced with *fei* 肥 in the Kyuchanggak edition of the *Wen xuan*. Generally, each line of hexagram represents a chronological procedure of the meaning of that hexagram. For example, the hexagram 1, *Qian* 乾 can refer to a gentleman's official career. The first line refers to be an unserviceable time, because he is not ready yet. The fifth line, the center of this hexagram, refers to the time is ripen for the gentleman to work as an official. The top line refers to a time to end one's official career. The hexagram

Because the “Daren fu” was intended to be shown to the emperor, it includes a more vivid description of chariot driving as compared to the other poems. All of three poems include the scenes describing chariot driving: They describe various fluttering banners; and use exaggerated expressions taking comets as ornaments for banners or treating stars as pennants. The “Daren fu,” however, vividly describes dragons that draw the chariot, which is not included in the other two poems:

He drove an ivory car with winged dragons, heaving and slithering,
Teamed scarlet serpent and blue basilisks, wriggling and writhing.
Upward and downward flexed straining straightened necks, they
bounded flaunting,

Sinuously spiraling humped bristling loping legs bent under, and
arced away swaying.

Rearing and bucking head-tossing they balked, and faltered
unbudging,

Then broke loose unbridled amok they reared rampant in towering
tangles.

Jerking forward and back, eyes rolling tongues lolling, slackening,
they slithered,

Then twined together cascading upward they boldly bolted gripping
and grappling.

Wound coiling together, roaring and bellowing, they alighted and
cleaved to the path.

Then soared aloft buzzing and bounding burst upward dashing
ahead in a frenzy.

With a whoosh and a sizzling crackle in flares they arrived, like

dun refers to retirement, and when it gets to closer to the top line, it means that one's retirement is about to end. Studies on corroborative evidence of the Classic of Changes also prove that when one received the sixth line of dun, that person soon came back from his retirement, and entered into a new official career. See Hwang Chong-yŏn, *Silchŭng chuyŏk* 實證周易 (P'achu: Ch'ŏnggye ch'ulp'ansa, 2012), 607-9.

lightning bolts passing,

In flash all fogs were gone: bursting open, clouds dissolved.¹¹⁾
(Owen, 182-83)

I think the impact of this vivid description of chariot driving is very similar to that of the tidal bore in Mei Sheng's 枚乘 (d. 141 B.C.E.) "Qi fa" 七發. The "Qi fa" deals with a chariot-race scene, but the description is not as rich. In the description of the tidal bore, however, Mei Sheng describes the water's dynamic movements in great detail. The implied reader is made to feel as if he is witnessing a real tidal bore, which generates a feeling of profound refreshment. Similarly, the passage cited above offers a description of chariot driving that includes the subtle movements of untamed dragons. Such a description is intended to give the implied reader a sense of freshness. This is evidence that the "Daren fu" was not written for the author himself, but for the implied reader, who was likely a ruler.

4. Directions Taken During the Journeys

This section examines the sequence of directions that the journeys took in the three poems.¹²⁾ I argue that the sequence of directions of

11) 《史記》卷 117, <司馬相如列傳>, "駕應龍象輿之螭略透麗兮, 驂赤螭青虬之蚺蟠宛蜒。低仰天矯裾以驕驚兮, 詘折隆窮蠶以連卷。沛艾赳螭以佻儼兮, 放散畔岸驥以孱顏。踉蹌輻轄容以委麗兮, 蝟蟻偃塞怵鼻以梁倚。糾蓼叫真蹋以縷路兮, 葭蒙踊躍騰而狂趨。苾颯崩翕燦至電過兮, 煥然霧除霍然雲消。"

12) The written date for the "Yuanyou" is problematic. I suspect that the different orders of the journeys in the three poems are useful for solving this problem. Unlike the "Daren fu" and the "Si xuan fu," the protagonist in the "Yuanyou"

each journey reflects the ritually proper order, as well as the historical cycle, of a Chinese dynasty. By making their protagonists take imaginary journeys based on a ritually proper order, I believe that the authors intended to prepare sequential experiences that would enlighten the protagonists and relieve their agonies.

As David R. Knechtges pointed out, the journeys in the “Daren fu” and the “Si xuan fu” proceed in the ritually proper order of east, south, west, and north. He was of the opinion that this order was related to the solar cycle of a day: the sun rises in the east, reaches its culmination in the south, sets in the west, and becomes invisible at night. He also associated this sequence with the Mutual Production order of the Five Phases: wood=east, fire=south, metal=west, water=north.¹³⁾ His idea can also be extended to the order of the four seasons: spring=east, summer=south, autumn=west, winter=north.¹⁴⁾

I think that this sequence may even correspond to a major cycle in Chinese history, especially in Zhang Heng’s “Si xuan fu:” east=period of myth, south=period of legend, west=period of records, north=unknown future and the end of a cycle. In the east, Zhang Heng describes the protagonist visiting figures or places from mythology, such as Shaohao 少昊, Goumang 句芒, Three Divine Hills 三神山, and

embarks on his exploration in the following order: east, west, south, and north. I think that this could be because the “Si xuan fu” was written before the establishment of the Mutual Production order of the Five Phases. If this is true, then it is evidence that the “Yuanyou” was created earlier than the “Daren fu.”

13) David R. Knechtges, “A Journey to Morality: Chang Heng’s ‘The Rhapsody on Pondering the Mystery,’” In *Essays in Commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of the Fung Ping Shan Library (1932-1982)* (Hong Kong: Fung Ping Shan Library, 1982), 170.

14) Edmund Lien, “Zhang Heng, Eastern Han Polymath, His Life and Works,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 2011, 228.

Fusang 扶桑. In the south, the protagonist visits places and meets figures from legends, such as Lord Yu 禹, Chongli 重黎, and Chongli's tomb. Compared with the journeys in the east and the south, the author's description of the journey in the west is relatively long. It is likely that he had much more reliable sources for the west=period of records.

The "Li sao" also introduces good and bad examples of historical figures to suggest the right ways of living one's life. Similarly, the "Funiao fu" and the "You tong fu" include anecdotes of historical figures. These two poems focus on the incomprehensibility of one's fate. The descriptive way in which unpredictable outcomes in historical anecdotes are juxtaposed in the "Si xuan fu" is very similar to that used in the "Funiao fu" and the "You tong fu." But the "Si xuan fu" seems to consciously describe an outer cycle of the cosmos that frames an inner cycle of an individual. In the middle of his journey to the west, the protagonist meets the spirit of the Yellow Emperor 皇帝 — a mythological Chinese ancestor. The protagonist asks where he should go to find the Way of Heaven. The Yellow Emperor answers that he should "trust the near, doubt the distant." Then he backs up this counsel with his observations on Chinese history, using subsequent historical anecdotes:

The Yellow Lord's spirit arrives, and I ask him my fate:
 "In seeking the Heavenly Way, where should I go?"
 He says, "Trust the near, doubt the distant:
 The Six Classics failed to write about this.
 The path of the spirits is dark and hard to explore:
 Who can understand and follow it?
 When ill, Niu Ai transformed into a tiger:

Even his own brother he was bound to eat.
Bieling died, and his corpse disappeared,
Yet later he assumed the Shu succession, and for many generations
his clan ruled.

The process of life and death is complex and uneven:
Even the Master of Fate does not comprehend it.
Lady Dou wailed as she traveled the road to Dai:
Later, she was blessed as empress and her family flourished.
Lady Wang flourished in the Han court,
But in the end, harboring grief, she died heirless.
The gray-browed commandant fell into obscurity as gentleman,
But after three reigns he met Emperor Wu.
At twenty, Dong Xian wore ministerial robes:
They built him a royal tomb, but he never occupied it...¹⁵⁾
(Knechtges, 119-121)

After expressing his first observation, along with examples, the Yellow Emperor continues to describe each observation with more examples: he says that “the path of the spirits is dark and hard to explore...,” then he offers Niu Ai 牛哀 and Bieling 警令 as examples to support his observation. These two figures were from the Spring and Autumn Period. Then the Yellow Emperor states, “The process of life and death is complex and uneven.” After this, he introduces four figures from the Western Han, in chronological order: Lady Dou 竇皇后, Lady Wang 王皇后 (daughter of Wang Mang), Yan Si 顏勰, and Dong Xian 董賢 (22-1 B.C.E.). Their lives were similar in that their good or bad fates were reversed later. It is certain that the Yellow Emperor provides these examples to prove his observation that one’s fate is hard

15) 《文選》卷15, <思賢賦>, “黃靈詹而訪命兮, 摯天道其焉如。曰: 近信而遠疑兮, 六籍闕而不書。神遠味其難覆兮, 疇克謨而從諸? 牛哀病而成虎兮, 雖逢昆其必噬。鼈令殮而尸亡兮, 取蜀禪而引世。死生錯其不齊兮, 雖司命其不晰。竇號行於代路兮, 後膺祚而繁廡。王肆侈於漢庭兮, 卒銜恤而絕緒。尉眉眉而郎潛兮, 逮三葉而遭武。董弱冠而司袞兮, 設王隧而弗處...”

to predict.

There are some exceptions, but to support each of his observations, the Yellow Emperor seems intent on following two rules: to include figures from the same or similar period, and to arrange them in a chronological order. When the protagonist moves to the north, he encounters extreme coldness, sadness, and dreariness, which is related to the image of an end or death. In sum, I believe that the author—Zhang Heng—was aware of the flow of Chinese history and was trying to fit it into the progression of the natural cycle, flowing from spring=east to summer=south to autumn=west and through to winter=north.

5. About the Formation of Deities

In describing journeys, the three poems introduce many deities or mythological figures, and share certain patterns. Gods in charge of directions show up to help the traveler — Goumang in the east, Rushou in the west, and Zhurong in the south are good examples. Another pattern is the protagonist's control over deities. The protagonist in the "Daren fu" is described as having been born with the ability to manipulate deities, while the protagonists in the two other poems seem to regard the same ability as a new experience that can bring them inner growth.

The protagonist of the "Daren fu" is good at manipulating all the deities described as follows:

He mustered all Spirits Assembled: he selected among them,
He enlisted a god-band at the star Quivering Rays.
He bade the Five Emperors, lead ahead on the way,
Sent the Supreme One back: had Ling-yang follow attending.
To his left, the Dark Spirit: to his right, Qian-lei, Demiurge,
Ahead was the sacred bird Chang-li: behind, Summer-burgeoning.
Zheng Bo-qiao was his liegeman: Xian-men served him,
And He summoned Qi-bo to be his Lord Druggist.
The South's Lord, Zhu-rong warned to empty his path,
Clearing murky miasmas: only then he fared onward.¹⁶⁾ (Owen, 183)

By focusing on the formation of the deities that guard the protagonist, this passage seems to emphasize the protagonist's mighty abilities.¹⁷⁾ The protagonist has control over all the deities imaginable. They serve the protagonist as if they are guarding an emperor on an imperial tour. They were arranged according to assigned duties. In contrast, the following passage from the "Yuanyou" does not seem to focus on the protagonist's authority:

The Wind-Earl sped for me taking the van,
Purged billowing dust: it was clear and cool.
Phoenix spread wings and bore up my banners,
I met with Ru-shou where the West's Sovereign dwells.
I snatched up a comet to, serve as my standard,
I raised Dipper's handle to serve as my sign.
Chaotic, pell-mell, we rose and dipped down,
We swam flowing waves of fog-tendrils windstruck.
But the moment grew dimmer, all darkened in shadow.

16) 《史記》卷 117, <司馬相如列傳>, “悉徵靈圉而選之兮, 部署衆神於搖光。使五帝先導兮, 反太一而從陵陽。左玄冥而右黔靈兮, 前長離而後漓淠。廡征伯僑而役濇門兮, 詔岐伯使尙方。祝融警而蹕御兮, 清氣氛而後行。”

17) David Knechtges also mentioned this point. See David Knechtges, *Wen Xuan, or Selection of Refined Literature*, Vol. 3, 171.

I called on Black Tortoise to dash in my train.
 Behind went Wen Chang, in charge of the columns,
 All the gods stood in order: the wheelhubs were even.
 The road kept on going: it was long and far,
 I slowed, pausing in pace, and crossed up on high.
 To my left the Rain Master I made wait upon me,
 To my right was Lord Thunder, who served as my guard.¹⁸⁾ (Owen,
 179-80)

This passage indicates that the protagonist seems to have similar authority for manipulating the deities. But the purpose of including this scene is not to display that power but to describe wonderful experiences. Because of this, the focus of the description is not centered on the well-arranged march but includes various subjects that show the wonders of a heavenly journey.

In the same passage the last four lines are the only part that explains the detailed formation of the deities. Notable is that these two deities are related to weather that is essential in agriculture. All three poems include a scene that shows the protagonist giving commands to deities concerning weather. This seems to suggest that agriculture was the most important industry of the periods when these poems were written. Naturally if one is able to control the agricultural deities, then he is considered to have a great power. The "Si xuan fu" begins with a scene deities concerning weather being manipulated:

I command the various officers to assemble early:

18) 《楚辭》卷5. <遠遊>, “風伯爲作先驅兮, 氛埃闢而清涼. 鳳凰翼其承旗兮, 遇蓐收乎西皇. 攬慧星以爲旂兮, 舉鬥柄以爲麾. 叛陸離其上下兮, 游驚霧之流波. 時暖噓其曠莽兮, 召玄武而奔屬. 後文昌使掌行兮, 選署衆神以並轂. 路漫漫其修遠兮, 徐弭節而高厲. 左雨師使徑侍兮, 右雷公以爲衛.”

All dutifully come and greet me.
Fenglong unleashes his thunderbolts:
The fiery fissures brilliantly light up the sky.
The Cloud Master darkly masses clouds together:
Driving rain, in torrents, sprinkles the road.
Readying my jade-inlaid chariot, I raise the flowery canopy:
Tame a winged dragon to draw my carriage.
The hundred spirits in great numbers follow in full array:
The grouped horsemen in orderly files scatter like stars.¹⁹⁾
(Knechtges, 131)

After talking about some other subjects, the “*Si xuan fu*” explains how the deities that protect the protagonist make their appearance:

On the left, a green patterned dragon raises a mushroom canopy:
On the right, the white eminence handles the bell.
In front, I send Changli to spread his wings:
To the rear, I entrust the Directorship of Waters to Xuanming.
I appoint Winnow Lord to embrace the wind:
He purges filth and dust and makes things clean.²⁰⁾ (Knechtges, 131)

All the deities who guard the protagonist are related to the weather. In addition, they are arranged according to the theory of the Five Phases: green=east=right, white=west=left, red=south=front, black=north=rear, and (yellow)=center.²¹⁾ The author—Zhang Heng

19) 《文選》卷15, <思賢賦>, “戒庶寮以夙會兮, 僉恭職而並逐。豐隆軫其震霆兮, 列缺曄其照夜。雲師韃以交集兮, 涑雨沛其灑塗。轆瑀輿而樹葩兮, 擾應龍以服輅。百神森其備從兮, 屯騎羅而星布。”

20) 《文選》卷15, <思賢賦>, “左青瑀之捷芝兮, 右素威以司鉦。前長離使拂羽兮, 委水衡乎玄冥。屬箕伯以函風兮, 懲澗涇而爲清。”

21) Changli may be a name for a vermilion bird, while xuan refers to black. See David Knechtges, *Wen Xuan, or Selection of Refined Literature*, Vol. 3, 130.

—seems to have been sensitive to the order of the cosmos, as discussed in the previous chapter. He even forms the deities that guard him in accordance with a rule, which, he asserts, dominates the cosmos.

The protagonist in the “Daren fu” also commands the deities to control the weather:

At Cong-ji I rested, sported at the source of all waters,
 Bade Holy Crone play the harp: had Ping-yi dance for me.
 But the moment grew dim and shadowed: dusky and turbulent,
 I called Ping-yi to slay Wind-Earl, and flog the Rain Master.²²⁾
 (Owen, 183)

In this passage the protagonist even punishes the deities. This is also evidence that the “Daren fu” was presented to the emperor — the author assumes that the protagonist is the emperor and demonstrates his mighty power.

6. The Motivation to Return from the Imaginary Journey

This section examines the motivation to return from the imaginary journey in the three poems. When their journeys reach culmination, the protagonists in the “Yuanyou” and the “Si xuan fu” come to see their homes, and suddenly feel inclined to return home. In contrast, the protagonist in the “Daren fu” does not experience a similar feeling of

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22) 《史記》卷 117, <司馬相如列傳>, “奄息總極汜濫水嬉兮, 使靈媧鼓琴而舞馮夷. 時若萋萋將混濁兮, 召屏翳誅風伯而刑雨師.”

homesickness. I think that this difference occurs because the assumed protagonist in the “Daren fu” is an emperor, whereas the assumed protagonists in the two other poems are scholar-officials.

Both the “Yuanyou” and the “Si xuan fu” include a scene where the protagonist feels a strong impulse to return home, but the function of such a scene is different in the two poems. The following lines are from the “Yuanyou”:

I fared through blue clouds: I swam swirling currents,
All at once I glanced down to my homeland of old.
My driver felt care: my heart grew sad,
The outer horses looked back and would not go on.
I longed for those I had known: I imagined their forms,
I heaved a great sigh and wiped away tears.
Adrift for amusement: I rose to far places,
And the quelled my will and gave myself ease.
Toward the Blazing God: I galloped straight forward,
Ready to journey to Southern Doubts Mountains.²³⁾ (Owen, 180)

The protagonist becomes uneasy as he approaches his homeland. Being so homesick, he begins to sigh and cry. He barely overcomes these feelings, passes his homeland and continues to travel. After attending a banquet, he ends his celestial journey and becomes a Daoist immortal. The “Yuanyou” ends with the following lines:

I went back and forth through the world's four bounds,
And flowed all around the Six Enclosures.
Rising I reached the Lightning Crack,

23) 《楚辭》卷5, <遠遊>, “涉青雲以汎濫游兮, 忽臨睨夫舊鄉。僕夫懷余心悲兮, 邊馬顧而不行。思舊故以想像兮, 長太息而掩涕。泛容與而遐舉兮, 聊抑志而自弭。指炎神而直馳兮, 吾將往乎南疑。”

Then plunging I gazed on the Great Chasm.
 Vertiginous depths below me where no land was,
 A cavernous emptiness above where was no sky.
 It flashed and flared where I listened, but I heard nothing.
 I passed beyond non-acting: I reached to the Clear,
 The Very Beginning became my neighbor.²⁴⁾ (Owen, 181)

This passage seems to describe a Daoist immortal's state of mind. His sensibility to the outer world becomes different from a human's, and he eventually becomes an immortal reaching the state of the Very Beginning. Notable is how the protagonist fulfills this privilege of becoming an immortal. We can assume that because the protagonist endures the anguish of homesickness, a banquet was given as a reward. He earns the right to be a Daoist immortal because he is able to detach himself from the everyday world. Such an ending is very similar to that of the "Li sao." It ends with the following lines:

But when I had ascended the splendor of the heavens,
 I suddenly caught a glimpse below of my old home.
 My groom's heart was heavy and the horses for longing
 Arched their heads back and refused to go on.
 Enough! There are no true men in the state: no one understands
 me.
 Why should I cleave to the city of my birth?
 Since none is worthy to work with in making good government,
 I shall go and join Peng Xian in the place where he abides.²⁵⁾ (David
 Hawkes, 78)

24) 《楚辭》卷5, <遠遊>, “經營四方兮, 周流六漠。上至列缺兮, 降望大壑。下崢嶸而無地兮, 上寥廓而無天。視倏忽而無見兮, 聽悄恍而無聞。超無爲以至清兮, 與泰初而爲鄰。”

25) 《楚辭》卷1, <離騷>, “陟陛皇之赫戲兮, 忽臨睨夫舊鄉。僕夫悲余馬懷兮, 馳局顧而不行。亂曰: 已矣哉, 國無人莫我知兮, 又何懷乎故都? 既莫足與爲美政兮, 吾將從彭咸之所居。”

The protagonist finds his home suddenly, and his groom and the horses become uneasy because they are overcome by homesickness. But unlike the “Yuanyou” protagonist, this protagonist immediately rejects the possibility of returning home, because he thinks that no one in his state understands him. Instead he decides to become a recluse like Peng Xian. In this context, inclusion of the image of home serves to emphasize the degree of the protagonist’s anger at being betrayed.

In contrast, feelings of homesickness in the “Si xuan fu” functions to awaken the protagonist from a delusion.

Reclining on Kaiyang, I gaze downward,
And behold my old home dimly revealed.
I am sad that living apart troubles the heart:
My feelings turn sad, and I think of returning home.
My soul is full of longing, and I look back again and again:
My horse leans against the chariot shaft, reluctant to go on.
Although through wandering I find enjoyment,
How can I bear the sorrowful yearning?²⁶⁾ (Knechtges, 135)

The suggested situation is exactly the same as with those of the “Yuanyou,” and the “Li sao,” but the “Si xuan fu” protagonist decides to return home, thus ending his celestial journey. In addition, he explains the ineffectiveness of the imaginary journey in the following way:

As long as my heart remains straight and true,
Though no one knows me, I am not ashamed.
Silent, nonacting, my mind fully focused,
I now wander freely with goodness and propriety.

26) 《文選》卷15, <思賢賦>, “據開陽而頽盼兮, 臨舊鄉之暗藹。悲離居之勞心兮, 情惛惛而思歸。魂眷眷而屢顧兮, 馬倚轡而徘徊。雖遨遊以媿樂兮, 豈愁慕之可懷?”

One can know the world without leaving his house:

Why must one exert himself on a distant journey?²⁷⁾ (Knechtges, 137)

After taking a long imaginary journey, he comes to suspect its effectiveness, because he thinks that if one learns “goodness and propriety,” by remaining at home, he is able to understand the world. Before reaching this conclusion, he even declares, “Though no one knows me, I am not ashamed.” His declaration directly points to the “Li sao” protagonist’s exclamation that he does not want to return home because no one recognizes him.

On the other hand, the “Daren fu” protagonist reaches a conclusion similar to that in the “Yuanyou,” but he never experiences homesickness. The following are the closing lines:

I left my massed riders at the Purple Towers,
I lurched ahead speeding to Gates of the Cold.
Below were sheer heights: all earth was gone,
Above was huge hollowness and no heavens.
Vision blurred and was dazzled: sight was lost,
Listening was indistinct: hearing was lost.
And I rode on that Blankness: I passed far above,
Beyond lack of others I endured alone.²⁸⁾ (Owen, 184)

After the celestial journey, the protagonist immediately becomes a daoist immortal. Throughout the completion of his journey, he shows no hesitation. All of his experiences are enjoyable, and he shows only his

27) 《文選》卷15, <思賢賦>, “苟中情之端直兮, 莫吾知而不惡。墨無爲以凝志兮, 與仁義乎消遙。不出戶而知天下兮, 何必歷遠以劬勞!”

28) 《楚辭》卷5, <遠遊>, “遺屯騎於玄關兮, 軼先驅於寒門。下崢嶸而無地兮, 上嶮廓而無天。視眩眼而亡見兮, 聽悄恍而無聞。乘虛無而上假兮, 超無友而獨存。”

mighty ability to manipulate the deities or his unhindered march passing through all the gates. Such a description of the journey is very different from the other two poems (or three poems, if the “*Li sao*” is included).

7. Conclusion

This paper examines the variations in the descriptions of the imaginary journeys in the “*Yuanyou*,” the “*Daren fu*,” and the “*Si xuan fu*.” The protagonists in the three poems decide to embark on their imaginary journeys because they are not satisfied with their life circumstances. The “*Yuanyou*” and the “*Sixuan fu*” utilize the theme of the imaginary journey because the protagonists are frustrated at not being successful as scholar-officials. But their conclusions are different. The “*Yuanyou*” protagonist opts for Daoist transcendence, while the “*Si xuan fu*” protagonist returns to face his reality.

The “*Yuanyou*” describes the process of becoming a Daoist immortal more vividly, while the “*Daren fu*” assumes that its protagonist has already reached that level. However, the “*Daren fu*” seems to be more interested in displaying the protagonist’s mighty abilities. I believe that the goals in writing these two poems were different, which resulted in these different perspectives. The author of the “*Yuanyou*” identifies the protagonist with himself, thus showing a great interest in how one becomes a Daoist immortal. This vivid description, which arouses realistic feelings, seems to provide a sense of catharsis for the author.

The “Daren fu” author, meanwhile, identifies the protagonist with a ruler, and thus focuses on descriptions of subjects that could entertain a ruler, or on descriptions of the protagonist’s exaggerated abilities. The author seems to be someone who was well versed in how to entertain a ruler, so it is not surprising that he was Sima Xiangru.

The protagonist in the “Si xuan fu” returns to the harsh reality and resumes his regular business. After a long imaginary journey, he declares that it is unnecessary to take such a journey, as long as one can dedicate his life to practicing Confucian learning. The “Si xuan fu” adopts many literary conventions from previous works, such as the “Li sao”: for example, taking a celestial journey (including the divination scene), drawing from history to discover a principle that governs one’s fate, using female characters to emphasize the protagonist’s virtues, and so forth. Some readers may feel that the “Si xuan fu” overuses familiar patterns and thus lacks pathos; in particular, it does not convey the intense feelings of the “Li sao,” “Funiao fu,” or the “You tong fu.” On the surface, the “Si xuan fu” may not appear creative, because it adopts subjects that everyone is already familiar with. But it is unique for its reconstruction of these subjects based on how the author contemplates and depicts the order of the cosmos. In this sense, the “Si xuan fu” will be of special interest to readers.

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< 中文提要 >

關於楚辭和漢賦的想像旅行作品裏作家和直接讀者之間的關係

鄭旭真

這篇論文比較一篇楚辭和兩篇漢賦中的想像的旅行。比較的作品是屈原的〈遠遊〉，司馬相如的〈大人賦〉和張衡的〈思賢賦〉。這篇論文主要目的是考察作家怎麼樣安排對直接的讀者和作品的裏主要人物之間的距離。爲了實現這個目的，首先參考作品創作的背景包括作家的身分和作家跟直接的讀者的關係等的問題。其次要考慮的是比較主要人物由甚麼原因離開自己的家，就是要分析因起主要人物內部矛盾的原因。然後這篇論文作對每個作品中想像的旅

行方向的分析. 因為作家講究中國傳統議禮上的方向, 每個旅行都按着同樣的方向進行. 讓我們矚目的是主要人物的自我發展因起歷史意識. 旅行的科程當中主要人物自覺他走的方向是跟一個中國王朝的興亡盛衰有關. 最後遠遊和<思賢賦>的主要人物回家. 反而<大人賦>的主要人物留在天空, 因為不像別的作品, <大人賦>的主要人物是皇帝自己而作家作這篇作品的目的是獻上皇帝欣賞.

關 鍵 詞 : <遠遊>, <大人賦>, <思賢賦>, 楚辭, 漢賦.

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