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**The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
School of Hotel and Tourism Management**

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF EARLY MEDIEVAL CHINA (AD 220-589) TO
THE TRAVEL CULTURE OF LANDSCAPE APPRECIATION**

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**A thesis submitted
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

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Libo Yan

ABSTRACT

Tourism has a long history that in the Western culture dates back to ancient Rome and Greece. In imperial China, tourism has a tradition independent of Europe, and is defined in the present study as “the travel culture of landscape appreciation”. At the heart of the travel culture was mainly landscape encountered, rather than society encountered as was in the European tradition. The aim of the study is to explore the factors contributing to the tradition formed in early medieval China (AD 220-589).

The subject was the aristocratic literati, who lived an affluent life based on the manorial economy as well as the political privileges guaranteed by the Nine Rank System. The decline of Confucianism and the rise of Taoism justified their concern with the individual life, and thus differentiated them from the ancient Confucian gentlemen who tended to fully devote themselves to politics and society. The change in social values paved the way for individual pursuits, including the appreciation of landscape.

The method for the present study was historical studies combined with content analysis. The main sources were literary works and discourses left by early medieval literati, with the aid of their biographies in the official histories. Induction was employed for exploration of the evolution of the travel culture of landscape appreciation. Case studies were used when a general situation remains unknown for

the lack of sources. The story of the evolution of the travel culture was told in a manner that integrated historical interpretation into historical narrative.

The major findings are summarized below. By regarding mountains as immortals' dwellings and ideal sites for self-cultivation, the Taoist perspective stimulated interest in visiting mountains. Some literati or Taoist laymen entered famous, scenic mountains for herb gathering, thus finding the beauty of nature. Among the literati class, the Taoist perspective aroused a desire for wandering in famous mountains, but the desire was difficult to be put into practice because of temporal and spatial constraints. The early medieval literati, therefore, used the suburbs as a substitute, making frequent excursion to the outskirts of cities for recreation as well as landscape appreciation. In the process of appreciating suburban scenery, the literati class cultivated a strong consciousness of landscape, which then made their tours different from ancient travelers who traversed scenic areas but seldom praised them. The convergence of a large group of influential, outstanding literati and artists in Kuaiji Commandery significantly contributed to the formation of a culture of landscape appreciation, and meanwhile made traveling from the commandery to the capital an important part in their social life. Finally, the culture of landscape appreciation reached its maturity in the long journeys associated with taking offices in different places in the South. From then on, official travels had been extensively linked to landscape appreciation.

The major conclusions are as follows. The decline of Confucianism was a prerequisite for the emergence of landscape appreciation. A rectification of the imbalance in literati's social life occurred when social conditions changed rapidly, which then led to the transformation of value-orientation, from devotion to hedonism. Accompanying the transformation was the quest for meaning of life, which finally resulted in the justification of landscape appreciation.

The permission from religion and philosophy paved the way for landscape appreciation. Confucianism took a moral perspective on mountains and rivers, which made the literati class close to nature in theory. By contrast, Taoism brought about practices of proximity to the nature world. Taoism drove the early Taoists and literati to mountains for nonmaterial reasons. Wandering in scenic, famous mountains for herb gathering contributed to literati's awareness of the beauty of nature.

The locale of the suburbs was significant for the evolution of landscape appreciation. With the influence of Taoist thoughts and practices, literati in the third and fourth century tended to have a desire for wandering in remote, famous mountains. However, the temporal and spatial constraints made them resort to the suburbs which were regarded as a substitute for remote scenic mountains. In spite of the superficial aesthetic experience they attained in the suburbs, the inclination for excursions to the suburbs did bring scenery close to the literati class, and enhance the consciousness of landscape. In the mid fourth century, a collective conscious of

landscape was forged among the literati class.

The travel involved in political careers finally brought the culture of landscape appreciation to its maturity. The two types of travels hunting for positions and taking offices, offered important opportunities for appreciating scenery which would be otherwise inaccessible. With these opportunities, the traveling literati sought for secluded and unusual sights, and explored the features and details of landscape, which brought about the aesthetic appreciation in the full sense. In the beginning of the fifth century, landscape appreciation became a significant part of literati's social life, and the link between travel and landscape appreciation was well established. To a large extent, the above four factors account for the emergence and flourish of the travel culture of landscape appreciation in early medieval China.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Landscape appreciation has a natural linkage to travel, but not vice versa. In the West, the linkage appeared approximately in the eighteenth century as a result of Romanticism and Industrial Revolution. In the East, the relationship between travel and landscape appreciation was established almost fifteen centuries earlier. What follows is an outline of travel in early China, from irrelevant to relevant to landscape appreciation. Prior to the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC), the attitude toward travel tended to be negative (B. Zhang, 1992, p. 98). In the Qin-han period (221 BC-AD 220), attitudes toward travel changed apparently (Fan, 1992; B. Zhang, 1992, p. 98). Social commentators suggested that tours had many positive aspects, e.g. cultivating the mind, broadening one's horizon, and functioning as recreational opportunities. Furthermore, the sense of leisure tours as the vents of negative emotions in social life was also realized.

The changes of attitudes in the Qin-han period brought about more traveling than ever before (Fan, 1992). The four centuries of Han period witnessed the flourish of imperial travels, which led to large-scale mobility of people. The period also saw frequent diplomatic travels as well as some academic travels. Besides these large-scale and significant events, there were also excursions in festivals, e.g. spring tours to rivers and streams in the third day of the third lunar month, and mountain climbing

in the Double Ninth Festival. Those excursions had a certain degree of relationship with recreation.

In spite of its flourish, traveling in antiquity appeared to have little linkage to landscape appreciation (Holzman, 1996). The story changed slowly when it came to the period of Six Dynasties (AD 220-589). The fall of the Han Empire resulted in significant changes in terms of travel. The four centuries following the end of Han Dynasty saw the disappearance of the imperial travels as well as the decrease of diplomatic travels. Again, long-distance travel between the North and the South became unrealistic since it needed to cross a hostile border. The retreat of old forms of travel was accompanied by the emergence of new types of travel, e.g. landscape tours and pilgrimages. Unlike the cross-boundary pilgrimages which found merely a few successors in the Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907) and then disappeared in history, travel associated with landscape appreciation remained as an important tradition in social life of literati in imperial China. Since the third or fourth century AD, landscape appreciation became an outstanding concern for literati travelers. Considerable literary works left by literati travelers served as strong evidence of their aesthetic appreciation of sceneries. The evidence suggested that landscape appreciation in the third and fourth century China had already been a social phenomenon worthy of concern, whether in quantity or in quality.

Landscape appreciation in the Six Dynasties period has already been accepted as a

given, but in so far, the causes of the phenomenon have not been convincingly examined. Existing studies related to landscape appreciation were mainly from the discipline of literary criticism as a byproduct when scholars investigated the birth of certain literary genres related to landscape appreciation. When conducting studies, they were inclined to pay more attention to the relationship between new literary genres and the old ones, than to landscape appreciation itself. Their explanations of the birth of landscape poem or landscape essay, therefore, might not necessarily apply to the emergence of landscape appreciation, as shown in the following two cases.

It was suggested that the quest for Taoist truth led to the emergence of landscape appreciation in the third and fourth century China (Holzman, 1994, 1995). While the viewpoint shows a reasonable insight that the intellectual factor was important for the emergence of the given social phenomenon, it has the risk of simplification. The reason lies in that the quest for Taoist truth appeared to be more the theme of philosophic debates prevalent among the literati class that time than the major cause for landscape appreciation. The quest for Taoist truth is not necessarily leading to the emergence of landscape appreciation. Researchers who support Holzman's viewpoint may argue that many references to metaphysics in initial landscape poems could be regarded as supporting evidence. Such argument, however, is based on a misinterpretation of the primary sources, considering that the metaphysical feeling was more a result of landscape appreciation than a major reason for the phenomenon.

To a large extent, it is unreasonable to regard the metaphysical feeling brought by the scene as the drive for the quest for natural beauty. A direct evidence is that in AD 400 more than thirty literati monks on Mount Lu made an excursion, and they noted the reason for the excursion is “to sing the praises of the landscape” (*yong shanshui* 詠山水)¹. The changing beautiful scenery stimulated their metaphysical feeling or understanding of Taoist truth, as expressed in the poem and the essay recording the excursion. Holzman used the case as the major evidence to support his explanation, which might be a result of confusion of the cause and effect.

Besides the philosophical explanation above, another widely accepted explanation of the initiation of landscape appreciation is the geographic factor (Y. Wang, 1986, p. 250), referring to the stimulation from the diverse landscapes in the lower reach of the Yangtze River. It appears to be reasonable to conclude that the diverse landscape in the South stimulated the senses of the relocated literati, and then brought about the aesthetic appreciation of scenery. Such explanation is not without doubts however. Accepting the explanation, i.e. the diverse landscape in the South is the major reason for the emergence of landscape appreciation, leads to difficulty in explaining why the aboriginals who had lived there for many generations did not possess any sense of the beauty of nature. Similar to the case of aboriginals of Southern China, many nations lived in beautiful environment for many centuries, but had no idea of the natural beauty (Berque, 1995, cited in Baker, 2003, p. 112). It appears that for the

¹ See “You shimen shi bing xu”, texts in JShi, 20: 1085-1086. A full translation in Holzman, “A comparison of landscape appreciation in Medieval China and Medieval Europe”.

emergence of aesthetic conception of landscape, the geographic factor could not take effect without the aid of other crucial factors.

The brief examination of two major existing explanations of the emergence of landscape appreciation in early medieval China suggests that the causes of the given phenomenon might be more complicated than generally imagined, and the attempts in using one or two factors as explanations might result in failure. There might have been a series of factors working together to have aroused the landscape awareness in the minds of early medieval literati.

As discussed above, literary studies treat landscape appreciation as a subtopic in explaining the birth of certain literary genres, which to a large extent results in that the historical phenomenon, i.e. landscape appreciation in early medieval China, was not fully explored and understood. Therefore, to investigate the genesis of landscape appreciation the present study employs a different approach with the following two characteristics. Firstly, this study uses a tourism perspective on landscape appreciation, regarding the phenomenon as a sort of sightseeing or nature-based tourism rather than merely stimulus of landscape literature. Secondly, it explores the major causes through examining the evolution of landscape appreciation from emergence to flourish.

However, a further factor, the emergence of a travel culture of landscape

appreciation has not been examined as a critical factor leading to the emergence of this trend. Yet, beginning with the Six Dynasties period and continuing to the mid 1800s, China had a flourishing travel culture of landscape appreciation. This thesis seeks to examine the emergence of this travel culture during the Six Dynasties period, by exploring the range of social, political, ideological and religious factors that led to the establishment and flourishing of such a culture.

The major research question of the present study is: what is it about early medieval China that caused the travel culture of landscape appreciation to flourish? It is a study of travel culture in early medieval China², and what made the travel culture different from others was its linkage to landscape appreciation. The focus of the study is the main causes for the emergence of landscape conception and the flourish of the travel culture. Further description of the given travel culture is placed in the second chapter.

The study has the following sub-questions. Firstly, as will be discussed, the existing explanation of the emergence of landscape appreciation points out that it is unreasonable to regard the quest for truth as the motive for early medieval literati's excursion to nature. Admitting this, the first sub question becomes what were the basic drivers for landscape appreciation? Secondly, the cultural factors are thought to be significant causes of landscape appreciation, and further that Confucianism and

² An alternative for the Six Dynasties period.

Taoism were influential factors in the intellectual domain, the author seeks to examine what the relationship existed between Confucianism and the emergence of landscape appreciation? It is also necessary to examine specific effects of the emergence of Taoism as the dominant philosophy on the birth of landscape awareness. Thirdly, this period saw an emergence of travel to the suburbs. It is, therefore, natural to ask why the literati class favored excursion to the suburbs. Finally, official travel was the most important opportunity for the literati class in early medieval China to travel. Thus, one needs to examine the part played by official travel in the flourish of landscape appreciation.

It should be noted that the examination of the evolution of landscape tour will not focus on the material aspects of travel, including transportation, accommodation, catering and travel facilities. The reason for excluding these issues lies in the belief that for the emergence and the prevalence of landscape appreciation among the literati class in early medieval China, the cultural factors are more important than the material ones (see Holzman, 1994, 1995). The importance of cultural factors to the emergence of aesthetic conception of landscape can be understood through that many societies in different periods had similar or more appropriate material conditions but turned out to have been not landscape-aware.

SIGNIFICANCE

The major significance of the present study lies in that it adds understanding of the histories of tourism. This study shows that in the third and fourth century China formed a tourism tradition that linked landscape appreciation to travel. The tradition was essentially nature-based tourism, which was almost fifteen centuries earlier than its Western counterpart. The study offers an answer of why the tourism tradition formed in the third and fourth century AD. In doing so, the study in part fills the gap in the study of tourism in early medieval China. It calls upon further studies on other aspects of tourism in the period, e.g. hospitality and traffic. It also arouses attention to tourism development in the Tang Dynasty (618-907), when travel became more frequent and had more influence on the life of the literati class (Y. Hu, 2008).

This study finds out that a series of factors brought the travel culture of landscape appreciation to flourish, which is different from existing studies which tended to use a single factor to explain the emergence of landscape appreciation. The contributing factors are examined through a representation of the evolution of landscape appreciation. The study pays enough attention to the relationship between contributing factors, which is helpful for understanding the evolution and the causes of the travel culture of landscape appreciation.

This study can be regarded as a rectification of existing explanations for the emergence and flourish of landscape appreciation. This study will show that the geographic factor, i.e. landscape itself, is not as significant as existing studies

claimed. So is the case for the philosophical Taoism.

SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Before beginning a thesis properly, it is necessary to offer a social and historical context of the study area. Below, brief sections include a historical overview, a review of the aristocratic class, discussion of value and social changes and an overview of the social economy at the time.

A Brief History

The studied period is mainly the two centuries from AD 220 to 420, i.e. the Wei-jin period. The two centuries accounted for more than half of the Six Dynasties (220-589) period, or early medieval China. This era is conventionally divided into three stages: 1) three coexisting kingdoms period (220-265): Wei, Shu and Wu; 2) Two Jin Dynasties (265-420): Western Jin, followed by the Eastern Jin in Southern China and sixteen kingdoms or regimes in the North; 3) the coexisting Southern (420-589) and Northern Dynasties (386-581).

Table 1: Part of China's historical periods

First Unification	Qin Dynasty		-221 to -206
	Han Dynasty	Former Han	-206 to +8
First Partition		Later Han	25 to 220
	Three Kingdoms	Wei...	220 to 265

Second Unification	Western Jin		265 to 316
Second Partition	Eastern Jin and Sixteen Kingdoms	Eastern Jin Sixteen Kingdoms	317 to 420 304 to 439
	Southern and Northern Dynasties	Southern Dynasties (Song, Qi, Liang, Chen) Northern Dynasties	420 to 589 386 to 581

The Six Dynasties period saw frequent turnover of reigns in the history of China. In the four centuries, thirty-five kingdoms, large or small, existed (Zhu, Liu, Liang, & Chen, 2005, p. 1). Except for the short-term unification in Western Jin, most of the time saw partitions of imperial China. This situation led to social instability. Frequent wars, accompanied by natural disasters and the fierce competition between different political forces, made some researchers regard the Six Dynasties as a “dark age”. However the image is misleading since the period was not without bright and positive aspects, e.g. cultural and economic development at varying degrees in different regions (J. Liu, 1994, p. 216). The reason is further analyzed by Li and Yang (1998). In approximately one hundred years, from the beginning of the Three Kingdoms period in 220 to the fall of Western Jin in 316, in spite of occasional wars, the social environment was far better than that of the end of Han Dynasty, when people were involved in endless battles and lived a hopeless life. In the equilibrium of the three kingdoms, economy was independently developed respectively in central, southwestern, and southeastern China. The unification in Western Jin, though not lasting long, furthered social and economy development. As a result of relative stability of society, there was economic recovery and cultural development.

In contrast with the Three Kingdoms and Western Jin, the Eastern Jin lasted relatively longer, more than one hundred years. In 316, the insurgence of ethnic peoples in the northern China overthrew the rule of the Western Jin. To leave the battlefield of Northern ethnic peoples, a large number of Han people, including aristocrats and landowners in central China, immigrated to the Southern China. With the Jin aristocrats' support, in 317, a royal descendant of Western Jin, Sima Rui 司馬睿 reconstructed the Jin court in Jiankang (present Nanjing). Under the ruling of Eastern Jin, Southern China enjoyed relative peace to develop economy and culture, by contrast with the extremely chaotic circumstances in Northern China, where more than twenty kingdoms had been setup in approximately 120 years, bringing about much turbulence.

In 420, the Eastern Jin was replaced by the Song. After that, the Southern China saw three other replacements of throne before AD 589 when imperial China entered its third unification. The Southern Dynasties, consisting of Song, Qi, Liang and Chen, were away from large turbulence despite the frequent handovers of throne which were usually processed in a relatively peaceful manner. The social environment facilitated the development of culture and economy.

The Aristocratic Class

The subject of the present study is the literati of the Wei-jin period. The subject

was the aristocratic literati, who tended to be innovative in social life. This subsection discusses the formation of the aristocratic class, its political and social status.

The birth of the aristocratic class was closely related to a system of selecting governmental candidates. In the Han Dynasty, the selection of governmental officials was up to social recommendation, and the criterion was morality. The overemphasis of morality led to neglect of talent cultivation, which caused the central government to have difficulty in finding competent candidates. Therefore, at the very beginning of Six Dynasties period an innovation was made, and talent was regarded as more important than morality. The newly designed system classified candidates into nine levels according to their competence, being named as Nine Ranks of Candidates, “*jiuping zhongzheng* 九品中正” (S. Hu & Yang, 2000, p. 15; Z. Liu, 1996, p. 524).

In the process of implementing the selection system, the original intention, however, was spoilt by the corruption of officials who were in charge of the selection. The essence was that the prestigious clans or families took advantage of the selection system to ensure their descendants to be selected. Under these circumstances, the virtual criterion for selections was changed from ability to parentage, which, to a large extent, facilitated the formation of the aristocratic class (Lao, 1975, pp. 105-108), and further enhanced their political status. The system was closely related to the interests of the emerging aristocratic class, thus being carefully kept through the

Six Dynasties period despite the protests and objections which lasted from the very beginning of Western Jin to the Liang period (Z. Liu, 1996, pp. 524-526). Many years of practicing the selection system resulted in the situation that in the Wei-jin period, almost all senior positions were taken up by the aristocratic class, and junior ones left to the lower class.

The ease of attaining governmental appointments, together with the aristocrats' affluence based on the manorial economy, in part accounted for the less serious attitude of the aristocratic officials toward their positions. In other words, they did not regard their positions seriously or pay enough attention to the corresponding responsibilities. They tended to let their subordinates deal with the practical issues and paid attention to their pursuits in domains like philosophy, literary, and arts (He, 2002, pp. 7-9; Z. Wang, 2003, p. 380). Their achievements in these domains then became another important sign for their aristocratic identity, besides their descents and political advantage. The aristocratic literati were authors for half of the individual anthologies in the two Jin Dynasties and seventy percent in the Southern Dynasties (He, 2002). The discussions of the aristocratic class continue in the following subsections, from aristocrats' philosophic thought to their economic conditions.

The Transformation of Value Orientation

It would be insufficient to understand the aristocratic class without an examination of their philosophy. In the Six Dynasties period, a significant change in the philosophic domain was the decline of Confucianism (Jing & Kong, 2006, pp. 217-223), which gave rise to significant transformation in the intellectual domain. The Confucianism regarded serving the court as the ultimate goal for the literati class. With the value orientation, the Han literati class tended to have a political ambition; the story changed when it came to its counterpart in the Six Dynasties period when the political deterioration weakened the literati class's interest in politics. Because of political deterioration and fierce competition between political powers, engaging in politics became dangerous for literati. Facing such a cruel reality, the literati class was no longer as interested in politics as its Han counterpart, extensively withdrawing from public domain to the individual world. Since serving the court had lost its value, the intellectual society then faced a fundamental question, i.e. what the meaning of life was. Seeking answers to the question was accompanied by the decline of Confucianism as well as the simultaneous rise of Taoism and Buddhism, which brought about a significant transformation in value orientations, from devotion to hedonism (Jing & Kong, 2006, pp. 226-229).

With its concerns transferring from society to individuals, the intellectual society had to reconstruct the meaning of life and give new meaning to life. The efforts was typically reflected in “*liezi yangzhu pian*” 列子 • 楊朱篇 which was a chapter in a Taoist classic (Jing & Kong, 2006, p. 227). The major theme of the chapter was the

advocacy of hedonism, based on the awareness that life was short and full of misfortunes. To encourage the enjoyment of life, the chapter emphasized that people should not be restrained by the tenets of Confucianism, e.g. its cherishment of fame, truth, and responsibility. To support his argument, the author discussed the relationship between fame and reality and claimed that what made sense of life was reality rather than fame which was essentially illusive. The chapter concluded that what of great importance was the individual, realistic experience of happiness of life, rather than the etiquettes, moralities and social responsibilities emphasized by the Confucianism. To a certain extent, Wei-jin literati's acceptance of hedonism showed that literati's value-orientation moved from one extreme to another.

With value orientation in social life changing from devotion to hedonism, the literati life took on a new look as shown in literati's aesthetic as well as pleasure pursuits. The Wei-jin literati began to seek pleasure from daily life, and appreciated precious food, local produce, and additionally, unusual process of cooking. The literati class did not stop at the level of gastronomy, but went on their explorations of the meaning in daily life through listening to fine music, appreciating fine arts, viewing beautiful scenery, and so on. With this inclination, most aspects of literati's social life tended to be artistic and graceful, and achieved a sense of aesthetics.

As suggested by the above discussion, the transformation of value orientation might have a certain effect on the emergence of landscape appreciation which was

related to leisure and pleasure pursuits. The relationship between hedonism and landscape appreciation will be discussed later in the present study.

Social Economy

Private manors appeared in the Han period (W. Zheng, 2004, pp. 25-30). The construction of manors continued in the Six Dynasties period, and the scale was even larger than at earlier times. The aristocratic class's manors tended to be broad, even enclosing hills, lakes, and rivers. At the hearts of manors were castles that gathered members of family clans, as well as a certain number of free farmers who could not bear the heavy burden of taxes and escuages required by government. With broad lands and plentiful labor forces consisting of slaves and farmers, the manorial economy was well developed (Tang, 1990; Wan, 1981). On the basis of its manorial economy and military force, the aristocratic class successfully achieved a certain degree of independence from the government, which turned out to have been an important basis for their individual pursuits in the spiritual world (Z. Li & Liu, 1999, pp. 4-6; G. Wu, 1994).

Another type of economy that helps to understand the aristocratic class was the commercial economy (Jian & Ge, 1996; Jiang, 2004, p. 418). The South in the Six Dynasties period saw the flourish of business and commerce for the following three reasons. Firstly, the immigrants from the North brought advanced cultivation

technologies, which was helpful for further exploitation of the South. The flourish of farming gave rise to surplus produce of agriculture, which then became commodity in the market. Secondly, the South had a long coastline, which was beneficial for the maritime commerce. The coastal cities enjoyed their prosperity brought by sea commerce. Thirdly, the tax policy in the Southern China was also encouraging. With the three conditions above, the Six Dynasties period had a developed commercial economy, with the extensive engagement from different social classes (Jian & Ge, 1996). Furthermore, the Southern regimes developed trading with the North as well as southeastern Asian countries, which was another contributor to the commercial economy.

The prosperity of commerce facilitated the development of cities. In the Six Dynasties period, a belt of cities appeared in the lower reach of the Yangtze River, see Table 2.

Table 2: The early medieval cities in the lower reach of the Yangtze River

Scale	Early medieval cities	Present location
Large	Jiankang	Nanjing
	Jingkou	Zhenjiang
	Guangling	Yangzhou
	Shanyin	Shaoxing
	Wu	Suzhou
Medium	Wuxing	Wuxing
	Yixing	Yixing
	Piling	Changzhou
	Dongyang	Jinhua
	Yongjia	Wenzhou

Data source: Jian & Ge (1996)

The table above shows two levels of early medieval cities, large and medium. The scale of cities could be glimpsed through the case of Jiankang, whose population surpassed one million (cited in Jian & Ge, 1996). Furthermore, Guangzhou in the South and Chengdu in the Southwest, both were flourishing, regional business centers, falling into the category of large cities (Lao, 1975, pp. 139-140).

The prosperous commercial economy and the development of cities were attractive to the Southern aristocrats (including those immigrated from the North), causing them to prefer cities to rural areas, unlike their northern counterparts. The aristocratic class settled in cities, and developed the suburbs for recreation, making landscape constructions there. Whether the reason for aristocratic literati's frequent excursions to the suburbs was that they lived in cities and had manors in the suburbs or not, which constitutes a concern for the present study.

SUMMARY

This chapter points out existing explanations for the emergence of landscape appreciation were unconvincing. These studies were mostly from the field of literary criticism, and the explanation of the phenomenon turned out to be a byproduct when literary scholars studied the birth of certain literary genres. The situation results in that landscape appreciation is seldom regarded as a topic to be studied for its own right. The situation also leads to a lack of a systematic examination of the evolution

of landscape appreciation while discussion of the evolution can be helpful in disclosing the factors significant for the flourish of landscape appreciation. Based on these considerations, the present study employs a tourism perspective on landscape appreciation, aiming at disclosing the significant factors working together to have brought landscape appreciation to flourish. Through a prudent examination of the emergence of landscape appreciation as well as how a special travel culture was formed, the present study initiates and calls upon studies of tourism prior to the tenth century AD in imperial China.

At the end of this chapter is an overview of the whole study (see Table 3).

Table 3: Structure of the study

Chapters	Focuses
1	Background, research questions, significance, and historical context
2	Description of the travel culture of landscape appreciation, and related terms
3	Methods and mains sources
4	The Taoist perspective on mountains, and the relationship between herb gathering and landscape appreciation
5	The landscape consciousness cultivated through suburban excursions
6	The maturity of landscape appreciation brought about by long-distance travels
7	Discussion and conclusion

CHAPTER II: TRAVEL CULTURE

This chapter is devoted to the understanding of travel culture of landscape appreciation. To achieve the goal, a series of concepts are examined, including culture, travel, travel culture, and landscape. The chapter ends up with a descriptive definition of the term referring to the tourism tradition formed in early medieval China, i.e. the travel culture of landscape appreciation.

CONCEPTS

This section focuses on the understanding of the concepts of culture, travel, and travel culture, as well as their implications for the present study.

Culture

For further clarification of the concept of travel culture, it is necessary to begin with the conceptual understanding of culture. Culture is one of the most frequently used terms. There exist at least one hundred and sixty definitions of culture, and it is extremely difficult to find the consensus (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963). With an applied perspective, different branches of social science are inclined to define culture according to the inner requirement of their study areas. Their definitions of culture range from an all-inclusive one to those with strict restrictions (Reisinger & Turner, 2003, p. 4). In other words, toward the understanding of culture some researchers

take a broad perspective and others a narrow one. Furthermore, researchers have already realized the difficulty of defining culture, thus suggesting that culture is “like a black box which we know is there but not what it contains” (Hofstede, 1980, cited in Reisinger & Turner, 2003, p. 4).

In spite of the complexity derived from the denotation and connotation of culture, researchers find agreement in the essential attribute of culture, i.e. “its human origin” (Reisinger & Turner, 2003, p. 5). Culture can be understood as “a way of life of a particular group of people” (Harris, 1968; Harris and Moran, 1979; Kluckhohn, 1951, cited in Reisinger & Turner, 2003, p. 5). The above understanding of culture, simple but useful, is adopted in the present study, and is the guideline for discussion of the travel culture of literati in early medieval China.

For the understanding of culture in the present study, at least two important definitions should be mentioned. The first is the classic one that defined culture as:

that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. (Tylor, 1924, cited in Reisinger & Turner, 2003, p. 5)

Tylor’s definition suggests that culture is a system that one learns from the society he or she belongs to. The second definition is as below:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior

acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963, p. 357).

This definition discloses the following issues. 1) Behavior patterns: these behavior patterns constitute a society's culture. Within a given society, they are inherited through semiotics. 2) The nucleus of culture: traditional ideas, together with values attached to them, lie in the heart of culture. 3) The interaction between culture and social behavior. The three issues are instructive for the studies of the travel culture of literati.

Apart from the above discussion of definitions, another issue related to the understanding of culture in the present study is the forms of culture, material and non-material (Reisinger & Turner, 2003, pp. 9-10). Some scholars refer to culture as material or spiritual, and others would like to encompass the both. Noticing that there is a close relationship between the two cultural forms, the present author is inclined to agree with the broad perspective. However, considering the characteristic of social science approach to history, i.e. aiming at some conceptual understanding of historical phenomenon, the researcher will focus on the spiritual issues of travel culture and leave the material aspect for historians. Another reason to do so is related to a proposition that for the emergence and flourish of landscape appreciation, the material issues are not as significant as are the spiritual or intellectual issues.

Travel

The Tang scholar, Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574-648), offered the earliest definition of travel: “one leaves his original residential area, and temporarily visits other places” (cited in Shen, 1996, p. 3). The definition makes a superficial description of the phenomenon of travel, and it should be noted that the concept of travel is not without complexity, as Roberson (2001, p. xxii) states:

Travel...is a complex matter, encompassing a variety of travel experiences – family vacation, political exile, exploration of distant lands, immigration, mundane shopping trips – and theoretical approaches to define travel.

In his cross-cultural study of travel, Guo (2005) constructs the concept of travel at three levels: at the bottom is touring (*lüyou* 旅遊), travel for pleasure or sightseeing; at the medium is the category he regards seriously, “*xingyou* 行遊”, travel with a serious purpose other than pleasure or sightseeing, e.g. imperial travel, military travel, diplomatic travel, business travel, cultural travel, and religious travel; on the top is “*shenyou* 神遊”, including spiritual travel, imagined travel, virtual travel, and travel as a metaphor of the passage from birth to death. Although he categorizes travel into three types, Guo reminds that the classification is not absolute, and no insurmountable distinction exists between different categories. The medium category of travel, for instance, could involve in recreation and sightseeing regardless of its original purpose. Again, the serious travel could also have a relationship with

spiritual travel. The present author agrees with Guo's view, but distinctions among the identified travel categories should not be overemphasized since they might transform to and interact with each other.

Movement, mobility, relocation, displacement, migration, and the like, might have some overlaps with the concept of travel, but the present study will not go that far to cover all these issues, as did some researchers who tended to employ a broad perspective on travel (Gong, 2001; Roberson, 2001). The broad perspective of travel might be appropriate for a collection of travel discourses, or a monograph of literary criticism, but not for the present study.

The issues of time and distance involved in travel are other considerations in understanding the concept of travel. It is generally accepted that the concept of traveler has a broader connotation than that of tourist, so it might be inappropriate to apply the definition of tourist to understand the concept of traveler. The constraint factors of defining tourist, e.g. the least degree of distance a tourist should cover and the largest time span¹, are not appropriate for defining traveler. Such necessary differentiation between the two concepts leads to an open understanding of travel. Accordingly, whether a country girl happily walked several miles to a fair in one day², or a Chinese Buddhist, spending more than ten years, went to the ancient India

¹ In terms of time, the concept of tourism has a restriction of one year, but the story of travel is much different. For instance, the initial Grand Tour usually cost an aristocratic young man three years or so (Towner, 1985).

² To include this type of short-distance travel in the spectrum of travels is inspired by Towner (1995). In his essay "What is tourism's history", he employed the following case as the beginning of rectification of class bias in tourism history studies: "One summer's day in August 1887, an 11-year-old girl and her nine-year-old brother set out from their Oxfordshire village to walk the eight miles to the local town to spend a month's holiday with their

in quest for Buddhist truth, can be regarded as travel in spite of the superficial difference. The two extreme situations can be understood as two ends of a travel continuum, within which lie a series of travel types. In this continuum of travel, there are excursions to the outskirts of cities as well as wandering in distant mountains and the long journeys to take offices in remote areas, as shown in later chapters.

Travel as a Culture

As discussed previously, culture can be understood as a way of life of a particular group of people, and their life can be understood from two dimensions, material and spiritual. The material life, in a Chinese context, consists of the following four aspects: clothing, food, housing, and travel. In this sense, travel itself is a culture since it reflects the life of travelers.

Scholars from most countries are inclined to exclude travel from the components of daily life and think that travel is not as important as other three issues: food, clothing, and housing. This inclination can be found in Japanese and Western studies of daily life (Z. Huang, 1998, preface). The differentiation might stem from the varied historical and geographic background. In imperial China that had a vast territory, travel naturally became an important part of social life, and it was

aunt and uncle. The journey itself was full of novel experiences... A new world was encountered in the small town, with different customs and sights; where even visiting the local shops was a memorable event. The holiday, informally organized, a short distance from home, and involving little expenditure, became a vital experience in the lives of these relatively poor children. Furthermore, their visit forms just as much a part of the history of tourism as a trip to a spa or seaside resort, a Grand Tour, or an exotic journey under the care of Thomas Cook.”

especially the case for literati-officials (C. Zhang, 2003). For this reason, the issue of travel becomes a worthy topic in studies of daily life or social life in imperial China. Similar situation can be found in exploration of travel in ancient Rome (Casson, 1994; Feifer, 1985). In their large empire, the Romans could travel to Egypt without crossing a hostile border, and travel appeared to be an important part of their social life. From the case of imperial China and ancient Rome, it can be realized that a large geographic area in the reign of an empire could facilitate travels. Without such a prerequisite, travel might be decreased or even neglected, which can be glimpsed from the case of Europe: the fall of the Roman Empire brought about a dark age for travel. To sum up, owing to the vast land of imperial China and the continuous prosperity, travel played an important part in social life and generated diversified travel cultures, which will be briefly examined in the following section.

DIVERSITY

The previous discussion of travel as a part of social life helps to understand that there were different cultures of travel in the world, even in a single country. The diversity of travel culture appeared to be caused by two types of factors, internal and external. The external factors refer to the influential factors of travel, e.g. geography, history, philosophy, literature, arts, religion, politics, social class (groups), education, economy, and technology. Each of these factors plays a certain part in the formation of travel cultures.

The internal factors refer to the inner complexity of travel cultures. The attempt to disclose the inner complexity of travel cultures leads to revisitation of the concept of travel. The saying “Travel is what travelers do” (Anonymous, cited in Berger, 2004, p. 6) is not definitely a circular argument. In a sense, the argument contributes to the understanding of the diversity of travel culture. The reason lies in that in a society, a person is regarded as what he or she does (Rapaille, 2006), so is the case for a special one, i.e. a traveler. This was explained by Roberson (2001, p. xi), who stated that “Whether we travel to foreign lands or just across the room, we all journey and from our journeying define ourselves.” He further clarified the concept of travel:

Fussell, MacCannell, and Baudrillard define travel in ways familiar to many and in ways that tend to universalize travel around models of pleasure and escape. But the word ‘travel’ has a multitude of meanings and connotations, not all of romantic tropic islands or exciting foreign cities. Travel means different things to different people, depending on their reasons journeying and their positions of gender, race, class, and ethnicity.

Roberson’s understanding of the concept of travel exhibits the important part played by travel parties in differentiating travel cultures. There is not a unitary travel culture dominated by a certain class; instead, different classes might have different cultures of travel, e.g. imperial travel, literati travel, diplomatic travel, religious travel, business travel, caravans, and knightly travel. These travel categories are regarded as journeys with a serious purpose in Guo’s (2005) hierarchy of travel. The official-literati traveled to take offices; the caravans traveled to transit commodities

and other items; the businessmen traveled for trade; the craftsmen traveled to find business; the barnstormers traveled to find audience; the knights errant traveled to rectify the injustices; and the Buddhists traveled for Buddhist truth or charity.

The diversity of travel culture is further demonstrated in Figure 1, which shows the inner complexity of travel culture as well as different approaches to it. The two perspectives, historical and social science, are discussed in Towner's (1988) study. As for dimensions, the temporal and spatial issues are self-explained in historical studies of travel. The social dimension that emphasizes class differentiation stems from Western studies of tourism history.

Considering the complexity and diversity of travel culture, the present study of travel culture needs to identify a social class to study. The choice of literati as the subject of the present study is based on the assumption that the literati travelers as a whole were the most influential group in terms of the travel culture in imperial China³. In his study of travel culture in Song China, Zhang (2003) exhibited the same consideration.

³ Dr. Bob McKercher notes that for studies of travel culture in imperial China, the importance of the literati travelers may be derived from their recording of travels, by contrast with the scarce of travel accounts for other social classes.

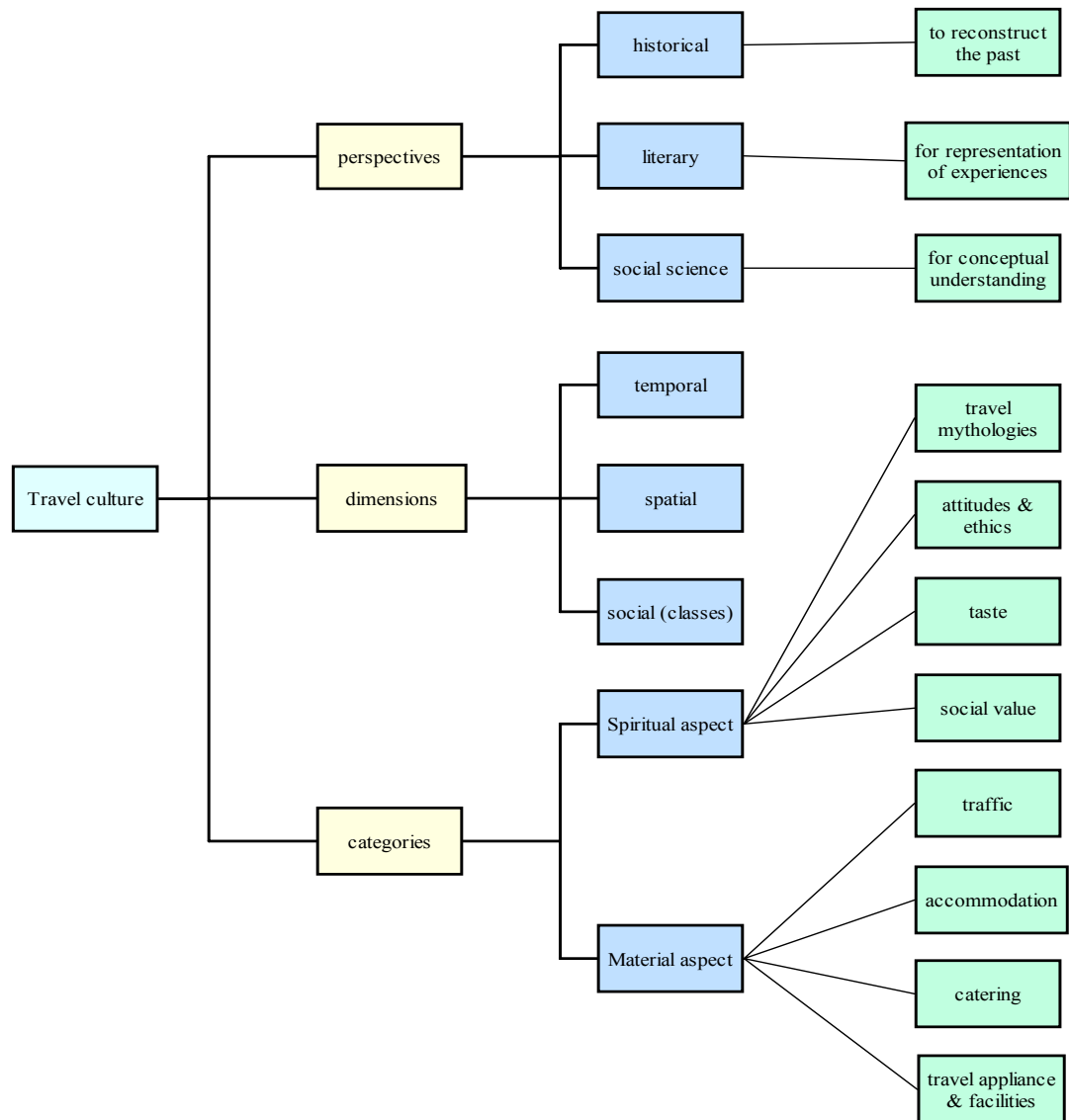


Figure 1: The diversity of travel culture

A SPECIAL CATEGORY

Previous discussions have exhibited the diversity and complexity of travel cultures, and the necessity of narrowing down the topic by focusing on the literati class. The specific travel culture of this social class is defined in the present study as “the travel culture of landscape appreciation”⁴. The studied travel culture has two major

⁴ The concept “travel culture of landscape appreciation” was put forward by Dr. Bob McKercher in a

characteristics: first, in this specific travel culture, travel was linked to landscape appreciation; second, at the heart of the travel culture was mainly landscape rather than society encountered.

The practice of linking travel to landscape appreciation was a cherished cultural tradition for the literati class in imperial China. The link between travel and landscape appreciation might be common for modern societies, but it was not the case for Western societies before Romanticism (Adler, 1989), or ancient China (prior to the third century AD). Since the third century, travel for landscape appreciation in China became an increasingly practiced social behavior among the literati class.

The tradition of landscape appreciation was shaped approximately in the period between the second and the fourth centuries (Holzman, 1996), and then passed on from generations to generations. From early medieval China to the nineteenth century, the romantic gazing at landscape remained as an everlasting fashion and almost a necessity in literati life (Guo, 2005, p. 51), which was witnessed by numerous travel writings (see Strassberg, 1994) and landscape constructions in different dynasties. The travel writings in imperial China demonstrated that the traveling literati were less interested in societies they encountered and natural landscape⁵ was the focus of travel experience.

conversation in 2007.

⁵ In general, landscape could be divided into two categories, natural and cultural (Baker, 2003, p. 110).

The concept of landscape is a nuclear element of the travel culture of landscape appreciation. In imperial China, the concept mainly referred to the natural landscape, while having plentiful cultural connotations. The Chinese concept of landscape, “*shanshui* 山水” (literally, mountain and water), refers to the natural world or nature⁶ (W. Li, Jiang, Liu, Wang, & Wei, 1996, pp. 2-3), which reflects the aesthetic taste of literati in traditional societies. The term has plenty of connotations⁷, as stated by a researcher from the discipline of landscape construction:

Shan means mountains (all kinds of different land forms); *Shui* means water (lake, river, sea, ocean, etc.). ...*Shan* is hard, still, sublime, vertically developed, close to the heaven; *Shui* is soft, moveable, sub-durable, horizontally developed, close to the earth. *Shui* embraces *Shan*, *Shan* surrounds *Shui*. All creatures live on the earth in between *Shan* and *Shui*, created and formed by each other. There is space, time, change; there are also feelings, emotions and stories, in which the beauty of nature and life lies. (J.-h. Wu, 1995, p. 102)

In the above quotation Wu suggested that mountain (*shan*) is a concept related to the sublime, and water (*shui*) the beautiful. To put it in other words, the Chinese concept of landscape, *shanshui*, included the two aesthetic domains.⁸

In the Chinese terminology of landscape, mountain and water appear to be parallel to each other, but this is not the case. Actually, in the term the status of mountain is

⁶ The natural landscape in the Chinese context is different from that in the Western context since the former could include cultural elements, and thus not pure natural. China's nature had been highly penetrated by cultural semiotics, by contrast with the pure nature of the Western world (Scollon & Scollon, 2003/2005, pp. 123-124). But it should be noted that in the early stage of landscape appreciation, i.e. the Wei-jin period, the literati class appeared to have been interested in the pure nature rather than the nature with cultural elements. For this reason, the subtle difference in Chinese and Western concepts of landscape is not further discussed.

⁷ The Confucian and Taoist understanding of the term would be analyzed in later chapters.

⁸ According to Kant (1724-1804), there were two aesthetic categories in terms of nature appreciation, beautiful and sublime (Brady, 2003, pp. 32-39). In the late eighteenth century, the third, picturesque, was added to categories of natural beauty.

superior to that of water. A scholar from the discipline of literary criticism explains the essence of the concept after his reference to the Confucian idea of mountain and water⁹ as below:

Even as the virtuous take precedence over the wise in the Confucian scheme of values, so river and stream are subordinate to mountain and hill in all later estimation. (H. C. Chang, 1977, p. 2)

Just as Chang points out, mountain is the leading element in the system of landscape.¹⁰ In other words, at the top of the hierarchy of landscape is mountain that surpasses any other element. Mountain is essentially an alternative for landscape in the Chinese context. The concept of mountain covers a series of landscape elements varying from natural to cultural¹¹, e.g. forest or woods, cliffs and rocks, and caves; springs and waterfalls in mountains, rivers in valleys, and lakes around mountains; temples, gardens, and other landscape constructions; and relics on the mountains. Opening the travel writings from imperial China, a reader can find that the authors' experiences of mountain scenery included various landscape elements mentioned previously.

As discussed above, mountain is the nuclear element of landscape in the mind of Chinese, and thus the present study will trace the initiation of landscape appreciation to the early ideas of mountains and examine how these ideas facilitate the proximity

⁹ See the first section of Chapter 7.

¹⁰ Also see Wang "Study on Tour in Song Dynasty", pp.64-68.

¹¹ Similarly, Wang states that mountain is, more often than not, a set of various landscape sites. "Study on tour in Song Dynasty", p.67.

to mountains or landscape sites. The Chinese understanding of landscape explains why the discussion of landscape appreciation in later chapters focuses on mountains while landscape includes various types, not limited to mountains. This is not because the present author chooses to do so, but because the early medieval literati's aesthetic interest pointed intensively to mountains.

SUMMARY

This chapter mainly deals with the key concepts in the present study. First, culture is understood as a way of life of a certain group of people, with two dimensions: spiritual and material. Second, travel is regarded as a part of social life. Third, travel culture is described as the social life on journeys. With the effect of a series of influential factors, travel culture varied from social class to social class. With a link to landscape appreciation, literati travel became an outstanding category in the diverse travel cultures. The early medieval literati initiated an important tradition of travel or tourism, i.e. the travel culture of landscape appreciation, which is the fourth concept examined. The main characteristics of the specific travel culture lie in two aspects: the linkage between travel and landscape appreciation, and the intense interest in natural landscape encountered. The Chinese concept of landscape consists of mountain and water, but mountain is the leading element in the perception of landscape. In a Chinese context, mountain as a set of various landscape elements became an alternative for landscape. The examination of the fifth concept, i.e.

landscape in the Chinese context, paved the way for later discussion of landscape appreciation which focuses on mountains. Having introduced the study in the first chapter and explained the key terms of the present study in this chapter, the present author will move to the issue of methods which is the focus of the following chapter.

CHAPTER III: METHODS

Beginning with a brief introduction of the challenges facing the present study, this chapter mainly describes the chosen methods, i.e. a mix of content analysis and historical method. Furthermore, as an organic part of reviewing the methods, the main sources are introduced.

THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

Exploring a historic phenomenon of fifteen centuries ago is not without difficulties. The challenges of the present study mainly stem from its nature in the following three respects: the object to study, the main issues to explore, and the methods to use. What comes first is the issue of understanding landscape appreciation: on the one hand it should be cautiously distinguished from similar activities; on the other its linkages to the latter should not be neglected. The studied object, landscape appreciation, is not a specific event, but a historical phenomenon which occurred many centuries before.¹ The boundary of the phenomenon is not easy to define. Sometimes it is difficult to tell whether an activity is landscape appreciation or not. The situation applies to the Taoist's immortality-seeking and herb gathering in famous mountains. These illustrations suggest that landscape appreciation is a concept more complex than that its literal meaning demonstrates. The present study understands the concept of landscape appreciation in the manner of Stumpf's (2003)

¹ The phenomenon continued throughout history into the modern society, but landscape appreciation after the fifth century was beyond the range of the present study.

definition of tourists in his doctoral dissertation titled “Tourism in Roman Greece”. Regardless of the primary reason for traveling, if a literati traveler² in early medieval China engaged in appreciation of scenery, his behavior falls into the category of landscape appreciation in the present study.

The second challenge is deciding the main issues to explore, which turns out to be a time-consuming process. The aim of this study is explicit, i.e. to explore the causes of the flourish of the travel culture of landscape appreciation, but the route to follow requires prudent considerations. At the operational level the researcher has two routes: outwardly to investigate the social conditions facilitating the development of the travel culture, and inwardly to examine the issues directly contributing to the evolution of the travel culture. It takes the researcher a long time to realize that the two routes do not exclude each other, and on the contrary, each serves as a supplement to the other. The explorations of external and internal factors appear to have the possibility of bettering the answering of the research question.

With the above considerations, the researcher decides to examine the external factors based on secondary sources, thus having more time for the examination of the internal factors which has been less investigated so far. That is to say, the major factors contributing to the emergence and flourish of landscape appreciation will be examined through the evolution of the travel culture of landscape appreciation. In

² As stated in the previous chapters, the subject of the present study was literati in early medieval China.

doing so, the study attains a certain degree of objectivity. At least the researcher does not prefabricate any explanations and instead attempts to determine how the issues involved in landscape appreciation contributed to the evolution of the travel culture of the literati class. By reading the narrative and interpretation in later chapters, a reader could participate in judging to what degree the goals of objectivity and credibility were achieved.

There could be different ways to answer the major research question, using different methods. Some methods, e.g. grounded theory and semiotic approaches, are possible for the study and thus had ever been considered. The grounded theory approach was used in the pilot study. Having singled out hundreds of early medieval literary works related to travel and landscape appreciation, the researcher managed to do open coding and axial coding. The result is that a full picture of the travel culture of landscape appreciation in the Six Dynasties period might have been attained, which could be helpful for a descriptive study of the travel culture of landscape appreciation, but not so helpful for an explorative study like the present one. In other words, the grounded theory approach might be useful for a superficial description of literati's travel culture, but has difficulty in answering the research question of this study, i.e. what caused the flourish of the travel culture of landscape appreciation.

The semiotic approach (see Danesi, 2007; Dann, 2005; Echtner, 1999; Frow, 1991; MacCannell, 1989; Scollon & Scollon, 2003/2005) might be helpful in explaining the

meaning of landscape to Jin literati, examining the sense of landscape appreciation, and interpreting the behaviors of literati in scenic settings. But similar to the situation of grounded theory approach, the semiotic approach appears not to have been helpful in exploring the causes of the travel culture of landscape appreciation in early medieval China. With such considerations, the researcher gave up attempts of using the two approaches for the present study and finally chose the historical method. The justification of the choice can be found in the next section.

It should be noted that conducting a historical study in the field of social science could have some differences from the situation in the field of history, which can be understood via a comparison of the two main approaches, i.e. historical and social science, to tourism history (see Towner, 1988). The historical approach emphasizes that most of the efforts be allocated to the following respects: exhaustive collection of primary sources, and correct interpretation of source materials. By contrast, the social science approach attaches importance to the systematic examination of existing literatures related to the studied topic, and within the intellectual body of literature finding the right place for the study. The social science approach further emphasizes some characteristics of social science studies, e.g. transparency, replicability, objectivity, and credibility. For instance, social science research usually covers a detailed description of methods, aiming at adding the transparency of research (see Towner, 1984). By contrast, in the discipline of history the methods is reflected more in the whole process of narrative and interpretation than in the method

chapter that is seldom found in dissertations on tourism history (see Foertmeyer, 1989; Stumpf, 2003; L. Wang, 1997; C. Zhang, 2003). The criteria for social science research should not be overemphasized in historical studies, considering that concepts like transparency and replicability have limited sense in historical studies. As for objectivity and credibility, they might be examined through historians' criticism and interpretation of sources (Bevir, 1994). As a result, the researcher attempted to take advantage of the strengths of the two approaches, thus prudently describing the methods and exhaustively searching for sources.³ The researcher also used what he learned from historians to interpret the primary sources, aiming at making a reasonable explanation of the emergence of the travel culture of landscape appreciation in early medieval China.

Furthermore, the present study has not a straight-forward procedure to follow. The research process turned out to be considerable circles of raising questions, and that of activities around sources: collection, selection, narrative, and interpretation. There is a dilemma in the respect of sources. On the one hand, there is an absence of desirable sources. There could have been many local gazetteers, like "*Yidu ji*" and "*Jingzhou ji*", which offered precious record of literati's official travel and their aesthetic appreciation of nature. Unfortunately, only a few of them are extant today, and the extant gazetteers are not in their full length any more. On the other hand, considerable sources, e.g. diverse genres of poems and essays, referred to landscape

³ It is one of the goals in historical studies, but the common situation is that for sorts of reasons, a researcher has difficulty to claim that he had exhausted all the source materials.

appreciation. Using sources without prudent selection is not appropriate for a serious study. Facing the dilemma, the researcher explores the possible relationship between sources, and wherever appropriate, manages to read between the lines. In doing so, the researcher finds out the logic relationship between wandering in remote famous mountains and excursions to the suburbs, between suburban excursion and long distance travels. The findings finally help to give an outline of the evolution of landscape appreciation.

CONTENT ANALYSIS AND HISTORICAL STUDY

The major method for the present study is a combination of content analysis and historical method, which is explained in the following three subsections.

Content Analysis

The choice of content analysis as one of the methods for the present study is inspired by a historian who is specialized in historical methodologies and comparative studies of historiographies. In his monograph of historical methods, Du (1985, p. 127) suggests that the spirit and thoughts of a given period could be disclosed by content analysis of representative works of that time. What follow is examinations as well as discussions of the method.

Content analysis was first defined by the Webster's Dictionary of the English Language in its 1961 edition as "analysis of the manifest and latent content of a body of communicated material symbols and themes in order to ascertain its meaning and probable effect." (cited in Krippendorff, 2004, p. xvii) Content analysis dates back to the eighteenth century, but the present content analysis, in respects of aim and method, has been much different from its precursor. The term did not find its use in English until the very beginning of 1940s (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 3). Decades ago, content analysis was predominantly employed in the area of communication, the focus of which was defined by Lasswell et al (1952, cited in Holsti, 1969, p. 24) as "Who says what, to whom, why, to what extent and with what effect". This understanding of content analysis was criticized for its simplification. A researcher in political science, Holsti (1969, p. 14) updated the understanding of content analysis by pointing out "Content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages." This definition states that inferences can be used for the latent meaning of texts. It should be noted that the two characteristics in this definition, objective and systematic, appear to be more appropriate for quantitative content analysis rather than the qualitative. A rectification of Holsti's definition can be found in Krippendorff's (2004, p. 18) defining content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the context of their use." The definition notices the role of context in the interpretation of the meaning of texts.

Definition of content analysis varied with time, technique development, and applications of the method to new types of inquires and materials (Holsti, 1969, p. 2). Overall, the 1961 Webster Dictionary version of definition appears to be more compromised, while later definitions tend to emphasize some characteristics (e.g. systematic, objective, and replicable) that might have a relationship with the increasing use of computer in aid of analysis. But it should be noted that for qualitative content analysis computer might not be as useful as was for quantitative content analysis. A qualitative researcher can not count on computer in terms of analyzing data, and to a large extent the role played by the computer in qualitative content analysis is mainly data management. That is to say, computer can merely facilitate the analysis, and the qualitative researcher has to do all the work of analysis. Therefore, the characteristics of quantitative content analysis might not apply to its qualitative counterpart.

Content analysis has been widely used in various disciplines, as the following quotation describes: “Beyond the technique’s initially journalistic roots, the past century has witnessed the migration of content analysis into various fields and the clarification of many methodological issues.” (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 17) Once stepping out of the threshold of communication, content analysis is widely employed in multiple disciplines, including psychology, politics, literature, arts, business, and history. In the broad sense the historical method can be understood as textual analysis

since the major work for a historian is to take advantage of the extant texts to infer what happened in the past (Krippendorff, 2004, pp. 26-27).

Previous discussion mentioned the two major types of content analysis, quantitative and qualitative, and what follows is further explanation of the two categories. While the quantitative type is inclined to focus on countable issues like frequency, direction, intensity, and space (Jennings, 2001, pp. 80-81), the qualitative type attaches importance to the mining of latent meanings from texts. The complexity of qualitative approach is illustrated by Hsieh and Shannon (2005) in their identification of three existing approaches of qualitative content analysis, respectively conventional, directed and summative. Furthermore, unlike the replicability of quantitative content analysis (see citations in Neuendorf, 2002, p. 10), the qualitative content analysis, without a set of procedures to follow, appears to be more subjective. Much of the analysis relies on the analyst's individual understanding of texts. To a large extent, most textual analysis is qualitative (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 16), which suggests that overemphasis of objectivity might be unreasonable for qualitative content analysis. This is further explained by the characteristics of texts, such as lack of objective qualities and single identifiable meanings, being abundant in latent meanings and dependent on the context and purpose of research (Krippendorff, 2004, pp. 22-25). Furthermore, the involvement of inferences in the analysis process adds the difficulty of being objective. Finally, it should be noted that there is no objective truth or story waiting there to be recorded

or told, but merely stories to be constructed (Denzin, 1997, cited in Phillimore & Goodson, 2004). The goal of researchers is thus striving to produce stories close to the reality, or stories that reflect the reality at best.

Content analysis could be distinguished via the orientation of research, i.e. text driven, problem driven, and method driven (Krippendorff, 2004, pp. 340-357). Content analysis used in the present study falls into the qualitative category as well as the type of problem driven. What follows is a justification of employing content analysis in the present project.

Following the examination of understanding of content analysis is two issues: first, what types of research is appropriate for using content analysis; second, explanation of the specific use of the method in the present study.

Content analysis is likely to be especially appropriate for at least three general classes of research problems which may occur in virtually all disciplines and areas of inquiry. ...it may prove useful when data accessibility is a problem and the investigator's data are limited to documentary evidence. ...If the subject is no longer alive, he can be studied through the record of his activities, through what his contemporaries set down about him, or through whatever writings he has left... Second, some form of content analysis is often necessary when, given certain theoretical components of the data themselves, the subject's own language is crucial to the investigation... (Holsti, 1969, pp. 15-17)

The above quotation describes the following two situations appropriate for using content analysis: first, the subject has been dead which resulted in impossibility of

direct contact with them; second, the study needs to examine the subject's own language. In the present study, the subject was early medieval literati who left records of their travel and landscape experiences. The subject of the present study died fifteen centuries ago, which makes this study accord with the first situation. Again, the subject's own narrative of their travel and landscape experiences is important to the present study aiming at exploring the cause of the flourish of landscape appreciation in the given period, which makes the study match the second situation. For the two reasons, together with historian's advocacy of using the method in history research, the present study had confidence to use content analysis as one of the major methods.

There are cases of using content analysis as an approach to studies of histories of tourism and travel. One is Towner's (1985) study of the Grand Tour based on content analysis of journals, diaries, and letters of contemporary travelers; the other is Knapp's (1907a; 1907b) exploration of ancient travels using ancient Roman plays. The two studies suggest that content analysis can find its place in the studies of histories of travel and tourism, especially when combined with other methods. For instance, in Towner's study there is a synthesis of various methods, from historical method to sampling, time series, statistical maps, quantitative analysis, etc. His approach inspired the researcher to use other methods in aid of content analysis, including induction, case study and comparative study, which were learned from Western and Chinese approaches to tourism history.

The above is the justification as well as some guideline of using content analysis for the present study, and what follows is a description of the use of content analysis. The content analysis used in the present study has no predetermined categories of concerns except for the theme of the study, i.e. causes of landscape appreciation. The textual analysis in this study is also different from that in literary studies. By focusing on texts that suggested the evolution of landscape appreciation, the present study analyzed the texts in a manner different from literary studies which might have other concerns, e.g. the aim of texts, the representation of feeling and scene, and the contribution to the formation of certain literary genres. The difference suggests that a tourism perspective is necessary for investigation of causes of the emergence of landscape appreciation.

The intensive, typical use of content analysis was shown in the analysis of the Orchid Pavilion poems (see Chapter 5). Through content analysis the researcher finds that most of the poems depicted landscape at the site they gathered, and the description of scenery account for half of the content of most of the poems. With these findings based on content analysis, the researcher can confidently reach a conclusion that the Orchid Pavilion poems suggest that the mid fourth century literati had cultivated a strong consciousness of landscape.

In a similar manner, content analysis was used in the survey of the sense of

landscape appreciation to the Orchid Pavilion poets. Through content analysis the researcher finds that a similar wording was widely used in the poems. Many poets wrote that landscape appreciation had a function of relieving their nervousness and worries derived from social life. In doing so, the sense of landscape appreciation to the early medieval literati is disclosed by a content analysis of the Orchid Pavilion poems.

The two examples of using content analysis for the reading of texts suggest that while the characteristics of texts determines the overall character of the analysis, i.e. subjectivity, the analysis of texts is not as arbitrary as generally imagined since the mining of meaning of texts is based on careful reading of texts rather than on the researcher's free imagination. For instance, if the Orchid Pavilion poets had not described the sceneries around them, there will be no judgment that they had praised the scenes in their eyesight, not to mention the formation of a strong consciousness of landscape. Whatever reading of texts is text-oriented rather than researcher-oriented. The researcher strives to hear what the texts said and never attempts to force the texts to say anything.⁴

The Historical Method

Among the issues that differentiate history from social science is the method

⁴ This is not without possibility in text analysis. For instance, in his book "The Songs of the Orchis Tower", Friedrich Alexander Bischoff almost forced all of the Orchid Pavilion poems to say that the gathering at Orchid Pavilion in 353 was a homosexual gathering, which turns out to be a fresh but unconvincing reading.

employed in historical studies. Unlike the situation in social science wherein the scholars have a set of procedures to follow, history researchers might find difficulties in clearly understanding every respects of their methods (Du, 1985). A historical study that employs a narrative paradigm could have difficulty in clearly describing specific procedures of data collection and data analysis, which means that most historical studies can not be as transparent as are social science studies. Methods of historical studies are usually embodied in the concrete process of analysis (see C. Chang, 2000; M. Huang, 2003; F. Wang, 2006; L. Wang, 1997; C. Zhang, 2003). Of course, historical studies do not thoroughly neglect description of the path followed: at least, the main issues and sources are usually informed.

The above discussion shows that the historical method (Howell & Prevenier, 2001; Qian, 2000; Shafer, 1974/1990; Yan, 2006; L. Zheng, 2002; L. Zhou, 1993) has the inclination of being subjective rather than objective, similar to the situation of qualitative content analysis. In part the characteristic of subjectivity explains that a historical study is hardly to be as replicable as is a social science study. Historical studies have no standard procedures to abide by, which to some extent lead to the diversity of data analysis. The same sources for the same topic can be analyzed in different ways (Towner, 1984). Many existing studies adopt a literary perspective on early medieval touring literatures, while the present study employed a tourism perspective toward reading the texts. In other words, when conducting the analysis of source materials, the researcher focused on their links to the evolution of landscape

appreciation rather than their literary significance. In doing so, the researcher could have a more focused examination of the causes of landscape appreciation in early medieval China.

In spite of its complexity, the historical method can be understood via the following two dimensions, methods universally accepted and those in dispute (Shafer, 1974/1990, pp. 39-42) . The basic elements of historical method cover the three activities about data: collection, classification, and interpretation. The second dimension that covers disputable issues in historical studies is difficult to describe. However, it could be glimpsed through another three activities related to data: external criticism, internal criticism, and integrated research. The external criticism examines the authenticity of data, and the internal criticism the credibility. The integrated research refers to how to merge source materials in narrative and how to clearly describe historical events, aiming at answering questions in the domain of history.

The above are discussions of the essence as well as the characteristics of historical studies, which is helpful for correct use of historical method in the present study. What follows is an explanation of the specific use of certain historical methods in this study, respectively, historical narrative and interpretation, induction and deduction, and case studies. The first issue is related to ways of representing findings, which in this study turned out to be an integration of historical narrative and

historical interpretation. The reason of using a mix of the two methods lays in their significance in historical studies in the following two aspect (Du, 1985, pp. 216-217). On the one hand the why and the how of historical events are closely related to each other, and thus without narratives of how the events happened, it will be difficult to understand why they happened. On the other hand without the corresponding interpretation, historical studies will look like merely chronological annals.

Through historical narrative the present author attempts to describe the evolution of landscape appreciation and meanwhile examine the factors significant for the evolution. By putting together the events which had a certain degree of relationship, the present author manages to attain a sort of interpretation, i.e. let the facts speaks for themselves. However, it should be noted that a researcher can not count too much on self-explaining facts since the meaning of events is, more often than not, unclear or unapparent for a given study. Under this circumstance history researchers have no choice but to explicitly interpret the relationship between the events they narrated (Du, 1985, p. 222). The interpretation for historical events or source materials is necessary for the present study since, besides the above reasons, existing interpretations of the source materials involved in landscape appreciation are mostly derived from a literary, rather than tourism, perspective, which leads to the situation that to a large extent the causes of the emergence of landscape appreciation remain unclear.

The method of integrating historical interpretation into historical narrative was used in later chapters based on primary sources. The researcher disclosed the relationship between the Taoist ideas of mountains and the behaviors of going to the mountains for herb-gathering and immortality-seeking through the narrative and explanation of related source materials. By narrating a series of events of herb gathering the present author attempted to show their linkages to landscape appreciation.

As mentioned previously, history researchers often encounter the situation that the relationship between different events is not apparent, which calls upon interpretation. This is especially the case for events like landscape tours with the excuse of herb gathering, and suburban excursions focusing on recreation as well as scenery appreciation. The existing studies noticed the relationship between landscape appreciation and either of the two events, i.e. wandering in famous mountains and making excursions to the suburbs, but failed to realize the links between the two events. With an attempt to disclose the relationship between herb-collection tours and suburban excursions, the researcher suggested that it was an important step using the suburbs as a substitute for famous mountains in the evolution of landscape appreciation, which made literati's proximity to nature more frequent and prevalent. The above-mentioned link is not fabricated by the researcher; instead, it is based on careful examination of related discourses of early medieval literati who had showed interest in both the remote mountains and the suburbs, who had stated their

frustrations brought about by inaccessibility of famous yet distant mountains, and who claimed that the places which suited their mind were not necessarily far away. With such information in mind, it is not difficult to infer that suburban excursion is a compromise for the desire of visiting remote, famous mountains.

Sometimes the relationship between different events is apparent, but the relationship is more complicated than generally imagined, thus calling upon further analysis and interpretation. A typical situation is that there could be more than one layer of relationships between two given events. Under this circumstance, if merely the superficial layer is disclosed, then the interpretation will be insufficient. In existing studies involved in landscape appreciation in early medieval China, researchers were usually concerned with the aristocrats' migration from north to south and reached an agreement that the diverse landscape in the South apparently stimulated the aesthetic sense of the settled aristocratic literati. The relocation of the aristocratic class to the South was implicitly regarded as an important reason for the birth of landscape poems as well as landscape appreciation (J. Yang, 2000), which was common among researchers who support the geographic determinant.

While admitting that the factor of environment played a certain part in the evolution of landscape appreciation, the researcher noticed that there were still other layers of relationship between the migration and literati's landscape appreciation. One of the layers was that the migration led to the convergence of influential literati

and artists in a certain place, which was significant for the formation of a culture of landscape appreciation. As discussed in Chapter 2, culture can be understood as the lifestyle of a particular group of people. The convergence of many outstanding literati, artists and philosophers in the given area served as an important precondition for the formation of the culture of landscape appreciation (see Chapter 5). The significance of the convergence of those social arbiters in the locale of Kuaiji can be understood from an opposite angle. Before the immigration into the South those social arbiters were scattered in the vast land of the North, which means their individual behaviors of landscape appreciation could hardly forge a collective consciousness of landscape.

The other layer of the relationship between the migration and landscape appreciation lay in that the immigration and then settling brought about frequent travels between Kuaiji and the capital, which offered more opportunities to appreciate scenery, thus enhancing the consciousness of landscape. The literati and artists settled down in Kuaiji Commandery, approximately five hundred miles away from the capital, which made traveling from the commandery to the capital an important part in the life of the settled aristocrats. Travel from the commandery to the capital was significant for the maturity of the culture of landscape appreciation (see Chapter 6).

The second issue about using specific historical method for the present study is the

employment of induction and deduction. The two methods are so commonly used in historical studies that they are even forgotten to be mentioned as methods. The uses of induction and deduction can be glimpsed through the following two examples.

The first example is about the employment of induction, which is in the chapter of suburban excursions. There the method of induction was used to show the linkage between the excursions and landscape appreciation. To examining the linkage, many cases were drawn from source materials of different eras, places, and settings.

Through the inductive analysis of these cases of suburban excursions, the researcher found that it was more the suburban setting than the landscape constructions in the suburbs that attracted the literati who dwelled in cities. Nonexistence of landscape constructions in the suburbs did not hold back literati's excursions to the outskirts of cities. The major purpose of suburban excursions was indicated by an induction of similar cases, which showed that literati went to the suburbs not for drinking wine, hunting or fishing, but for appreciating suburban scenes. The induction suggested that the suburban setting was significant for the evolution of landscape appreciation.

The other example is about the use of deduction, which is in the chapter of going to the mountains. There the method of deduction was used to show the relationship between herb gathering and landscape appreciation. The existing reasonable theoretical inference about the relationship between the two phenomena is a starting point for the examination of the limited number of cases which appear to be not

sufficient for an induction but appropriate for a deduction. Therefore, the researcher followed a route from the general situation to the specific cases.

The third issue of specific use of historical method for the present study is the employment of case studies, which is especially helpful when the general situation of a certain event or phenomenon remains unknown for the lack of sources. The use of case studies can be found in the section (in Chapter 6) that aimed at exploring the relationship between landscape appreciation and travels caused by taking offices. Three typical cases of official travels were employed to suggest the close relationship between office-taking travel and landscape appreciation. There might be concern whether the limited cases could contribute to understanding of the general situation, which is explained through the following two aspects. On the one hand, the cases of the three literati-officials were representative of the general situation, and as various sources showed there must have been many similar cases that are not extant in texts today. On the other hand, later literati's experiences offered evidence to support the linkage between official travels and landscape appreciation.

Above the researcher explained three specific historical methods used in the present study, but it should be noted that several methods could be combined in the studies. Actually, the integration of methods was a common situation in the present study.

Combination of Content Analysis and Historical Approach

Overall, the method for the present research is a combination of content analysis and historical study. The employment of such a mix in the present study stems from the characteristic of the present study. As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, the route followed in the study is to explore the major causes of landscape appreciation through examination of the evolution of the phenomenon. The narrative of the evolution of landscape appreciation covers several issues like who, what, why, when, and how. The answers of these questions rely much on literary works since the traditional historical records are seldom concerned with social life. Many literary works left by early medieval literati were collected in two series of poems and essays respectively (see the following section), which offers the possibility of sifting out the desired literary works on the topic of landscape tours and conducting a content analysis. However, it would be naive to think the major research question can be answered via a content analysis of those literary works, since the ancient texts did not offer sufficient information for the present study. The forms of these texts are mainly poems and essays, all written in ancient Chinese literary language. The wording of these works is very concise, and the information related to travel is not sufficient, both of which added the difficulty of this study. The solution to the scarcity of necessary information is to use the historical method, employing a wide range of sources that could complement necessary information for further analysis. Furthermore, the sources other than literary works, historical records in particular,

offer the context for content analysis. Therefore, the combination of content analysis and historical method in the present study is necessary as well as effective.

The employment of the mix of content analysis and historical methods in the present study has some advantages in contrast with existing studies related to landscape appreciation. While admitting that the discipline of literary studies has contributed, directly or indirectly, much to the investigation of the emergence of landscape appreciation, the researcher finds that studies from the discipline were inclined to focus on certain genres of literary works, which means these studies used limited sources related to landscape appreciation. For instance, some studies examined landscape poems, and other studies landscape essays. This situation causes the lack of a full picture of the evolution of landscape appreciation in early medieval China. The primary concern of these studies from the literary discipline was more the evolution of certain literary genres, e.g. landscape poem and landscape essay, than the evolution of landscape appreciation. This situation accounts for why the emergence of landscape appreciation is not fully explored until the present. Furthermore, in literary studies the causes of landscape appreciation were seldom regarded as an independent topic for studies, but mentioned in convenience in the investigation of certain literary genres. It should be noted that landscape appreciation and landscape literature are different issues, and thus their births, while sharing some similarities, are different stories. It is not difficult to understand that only when landscape appreciation is studied for its own right rather than as a subordinate of

studies of landscape literature can the intellectual society have an in-depth understanding of the why – why landscape appreciation flourished in early medieval China. Based on the considerations above, the present study chose the emergence and flourish of landscape appreciation as its focus, using a wide range of sources to explore the causes of the phenomenon, including landscape literature, discourses, historical records, and local gazetteers. To a certain extent, the use of diverse sources added the credibility of the present study.

MAIN SOURCES

The primary sources used in the present study are mainly literary works and discourses related to landscape appreciation in the Wei-jin period, as well as historical records of the Jin and Song dynasties. Literary works play an important part in historical studies of tourism, which has already been demonstrated by existing theses on tourism history. Most of the early medieval literary works can be found in the following two series respectively of essays and of poetries:

SGLCW 全上古三代秦漢三國六朝文 [Complete Prose from High Antiquity, the Three Periods, Qin, Han, Three Kingdoms, and Six Dynasties], Compiled and edited by Yan Kejun. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1958).

WJNBCS 先秦漢魏晉南北朝詩 [The most complete collection of pre-Tang poetry], compiled by Lu Quanli. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1983).

Besides the two literature collections, Wei-jin literati's discourses collected in "Shih-

shuo Hsin-yü: A New Account of Tales of the World” are also important for the present study. These discourses reflected what social life in the third and the fourth centuries was like, being an important supplement to official history that tended to neglect social life. These discourses, together with literati’s biographies in the official histories, offer a context for understanding the texts of landscape appreciation.

Furthermore, the primary sources for this study still include anthologies, local gazetteers (*fangzhi* 方志), Taoist and Confucian classics, and historical encyclopedia (*leishu* 類書). The anthologies, e.g. “The Collection of the Orchid Pavilion Poems”, are helpful for examination of group behavior involved in landscape appreciation, and individual anthology, e.g. the anthology of Xie Lingyun, is useful for in-depth study of certain literati activity related to landscape appreciation. The local gazetteers, e.g. “*Yidu ji*” and “*Jingzhou ji*”, keep travel records by certain literati, turning out to be useful in studying the travel of literati-officials who took offices in local places. The Taoist and Confucian classics are important for tracing the birth of landscape awareness. As for historical encyclopedia, it played a significant part when the present author needs to know the overall situation of landscape appreciation at a given landscape site.

By employing a variety of sources related to the topic of landscape appreciation, this study makes a thorough examination of the studied phenomenon and then offers an reasonable explanation of the causes of the flourish of the travel culture of

landscape appreciation.

SUMMARY

This study uses a mix of content analysis and historical method. As mentioned previously, the two methods are appropriate for a study when its subjects are no longer alive and the basis for research is the evidence left by the past. The content analysis used in the present study is qualitative and problem driven rather than quantitative and text driven, which accounts for some differences in using the content analysis, in contrast with the conventional procedures. The contexts for content analysis of source materials were drawn from historical records and other sources, which helped to mine the latent meaning of texts. The historical method was described at both theoretical and operational levels. The study used certain historical methods, including historical interpretation and historical narrative, induction and deduction, and case studies. The narrative was useful in depicting a holistic picture of the evolution of the travel culture of landscape appreciation, and the interpretation of historical events helped to disclose their links to landscape appreciation. The methods of induction, deduction, and case studies facilitated the narration of the story.

The main sources for in the present study are the following three types: poems and essays related to landscape appreciation, discourses by the Wei-jin literati, and official histories of Jin and Song Dynasties. The employment of diverse sources

helped to tell a full story of the evolution of the travel culture of landscape appreciation.

CHAPTER IV: GOING TO THE MOUNTAINS

In the first chapter, several issues related to the subject of landscape appreciation were discussed, including the emergence of an aristocratic class and their social life, the decline of Confucianism, the development of social economy and cities. In varying degrees these external factors contributed to the emergence of landscape appreciation. It should be noted that these external factors should not exclude concerns with internal factors which were directly involved in the evolution of landscape appreciation. These internal factors will be discussed in the following chapters that outline the evolution process. As noted in Chapter 2, landscape appreciation in a Chinese context is mainly the appreciation of mountains as well as various objects associated with mountains. Therefore, the story of landscape appreciation naturally begins with inquiries such as why early medieval literati went to the mountains and what they did there.

THE TAOIST PERSPECTIVE ON MOUNTAINS

Mountains have a close relationship with the quest for meaning of life, as showed by the Former Han literati who were inclined to regard mountains as metaphors of their preoccupation, i.e. morality and politics (Knechtges, 2002).¹ The relationship is especially true in the case of Taoist thought. In a sense the narrative of Taoist perspectives on mountains is almost telling a story of the Taoists' quest for meaning

¹ See the chapter "Poetic travelogue in the Han *fu*".

of life.

The story begins with a conversation between Duke Jing of Qi, “*qijinggong* 齊景公” (547-490 BC) and his two courtiers:

Duke Jing of Qi went on an excursion to Ox Mountain. He looked Northward down on the walls of his capital, and said with tears streaming: ‘How beautiful, this city of mine, teeming and thriving! Why must the drops fall one by one, why must I some day leave this city and die? If from of old there had been no death, should I ever leave it for another?’
Shi Kong and Liangqiu Ju both followed his example and wept, saying: ‘Your servants owe it to your bounty that we are lucky enough to have tough meat and coarse rice to eat, jaded hacks and plain carriages to ride. Yet we do not wish to die, and how much less our master!’²

The source above was firstly presented in the Biography of Master Yan, “*Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋”, and later collected in the Taoist classic “*Liezi* 列子”, and thus it is widely known. In the quotation above was one of the earliest sources about sentiments concerning short life span. The Duke expressed his desire of longevity through his melancholic statement that people could not be immortal, and the desire was echoed and justified by his two courtiers. Similar sentiments could be found in different periods. For instance, seven centuries later Yang Hu 羊祜 (221-278) sighed on his resort, Mount Xian:

This mountain exists since the universe exists, and from times immemorial innumerable wise, virtuous and superior gentlemen have, like us, climbed up here to gaze into the far distance. How sad that they have all disappeared without a trace, like so much mist or fog! If, one hundred years from now, I

² LZ, p.132 of Graham’s translation, “The book of Lieh-tzu: A Classic of Tao”.

still retain consciousness, my souls will still want to climb up here.³

Such sentiments concerning short life span was echoed and then explained by Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303-361), who stated that people might take pleasure from different aspects in their lives, unaware of the fast approaching of old age, but when they sensed the time-passing, they became gloomy:

When they tire of something, they let their feelings change along with events as they experience a deep melancholy. What they had take pleasure in has now passed away in an instant, so how can their hearts not give rise to longing? Furthermore, longevity depends on Nature's transformation: everything must come to an end. An ancient said, "Life and death are the greatest of matters, indeed!" Isn't this reason enough to be sad?⁴

For those in unbearable trouble, death was sometimes regarded as a solution or a consolation, but for those who enjoyed their life, such as the above-mentioned Duke and his courtiers, the general Yang Hu, and the aristocratic literati and artist Wang Xizhi, death was doubtless undesirable, by contrast with their happy lives. Accordingly, it is natural to express the dissatisfaction in life by questioning why people could not be immortal. Unlike Wang Xizhi, who believed that everything must come to an end, some literati realized that the never-changing mountains were a contrast to the short life of human beings. Inspired by the unchangeable nature of mountains, they formed the concept of "immortal" as described in the ancient classic "*Shanhai jing* 山海經" which presents stories about undying mountains, undying trees, and elixir of life. With these stories in mind, they began to deliberate on the

³ Texts in JS, 34: 1020. Translations by Holzman, "Landscape appreciation", pp. 122-123.

⁴ Translations in Strassberg "Inscribed landscape", p.66.

question whether human being can be immortal like mountains, or whether an individual can live without experiencing death. Some people in antiquity appeared to have held a positive attitude toward the question, and the images of immortal divinities were then put in this ancient classic. At this stage, the divinities were described as partially similar to human being in terms of appearance. Later in oral history the appearance of immortals were depicted as no different from that of human being, which suggested a firm belief that immortal people exist.

The belief in immortals led to an urgent concern, where the immortals lived. The dwelling of immortals was naturally linked to mountains for the following two reasons: firstly, the ancient Chinese had noticed the immortality of mountains; secondly, they, in their ideas of topography, regarded the high as living and the low as dead⁵. The image of immortals and their dwelling places appeared to have been first described in the Taoist classic, *Zhuangzi*:

There is a holy man living on the faraway Mount Guye. With his skin as white as ice and snow, he is as amiable as a virgin. He does not eat the grains, but sucks the wind, drinks the dew, rides on the cloud, harnesses the flying dragon and roams beyond the four seas.⁶

Once the image of immortals was shaped, it became a continuous inspiration for later literati' imagined travels as recorded in their "wandering immortal" poems. Later literati attained a clear concept about the dwellings of immortals, which led to more

⁵ See HNZ, 4.

⁶ ZZ, Xiaoyaoyou. Translations in p. 7 of Wang Rongpei's translation, *Zhuangzi* (Changsha: Hunan People's Publishing House & Foreign Language Press, 1999).

and more narratives on immortals. The narrators appeared to have reached a high degree of agreement about where the immortals lived, and generally believed they lived on mountains.

The idea of regarding mountains as dwellings of immortals was closely related to the aspiration for eternal life. The idea, together with the worship to Kunlun Mountain where the Yellow River starts, brought about perceiving Kunlun Mountain as Jade Emperor's capital on the earth, as well as dwellings of a large number of divinities. In "Huainanzi", Kunlun Mountain was further regarded as a ladder to the heaven and thus to ascend the mountain meant a possibility of becoming immortal. For the above reasons, Kunlun Mountain became the dwelling of King Mother of the West, "*Xiwangmu* 西王母", and frequently received patronage of Master Red Pine, "*Chisongzi* 赤松子"⁷, one of the two immortals referred to with the highest frequency in literatures from Han period down to the Six Dynasties period (F. Li, 1996, p. 29). The other most frequently mentioned immortal, Wangzi Qiao 王子喬 (Prince Qiao) also lived on mountains. According to Liu Xiang's 劉向 (c.79-c.6 BC) "Biographies of Immortals" (*liexian zhuan* 列仙傳), Prince Qiao, a son of King Ling of Zhou (c. 571-545 BC), entered the central, revered mountain, "*Songgao shan* 嵩高山", following a Taoist divinity, Floating Hill (*fuqiugong* 浮丘公). Having lived on the mountains for thirty years, he became an immortal.

⁷ See LXZ.

The ancient Chinese appeared to have little doubt about immortals' living on mountains. In the first century AD, two dictionaries defined the term, *xian* 仙, as “To live to an old age without dying, and move into mountains”⁸. The meaning was strengthened by the coinage, 仙, as an alternative of *xian*. The newly created Chinese character was a compound of two characters, 人 (people) and 山 (mountain), aiming at explaining that immortal (*xian*) means people on mountains.

Having attained ideas of dwellings of the immortals, the ancient Chinese began their long process of quest for immortality. According to Sima Qian, immortality-seeking dates back to the fourth century BC.⁹ With advocacy of kings and emperors the antiquity saw the tide of immortality-seeking (Yonghao Wang & Yu, 2005, pp. 96-110). Typical among those immortality seekers were the First Emperor (*qinshihuang* 秦始皇) and Emperor Wu of Han (*hanwudi* 漢武帝), both sparing no efforts in attempts of turning their dreams of eternal life into reality. Besides sending off Taoist adepts to hunt for elixirs, the two emperors traveled frequently in the vast land of their empires, made sacrifices to famous mountains, and ascended mountains beside the sea, dreaming about attaining immortality.

Unfortunately, all of their efforts were in vain. In later eras, while some people followed previous examples and continued immortality-seeking on mountains or islands in the sea, others began to explore alternative ways to become immortals.

⁸ See *Shiming* 釋名 and *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字.

⁹ *Shiji*, 史記 • 封禪書, cited in Holzman, 1998 I: 104.

These explorers thought that the goal of immortality should have been achieved through self-cultivation. This issue was systematically explained in Ge Hong's 葛洪 (283-363) "the Inner Chapters of Baopuzi". He pointed out that the crucial point of becoming immortals is:

When cultivating the best of divine process in the search for Fullness of Life, the secret lies in willpower, not in riches or high position. If one is not of the right type, high position and great wealth are serious incumbrances.¹⁰

Based on the above explanation, he analyzed the reasons for the failure of the two imperial immortality-seekers, pointing out that they were not the appropriate type of person to study and practice the divine process, considering that what they did were at the opposite to the divine process which requires:

...a true desire to attain calm and repose, to free oneself of covetousness, to see and hear internally, and to be entranced and freed of emotion...[and] calm, freedom of action, and obliviousness of one's physical frame.¹¹

In Ge Hong's opinion, abiding by the rules in the two quotations above was helpful for an effective practicing of the divine process. These rules suggested that mountains were ideal sites for self-cultivation since the secluded mountains help the immortality-seekers to firm their wills and become unaffected by the mundane world. Accordingly, he who understood these issues could "find happiness through disengagement and reclusion, and cultivate his affairs in the mountains and forests"¹².

¹⁰ BPZ, p.42.

¹¹ BPZ, pp. 42-43.

¹² BPZ, p.30.

Some Taoist disciples doubted the necessity of entering mountain forests to achieve the ultimate goal, i.e. becoming immortal. What brought about the doubt was that according to Taoist classics former persons succeeded in becoming immortals by cultivating themselves in the mundane world rather than in mountain forests. Ge Hong's answer to the doubt was that the circumstance for self-cultivation had been negatively changed, so the seekers needed to go to the mountains. He further stated that in the past the social environment was appropriate for practicing the divine process since:

Antiquity was pure and unsophisticated; manipulations and counterfeiting had not yet sprouted. Those who in those days believe in God studied God assiduously, while the nonbelievers maintained silence. Slander of God never passed their lips; there were no sadistic hearts in the breasts of those days.¹³

However, all changed when it came to the early medieval China. Nonbelievers held a hostile attitude toward the immortality-seekers, and mocked as well as slandered their search, which made seekers reluctant to stay in the mundane world so that:

Gentleman of the highest type were ashamed to dwell within such a society...and obliged to enter mountains and forests because they must get far away from the deteriorated thus inappropriate social environment and enjoy the purity of these secluded places.¹⁴

As discussed above, the early medieval immortality-seekers had no choices but to

¹³ BPZ, pp.169-170.

¹⁴ Ibid, p.170-171, with modification of translations.

resort to mountains and forests to practice the divine process. It should be noted that not all mountains were regarded as equally appropriate for self-cultivation. It was repeatedly emphasized that only famous mountains were ideal sites. Ge Hong offered three reasons to justify the choice of famous mountains for self-cultivation. The first could be found in the above quotation, i.e. to avoid slanders from nonbelievers, who might have negative effect on the divine process, and cause failure. The second is that the little, ordinary mountains should not be chosen because such places “do not have their own gods to govern them ... [and were full of] tree and stone spirits, creatures a thousand years old, and vampires”¹⁵, and these evils could bring misfortune and ruin the great divine elixir. By contrast, the famous mountains had their own gods who were most likely to assist the preparation of the elixir and bring luck. Furthermore, on the famous mountains, earth immortals might be encountered and magic fungi and herbs grew there, both of which were helpful for the making of divine elixirs. Finally, these places served as a refuge from war and catastrophes. These advantages constituted the third, or the most important reason for regarding famous mountains as the optimal places for the divine process. Therefore, when the immortality-seekers planned to make the divine elixir, they “made sure to go up a famous mountain and not linger in the ordinary hills”¹⁶.

The concept of “famous mountains” needs some explanations herein; otherwise it would be confusing about the criteria of famous mountains. It is necessary to know

¹⁵ Ibid, p.93.

¹⁶ Ibid.

to which degree a mountain was prestigious enough to receive patronages of the mortality-seekers. The Taoist classics prior to Ge Hong's time had already dealt with this issue, and what he needed to do in his own book was to cite the list that included twenty-eight famous mountains:

Mounts Hua, T'ai, Huo, Heng, Sung, Shao-shih, Ch'ang, T'ai-po, Chung-nan, Nü-chi, Ti-fei, Wang-wu, Pao-tu, An-ch'iu, Ch'ien, Ch'ing-ch'eng, O-mei, Jui, Yün-t'ai, Lo-fu, Yang-chia, Huang-chin, Pieh-tsu, the large and smaller T'ien T'ai, Ssu-wang, Kai-chu, and Kua-ts'ung.¹⁷

These famous mountains were scattered in the vast land of imperial China, but for the southern Chinese, the famous mountains in North China were inaccessible since approaching them required crossing a hostile border because of disunity in most time of the Six Dynasties period. Fortunately, the situation did not hold back the southern Taoists' practice of the divine process since in the above list there were enough famous mountains located in the south of the Yangtze River, such as Mount Huo in Jin'an Commandery, Ch'ang and T'ai-po in Tung-yang, and at the end of the list, the five mountains in Kuei-chi. Moreover, Ge Hong made a supplement to the existing list and suggested that if for whatever reasons an immortality-seeker had no access to the famous mountains listed above, he could regard the larger islands along the coast as alternatives, e.g. Tung-weng, Tan, or Chu-yü in Kuei-chi; Hsin-chü, T'ai-kuang, and Yü in Hsü.¹⁸

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 94.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Since Ge Hong's time, to meet the increasing need of ideal sites for self-cultivation more and more mountains had been added to the list. Till the early seventh century, the number of optimal sites or "Caverns of heaven and place of blessing" (*dongtian fudi* 洞天福地) had increased to one hundred and eighteen (see Table 4). The four provinces top in the left column account for sixty-three percent of the total, which shows that most of the optimal sites centralized in regions close to the metropolis Jiankang, the culture centre of early medieval China since the Eastern Jin. The early seventh century distribution of optimal sites, mainly famous mountains, reflects the effect of Taoist activities in the Six Dynasties period.

Table 4: The distribution of Taoists' optimal sites for self-cultivation

Present Location	Number
Zhejiang	29
Hunan	18
Jiangxi	17
Jiangsu	10
Sichuan	6
Fujian	6
Shanxi 陝西	6
Henan	5
Guangxi	4
Guangdong	3
Anhui	3
Shandong	1
Hebei	1
Hubei	1
Others	8
	Total: 118

Data Source: (W. Zhou, 1996, pp. 47-50)

Having regarded famous mountains as abodes of immortals as well as optimal

sites for the divine process, many Taoists went to the famous mountains to achieve their goals of life. Through early Taoists' actions, famous mountains received extensive attention from people living in the mundane world. The laymen of Taoist or common literati then imitated Taoists' actions by going to famous mountains for herb gathering and immortality-seeking. The behavior had a significant impact on the evolution of landscape appreciation, which is the focus of the following section.

HERB GATHERING AND LANDSCAPE APPRECIATION

Herb gathering was as an important activity not only for early Taoists but for their successors in the Six Dynasties period as well. Most of the aristocratic families believed in Celestial Master Taoism, “*tianshidao* 天師道”, and thus mastered herbalism which was a cornerstone of Taoism (Y. Chen, 1992, p. 181). The interest in herbs drove some aristocratic literati to mountains, which had a linkage to the appreciation of mountains sceneries. The relationship between literati's mountain tours of herb gathering and landscape appreciation constitutes the major concern of this section of the present thesis.

The Period of Wei

The first record of a herb collection tour that had a pleasure element points to Ji Kang 嵇康 (224-263), a leading figure of the literati group in the mid third century,

“Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove”. His biography in the official history says:

Kang occasionally gathered herbs and wandered in mountains. He happened to have understood certain issues of metaphysics, and thus forgot to return home. Woodcutters who met him regarded him as a divinity.¹⁹

This quotation says that Ji Kang went to the mountains in quest for Taoist truth and attained pleasure. In the above quotation Ji Kang’s pleasure appears to be derived from understanding of Taoist truth, by contrast with the below quotation that demonstrates that his pleasure came from experiences of the physical environment of mountains. In a letter to his friend Shan Tao, Ji Kang wrote that:

I have studied in the esoteric lore of the Taoist masters, where a man’s life can be indefinitely prolonged through eating herbs, and I firmly believe this to be so. To wander among the hills and streams, observing fish and birds, is what gives my heart great pleasure.²⁰

As an outstanding philosopher or literati in his time, Ji Kang did not believe in the existence of immortals, but he held the belief that human life could be extended by taking herbs or other ways of self-cultivation. The herbs taken to extend life should be gathered by the person himself who expected a long life span, and thus it was necessary to go to the mountains. Unlike the commoners who gathered herb to make a living, literati, once in the mountains, would take the opportunity to look around rather than merely concentrate on gathering herbs. The observing of swimming fish and flying birds could be additional pleasures for literati who entered the mountain

¹⁹ JS, 49: 1370.

²⁰ Texts in JS, 49: 1371. A full translation of the letter in *Classic Chinese Literature*, pp.463-467.

forests.

Besides the observation of fish and birds, the literati who went to the mountains might appreciate the sceneries around him when gathering herbs. Wang (1986, p. 88) has analyzed the relationship between the two activities, gathering herbs and viewing landscape, and suggested that there was a natural linkage between them:

The initial purposes of going to the mountains were seeking immortality or gathering then taking herb, in the hope of breaking the temporal and spatial thresholds and enjoying the freedom like a divinity. However, whether for immortality-seeking or for herb gathering, the literati needed to gaze to the east or the west, and look forward and backward. In doing so, they caught sight of the famous mountains, which was described as the abodes of immortals in legends. ... The mountain sceneries and the fairyland, then, naturally became the objects appreciated by poets.

The above quotation offers a reasonable explanation of the relationship between the two types of activities, i.e. herb gathering and landscape appreciation.

The literati's herb-gathering tour was different from that of commoners, which might be explained by their different identities. The commoners needed to make a living by gathering herbs, and thus their major concern was how to collect more desirable herbs. However the literati had no such an urge since they regard herb gathering as a way of satisfying their spiritual needs rather than the material ones. Therefore, going to the famous mountains to gather herbs was more a leisure activity than a labor for them. In the mountains, their exploration would not be bound to

gathering herbs, and they would pay attention to the diverse natural objects. In this sense, literati's exploration of the mountains for herb gathering objectively facilitated the appreciation of sceneries, which was explained by Wang (1986, pp. 92-93) as below:

It is time-consuming to go to the mountains for immortality seeking and herb gathering. Once in the famous mountains and deep forests, the literati were secluded from the occurrences in human life and far from the mundane world... Forsaking the worldly affairs, the literati might have been indifferent to fame or gain in the mundane world and immersed in the tranquil environment. Such relatively long periods of contact with nature would undoubtedly enhance the aesthetic appreciation of mountains and streams.

With the excuse of herb gathering, Ji Kang occasionally wandered between mountains and streams. He mentioned his observation of birds and fishes, but made no reference to the settings in which he wandered. Some traces of his landscape experiences could be found in his literary piece, "A rhapsody on the lute" however. The main purpose of the poetic essay was to offer a justification of the origin of the wood used to make lutes, or zither, and thus the poet spared no effort to praise the wood:

The trees of that species from which lutes are built grow on the lofty ridges of steep mountains. Rich soil ensures them great age; their tapering stems rise high into the sky. They are saturated with the pure harmony of Heaven and Earth; they inhale the beneficent splendor of sun and moon. Their solitary luxuriant growth overtops the surrounding vegetation; their verdure leaps high to azure vault of heaven. At twilight they borrow the red glow of the evening sky; in the morning the sun dries the dew on their stems. For a thousand years they wait for him who shall recognize their value; quietly

they repose, forever robust.²¹

With similar considerations, he further described the environment as a fairyland, within which the trees grow:

Now observing more closely what is found growing in this region, the precious products of this mysterious domain, one sees on the slopes of these mountains rare and strangely shaped jadestone, and deep red jasper, massed about in luxuriant abundance. Vernal orchid cover their eastern sides, their western slopes produce the yellow crab-apple tree. On their southern sides the immortal Juanzi dwells, in front an ambrosia fountain bubbles up. Their summits are covered with dark clouds, phoenixes with fluttering wings gather on their peaks. Pure dew moistens their flanks; a gentle breeze blows over them. They are quiet in majestic passiveness; they are subtle in serene repose. Being surrounded by such scenery, these trees naturally are spiritual and beautiful, and suitable for inspiring the love of music.²²

But it should be noted that in the poetic essay there were also landscape descriptions with less intimations of immortality:

The scenery there is rugged and irregular, with many a hidden depth. There are rock-covered heights and lonely mountains peaks, dark rocks and craggy ascents, steep cliffs and precipitous ridges. Red rocks rise steeply upward, and there are green walls ten thousand fathoms high. Mountain crest rises above mountain crest, they seem to be pressed down by the clouds. Lofty and verdurous summits far off show their massive shapes; here and there a solitary peak rising in impressive splendor draws they eye.²³

The environment is worthy not only for the woods used to make lutes but for the sojourns of persons with noble minds as well, as described in the quotation below:

²¹ A full translation of the essay in CCL, pp. 458-462.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

Here it is that the wise men fleeing the world, worthy companions of a Yongqi or Qili, together ascend high mountains arches and cross deep-cut vales. Clinging to branches of fairy trees they climb steep ridges, in order that they may roam under these trees. Wandering about they remain gazing into the distance for ever; their horizon is as wide as that of a bird in its flight. Looking upward they see the Kunlun ranges, looking down they discern the marshes that border the ocean. They point to the Cangwu mountains afar off, they approach the imposing calm of meandering rivers. Then they realize the constraining shackles of worldly life, and longingly they look up to the splendor that lingers over Mount Ji. Enamoured with the generous broadness of these heights, their hearts are filled with noble emotions, and they forget to return.²⁴

The landscape descriptions in the poetic essay, to a certain extent, show a transition from the imagined fairyland to the real settings. The transition applies to the evolution of “wandering immortal” poem (*youxian shi* 遊仙詩), a poetry genre that has a close relationship with landscape writing. The transition was almost finished at the time of Guo Pu 郭璞 (276-324), who, as a representative of his contemporary poets, described regional famous mountains instead of imagined divine mountains, with his subject being recluses rather than immortals (G. Wang, 1986, pp. 90-97). By contrast with Guo Pu’s achievements in terms of depicting scenery in “wandering immortal” poems, Ji Kang’s landscape description forecasted the change of the focus of the given poetry genre approximately.

Several decades before Ji Kang’s time, the literati of the Jian’an era (196-220)

²⁴ Ibid.

accumulated some experiences in depicting suburban sceneries (see Chapter 5), but when attempting to describe remote scenes, they resorted to imaginations since they lacked experiences of wandering in mountains like Ji Kang. Ji Kang's descriptions of scenery showed a subtle difference from his precursors at the turn of the third century, which could be glimpsed through a comparison with the writings of a leading poet in the Jian'an era. Cao Zhi 曹植 (192-232) described trees and fairyland in his "wandering immortal" poems. Cao's depiction of the Fu-sang tree in the following quotation was thoroughly derived from tales:

Where the Fu-sang trees grows,
Is in the Morning-bright Torrent.
The tree's trunk rises to the ends of the earth.
When the sun rises, it climbs the eastern trunk,
And as night falls, the sun sinks into the western branches.²⁵

He praised another divine tree and described the setting around it as a fairyland based on his imaginations:

The osmanthus tree,
The osmanthus tree,
How beautiful it has grown!
Unfolding crimson blooms and blue green leaves
It wafts its fragrance to the ends of the earth.
In its branches nest the phoenix,
And its foot coils the dragon.
At the osmanthus tree
The Perfect Men who have attained the Way
All come to discourse on the immortals...²⁶

²⁵ "Ascending to Heaven" 升天行, translations in Holzman, Ts'ao Chih and the Immortals, in "Immortals, Festivals and Poetry in Medieval China", p.38.

²⁶ The osmanthus tree 桂之樹行. Ibid, p.44.

In a similar manner, Cao Zhi described the jade tree that can shine and the peak, like the trees in above quotations, that reaches the heaven:

The green creeper hugs the tree of jade;
 They shine together, glittering brightly...
 How verdant is the summit of the Western Peak
 Whose dark blue stone caves reach to the heavens!²⁷

In the fairyland depicted by Cao Zhi, even the creeper common in the natural world could glitter, presenting an unusual air. In Cao Zhi's poems, the divine trees or the peaks either rose to the heaven or extended to the end of the earth; the Fu-sang tree was abode of the sun; divine creatures, e.g. phoenix and dragon, and immortals were around the osmanthus tree; the green creeper and jade tree were shining. Such descriptions are different from that of Ji Kang. In Ji Kang's essay, some natural objects were presented in a natural manner. In the poetic essay mentioned previously, on the mountain he described there were spring orchids on the eastern side and yellow crab-apple trees on the western slopes, as well as pure dew and gentle breeze. His description of the overall appearance of mountains is also worthy of attention since the writing appears to be based on his physical experience of mountain sceneries. In the lines contributing to the description of the outline of mountains, there are neither imagined or exaggerated details, nor divine objects.

²⁷ Hard thinking 苦息行. Ibid, p. 36.

The lack of authentic depictions or concrete experiences of mountain was not only the case for Cao Zhi; to a large extent the situation applied to his contemporaries. They had difficulty in attaining concrete experiences of hills by merely climbing terraces in the suburban landscape gardens and gazing at the hills around. Therefore the gaze at the Western Hill on the Bronze Sparrow Terrace 銅雀臺 brought Cao Pi 曹丕 (187-226) nothing more than a vague impression, “The mountain valleys twist in a crisscross manor, and the grasses and trees are linked together.”²⁸ When traveling, the Jian’an literati, like the Han literati, might climb a mountain en route and look around, but such hustled glances could not offer them any in-depth experience of mountains. The limited view on top of a hill sometimes might be overshadowed by a deep feeling of homesickness, and thus the traveling literati could discern only some large-scale objects on the land (Y.-C. Chen, 2003, p. 55). To a large extent, the Jian’an literati lack the sort of physical experience of mountains as was seen in cases of the mid third century literati who wandered in mountain forests and sometimes forgot to return. The difference is in part explained by the activity of gathering herbs in mountain forests. With the excuse of herb gathering, literati in the mid third century and onwards could leisurely wander in mountains, thus enjoying the mountain environment.

The Two Jin Dynasties

²⁸ Dengtai fu 登臺賦, QSGW, 4: 1074a.

The above section has shown that at least since the mid third century, herb gathering had been a reason for going to the mountain forests, which brought experience of mountain sceneries. Ji Kang's case suggested an implicit linkage between herb gathering and landscape appreciation, and the relationship between the two activities was made explicit by the fourth century literati. This section, therefore, aims at examining how the linkage was made apparent.

As can be read in Ge Hong's 葛洪 (283-363) works mentioned in the previous section, the early Taoists regarded famous mountains as optimal sites for the divine process or self-cultivation, and Taoists who engaged in self-cultivation would stay on famous mountains rather than linger on common hills or mountains. Influenced by these Taoists, literati who engaged in herb gathering would have a similar choice, i.e. regarding famous mountains as their desirable destinations. Ge Hong's elder contemporary, Guo Pu 郭璞 (276-324) appeared to be the first poet who mentions the two activities together, herb gathering and wandering in famous mountains:

I roam among famous mountains gathering herbs,
 To arrest the decay of my old age.
 With breathing control and jade liquid,
 A wonderful spirit suffuses my heart.²⁹

The above lines suggest the linkage between herb gathering and visitation of famous mountains. Furthermore, these lines point out explicitly that the two activities related

²⁹ The eighth piece of Guo Pu's nineteen "wandering immortal" poems. Translations in "Naturalness and Authenticity: The Poetry of Tao Qian" (Kwong, 1989), p.61.

to extending life or health considerations. These lines were presented in a collection of Guo's "wandering immortal" Poems, which added authentic landscape description to the poetry genre that the Jian'an poets used exclusively to express their dissatisfaction with the reality or their desire for wandering in remote, famous mountains. When discussing Guo's poems Holzman (1996, p. 132) points out, "They contain realistic description of actual landscape, of places we know from his biography he had actually visited." Guo's landscape lines, "There is not a tranquil tree in the forest, and the rivers never cease to flow" always echoed in the minds of his contemporaries who had regarded landscape viewing as a necessary part of life (Holzman, 1996, pp. 133-135).

Wandering in the mountains brought fresh experiences of mountain sceneries to Guo Pu, which could be glimpsed through the live description of scenery in the opening lines of a poem:

Kingfishers frolic among the orchid blossoms,
 Each form and hue lending freshness to the others.
 Green creepers twine over the tall grove,
 Their leaf darkness shadowing the whole hill.³⁰

The diversified plants described in the above lines were common on the mountains.

With their decorations the hill was beautiful in the poet's eyes. The beautiful environment was ideal for a reclusive life³¹ as well as for a short period of seclusion

³⁰ Translations in "The Columbia Book of Chinese Poetry" (Watson, 1984), p. 170.

³¹ The literati of Jin period were inclined to regard mountain forest as ideal sites for a reclusive life, and thus it is not uncommon in the poems they admired the beauty of mountain sceneries as well as the hermit life. Guo Pu is

from the mundane world, e.g. herb gathering in mountains, and thus Guo Pu went on with:

And in the midst, a man of quiet retirement
Softly whistles, strokes the lute strings,
Frees his thought to soar beyond the blue,
Munches flower stamens, dips from a waterfall.
When Red Pine appears, roaming on high,
This man rides a stock, mounting the purple mists,
His left hand holding Floating Hill's sleeve,
His right hand patting Vast Cliff on the shoulder.³²

Mountain forest is a proper setting for whistling as well as playing the lute³³, which adds meaning to the activity of wandering in mountains. It is worth noticing that the three immortals, Red Pine 赤松, Floating Hill 浮丘 and Vast Cliff 洪崖, were presented in the poem not as tellers of ways to be immortal (as seen in the Jian'an poetries) but as travel partners or bosom friends. The poet wrote that accompanied by these immortals he wandered and appreciated the mountain sceneries. The transformation of roles played by immortals in poems suggests a changing interest, from eagerness for longevity to concern with mountain scenery.

not the earliest to do so since he has at least two precursors, Zuo Si and Lu Ji, whose related poems will be discussed in the next chapter.

³² Translations in "The Columbia Book of Chinese Poetry", p. 170.

³³ Chenggong Sui's (231-273) poetic essay, "A rhapsody on whistles" (Xiaofu 嘯賦) says the setting between hills and streams was one of the ideal sites for whistling, a special way of breathing. His essay reads: Now if the whistler/ Wanders over lofty ridges and crags, /crossing a huge mountain,/ And, at the edge of a gorge/ overlooking a purling stream,/ Sits down on a massive rock,/ And rinses his mouth with the sparkling springs;/ Or leans into a luxuriant profusion of marsh-orchids,/ In the shade of the elegant charm of tall bamboos - / Then his warble pours forth./ An endless succession of echoing reverberations./ He unfolds the melancholic thoughts harbored mutely in his mind;/ And arouses his most intimate feelings, which have long been knotted up./ His heart, cleaned and purified, is carefree;/ His mind, detached from the mundane, is sylphlike. A full translation of the essay in "The shorter Columbia anthology of traditional Chinese literature" (Mair, 2000), pp. 229-235. . Between the hills and streams was also appropriate for playing on the lute, see Ji Kang's "Rhapsody on the lute".

The beautiful mountain forests, isolated from worldly affairs as well as threats in human societies, appeared to have been attractive to Guo Pu and his contemporaries. In the first piece of his “wandering immortal” poems, he praised the reclusive life and the beautiful environment by comparing them with the city life and urban environment, and expressed his desire for going to mountains to be a recluse:

The capital is a cave for wandering knights,
 Mountains and forests are hiding-places for hermits.
 What luster lies in those vermilion gates?
 They cannot compare with a dwelling on Mount Penglai.
 The hermit drinks from the clear waves of the spring,
 Then climbs the hills to gather cinnabar buds.
 Hidden from the world, he can stroll by Magic Stream,
 So why should he care to climb the Ladder to the Clouds?...
 Let me flee to the mountains, out of the wind and dust,
 And blowing low, take farewell of Yi and Qi.³⁴

In the above lines the poet stated that cities and mountains forests were two very different locales for dwelling, and like the hermits he preferred the latter one. In the mountain forests, he could stroll between hills and streams, and gather the young cinnabar mushrooms that were helpful for extending life. The life in mountains forests was so desirable that the poet even gave up the idea of ascending to the Taoist heaven. He would like to be an earth immortal³⁵ that could enjoy the sceneries in the real world rather than a heaven immortal strolling between galaxies.

Guo Pu’s case shows that famous mountains, with hermits in the mountain forests,

³⁴ Translations by Frodsham in *Classic Chinese Literature*, p. 437.

³⁵ See the hierarchy of immortals in BPZ.

were attractive to the literati class. The desire for wandering in famous mountains with the excuse of herb gathering was not only the case for Guo but also for the literati class since the mid third century. Once in the mountains, they would pay more attention to scenery than to herbs. The following cases of several literati served as further explanation of their primary concern in the mountain settings.

In 339, Yu Chan 庾闡 (c. 294-347)³⁶, as the Grand Warden of Lingling 零陵 Commandery³⁷, visited a famous mountain in the region. The tour reason was exactly as Guo Pu described, to “roam among famous mountains gathering herbs to arrest the decay of my old age”. His poem on this tour reads:

To gather herb on the peak of the blessing mountain,
 I climbed Mount Jiuyi³⁸, with my carriage stopping at the piedmont.
 The essence of stone flowed along the hanging rock,
 The cinnabar glossy ganoderma grew in the fragrant valley.
 The cool Cloud Pearl³⁹ was falling,
 And the brilliant Stone Honey⁴⁰ multiplying.
 The fresh, clear sceneries appeared to be dyeing with a glacial color,
 The wonderful spirit aided the life span.
 Sun rays made the tender wrinkled giant hyssop vivid,
 The rainbow illuminated the irregular landscape.⁴¹

When wandering in the mountains forests Yu Chan was at first concerned with the

³⁶ See, “Zhongguo wenxuejia dacidian: Xianqin Han Weijin Nanbeichao juan” (Cao & Shen, 1996), p.417. By contrast, sinologists are inclined to believe that Yu Chan’s period is approximately 286-339, see Frodsham (1960), “The origins of Chinese nature poetry”, p.89; Holzman, “Landscape appreciation”, p.125. It appears that the previous date is more credible, considering that when crossing the Yangtze River Yu Chan was still young, see JS, 92: 2385.

³⁷ See JS, 92: 2385.

³⁸ Literally, nine puzzles. The nine brooks in the mountain resemble each other, so the mountain was named as “nine puzzles”, see Guo Pu’s annotations, SHJ, p.459.

³⁹ A sort of mica. In Ge Hong’s “Baopuzi”, the chapter of divine medicine mentions that “there are five sorts of mica... The type that has five colors and more cinnabar is Cloud Pearl, which is appropriate to be taken in summer.”

⁴⁰ The honey is yielded by wild wasps that build their nest on the rocks.

⁴¹ Texts in JShi, 12: 874-875.

herbs and the edible minerals, which might be explained by health considerations derived from his poor health condition brought by his twenty-year mourning for his mother's death.⁴² The poet was happy to find the following desired edible minerals and herbs: the stone essence, glossy ganoderma, Cloud Pearl, Stone Honey, and wrinkled giant hyssop. While enjoying these findings the poet did not forget to appreciate the mountain scenery and paid attention to the following scenes: the hanging rock, the fragrant valley, the wrinkled giant hyssop shined by the evening sun rays, and the irregular landscape under the rainbow. The whole scenery appeared to have been as pure as decorated with ice, and the poet felt that breathing the fresh air in the blessed mountain was helpful for extending life. It appeared that before the visitation, Yu Chan had already had a strong interest in Mount Jiuyi, as showed in one of his "wandering immortal" poems:

Flickering are the orange osmanthus and the purple mushrooms,
Which take their roots on Mount Jiuyi that towers into the clouds,
Colorful and beautiful, and fragrant in summer, bright in winter.
Who can participate in approaching and gathering them in a scheduled
time?⁴³

The tours associated with herb gathering and immortality seeking might have contributed to Yu Chan's aesthetic consciousness, which accounted for his status as a precursor in writing landscape poems.⁴⁴ In his "wandering immortal" poems there is a vivid description of landscape experience on the top of mountains:

⁴² See JS, 92: 2385.

⁴³ Texts in JShi, 12: 875. Ten of his "wandering immortal" poems are extant.

⁴⁴ Fan Wenlan, in his annotations to "wenxin diaolong" 文心雕龍, has a famous commentary on the birth of landscape poems, "Landscape was first written by Yu Chan and by men in his milieu at the beginning of the Eastern Jin dynasty", cited in Holzman, 1996, p.125.

The Three Mountains display as grains,
And great ravines appear not to accommodate a boat.⁴⁵

Through the above lines it can be understood that the poet imagined that he was flying like a winged immortal when viewing the landscapes, but it should be noted that his descriptions appeared to be based on authentic experience of ascending mountains. As the literati looked down from a peak, the objects looked like they were being changed into minute size. Earlier account of such experiences could be found in Ma Dibo's 馬第伯 (fl. first cent. AD) accounts of the imperial sacrifice to Mount Tai in AD 56. In the essay, Ma mentioned that when looking from the summit he found that the yellow river looked like merely a ribbon. The experience should have been fresh and exciting to whoever climbs a mountain, and thus when Yuan Shansong 袁山松 (c. 344-401) ascended a summit in Yidu Commandery, he could not help praising the dramatic scene in the surface of the Yangtze River (see Chapter 6), in a manner similar to that of Ma and Yu.

The literati's mountain climbing brought about considerable exciting experiences, not limited to a bird-view from summit. To a large extent, the entire process of tour was full of excitement and expectation, as Yu Chan told in the above discussed poems as well as in his poem on visiting the Stone Drum Mountain.⁴⁶ The poet said the destination was fresh to him and he was eager to see the blissful mountain: "I

⁴⁵ JShi, 12: 875.

⁴⁶ See his poem "Looking at Stone Drum Mountain" 觀石鼓詩. The lines quoted in this paragraph are drawn from the poem. A full translation of the poem in Frodsham "The origins of Chinese nature poetry", p.94.

called for my carriage to go and see something rare and strange, /Hastening on my way I went to the Magic Mountain.” He mentioned his tour on the mountains and his enjoying of the waterscape: “In the morning I crossed the shores of a pure stream, /In the evening I rested by the Five Dragon Spring.” Just as the name suggest, on the mountain there were stones in the shape of drums, which stimulated the poet’s imagination as if he had heard the sounds of the Stone Drums: “The Singing Stone holds a hidden music, /Thunderous and startling, it shakes the Nine Heavens.”

Following the poet’s aesthetic imagination was a couplet related to a metaphysical thought: “It is not that there are no such things as Mysterious Transformations, /But that no one knows of the Spontaneity of the Spirits.” By following the description of the Stone Drums the metaphysic lines read like a praise of the rare shape of stones.

The poem ended up with the poet’s appreciation of scenery:

Flying mist brushes the blue peaks,
A green torrent washes between the crags.
I rinse my hands in the vernal purity of the spring,
While my eyes enjoy the fresh beauty of flowers in the sun.⁴⁷

Literati like Yu Chan were engaged in herb gathering as well as landscape appreciation in their tenures, and other literati, such as Yu’s young contemporary Wang Xizhi (303-361), were involved in herb-collecting tour after resign. Wang had a bosom friend, Xu Mai. The Taoist Xu Mai occasionally collected herbs in Mount Heng in Tonglu Prefecture and West Mountain in Lin’an Prefecture⁴⁸. His letter to

⁴⁷ Tr. Frodsham, “The origins of Chinese nature poetry”, p. 94.

⁴⁸ JS, 80: 2107.

Wang Xizhi reads that “[In the mountains] from Shanyin County to Lin’an were golden halls and Jade chambers, as well as divinities and glossy ganoderma.”⁴⁹

Influenced by his friend’s lifestyle, Wang Xizhi “cultivated and took powders together with Xu, traveled more than one thousand *li* to collect herbs. [With the excuse of herb gathering] Wang traveled to all the eastern and central places and visited all the famous mountains in these areas.”⁵⁰ The Wang clan was Taoist believers⁵¹ so it was natural for Wang Xizhi to accept the Taoist lifestyle, gathering herbs as well as visiting famous mountains.

Taoists could not claim monopoly of the lifestyle of collecting herbs and visiting famous mountains, considering that Buddhists also engaged in such activities. In a preface to poetry, Zhi Dun 支遁 (314-366), a celebrated monk of Eastern Jin, showed an interest similar to that of Taoist literati discussed previously:

I enjoy the calmness of the wild area, adding the desire to gather herb, so I went alone [to Mount Tu in Wu Prefecture]... While climbing the mountain and collecting herbs I took pleasure from the appreciation of rocks and streams.⁵²

The preface also says that there was a religious gathering, Eight Discipline Fast (*baguanzhai* 八關齋), for twenty-four lay Buddhist at the foot of a mountain in Wu Prefecture. The fast ceremony lasted a day and a night in winter, and then the host of

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ JS, 80: 2101.

⁵¹ JS, 80: 2103.

⁵² Baguanzhai hui shixu 八關齋會詩序, texts in JShi, 20:1079.

the ceremony, Zhi Dun, saw off the other participants and ascended the mountain for herb gathering as well as scenery appreciation. In the third piece of his “Poem on Eight Discipline Fast”, he described his wanderings and appreciation of the mountain scene:

The northern wind⁵³ blows the groves and thin bamboos,
 Swirl wind scatters into the cracks of windows.
 With plentiful time I fancy leisurely,
 And climb the lofty mountain to gather herb.
 Along the rugged path I ascend a thousand fathoms⁵⁴,
 Facing the desolate field, ten thousand mu square.
 Gazing at the mountain, I delight in the flourishing pines;
 Looking forward at the marshes, I sympathize with the plain willows.
 Unfastening my girdle at the slope of the long mound,
 I wander about at ease to the right of the clear stream.
 The cool wind releasing my gloomy feelings,
 I wash my warm hands in the chilly spring.
 Sensing the empty, my spirit is unrestrained,
 Respectfully I feel as if I was strolling by a spring lakeside.⁵⁵

The poem above opens with a description of the winter winds and makes a reference to the superficial reason of climbing the mountain. It can be noticed that unlike the case of Yu Chan, Zhi Dun did not mention any of the herbs he gathered, which suggests that his genuine motive was the appreciation of mountain scenery, and herb gathering was nothing more than an excuse. The poet then went on with his climbing along the rugged path and looking over the desolate field. The poet chose two representative types of trees to show his appreciation of plants, respectively willows grown in the marshes and pines flourished on the mountains, which shows that the

⁵³ The phrase “*guangmo*” refers to wind, see SSHY, 2/95. Gu Kaizhi described the manner of his mourning Huan Wen as “My nose was like the long wind over the northern steppe (*guangmo changfeng*)...”

⁵⁴ A unit of length used in antiquity, equal to eight foot (*chi*).

⁵⁵ Texts in JShi, 20:1080.

poet appreciated the sceneries all the way when climbing the mountain. Leisurely wandering in the wild area, the poet felt at ease and was happy to realize that no formality was necessary on the occasion when he was alone. The cool wind relieved his worldly worries and concerns, and the freedom and calmness that Zhi Dun enjoyed even made an illusion that he was in a warm spring setting rather than a cold winter locale. Zhi Dun's acceptance of the combination of herb gathering and landscape appreciation might have a certain effect on the Buddhist society since he was a master. His influence also permeated the literati society with his excellent, fresh annotations to the classic piece in Zhuangzi, "Free Wandering" (*xiaoyaoyou* 逍遙遊).⁵⁶ His friendship with Wang Xizhi, a leading figure of the literati society, began with an oral interpretation of the piece.⁵⁷

In the above case, Zhi Dun, with herb gathering as a reason to stay on the mountain, appreciated the scenery and then immersed in Buddhist meditation. He appears to be less concentrated scenery than was the monk in the following case. Bo Daoyou 帛道猷 (fl. 372 AD), who was born in Shanyin Prefecture, had written a poem describing his experience of gathering herbs on mountains, "A poem improvised when ascending the peaks to gather herbs". The title and the preface⁵⁸ suggests that the poet's attention thoroughly transferred from gathering herbs to appreciating scenery, which is helpful for understanding the relationship between herb gathering and scenery appreciation. It was the beauties of nature that offered the

⁵⁶ See SSHY, 4/32: 115.

⁵⁷ See SSHY, 4/36: 117-118.

⁵⁸ See QJW, 159: 2383.

poet inspirations to improvise the poem, which might explain that in the poem there were no references to herbs and meditation but descriptions of the beautiful scene and the poet's corresponding feelings⁵⁹:

The peaks are continuous in several thousand miles,
 Slender groves on the flat banks look like ribbons.
 Clouds pass, moving with their shadows on the mountains,
 The wind come, straightening the grasses and brushes.
 A thatched cottage remains hidden and unseen,
 But I know there are residents on hearing the cock crow.
 Leisurely strolling on the path,
 I see deserted firewoods here and there.
 So I know that one hundred generations later,
 There are still people similar to those in antiquity.⁶⁰

The poem quoted above opens with an overall impression of the scenery: the numerous peaks extend into distance, and the slender groves wind as a ribbon along a river. Following the overall impression is some specific experience of scenery, from the shadows moving with clouds to grasses and bushes straightened by occasional winds. Apart from the visual sense, the poet's aural sense was also involved in the appreciation. The poet was glad to hear the cock crow that reminded him of a thatched cottage in which there lived recluses whom he admired. The seclusion of the mountain was described according to the heard cock-crows and the unseen recluses.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Scene and feeling appear are not easy to be integrated into each other, as suggested by "the metaphysic tag" in the Jin poems that is widely acknowledged in literature criticism, but Bo Daoyou's poem appears to be an exception. To a large extent, the goal of achieving harmony of scene and feeling was not attained until the Tang period, see "Pearl from the dragon's mouth: evocation of scene and feeling in Chinese poetry" (Sun, 1995), pp.95-107.

⁶⁰ Texts in JShi, 20: 1088.

⁶¹ The method of depicting a secluded mountain was imitated by later poets. For instance, Wang Wei's 王維 (701-761) "Deer Park" reads: Nobody in sight on the empty mountain,/ But human voices are heard far off./ Low

By comparison, there is a subtle difference between the landscape appreciation respectively of Zhi Dun and Bo Daoyou. For the former, the appreciation of sceneries means a glance at a distance, which applies to the images of the highness of the mountains and the wideness of the field, and the vague impression of the luxuriant pines and the plain willows. For the latter, the appreciation involves experience of the animate features of the scenes, e.g. the moving cloud shadows and the dynamic plants in the wind. In a sense, the difference forecasts a transition of landscape appreciation at the turn of the fifth century, from being satisfied with glancing at a distance and attaining an overall impression of scenery to emphasizing the necessity of entering the scenic settings and experiencing the landscape features, which will be discussed in the next two chapters.

The early medieval sources suggest that using herb gathering as an excuse for landscape tours was common at that time. Among this type of travelers were a few who, as social commentator Dai Kui 戴逵 (330?-396) criticized, were addicted to the pleasure derived from landscape appreciation with the excuse of herb gathering. Their addiction reached an extreme that even the death of their parents could not make them return.⁶²

sun slips deep in the forest/ And lights the green hanging moss. Similarly, Jia Dao's 賈島 (779-843) "Looking for the Recluse and Not Finding Him" reads: Beneath the pines I asked his servant boy,/ Said, "The master's gone off picking herbs;/ He's somewhere on this mountain,/ But the clouds are so thick I can't tell where." Translations of the former poem in Tony Barnstone, Willis Barnstone and Haixin Xu, "Laughing lost in the mountains: poems of Wang Wei" (UPNE, 1992). There is an alternative translation of the poem in p. 704 of "Classic Chinese Literature". By comparison, the previous translation appears to be more close to the original meaning of the poem. Translations of the latter poem by Stephen Owen, in *Classic Chinese Literature*, p.868.

⁶² JS, 94: 2457.

The above discussions show that with the participation of the affluent, leisurely literati, herb gathering slowly lost its religious meaning and evolved into an outdoor recreation that had a certain degree of relationship with landscape appreciation. Wandering on mountains with the excuse of herb gathering offered cherished opportunities for landscape appreciation, but such opportunities were not so common for the literati class. The reason, besides the spatial constraint, lies in that most literati-officials had not enough time necessary for traveling to and wandering in famous mountains, while herb gathering was time-consuming, which appeared to have been the temporal constraint. There was a tension between the desire for visiting famous mountains⁶³ and the lack of necessary time, which was then solved by using the suburban hills and landscape gardens as an alternative, just as Zheng Banqiao (1693-1765) 鄭板橋 said:

People like me would like to visit famous mountains and grand rivers, but could not leave for [these destinations] for the time being. Why not construct a house with microscopic landscapes that exhibits delight and taste, which never loses the freshness while lasting long?⁶⁴

In a sense the Jin literati had already behaved as what Zheng claimed: they constructed landscape gardens on the outskirts of cities, and made frequent

⁶³ See Wang Xizhi's letters to Zhou Fu 周撫 who had served as the governor of Yi Province 益州 and stationed Chengdu in the period 347-361, cited in the master thesis (L.-C. Huang, 2005), "The study of life-enjoying theory inferred from Wang Xizhi's life perspective", pp.81-82). One of the letters mentioned that Wang, having read the descriptions in a letter from Zhou, knew that there are gorgeous landscape in Yi Province and thus had a strong desire to view the mountains praised by his friend, e.g. E'mei 峨嵋 and Wenling 汶嶺. Wang's eagerness was clearly expressed in the following sentence: "At the moment that I talk about this issue, my spirit has already wandered in that region." Texts in QJW, 22: 1583a.

⁶⁴ ZBQJ, p.169.

excursions to these sites as well as the suburban hills. In doing so, the Jin literati solved the tension between the desire for viewing sceneries and the constraint of lacking time. They appeared to be satisfied with the suburban settings as a substitute for their desirable destinations, i.e. famous mountains, as Emperor Jianwen, Sima Yu 司馬昱 (320-372) stated on entering the Flower Grove Park:

The spot which suits the mind isn't necessarily far away. By any shady grove or stream one may quite naturally have such thoughts as Zhuangzi had by the Rivers Hao and Pu, where unself-consciously birds and animals, fowls and fish, come of their own accord to be intimate with men.⁶⁵

Insofar, Jin literati's excursions to the suburbs and their linkage to landscape appreciation constitute the major concern of the following chapter.

⁶⁵ SSHY, 2/61: 63.

CHAPTER V: EXCURSIONS TO THE SUBURBS

This chapter attempts to explain how, in the third and the fourth centuries, a collective interest in landscape was cultivated. The present study finds that the locale of the suburbs played a significant part in cultivating a collective interest in landscape. In the suburbs there might be landscape gardens, villas, estates and pavilions¹. Besides these natural objects, the concept “suburb” refers to riverside, lakeside and hilltop on the outskirts of cities. The countryside scene was also a part of the suburbs but to a large extent neglected by the literati at this stage.²

THE THIRD CENTURY

The third century saw quantitative changes³ in the evolution of landscape appreciation. The literati class made more and more excursions to the suburbs, drinking wine as well as admiring the scenes. It could be discerned that the suburbs played an increasingly important role in literati’s life.

¹ Pavilions, “*ting* 亭”, were signs of open landscape gardens in the suburb, such as Xinting 新亭, Lanting 蘭亭, Bailouting 白樓亭 in the two Jin Dynasties. But it should be noted that some traditional pavilions still existed, in other words, the original functions of pavilions, e.g. posthouse and hostel, remained as they were in the Qin-han period. See “The literati culture in Wei-jin landscape gardens” (W. Zheng, 2004), pp.38-41. *Jinchang ting* and *Qiantang ting* were illustrations mentioned in SSHY. It is not the case that all the Han Dynasty posthouses evolved into landscape constructions in the two Jin dynasties as Zhou Weiquan claimed in his “A history of classical gardening in imperial China” (W. Zhou, 1999), p.116.

² The fifth century saw the unconventional poet Tao Yuanming, who wrote considerable idyllic poems, showing his love of rural life, including the appreciation of rural sceneries. The intellectual society are inclined to agree that idyllic poetry, as a genre, was born in the Wei-jin period, but it should be noted that the focus of the idyllic poems before Tao was the description of the farmers’ lives rather than rural landscape, see “Essays on Landscape Idyllic Poems of the Six-dynasties” (Kang, 2006).

³ The present author uses “quantitative changes” referring to the overall characteristic of the evolution of landscape appreciation in the third century, by contrast with the “qualitative changes” in the fourth century. The qualitative changes referring to that a collective consciousness of landscape was forged and the strong consciousness of landscape contributed to the formation of a landscape culture. The use of the two phrases is for the convenience of discussion, and it should be noted that it does not mean that there were no qualitative changes in the third century and no quantitative changes in the fourth.

The Jian'an Era

Before the third century, the royal gardens accounted for the most of landscape gardens. The royal families constructed these gardens with multi-purposes. Each of these gardens occupied a wide area, within which considerable fruit trees and other types of trees were planted, and many animals raised. In this sense, the royal gardens had functions of generating produce and offering sites for leisure hunting. The third function of those royal gardens was linked to immortality-seeking. In the ancient gardens there were miniatures of divine mountains as well as high terraces that helped the immortality-seekers to communicate with immortals. The royal landscape gardens, by contrast with their successors in the Six Dynasties period, were constructed in a crude manner, with constructions plainly scattering in the gardens, or more specifically, in the natural settings. These scattered constructions were not necessarily in harmony with the natural parts of gardens. In short, prior to the third century the large-scale, crude landscape gardens were to a large extent employed as sites for agricultural produce generating, leisure hunting and immortality seeking, but not for appreciating.

When it came to the Wei-jin period, the functions of gardens were significantly changed. The functions of hunting and immortality-seeking were replaced by a different use of landscape gardens, i.e. the appreciation of them. The transformation

was involved in the following two issues: the emergence of the aristocratic class and aristocrats' recreational needs. The first issue has been discussed in Chapter 1, so the focus herein is the development of landscape gardens and corresponding appreciation of garden scenery.

In the beginning of the third century, the main type of landscape gardens was still the royal one, but in the later half of the century the story changed. With the rise of an aristocratic class, more and more private landscape gardens were constructed, which suggests an increasing interest in landscape gardens in social life. The Western Jin aristocrats, in the suburb of the capital Luoyang, constructed many landscape gardens at the foot of Beimang Mountain, which even brought the land price to a high level.⁴

The enjoying of gardens in the suburb of Luoyang did not last long since the invasion of ethnic peoples brought the Western Jin to its end in 317, making the aristocrats lose their capital as well as homes. Under these circumstances, the relatively peaceful Southern China, once despised by the Northern aristocrats for its humidity, became a refuge. Those homeless aristocrats, with their large numbers of attendants and slaves, hurriedly crossed the Yangtze River. Having found that the fertile land around the Five Lake (present Lake Tai) was already occupied by the local aristocrats, they had to cross another river (*zhe*), reaching Kuaiji Commandery,

⁴ SSHY, 30/9: 498.

where they settled down and constructed their manors. These manors became a solid basis for the aristocrats' social life. Furthermore, these manors, as an extended form of landscape garden, also met the aesthetic need that the relocated aristocrats inherited from previous literati who had aesthetic experience of garden scenery. The large-scale manors in Kuaiji enclosed natural hills and water to meet aristocrats' economic needs. As a result, the inclusion of hills and water in their manors drew the aristocrats close to nature since they might inspect the land or hold banquets in their manors.

The above is an overview of the evolution of gardens till the Wei-jin period, which shows that in the third and fourth centuries the construction of landscape gardens on the outskirts of cities became a common practice among the aristocratic class. The two centuries also saw different perspectives on the suburban landscape gardens. In the beginning of the third century, suburban gardens were regarded as a locale for temporarily escaping from the ruthless reality. With frequent wars, draughts and plagues, individual life became very fragile. Under these circumstances, the Jian'an literati made the best of their time to enjoy their life and make frequent excursions to suburban gardens in hope of relieving their worries.

When it came to the fourth century literati, the story changed since the social conditions were somewhat better than that of the Jian'an era. The aristocratic literati enjoyed an affluent life, and the suburban gardens were regarded as a setting that

gave meaning to individual life. They began to widely practice the ideal lifestyle advocated by Zhongchang Tong 仲長統 (179-220), who stated that he would like to live in retirement in a landscape garden within a beautiful environment where he could practice the way of extending life and communicate with friends who shared similar noble interests with him.⁵ The discussions of the evolution of and the perspectives on landscape gardens serve as a context for the detailed examination of literati's behaviors in the suburban gardens as follows.

Sources showed that the Jian'an literati made frequent excursions to the suburban gardens. They held banquets in the landscape gardens, drinking wine and then chanting poems to praise the beauty of their banquet settings, as Cao Pi described: "when our ears became hot from deep drinking, we would look up and write poetry."⁶ The leading poet of the Jian'an era, Cao Zhi 曹植 (192-232), described their experience with the Western Garden 西園, located in the suburb of Ye city:

The prince honors dearly loved guests,
Knowing no tire till the party's end.

⁵ In his literary piece, "An essay on good cheer" (Lezhi lun 樂志論), he claimed that "I would have, in my retirement, fertile lands and a spacious house, with hills behind it and overlooking a stream. Encircled by moats and covered with bamboos and trees, there would also be a vegetable patch and threshing ground in the front with a fruit orchard planted behind. I would have just enough boats and carriages to save me the trouble of walking and wading, and just enough servants to avoid physical labor..." (Tr. Holzman, "Landscape appreciation", p.72.) In the later part of the same essay, Zhongchang Tong disclosed that the religious Taoism was responsible for the formation of the ideal life style, "One's spirits can be calmed in the interior apartments, or one can mediate on the mysterious void of Laozi, or make one's vital essence harmonious by practicing breathing exercises, in an attempt to become like the supreme men. ...The demands of one's time are left unheeded, and life can be prolonged for ever. In this way one can reach the firmament and emerge into a region beyond space and time. Why then should one be eager to be received by kings and emperors?" (Tr. in CCL, pp.592-593.) In the above quotation, Zhongchang Tong suggested that the breathing exercises and other issues could prolong one's life, and even lead to eternal life, which helped one transcend the temporal and spatial restraints, and enjoy an absolute freedom. In his opinion, such pursuits was superior to the Confucian political aspiration that at most brought a fame that one could not enjoy too long because of the short life span.

⁶ Cao Pi, Yu Wu Zhi Shu 与吴质书. Translation of the quoted line in "Written at Imperial Command" (F. Wu, 2008), p.40. Drinking wine is helpful for the Wei-jin, and onwards, literati to attain a sense of transcendence as well as a romantic gaze at landscapes, which is not the focus herein.

We roam Western Garden on clear, cool nights,
 In canopied coaches one after another.
 With clear rays the bright moon washes pure,
 The constellations lie scattered.
 Fall orchids blanket the long slopes,
 Red blooming covers green pools.
 The Sunken fish leap in limpid waves,
 And in high boughs the fine birds sing.
 Numinous gusts catch our russet hubs,
 Light carriages move along with wind.
 Whirled along, our spirits are free -
 May it stay this way for a thousand autumns!⁷

In the poem quoted above, most lines contribute to the description of garden scenery.

It was at night, and the lingering literati could see the bright moonshine and the twinkling stars and were immersed in the beauties of the garden. Frequent visitations made them already familiar with the scenes in the garden, so in spite of the nighttime the images of garden scenes were vivid in their minds. The vivid images involved garden plants and animals, from the fall orchids on the slopes and the blooming lotus in the lakes to the singing bird hiding in the trees and the leaping fish sporting beside the lotus. All of these pleasant elements, with the aid of wine, made the visitors of the Western Garden feel happy and temporarily forget their worries.

The garden experience as seen in the above poem was not alone in the case of Cao

⁷ Cao Zhi, Gongyan shi. Translations are based on Stephen Owen and Tom Lavalley, see *Formality and the pursuit of pleasure* (Lavalley, 2004), p. 106, with slight modifications. The wish of maintenance of the happy moment together with the beautiful setting appears to have a long tradition, as we can find the wish similar to Cao Zhi's in a poem, "Written in Early Autumn at the Pool of Sprinkling Water", composed by Emperor Zhao of Han (? 95- 74 B.C.), which reads: "In Autumn, when the landscape is clear, to float over the wide, water ripples, /To pick the water-chestnut and the lotus-flower with a quick light hand! The fresh wind is cool, we start singing to the movement of the oars. The clouds are bright; they part before the light of dawn; the moon has sunk below the Silver River. Enjoying such pleasure for ten thousand years - / Could one consider it too much?" Translations in "Classical Chinese Literature (vol.1)", p.416. In a broad sense, the desire of keeping the happy moment stimulated by beautiful landscape could be even dated back to the sixth century B.C. when Duke Ching of Ch'i expressed his sentiments in his excursion to Ox Mountain, see the chapter of "Concepts of Mountains" in the present study.

Zhi but a shared experience related to interest in garden scenery. What follows is an examination of the narratives of other literati, host and guest. The host of garden banquet was the prince mentioned in Cao Zhi's poem above, his elder brother Cao Pi 曹丕 (187-226), who also recorded his experience of the garden scenes:

We take our carriages to roam at night,
 Carefree, we walk the Western Garden.
 Double canals cross each other,
 Fine trees meander along the broad river.
 Low stems touch the feathered canopies,
 Tall branches reach the blue sky.
 A sudden wind blows on the wheel,
 Flying birds hover in my front.
 Crimson sunset surrounds the bright moon,
 Brilliant stars emerge from the clouds.
 Heaven sends down gleaming light,
 How luminous are its numerous colors!⁸

In the Cao Pi's lines, readers can discern the sort of experience similar to that in Cao Zhi's poem quoted previously, from the delighted feelings to the natural objects. Unlike his younger brother who clearly referred to the two sorts of flowers he loved, he did not tell what kind of trees he appreciated. In Wei-jin landscape gardens there might be fruit trees, pines and cypress as symbols of longevity, the trees (e.g. willows) appropriate for viewing, and rare categories of trees. He mentioned the man-made rivers, on the banks of which trees were planted. He showed no interest in the constructions, including the three famous terraces and more than one hundred houses, which served dual purposes, military use in emergency and recreational use in the

⁸ Cao Pi, Furongchi zuo 芙蓉池作. Translations in "Written at Imperial Command", p. 41.

usual time.

The poems written at the occasions of banquets in the Western Garden showed that appreciation of garden scenery was a shared interest among the participants of suburban gatherings. Liu Zhen's 劉楨 (186-217) poem was an illustration of the guests' experiences of the garden setting. In the beginning of the poem, he told the readers that they had already arrived at the park, promenading there in the daytime; their interest in the garden scenes was so strong that they stayed there at night, admiring the beautiful moonlight garden. Following the brief introduction, he wrote his exciting experiences in the following lines:

The moon comes out to shine on the garden,
 Precious trees are lush and green.
 The clear river passed the stone paved canal,
 Flowing streams are stopped by the fishing dam.
 Hibiscuses spread their blossoms,
 Lotus brim over the banks of the golden pond.
 Phoenixes reside by the waterside,
 Unicorns gallop over the flying bridge.
 Colorful houses stand by the flowing waves,
 Their spacious rooms bring in cool breeze.⁹

In spite of the interest similar to his host's, such as the attention to the canals, trees on the banks and flowers in the lake, Liu Zhen showed his different concerns by noticing the precious trees and rare animals as well as the painted, spacious houses by the riverside or the lakeside. He even referred to the existence of attendants who

⁹ Liu Zhen, Gongyan shi. Translations in Wu "Written at Imperial Command", pp. 41-42.

served the garden banquet.

The Jian'an literati showed a strong interest in the garden setting by initiating a tradition of viewing nightscapes of gardens. The experience of nightscape viewing in the moonlight garden was so fresh that the viewers were greatly excited, as Liu Zhen described below:

All my life I had never heard of [such joy],
How can it be fully conveyed in my song?
I lay aside my brush in a long sigh,
This exquisite beauty will never be forgotten.¹⁰

The practice of viewing nightscape also reflected the desire for taking full advantage of the short life span in quest for the pleasure derived from the appreciation of garden sceneries:

Our life span is not like that of Song and Qiao¹¹,
Who can turn himself into an immortal?
So let us roam around to enjoy our time, and
Treasure ourselves to finish our hundred years.¹²

It is worthy of concern that in the suburban excursions, an atmosphere appropriate for collective appreciation of scenery was made since the host of these gatherings, Cao Pi set up a new mode of relationship between monarchs and court literati by showing respect to them rather than, as previous monarchs did, regarding them as

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Two frequently mentioned immortals in the poems in the period from Han to Tang.

¹² Cao Pi, Furongchi zuo 芙蓉池作. Translations in Wu "Written at Imperial Command", p. 41.

mere entertainers¹³. In doing so, he built a mutually respectful relationship, which offered the possibility that in the occasions of suburban excursions or garden banquets, the host and the guests could be immersed in a friendly, harmonious atmosphere, without strictly following the Confucian rituals¹⁴. In a 217 AD letter to Wu Zhi 吳質 (177-230), while recalling his literati friends who died in the plague in the past year, Cao Pi disclosed the unconventional relationship:

During those old days we would go outing together. As we traveled, our carriages went side by side, and as we sat, our mats touched one another; we were never separated even for a moment. We passed around goblets, listened to music; when our ears became hot from drinking, we would look up and write poetry.¹⁵

The friendly atmosphere in Jian'an literati's gatherings or excursions which discarded the Confucian ritual had apparent impact on later literati in similar occasions. A typical case is that one century later, the historic gathering at the Orchid Pavilion did not differentiate the noble and the humble, or the old and the young, and thus all could be seated along the streamside, playing the game of floating goblets and contemplating the scenes around. In doing so, the young and the humble attained an opportunity to learn the culture of landscape appreciation, which contributed to the dissemination and inheritance of the special culture.

The Middle

¹³ See "Written at Imperial Command", p.40.

¹⁴ There is a tension between ritual and pleasure in the banquets, or literati gatherings, which is well discussed in Tom Lavalley's doctoral dissertation, "Formality and the pursuit of pleasure".

¹⁵ Cao Pi, Yu Wu Zhi shu. Translations in "Written at Imperial Command", p.40.

Two decades after the Jian'an era was the Zhengshi 正始 era (240-249), which was marked by the "Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove", a group of literati who in a certain period shared similar lifestyles in terms of disengagement in politics and discourses on metaphysics. Later literati believed that the seven literati often gathered in bamboo grove, drinking wine and talking about metaphysics, and thus addressed them as Sages of the Bamboo Grove. These literati were unfortunate as they lived in a period full of fierce competition between two political parties, the Wei regime and the Sima clan.¹⁶ The political competition could bring about disasters to the literati class, who faced the requirements of showing their political attitudes and deciding which party to support. The Bamboo Grove literati faced such a dilemma. As a leading member of the literati group, Ruan Ji 阮籍 (210-265) was reluctant to support the Sima clan who had controlled the court since 239, but he dared not to show his genuine attitude whether in public or in private since the declaration of his negative attitude toward the powerful party was almost equal to committing suicide. He was so gloomy that he went to the mountains or the wild areas to temporarily escape the political pressure from the society:

He [always] roamed on mountains or beside rivers for days, forgetting to return home.¹⁷

Ruan Ji often went riding alone wherever his fancy led him, not following the roads or byways, to the point where carriage tracks would go no further,

¹⁶ From the beginning of the Zhengshi era, the Wei Regime was controlled by the courtier, Sima Yi 司馬懿 and his two sons. His grandson, Sima Yan 司馬炎 brought the Wei Regime to its end by establishing himself as the emperor in 265.

¹⁷ JS, 49: 1359.

and always he would return weeping bitterly.¹⁸

In Ruan Ji's eyes, the natural world was an outlet for his depressing feelings. His forgetting returning stemmed from his reluctance to go back to the mundane world, in which most of the famous literati were killed, as a result of the political competition between the two powers.¹⁹ The reason for his crying at the sites wherein carriage could not be driven forward lies in that the situation of no tracks in front was a strong reminder of his hopeless destiny. His lofty ambition of striving for the wellbeing of his generation was apparently held back by the turbulent social environment.²⁰ In this sense, the end of carriage track became a symbol of the impossibility of fulfilling his lofty will. Admitting this, readers would have no difficulty in understanding his reason of bitterly weeping in outings, and Ruan Ji himself became the symbol of a depressed generation at the turn of the Wei-jin period. His sojourn in the mountains appeared to have not aroused aesthetic appreciation of the mountain scenes. He wrote more than eighty poems to show his Confucian ambition, without one piece contributing to the praise of nature.

To a large extent, Ruan Ji could be regarded as a representative of the Zhengshi literati in terms of response to scenery they encountered. They inherited the tradition of excursions to the suburbs to relieve their worries, but the difference from the Jian'an literati was that too much affliction of living in a dangerous period might

¹⁸ JS, 49: 1361. Trans in SSHY, pp. 354-355.

¹⁹ JS, 49: 1360.

²⁰ Ibid.

have restrained their appreciation of nature. Therefore Ruan Ji went to the mountains but had no interest in the beauties of nature, and Ji Kang wandered in mountain forests with the excuse of herb gathering but his attitude toward landscape or scenery was vague. The years that Ji Kang spent in mountain forests with the Taoist Sun Deng appeared to have not significantly enriched his landscape experience.

In the decades following the gloomy era of Zhengshi, the literati class's appreciation of natural objects and natural settings continued,, which could be glimpsed from the case of the following literati. According to Chenggong Sui's 成公綏 (231-273) literary works, he had a wide interest in praising natural objects, from clouds and rains in the sky to rivers on the earth surface, from animals such as eagle and wild goose to plants such as willow and chrysanthemum. He also praised human behaviors, such as outdoor recreation in the Lustration Festival (*xi 禊*), whistling (favored by Wei-jin literati) on terraces or in wild areas. His interest in diversified natural objects and settings might be derived from his frequent suburban excursions. He had made excursions to rivers, including the Yellow River, the Luo River, and other common rivers, on which he commented that:

Having viewed the grandeur of one hundred rivers, I found that no other rivers could be compared with the Yellow River in the respect of sublime beauty.²¹

²¹ Chenggong Sui, *Dahe fu* 大河賦, SGLCW. Some researchers (e.g. Frodsham) stated that Chinese literati don't appreciate the sublime, but this is not absolutely the case, appreciation of the beauty domain, at least, could be found in lieterati's appreciation of seas, large rivers and tides.

Chenggong Sui's interest in natural objects was somewhat stronger than that of the Jian'an poets who enjoyed the beautiful settings of banquets, which could be glimpsed through the following line from one of his poetic essays:

In the Western Garden in Xuchang were lily magnolias, and thus I went to the park for a view, and composed a rhapsody.²²

From the above quotation it can be understood that his motive for visiting the Western Garden was different from that of the Jian'an poets since he made excursions to the landscape site merely for the appreciation of a sort of trees that have aromatic twigs and large flowers. The quotation also shows that he could make excursions alone, having no need of accompaniers or invitations from others, which shows a positive attitude toward the appreciation of natural objects.

Like the Jian'an poets, Chenggong's contemporary literati made excursions to the suburbs for banquets and appreciation of scenery, but the sites were not necessarily gardens. Their banquet settings could be hilltops or other sites in the suburbs. Yang Hu 羊祜 (221-278) was a representative literati-official who held banquets in the natural settings. The last ten years of his life was spent in Xiangyang 襄陽 (in present Henan Province) as a military governor, and during the period he frequently made excursions to the suburban hills. His biography in the official history of Jin Dynasty says that:

²² Cheng Gongsui, *Mulan fu* 木蘭賦. QJW.

Yang Hu loved mountain landscapes, and every time [the weather permits] scenery-viewing he would without fail to go to Mount Xian 峴. There he would have wine served, chant poetry and stay the whole day through without tiring.²³

The above quotation shows a subtle difference between Yang Hu and the Jian'an poets in terms of frequency of suburban excursions. The Jian'an poets might make excursions to the Western Garden occasionally, but when it came to Yang Hu, the frequency of excursions increased dramatically. For Yang Hu, the frequency is "every time the weather permits", which shows a stronger interest in suburban sceneries. Because of his intensive interest in suburban hills, Yang Hu was regarded as the person who initiated the fashion of visiting mountains for recreation rather than any other purposes.

At the End

Two years after Yang Hu's death came the Taikang 太康 era (280-290), which, together with the decade following it, saw apparent evolution of landscape appreciation. The evolution might be brought on by the prosperity derived from the reunification of China in 280. The landscape consciousness in the last two decades of the third century could be glimpsed from several representative literati of the Taikang era, respectively Shi Chong 石崇 (249-300), Zuo Si 左思 (c.252-c.306), and Lu Ji

²³ JS, 34: 1020. Trans in Holzman, 1996: 122-123.

陸機 (261-303). Shi Chong was the richest literati-official of his time, and thus had a solid economic basis for showing hospitality to his contemporary literati as the Wei princes did in the Jian'an era. Since his middle ages, Shi Chong, with the influence of religious Taoism, was inclined to practice the lifestyle described by Zhongchang Tong, i.e. to live in retirement, practice the way of extending life, and treat friends who shared similar interests. This lifestyle had an important base, i.e. his estate in the Golden Valley (*jingu* 金谷), located in the suburb of Luoyang, as he described below:

I own a villa on the outskirts of Henan Prefecture, by Jingu Creek, with some high and some low ground. There are clear springs and verdant woods, fruit trees, bamboos, cypresses, and various kinds of medical herbs, all in great abundance. In addition there are water mills, fish ponds, caves in the earth, and all things please the eye and delight the heart.²⁴

The plants, e.g. bamboos and cypresses, that symbolize longevity as well as medical herbs necessary for immortality-seeking showed Shi Chong's interest in extending life. But it should be noted that he also had an aesthetic interest in these garden plants. He thought the viewing of these plants could arouse a pleasant feeling. Owning a wonderful place, he did not enjoy it alone but shared with others, thus occasionally holding banquets in the Golden Valley Garden. So came the historic gathering as a farewell party lasting for several days in 296:

The libationer and General Chastizing the West, Wang Hsü, was due to

²⁴ SSHY, 9/57: 284-285, n.1.

return to Chang'an (Shanxi), so I and other worthies escorted him as far as the creek. Day and night we roamed about and feasted, each time moving to a different place, sometimes climbing to a height and looking down, sometimes sitting by the water's edge. At times seven- or twenty-five-stringed zithers, mouth organs, and bamboo zithers accompanied us in the carriages, and were played in concert along the road. When we stopped, I had each person perform in turn with the orchestra. Then each one composed a poem to express the sentiments in his heart. Whenever anyone could not do so, he had to pay a forfeit by drinking three dipperfuls of wine...²⁵

The above quotation is recorded in Shi Chong's literary piece, "Preface to the Golden Valley Poems", which mentioned that thirty people were presented at the party. The above quotation suggests that the participants of the farewell party might appreciate, more or less, sceneries since they wandered in the valley, changing feast settings and looking around. It is a pity that most of the poems in the collection of Golden Valley Poems are not extant, otherwise researchers could examine what these literati wrote in their banquet poems and to which degree scenery aroused their interest, as well as compare their perception of garden scenes with their precursors in the Western Garden. The only poem extant today is the one by Pan Yue 潘岳 (247-300), who allocate most lines of his poem to the description of the garden sceneries.

Furthermore, Pan Yue, like his elder contemporary, Chenggong Sui, composed quite a few poems and rhapsodies, praising diverse natural objects. It is not appropriate here to list poets who behaved like Chenggong and Pan, but a glimpse of the Jin literature does offer an impression that the number of literati who were interested in praising natural objects were increasing with time.

²⁵ Ibid.

There is no direct evidence showing that the two outstanding poets of the Taikang era, Zuo Si and Lu Ji, participated in the Golden Valley gathering, but this does not hold back understanding of their experiences of the suburbs since there are other sources helping to explore the issue. The two poets had their own gardens, which in part contributed to their desire for living in retirement as Zhongchang stated. Their private gardens might help them to cultivate an interest in the suburbs as demonstrated in their poems with the same title “Summoning the Recluse” (*zhaoyin shi* 招隱詩). Both poems apparently reflected their admiration of reclusive life in mountain forests as well as their perception of the environment of this lifestyle. The poem title, “Summoning the Recluse” originally referred to calling upon the recluses who lived in the mountain forest to go back to human society and serve the court, but the Taikang poets deliberately employed the poetry title in its reverse meaning. They were not summoning the recluse back but seeking and imitating the latter since the poets were bored with efforts for gaining fame, feats and economic interest, which were very difficult to attain due to the policy of Nine Rank System which meant lineage already determined one’s prospect. With a disappointed, restless feeling they made excursions to the suburbs, seeking recluses whose lifestyle they want to imitate.

In the eyes of the two poets, the settings for reclusive life were so beautiful that they spared no efforts in praising the environment. Zuo Si described that:

Though the cragged caves have no fancy structure,
In the hills there is the sound of zither.

White clouds stay over shaded peaks,
 Red flowers shine in the sunlit woods.
 Rocks are washed by the stream like jade;
 Delicate scales of the fish bob up and down. . . .
 Autumn chrysanthemums suffice for food,
 Hidden orchids can be worn on the front of one's garment.²⁶

In the lines quoted above the poet employs a series of vivid images for depiction of the reclusive environment: from white clouds to red flowers, from stony spring to delicate fishes, and from autumn chrysanthemums to hidden orchids. Similar efforts in praising a reclusive environment can be found in Lu Ji's lines below:

Light branches there seem to form a cloud-reaching palace,
 And dense leaves, a canopy of kingfisher plumes.²⁷
 Eddying winds linger in the grove of magnolias²⁸,
 Their fragrance swirls to meet the graceful trees.
 The pleasant plashing of the mountain burn,
 A waterfall rinsing the singing jade!
 Mournful music wells from these magic waters,
 Their falling notes echo in coigns of the crags.²⁹

The above lines depict a secluded valley, an ideal place for recluses. As did Zuo Si, Lu Ji appreciated that there were no constructions in the beautiful environment. The latter even employed romantic imagination on the gorge scene, contemplating at the "palace" formed by trunks and branches as well as the "tents" formed by overlapped leaves. In doing so, Lu Ji was suggesting that there was no need of constructions in the locale since the plants had already weaved themselves into a wonderful paradise.

²⁶ Translations in "Landscapes and Communities on the Pacific Rim" (Gaul & Hiltz, 2000), p.96.

²⁷ Translations of the two lines were from Holzman's synthesis of several translators' work. See Holzman "The birth of landscape appreciation", p.115.

²⁸ Holzman had a different understanding of the phrase "lanlin" 蘭林 and thought it should be translated as "the orchid-filled forests".

²⁹ Translations in CCL, pp 435-436.

In the reclusive environments admired by the two poets, there were gurgling brooks and sweet-smelling odors from magnolias groves or orchids in the shadow of trees. The springs rushed onto jade-like stones, making sounds like the musical notes. Hearing such clear sounds, Zuo Si felt that in the wild area the beautiful scenery was an ideal substitute for the mundane music from which literati usually took pleasure in their daily life. With the idea in his mind, Zuo si wrote the following lines:

Why must one have strings and flutes?
 When mountains and streams give forth their pure notes.
 Why bother now to whistle or to sing?
 When bushes produce moving sound of their own.³⁰

In the evolution of landscape appreciation, the significance of Zuo Si's poem "Summoning the Recluse" which included the above four lines can not be overestimated. This judgement is explained in the following two aspects.

Firstly, they functioned as a slogan encouraging later literati to march for the nature. To hear the music sound in nature or to view the beautiful scenery, literati needed to be close to mountains and streams in person. The pure notes of nature transcended the mundane music, and the natural sounds could relieve the restless minds of literati. According to Zuo Si, the mountain scenes and the natural sounds in the mountains were desirable aesthetic objects for literati. These aesthetic objects

³⁰ Zuo Si, *zhaoyin shi* 招隱詩. Translations by Frodsham, CCL, p. 436, and Holzman, 1996, pp. 118-119.

could arouse a sense of pleasure in the minds of literati who admired the reclusive life. In terms of pleasure related to nature, Zuo Si's explanation is significantly different from the Confucian understanding of literati's delight in mountains and water. From a Confucian perspective, mountains and water were symbols of morality and thus worthy of concerns. To pursue the Confucian delight literati would not need proximity to mountains and streams since an imagination of them or a reading of written materials about them could achieve the purpose. But such imaginations or readings can not offer tangible experience of mountains and waters. Specifically, "the pure notes of mountains and streams" can not be imagined or written down. The natural sounds can be enjoyed exclusively through actual proximity to nature. Accordingly, Zuo Si's above lines could be regarded as an encouragement for literati to approach nature. A typical case in this respect is that at a snowy night, reading Zuo Si's poem reminded Wang Huizhi 王徽之 (c. 338-386) of his friend Dai Kui who lived in retirement in Shan Prefecture, and the poem stimulated him to immediately set off to visit Dai.³¹ When Wang arrived he did not present himself before his friend, and the journey turned out to be a landscape tour.

Secondly, Zuo Si's poem suggested the independent value of landscape, advocating literati to appreciate scenery for its intrinsic beauties rather than as settings for banquets or musical performances. Accordingly, his idea disclosed in the poem could be regarded as a milestone in the evolution of landscape consciousness.

³¹ SSHY, 23/47.

In a sense, he was suggesting literati who came to the mountains to concentrate on the intrinsic beauty of nature, not permitting the mundane music to hold back their communication with nature. His ideas were accepted by later literati. A typical case is the historic gathering at the Orchid Pavilion (*lanting* 蘭亭) approximately fifty years after Zuo Si composed the poem. The Orchid Pavilion poets, with the influence of Zuo Si, seated themselves along a swirling, splashing and curving stream, playing a game of floating goblets and composing poems. At that occasion they did not have music as in daily life, but the pleasure they felt was never inferior to that of the Golden Valley poets who were accompanied by musical instruments all the way. The participants of the Golden Valley gathering, while enjoying the beautiful setting of gathering, appeared to have taken pleasure mainly from music appreciation.

The independent value of landscape was disclosed in Zuo Si's statement, "No need of strings and flutes when mountains and streams give forth their pure notes". This statement or argument was strongly agreed by the Orchid Pavilion gathering participants, who not only responded in practice but echoed it in their poems as well. The host of the gathering, Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303-361) appeared to have been the one who was mostly influenced by Zuo Si, and thus no music performance was arranged in the gathering. He mentioned:

Though we had none of the magnificent sounds of strings and flutes, a cup of wine and then a poem were enough to stir our innermost feelings.³²

³² Translations by Michael Sullivan, in Lavalley, p. 248.

In one of his Orchid Pavilion poems, Wang Xizhi even used a wording similar to that of Zuo Si to explain his withdrawal of background music that was common in previous literati gatherings:

Even though there are no strings and flutes,
The profound spring possesses pure sound.
Even though there is no whistling or singing,
Chanted words have an echo of fragrant elegance.³³

Wang Xizhi is not alone in agreement with Zuo Si, and other poets also showed their support to Zuo Si. In their poems chanted at the Orchid Pavilion they even described the pure notes they had heard. For instance, Xie Wan wrote that “In the valley stream there is a pure echo”³⁴; Xu Fengzhi sensed that “Pure sounds imitate the strings and flutes”³⁵; and Sun Tong even heard that “The ten thousand sounds blow among the linked peaks”³⁶. To a large extent the Orchid Pavilion poets agreed that the pure notes from mountains and streams were an ideal substitute for the musical sound. The acceptance of Zuo Si’s advocacy in part accounts for their excellence in describing the sceneries around the Orchid Pavilion, which is further discussed at the end of the following section.

THE FOURTH CENTURY

³³ Translations by Lavalley, p. 248.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 253.

³⁵ Ibid, p.260.

³⁶ Ibid, p.254.

The fourth century saw qualitative changes in the evolution of landscape appreciation, which is a contrast to the quantitative changes occurring in the third century. In the fourth century, a strong and collective landscape consciousness found its place in the minds of literati. Wandering among mountains and streams for landscape appreciation even became a significant part of the desirable lifestyle for the literati in Kuaiji Commandery, which showed that a culture of landscape appreciation formed among the literati class.

The Suburbs of Luoyang and Jing Province

As discussed in the previous section, the Taikang literati showed an increasing interest in suburban scenery in their poems. The interest was further developed in the beginning of the fourth century, which is discussed in the following two respects: first, the intentional integration of other activities into suburban excursions; second, the dissemination of the landscape interest to local places.

Sources show that literati in the capital Jiankang liked to take advantage of other activities for excursions to the suburbs. Typical among these activities was Pure Conversation “*qingtan* 清談”, which was philosophical debates prevalent among the Wei-jin literati class. In the beginning of the fourth century, it was a common practice to choose suburban settings as sites for philosophical debating, as disclosed by the following sources:

All the famous gentlemen of the Western Jin Court once went together to the Luo River on a pleasure excursion. On their return Yue Guang 樂廣 asked Wang Yan 王衍, “Did you enjoy today’s excursion?”³⁷

I used to go on outings with Wang Cheng 王承 (d. 320) and Ruan Zhan 阮瞻 (d. 312) by the shores of the Luo River...³⁸;

At the riverside they freely discussed Taoist thoughts as Wang Dao 王導 (276-339) noted:

Formerly on the banks of the Luo River on many occasions I used to discuss the Way with Pei Wei 裴頠 (d.300), Ruan Zhan, and the other worthies.³⁹

Although the focus of their discussion was not the beauty of nature, their choices of gathering sites showed their interest in the suburban settings.

The literati who lived in the capital could not claim monopoly on interest in suburban scenery, and such an interest was brought to local places by literati-officials who left the capital and took offices there. This was illustrated by the case of Shan Jian 山簡 (253-312). When serving as the governor-general of Jing Province (*jingzhou* 荊州) in 309, he, together with his subordinates, frequently rode to the suburb, being attracted by a landscape site. There was a fine fish pool which was believed to have been constructed by imitating the way of raising fish proposed by an ancient, respectful literati-official. What attracted Shan Jian were the pool and its

³⁷ SSHY, 2/23: 43.

³⁸ SSHY, 26/6: 464.

³⁹ SSHY, 16/2: 344.

beautiful surroundings:

Along the pool's edge ran a high dike on which were planted bamboos and tall mallotus trees (*ch'iu*), while lotus (*fu-jung*), water chestnuts (*ling*), and water lilies (*chih*) floated on the water. It was a well-known resort for outings and banquets.⁴⁰

From the above quotation it can be realized that the landscape site was popular for its beautiful setting. Therefore, Shan Jian usually made the best of his leisure time and stayed there for a whole day, drinking and appreciating the scenery:

Shan Jian often visited this pool, and never returned without getting magnificently drunk, at which times he would cry out, "This is my Gaoyang Pool!"⁴¹

His repeated experiences of being drunk in the beautiful setting is a reminder of Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072), who in a essay describing an suburban excursion stated that:

Wine is not uppermost in the old Drunkard's⁴² mind. What he cares about is to be amid mountains and streams. The joy of the landscape has been captured in his heart, and wine drinking merely expresses this.⁴³

Ouyang's saying applies to the regular visitor of Gaoyang Pool, Shan Jian, as well as his precursors who intentionally drank in the suburban settings.

⁴⁰ SSHY, 23/19: 406-407, n.1.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Refers to Ouyang Xiu himself.

⁴³ The Pavilion of the old Drunkard 醉翁亭記. A full translation of the essay in Strassberg, "Inscribed landscape", pp. 162-164.

The Outskirt of the New Capital

In 316, the insurgence of ethnic peoples brought the Western Jin court to its end. Under this circumstance, most members of the upper and the middle classes migrated to the relatively peaceful South to find their refuges (Y. Chen & Wan, 1995, pp. 114-118). Actually, the migration or withdrawal had already been planned. In the beginning of the fourth century, the Jin society was in a chaotic state because of the rebellions of eight kings. The upper class lost their confidence in the restless North, and thus had already begun their preparations for the scheduled retreat. The upper class even started their migration before the fall of Western Jin. The no-return journeys from familiarity to strangeness were gloomy, as suggested by the following case which showed the migrating aristocrats' impression of scene en route:

When Wei Jie 衛玠 was about to cross the Yangtze River (in 311) his body and spirit were emaciated and depressed, and he remarked to his attendants, "As I view the desolate expanse of water, somehow without my being aware of it a hundred thoughts come crowding together. But as long as we can't avoid having feelings, who indeed can be free of this?"⁴⁴

The immigrants brought their lifestyles to their new residencies in the South. The lower class brought the relatively developed techniques of cultivation, and the upper class the ideologies and lifestyles of Western Jin. Besides Pure Conversation and Cool Food Medical Powder, what were imported to the Southern China were also the

⁴⁴ SSHY, 2/32: 47.

conventions of outings and landscape appreciation.

Having settled down in the south, the upper class restored their habitual leisure, making excursions to the suburbs of Jiankang. Approximately in 311⁴⁵, the precursors of immigrating frequently gathered in a suburban landscape site:

Whenever the day was fair, those who had crossed the Yangtze River would always gather at Xinting (a southern suburb of Jiankang) to drink and feast on the grass. On one occasion Zhou Yi, who was among the company, sighed and said, “The scene is not dissimilar to the old days in the north; it’s just that naturally there’s difference between these mountains and rivers and those.”...⁴⁶

The excursions to the suburb of Jiankang have no essential differences from their counterparts on the outskirts of Luoyang, but the feelings toward scenes were not the same any more. The early immigrants felt themselves like merely travelers although they had settled down in the South. They felt a strong sense of the otherness when beginning their lives in the land of the others. The feeling was strong for the precursors of relocated aristocrats:

When Emperor Yuan⁴⁷ (Sima Rui 司馬叡) first crossed the Yangtze River (in 307), he said to Ku Jung, “A sojourner in your native land, I feel a continual sense of shame in my heart.”⁴⁸

In the southern region strange to the aristocratic immigrants, they needed to restore

⁴⁵ See SSHY, p.47, n.1.

⁴⁶ SSHY, 2/31: 47.

⁴⁷ Sima Rui became the first emperor of Eastern Jin in 317, ten years after crossing the Yangtze River.

⁴⁸ SSHY, 2/29: 46.

their social life as in Luoyang, thus going on with suburban excursions as well as Pure Conversations. In 349, the celebrities in Jiankang invited each other and made a boat excursion on the Yangtze River, aiming at meeting Chen Kui 陳逵⁴⁹ whose reasoning was excellent for philosophical debates:

While Chen Kui was living on the western bank of the Yangtze River, all the gentlemen in the capital (Jiankang) went to Niuzhu (across the river) to meet him.⁵⁰

No further extant evidence for a discussion of their feelings toward this boat outing, but it appeared that they could have engaged in appreciation of the waterscape especially when the expected debate was unsuccessful because of Chen's reluctance to converse with aristocrats from the North. Furthermore, it is worthy of noticing that Niuzhu 牛渚 was a beautiful site for outings as shown by the case of Chen's successor, Xie Shang 謝尚, who was the governor of Yu Province 豫州 (present northern Anhui) between 350 and 354. Xie was stationed at Liyang, at the opposite of Niuzhu across the Yangtze River. Thus it was convenient for him to make excursions either to the landscape site or merely on the river.

Xie Shang was once on a boating excursion [from Liyang to Niuzhu], and on that particular night there was a fresh breeze and a bright moon. He heard on one of the merchant ships moored along the river shore the sound of someone chanting poems with deep feeling.⁵¹

⁴⁹ He was the commandant of the West and at the same time grand warden of the Huai-nan Commandery, stationed at Li-yang (northern Anui).

⁵⁰ SSHY, 13/11: 327. A slight modification of the translation was made to be in accordance with the original texts.

⁵¹ SSHY, 4/88: 146.

Xie's night excursion is a reminder of the tradition of appreciation of nightscape which was initiated by Western Garden poets in the beginning of the third century. Moreover, his boating excursion suggests that the literati class had more to view in the lower reach of the Yangtze River than in the North. The Yangtze River flowed through the capital outskirts, where quite a few scenic hills were located, such as Overturned Boat Mountain, White Rock Mountain, Chicken-cage Mountain, Mount Zhong, Mount She, and Square Mountain, all of which were appropriate for outings.⁵² Approximately in 357⁵³, Yuan Hong 袁宏, the poet heard by Xie Shang in the above-mentioned excursion, made an allusion to the suburban hills by signing at the time of parting with his friends who had escorted him from the capital to the southern suburb:

The hills along the Yangtze River are so far off, they actually have the appearance of already being ten thousand *li* away!⁵⁴

Yuan's sentiment reflected his reluctance for the departure as well as his impression of the hills on the riverside. These riverside hills appeared to have made an unforgettable impression in the traveler's mind.

In 317, with the help of Northern and Southern aristocrats, Sima Rui 司馬叡, reestablished the Jin court in Jiankang, which means that for the first time in the history the political as well as cultural and economic centers transferred from the

⁵² See SSHY, 5/54: 184; 8/107: 254.

⁵³ See Zhongguo wenxuejia dacidian (Cao & Shen, 1996), p.324.

⁵⁴ SSHY, 2/83: 72.

North to the South. The transfer of centers had an effect on ideologies underlining the appreciation of nature. When the political center remained in the North, the Yellow River was an important sign of the empire, and thus no other rivers were parallel to it, just as Chenggong Sui claimed. When the political center was relocated in the South, the story was changed. Under the new circumstances, it was necessary for the intellectual society to raise the status of the Yangtze River at least to the degree parallel to the Yellow River. With such a background, Guo Pu 郭璞 (276-324) composed a long poetic essay, “Rhapsody on the Yangtze River”⁵⁵, to describe the largest Chinese river, with its sublime and grandeur as the focuses. At the end of the rhapsody, he concluded that:

If we examine the most wondrous sights among rivers and waterways,
Truly none is more illustrious than the Yangtze and the Yellow Rivers.⁵⁶

To a certain extent Guo Pu’s conclusion, together with similar efforts by his contemporaries, repositioned the status of the Yangtze River in Chinese culture.

It should be noted that it was not until the Eastern Jin that literati began to appreciate the Yangtze River. Several decades before Guo Pu composed his masterpiece mentioned above, Xiahou Zhan 夏侯湛 (243-291) had a short poetic essay that recorded his voyage on the Yangtze River, which included lines depicting the sublime scenery:

⁵⁵ Texts in QJW, 120: 2147a-2148b. A full translation of the essay could be found in “Wen xuan, or, Selections of refined literature (vol.2)” (Xiao & Knechtges, 1982), pp.320-351.

⁵⁶ Translations in *ibid*, p.351.

How mighty and torrential is the Yangtze River,
 The water flow through ten thousand *li*.
 The grand waves look like the clouds in the sky,
 The spirits of great waves are rushing.⁵⁷

Kuaiji Commandery

Having crossed the Yangtze River, most aristocratic families found that the area of Jiankang had not enough land for them to settle down, and the lower reach of the Yangtze River had already been occupied by the northern middle class who had advantages in terms of both population and competence of fighting. Furthermore, the fertile lands around the Five Lake (present Lake Tai) were controlled by the aboriginal residents, Wu people. The migrating aristocratic families had to cross the Zhe River and settle down in Kuaiji Commandery, of which the Wu people had less control (Y. Chen & Wan, 1995, pp. 118-119).

Fortunately, the settled aristocrats found that the land of Kuaiji was not only fertile enough to support their large families but also abundant in sceneries to meet their aesthetic needs. The biography of Wang Xizhi (303-361) in the official history of the Jin Dynasty described the settlement of the aristocratic class:

There are beautiful landscapes in Kuaiji and many famous men made their homes there. Xie An used to live there before he took office. Sun Chuo, Li

⁵⁷ Jiangshang fange 江上泛歌.

Chong (fl.c. 330), Xu Xun and others, all of whom were among the best writers of the time, had houses built in the eastern region and were on good terms with Xizhi.⁵⁸

Living in a beautiful environment, focusing on the way of extending life⁵⁹ and having good relationship with friends sharing similar interest, all of these issues were the complete fulfillment of the desirable lifestyle as described by Zhongchang Tong. The poetic lifestyle helped these immigrants to accept the new locale, which is typically illustrated by the case of Wang Xizhi, who

...did not like sojourn in the capital, and since the moment he firstly crossing the Zhe River, he had the intention of remaining there the rest of his life.⁶⁰

The positive attitude, as shown in the above quotation, toward the South was quite different from that demonstrated in 311 when gathering in the suburb of Jiankang the early immigrants had a strong sense of the otherness. At that time, the precursors of immigrants did not think they belong to the land on which they lived, just as Lavalley (2004, p. 164) points out: “The southern landscape to those gathered at this occasion is alien and causes nostalgia.” When it came to literati like Wang Xizhi, they fully accepted their new living environment and enjoyed it. Appreciation of the newly discovered landscape furthered the acceptance of the South. By the time of the gathering in 353 at the Orchid Pavilion, the feeling of the otherness thoroughly disappeared as the poems composed on the occasion suggest, which showed that the

⁵⁸ Translations in Frodsham, “The Origins of Nature Poetry” p. 87.

⁵⁹ JS, 80: 2098.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

Orchid Pavilion poets, if not all of the migrated aristocrats, had integrated themselves within the southern landscape (Lavalley, 2004, p. 164).

The condition that the best writers and artists of the time lived in the same place was important for the evolution of landscape appreciation. They had originally been scattered in the northern land, but because of the migration they then converged in the same place, Kuaiji 會稽. The convergence made the literati communication convenient as well as frequent. The spatial proximity of these literati and artists apparently accelerated the formation of the culture of landscape appreciation.

Sources of the period disclose that these literati shared similar lifestyles in terms of tending to live in retirement and being addicted to the intrinsic beauty of nature. That is what culture means, ways of life for a particular group of people. What follows is detailed examination of the fourth century literati life in the area of Kuaiji, with references to literati's landscape appreciation.

In Eastern Jin, the Wang and Xie clans were the first class aristocratic families. As the major representatives of the two clans in the literati circle, Wang Xizhi and Xie An 謝安 (320-385) played a leading role in the literati coterie in Kuaiji. They frequently made excursions to the landscape site, the Orchid Pavilion (*lanting* 蘭亭):

The river Zhe also joins up to the East with Orchid stream. South of the lake lies Mount Tianzhu. At the mouth of the lake stood a pavilion called the Orchid Pavilion or the "Village on the Orchid stream". The governor Wang

Xizhi, Xie An and his younger brother used to go there.⁶¹

The frequent excursions to the Orchid Pavilion showed that the mid fourth century literati inherited the tradition of suburban outings which started from the beginning of the third century.

By contrast with their precursors in the North, the Kuaiji literati had more to explore, e.g. the seascape. They enjoyed boating excursion and seascape appreciation. The following source shows Kuaiji literati's different responses to the sublime seascape:

While Xie An was in retirement in the Eastern Mountains (Zhejiang, before 360), he was once boating on a lake for pleasure with Sun Chuo, Wang Xizhi, and others. When the wind rose and the waves tossed, Sun and Wang and the others all showed alarm in their faces and urged having the boat brought back to the shore. But Xie An's spirit and feelings were just beginning to be exhilarated, and humming poems and whistling, he said nothing.⁶²

According to Xie An's behavior in this boating trip, his contemporaries regarded him as a pillar of the society, whose "tolerance was adequate for a governing post, capable of reassuring both the court and the general populace".⁶³ The judgment turned out to be true in 383 when Xie An, together with his nephew Xie Xuan, played a significant role in successfully preventing the large-scale invasion from the

⁶¹ Texts in SJZ, 40: 622. Translations in Frodsham, "The Origins of Nature Poetry" p. 89, with slight modifications.

⁶² SSHY, 6/28: 201.

⁶³ Ibid.

North.⁶⁴

The Kuaiji literati coterie's interest in nature was also reflected in other outdoor recreations, such as fishing and hunting:

He (Xie An) dwelt in Kuaiji with Wang Xizhi, Xu Xun of Gaoyang and the monk Zhi Dun. And there they lived at their ease. They went out to shoot and fish among the mountains and rivers. They came home and recited verse and composed poems. They had no worldly thoughts.⁶⁵

The several quotations above about the Kuaiji literati coterie mainly show the two leading figures' positive attitude toward the appreciation of nature. As for the common members, some of them even showed a higher degree of interest in nature, which could be glimpsed through the cases of the Sun brothers. Sun Tong's 孫統 (fl. fourth cent. AD) biography says that he took a governmental position primarily for the convenience of appreciating scenery in the prefecture he administrated:

When Sun Tong was young he was free and unrestrained and not bound by conversation. He settled in Kuaiji (Zhejiang), since by nature he was fond of hills and streams. When he sought to become magistrate of Yin Prefecture (near Ningbo), he neglected all petty duties and let his fancy free, roaming about for pleasure. There was not a famous hill or outstanding stream he had not viewed in his travels.⁶⁶

The above quotation demonstrates that Sun Tong's passion for natural beauty apparently outweighed his responsibility as a magistrate. The situation suggests an

⁶⁴ See SSHY, 6/35: 204.

⁶⁵ Texts in JS, 79: 2072. Translations, Frodsham, "The Origins of Nature Poetry", p.88.

⁶⁶ JS, 56: 1543. Translation was based on SSHY, 23/35: 414, n.1.

imbalance of Confucianism and Taoism in his mind. His contemporary Liu Tan 劉惔 commented on him like this:

Sun Tong is a madman. Whenever he goes anywhere he enjoys himself for days on end, and sometimes on his return he'll get halfway home and then suddenly turn back.⁶⁷

Sun Tong's inclination for scenery applied to his younger brother, Sun Chuo 孫綽 (314-371). In the early stage of his life in Kuaiji Commandery, Sun Chuo also lived an unrestrained life. His biography says that in a long period he was addicted to appreciation of scenery in Kuaiji Commandery:

When was young he had a lofty will as did Xu Xun. He lived in Kuaiji, and roamed freely about the countryside for more than ten years, and had written a poetic essay on "Fulfilling My Original Resolve" (*suichu fu*) to show the world his will.⁶⁸

His poetic essay mentioned in the above quotation reads:

...I have built a house on five *mu* 畝 of land on the slope of Long Mountain in the Eastern Mountains (Zhejiang), surrounded by dense woods. Compared with sitting amid decorated curtains or listening to the playing of bells and drums (i.e., court ceremonial), how could these pleasures be mentioned in the same year?⁶⁹

The above two quotations show that Sun Chuo was satisfied with the lifestyle: neglecting the worldly affairs, living in retirement, being immersed in the beautiful

⁶⁷ SSHY, 23/35: 413.

⁶⁸ JS, 56: 1544.

⁶⁹ SSHY, 2/84: 72-73, n.1.

environment of Kuaiji, and composing literary works. In doing so, he was proud to claim that “he had experienced the lot of one who ‘stops when he has had enough’”⁷⁰, showing his in-depth understanding of the teaching of the Taoist master Laozi.⁷¹ At the macroscopic level, the reason for his claim was that the Jin literati class strongly admired the acts of disengagement and favored living in retirement like a recluse. Sun Chuo deliberately showed the world his taste with his ten-year roam in the countryside, recluse-like life in the long mountain, together with some specific actions. For instance, “In front of his study, he planted a pine tree, which he constantly banked up and tended with his own hands.”⁷²

Sun Chuo might contribute more to the culture of landscape appreciation than did his brother. His transcendence could be understood through his excellence in literary and his friendship with the leaders of the Kuaiji literati coterie, Wang Xizhi and Xie An. These issues, together with his strong interest in landscape, facilitated the communication of perceptions of landscape. He composed a “Poetic Essay on Roaming in the Tiantai Mountain” based on his experience of mountain scenes. The preface of the essay noted that he had not climbed the mountain since it was extremely difficult to do so, and thus employed his imagination in composing the essay. But it should be noted that in the essay was not pure imagination but a shared aesthetic experience of mountain scenery.⁷³ When his friend Fang Qi 范啟 read the

⁷⁰ SSHY, 2/84: 72-73.

⁷¹ Laozi had the statement “The one who knows when he has had enough will never be disgraced, and he who knows when to stop will never be in danger.” See SSHY, 2/84: 72-73.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ It is argued that mountains described in “Poetic Essay on Roaming in the Tiantai Mountain” is “the actual sight of actual mountains” rather than symbol of the Taoist Truth. See Holzman, 1996, pp. 138-139.

essay, he praised the writing and showed his agreement with the narratives and arguments. Every time he came to a felicitous passage, he would invariably cry out, “This ought to be our kind of language!”⁷⁴

Sun Chuo’s in-depth experience of landscape and his excellence in literary pursuits might account for his role of composing the postscript for the collection of the Orchid Pavilion poems. The preface was by one of the leaders of the Kuaiji literati coterie, Wang Xizhi, but the postscript was by a member rather than the other leader, Xie An. A detailed discussion of the postscript is in the next section focusing on the historic gathering at the Orchid Pavilion.

Among the Kuaiji literati there was a figure, Xu Xun 許詢, whose fame was parallel to that of Sun Chuo in respects of both literary excellence and nature appreciation. Each of them enjoyed an outstanding aspect which was admired by gentlemen of their time. A source records that:

Sun Chuo and Xu Xun were both famous men of their age. Those who honored Xu for his exalted feelings would correspondingly despise Sun for his corrupt conduct, and those who loved Sun for his literary ability and style would conversely have no use of Xu.⁷⁵

The above quotation might offer an impression that Xu was inferior in terms of composing literary works, but it should be noted that the differentiation between the

⁷⁴ SSHY, 4/86: 145.

⁷⁵ SSHY, 9/61: 285.

two celebrities should not be overemphasized. Xu was virtually one of the best poets of his time, as Sima Yu 司馬昱 (Emperor Jianwen of Jin) praised, “Xun’s five-word poems may be said to surpass in subtlety those all of his contemporaries.”⁷⁶ Both of them were “literary models for the entire age, and from their time onward all writers imitated them”⁷⁷ till the fifth century. Besides literary talent, Xu Xun’s love of nature was also no secondary to that of Sun Chuo, as demonstrated by the following source:

Xu Xun was fond of wandering among mountains and streams and his physique was well suited to mountain climbing. His contemporaries used to say, “Xu not only has superb feelings; he really has the equipment for traversing the superb [i.e. mountain resorts].”⁷⁸

Xu Xun’s contemporaries’ admiration of his physical shape appropriate for landscape tours disclosed that the fourth century society held a positive attitude toward the act of landscape appreciation. The admiration of Xu could reach such a degree that even facing the beautiful and pleasant scenes would stimulate the memory of him. Liu Tan 劉惔, who had ever called Sun Tong a madman for the latter’s keen interest in nature, said, “In a fresh breeze under a bright moon I always think of Xu Xun”.⁷⁹ In this sense, Xu Xun’s image was linked to scenes.

The above examinations of individual behaviors of the Kuaiji literati coterie showed that its members indeed shared a common interest in nature. In a mid fourth

⁷⁶ SSHY, 4/85: 144-145.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ SSHY, 18/16: 362.

⁷⁹ SSHY, 2/73: 68.

century gathering discussed in the following section they intensively showed the world their collective consciousness of landscape.

The Orchid Pavilion

The year 353 saw a historic and grand gathering, whose role in the evolution of landscape appreciation can not be overemphasized. In the third day of the third lunar month, the Kuaiji literati coterie held a gathering in the suburb of Shanyin 山陰 Prefecture at the Orchid Pavilion 蘭亭, with forty-two persons participating⁸⁰ (see Figure 2). The host was Wang Xizhi, the governor of Kuaiji Commandery. The reason for this gathering was that it was the day of the Lustration Festival (*xi 禊*)⁸¹, which had been a religious ceremony when people washed their hands and feet in the flowing water in hope of removing the inauspiciousness. The religious festival later evolved into an outdoor recreation opportunity.⁸² The participants of the Orchid Pavilion gathering sat on the grass along a stream, playing a game of floating goblets in the stream, gazing on the scenes around, and then composing poems. As the complete collection of poems composed at this occasion is extant, and total forty-one pieces had been compiled together with a preface and an epilogue, it is possible to have an investigation of their collective appreciation of landscape as follows.

⁸⁰ Among the members of the literati coterie mentioned in the previous section, Xu Xun and Li Chong did not participate in the historic gathering for unknown reasons.

⁸¹ Also translated as “Spring Purification Rites”, see SSHY, pp.344-345; “Bathing Festival”, see Strassberg, “Inscribed Landscape”.

⁸² See Lavalley, the section “History of 3/3 Gatherings”, in “Formality and the pursuit of pleasure”, pp. 157-163.



Figure 2: Lustration Festival at the Orchid Pavilion (by Zhao Mengfu, 1254-1322)

Source: National Palace Museum Online

The literati till the mid fourth century were inclined to be satisfied with an overall impression of the scenery they gazed on, without specific observations. This overall characteristic of scenery appreciation applied to the Orchid Pavilion poets. The descriptions of the gathering setting in the preface, epilogue and poems of the poetry collection were helpful to understand the characteristic. Wang Xizhi's depiction in the preface reads:

Surrounding the pavilion were lofty hills and towering ranges, luxuriant forests and slender bamboos. There was, moreover, a swirling, splashing stream, wonderfully clear, which curved round it like a ribbon... On this day the sky was bright and the air clear and mild; a breeze was gently blowing.⁸³

The above quotation described an overall impression of the gathering site, but failed to offer individual features of the setting. To a larger extent, the scene Wang described was so common that it could be found at many other sites in the lower reach of the Yangtze River. The situation applies to Sun Chuo's writing. In the postface Sun Chuo

⁸³ Translations were based on "Nature Poetry" (H. C. Chang, 1977), p.8, Strassberg's "Inscribed Landscape", pp.65-66 and Mather's SSHY, pp. 344-345. There had been questions about Wang Xizhi's authorship of the preface, but after careful examination, Holzman points out that the doubts are unreasonable since they are based on misunderstanding of Wang's thought (Holzman, 1997).

attempted to depict the highness of mountains and the broadness of the lakes, but he did not achieve that goal, considering that the numbers he employed in the following quotation were mainly used for the convenience for composing poems rather than for specific descriptions of the setting:

At the bank of southern brooks: high were the mountain ranges, ten thousand feet high; long were the lakes, millions of square miles.⁸⁴

Moreover, the researcher found that the Orchid Pavilion poets' perception of scenery was closely related to individuals' previous experiences of landscape. The nuclear members⁸⁵ of the Kuaiji literati coterie tended to hold a more positive attitude toward the appreciation of nature as discussed in the above section. Accordingly they contributed to more lines of landscape description than did others. Some of them devoted a half, even a whole poem to the depiction of scenery, which is an outstanding phenomenon considering that metaphysics poetry predominated the poet society in the period of Eastern Jin.

The "madman"⁸⁶ Sun Tong spared no efforts in his writing of scenery, without a single line allocated to metaphysical meditation that might occur to other poets at the occasion, which showed his confidence in confirming the value of landscape depiction in poems.

⁸⁴ Translations in "The Songs of the Orchis Tower" (Bischoff, 1985), pp.205-206, with slight modifications.

⁸⁵ The present author used the couple of concepts, i.e. nuclear member and peripheral members, for the convenience of discussion. It should be noted that there might be no strict distinctions between them in spite of the differentiation in respects like social status, landscape taste, and talent in literature and arts.

⁸⁶ See SSHY, 23/35: 413.

The landowners⁸⁷ contemplate the mountains and streams;
 Looking up searching for the tracks of the hermits.
 The revolving pool swirls up a thoroughfare in the middle;
 Sparse bamboo divide the tall paulownia.
 Then flows the turning light goblets;
 Clear sounding wind floats falling among the pines.
 Birds of the season sing by long mountain streams;
 The ten thousand sounds blow among the linked peaks.⁸⁸

The first couplet tells that on the one hand, in this festival gathering his concentration was on the mountains and rivers rather than anything else, and on the other, he did not immerse himself in the pleasure brought by drinking wine but rather gazed at the scenery. The middle two couplets show that while looking at the floating goblets in the stream and the swirls, he would never forget to gaze at the natural objects around, including the harmonious coexistence of bamboos and paulownia, and the shaking pine in the wind. It is worth noticing that Sun Tong was the only one among the Orchid Pavilion poets who mentioned three specific plants, by contrast with some poets who did not refer to any specific plant. His plentiful aesthetic experience in the appreciation of nature might account for his awareness of the existence of these plants as landscape elements. The last couplet discloses that in the appreciation process, not only the visual sense but the aural one was employed as well.

Accordingly, the poet heard the singing of birds and a variety of pleasant natural sounds. Sun's case shows a typical appreciation at this stage, which is also an overview of the setting, without essential difference from Wang Xizhi's description

⁸⁷ Referring to the participants of the Orchid Pavilion gathering since most of them had manors. See "Zhonggu xiandao shi jinghua" (Zhong, 1994), p.279.

⁸⁸ Translations in Lavalley's, "Formality and the pursuit of pleasure", p. 254, with slight modifications.

mentioned previously. The desirable aesthetic images that he created might explain Wang Xizhi's admiration of him as the leading figure in composing poems in the occasion (Zhong, 1994, p. 279). In this sense, he surpassed his younger brother Sun Chuo in the respect of landscape writing in the special moment.

Sun Tong was not alone in composing landscape poems in the full sense. Xie An's younger brother, Xie Wan 謝萬 (320-361), a repeat visitor of the Orchid Pavilion⁸⁹, even offered two landscape poems at this occasion, thus showing his strong consciousness of landscape. In Jin literati gatherings, composing poetry was a popular literary game. The game rule might be that a poet should write at least one four-character-poem and one five-character-poem respectively, which suggested that it was a transition period in the respect of literary transformation from antiquity to the medieval age. The poetry genre is not the focus of this study, and the concern herein is what Xie Wan had written in his following two poems. His four-character-poem reads:

Intently looking into the lofty mountains,
 Gazing at the tall woods.
 Green creepers screen the mountain peak,
 Slender bamboo cap the high pointed hill.
 In the valley stream there is a pure echo;
 The drumming of the branches makes a singing sound.
 The black cliff spits moisture,
 The spreading fog thus overshadowed the cliff.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ See SJZ, 40: 622

⁹⁰ Translations in Lavalley, p.253, with the last line changed. By regarding the Lanting gathering as a homosexual party, Bischoff has an alternative translation of this poem, using some words related to sexual intercourse, such as mate, semen and sex. See "The Songs of the Orchis Tower", p.156.

In this poem Xie Wan told that like Sun Tong he also raised his head contemplating scenery, but he had different observations. He noticed the decorations of hills, the liana looking like screens and the bamboo groves like bonnets. The natural sounds he heard were the murmuring of streams and the drumming of trunks and twigs. The poem ends with an allusion to moisture and fog throwing shadows on the peaks, which make the aesthetic images more mysterious and thus meet the Taoist aesthetic taste. What the whole poem represents is a pure nature, without human intrusion, which is also different from Sun Tong's depiction. This characteristic applies to his second poem.

Xie Wan's five-character poem reads:

The spirit of winter curls up its dark banner;
 The deity of spring unrolls its bright flag.
 Divine water covers the nine regions⁹¹;
 A bright wind fans fresh luxuriance.
 The verdant forest is luminous with halcyon colored flower;
 Red blooms push up out of new stalks.
 Soaring birds strum their feathers as they roam;
 Leaping fish jump with pure sounds.⁹²

In his reading of the above poem, Lavalley (2004, p. 173) thinks the poet might be too drunk to see the authentic scenes around him and doubts that the representation in the poem is not related to the scenes before the poet's eyes. Similarly, Zhong (1994, p. 278) notes that the landscape writing in the poem is half authentic and half

⁹¹ The phrase "nine regions" refers to the territory of imperial China.

⁹² Lavalley, p.253, with a slight modification.

imagined. Their readings were doubtlessly reasonable, but it should be noted that the poem, nevertheless, shows an observation of the rhythm of nature, the change of season, together with corresponding variations, thus differentiating it from other poems in the poetry collection. The poet took a macroscopic perspective on the spring scenery, before him or not, thus making the depiction apply to whatever sites in the lower reach of the Yangtze River, not limited to the Orchid Pavilion. The ending couplet was borrowed from lines of the Western Garden poets (Lavalley, 2004, p. 173), which suggests a continuity of employing similar aesthetic images in describing scenery.

Unlike the three poems discussed above, Sun Chuo's two pieces were merely landscape poems in the partial sense. His four-character-poem reads:

In spring we sing and climb the terrace,
 Together we look down upon the flowing water.
 The ode "Chopping Wood" comes to mind.
 Dignified is this elegant party.
 Slender bamboo shades the pool;
 Swirling rapids coil around the hill.
 Water threads through the pond rousing up torrents,
 And comes to overflow the boat-like goblets.⁹³

The above poem, by contrast with Sun Tong's and Xie Wan's pieces, appears to offer nothing fresh in the respect of landscape experience. Possibly Sun Chuo was eager to show off his artifice of chanting poems, and thus in the first half of the poem

⁹³ Translations in Lavalley, p.251.

continuously made allusions to classical literatures. He employed these allusions to suggest the prosperity they enjoyed as well as his friendship with Wang Xizhi and Xie An.⁹⁴ The second half of the poem manages to draw a picture of the setting and the game of floating goblets, but lacks individual observations. The poem indeed shows Sun Chuo's literary artifice, skillfully integrating the allusions into the representation of scenes (Lavalley, 2004, p. 172).

Facing the scenes, Sun Chuo appeared to have been somewhat absent-minded. In the above poem his priority is the friendship with Wang and Xie; in the following one, he reminds the readers of his identity as a master of metaphysical poetry, refers to the delicious dishes they enjoyed, and praises the pieces of others in the latter part of the five-character-poem:

Grasping the brush I let fall clouds of elegant diction,
 With subtle words exploring the metaphysic truths.
 The season's treasures how could we not enjoy them?
 Hearing your poetic chanting I forget the flavor of food.⁹⁵

In the poem including the above lines he employs a different style by opening the poem with excellent depiction of the dynamic sceneries:

The flowing wind brushes the crooked islands;
 Lingering clouds shade the nine marshes.

⁹⁴ See Zhong Laiyin, "Zhonggu xiandao shi jinghua", p.278, n.1; n.2. Sun Chuo appeared to have an inclination of mentioning his friendship with aristocrats. The inclination of showing off even reaches such a degree that the friendship he claimed might have not existed. See SSHY, 5/48: 182-183.

⁹⁵ Translations in Lavalley, p.252, with modifications based on Zhong Laiyin's annotations, see "Zhonggu xiandao shi jinghua", p.269.

Voices of warblers sing in slender bamboo;
Roving fish sport in the swelling waves.⁹⁶

With the prudently chosen words, “brushes (*fu* 拂), shade (*yin* 蔭), sing (*yin* 吟) and sport (*xi* 戲)”, the four lines effectively reenact the scene before the poet’s eyes.

At the end of the discussion of the nuclear members of the Kuaiji literati coterie is a brief examination of Xie An’s poem. His four-character-poem writes that the festival excursion shows a continuity of the convention of Lustration Festival originated from the antiquity, and lingering in natural environment makes them feel proud and look down upon the mundane world:

The ancient and those who came before us
Took to heart their spring time roaming.
We are in harmony here, our words maintaining (their tradition).
We commit our contempt of the world to the trees and hills.⁹⁷

The taste in landscape might in part account for Kuaiji literati’s contempt of worldly affairs. Like his friends and younger brother, Xie An would not fail to exhibit the aesthetic images reflected in his mind. He thus went on with:

Lush and luxuriant are joined ranges;
Vast and boundless are the plains and fields.
Revolving skies hang with mist;
The icy spring cracks open and flows.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Ibid, with a slight modification. In the original text of the poem, the phrase in the first line is 枉渚 “crooked islands”, not 柱渚 “column-like islands”, see JShi, 13: 901.

⁹⁷ Translations in Lavalley, p.252.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

It could be discerned from the above lines that Xie An might attempt to show his aesthetic taste different from others, depicting a sort of sublime scene by the wording of numerous joined ranges and boundless plains and fields. However, the researcher doubts that the images belong to the scene presented to him since Wang Xizhi and Sun Chuo had, respectively in the preface and the epilogue, already described the topography or landform of the gathering site: there were not such boundless plains and fields. Therefore he might have used the same artifice as was in Xie Wan's five-character-poem: half reality, and half imagination.

The above discussed the cases of the nuclear members of the Kuaiji literati coterie, who account for a low ratio of the participants of the Orchid Pavilion gathering. These nuclear members could not claim monopoly on landscape appreciation, and the peripheral ones, despite that their aesthetic cultivation might not be parallel to that of their nuclear counterparts, also exhibited their interest in scenery in varying degrees, as shown in the following table.

Table 5: Landscape description in the Orchid Pavilion poems by peripheral members

Poets	Landscape lines ⁹⁹
Xi Tan	A warm wind rises in the eastern valley; Harmonious pneuma shakes the tender shoots.
Sun Si	Gazing at cliffs I recollect the reclusion of Xu You; Looking down on the flowing wave I think of Zhuangzi.
Hua Mao	The tress are glorious surely luxuriant, The waves stir up as they bend in the river.
Yuan Qiaozhi	Turning my head to gaze at the resplendent forest blooms;

⁹⁹ Texts in JShi, 13: 895-917. Full Translations in Lavalley, pp.248-262.

	Looking down, looking up, under the bright sky, the broad stream.
	Strong currents flow carrying fragrant wine...
Wang Xuanzhi	Pine and bamboo stand upright by the steep cliffs; A secluded mountain stream rouses a clear current.
Wang Ningzhi	Wisps of smoke fanned by the wind; With brilliant joy the harmonious penuma is pure.
Wang Suzhi	Chanting verse as the winding water rushes by; Clear waves twist and turn revealing white fish.
Wang Huizhi	Scattering thoughts in the landscape; Desolate, forgetting our confines. Gracefully floating bright and intelligent; Sparse pine trees shroud the peaks. ¹⁰⁰
Wang Binzhi	The cinnabar cliffs tower over the land; ¹⁰¹ Blossoms elegant reflect in the woods. Clear water stirs up waves; Now floating, now sinking. Fresh blossoms reflected in the trees so elegantly; Drifting fish sport in the clear dikes. ¹⁰²
Wang Fengzhi	Without restraint gazing at the rocky mountain peaks; Looking down on the stream that washes away all traces. Feeling the flourish of the fishes and birds; A peaceful abode secluded in the mountains.
Wei Pang	On the third day of the third month of spring there is delight in the harmonious pneuma; The myriad things all are one in happiness.
Xu Fengzhi	Looking down brushing the pure white waves; Looking up plucking the fragrant orchids.

Unlike the nuclear members who composed eight lines, even twelve¹⁰³, most of the peripheral members wrote merely four lines, which means that their landscape lines in the above table respectively account for approximately fifty percent of the content of their poems.

¹⁰⁰ Translations slightly modified.

¹⁰¹ The translation of this line was modified based on the original text.

¹⁰² The couplet is in another poem.

¹⁰³ E.g. Wang Xizhi's several metaphysics poems.

To a large extent, the Orchid Pavilion gathering was an ideal opportunity for the common literati to learn from the elite, also for the young from the old. Among the participants there were brothers¹⁰⁴, as well as fathers and sons.¹⁰⁵ It is not difficult to find some traces of imitation in their lines. In a manner similar to that of the nuclear members, the peripheral ones described the following natural objects: the warm wind, the cinnabar cliffs, the decorated peaks, the hovering birds, the luxuriant woods, the forest blooms, the sparse pines, the slender bamboos, the crooked stream, the sporting fish in the clear water, and the torrents floating their goblets. Besides these aesthetic images, the imitation of peripheral members was also reflected in their allusions, similar to that of nuclear ones, to the following issues: festival tradition, the ancient recluses, the pleasure of excursion to a suburban river mentioned by Confucian and his disciples, the joy of fish stated by the Taoist master Zhuangzi. Furthermore, the purpose of learning were apparent for two children, i.e. Wang Xizhi's two youngest sons, Wang Caozhi, fourteen, and Wang Xianzhi, nine. They were too young to compose poems in limited time as well as to drink wine. Accordingly, they attended for learning rather than for competing in chanting poems. As for what they were hoped to learn, it could be the artifice of composing poems, or the taste of landscape appreciation.

In summary, the competition of chanting poems required no themes except for

¹⁰⁴ E.g. Sun Tong and Sun Chuo, Xie An and Xie Wan, Yu Yun and Yu You, Wang Xizhi and his cousin Wang Binzhi. There was a doubt about the attendance of Wang Xizhi's sixth son, Wang Caozhi, but Li Longqiu has argued that Wang Caozhi presented himself at the historic gathering. See "From Jingu to Lanting" (Longqiu Li, 2006), pp.25-27.

¹⁰⁵ E.g. Wang Xizhi's seven sons, and Sun Chuo's son, Sun Si.

styles, but most of the poets represented the scenes around the Orchid Pavilion in varying degrees¹⁰⁶, which suggests that a strong consciousness of landscape had found its place in the minds of Kuaiji literati. In their Orchid Pavilion poems, besides the representation of scenery and the pleasure of proximity to nature¹⁰⁷, they also explored the sense of landscape appreciation to them, see the table below.

Table 6: The sense of landscape appreciation to the Orchid Pavilion poets

Poets	Related lines ¹⁰⁸
Wang Xizhi	Release our pent up thoughts on the lone hill.
Cao Maozhi	When the season arrives who does not recollect old friends? ¹⁰⁹ As we scatter among the wooded spaces.
Yuan Qiaozhi	Unrestrained this tired heart scatters. With wild fanciful thoughts I escape the common track...
Wang Xuanzhi	Our passions and intent are vanished and scattered without restraint.
Wang Suzhi	In ancient times during days of leisure, Taste consisted of forests and mountain ridges. Today on this outing, My spirit is delighted, my heart serene.
Wang Huizhi	Scattering thoughts in the landscape; Desolate, forgetting our confines.
Wang Yunzhi	Scatter open desires intent on expanding; Worldly straps of officialdom already removed.
Yu Yue	The spirit scatters in the universe... Trusting in freedom for an instant of happiness...
Xie Yi	Bathing in the creek joyfully discarding worldly desires.

There is a key word in these lines, “scatter” (*san* 散). In the original texts of these lines, all of the poets except for Wang Suzhi and Xie Yi used the word in their poems.

¹⁰⁶ Approximately sixty-five percent of the Orchid Pavilion poems mention their viewing of scenery as well as their pleasure in the festival excursion. See Li Longqiu “From Jingu to Lanting”, pp.29-33.

¹⁰⁷ Lavalley has made an in-depth exploration of the pleasures of the Orchid Pavilion poets, which discloses that their pleasures were derived not only from landscape appreciation but also from religious and philosophical experiences in the scenic setting. See “Formality and the pursuit of pleasure”, pp.191-206.

¹⁰⁸ Texts in JShi, 13: 895-917. Translations of full poems could be found in Lavalley, pp.248-262.

¹⁰⁹ In the original text there is no such a concrete object for the poet to recollect, and what occurred to the poet was more a sort of nostalgia than missing old friends.

The word “*san*” has a variety of meaning, but in the above lines it is relatively close to the following meaning: dissipate and relieve¹¹⁰. What the poets needed to dissipate and relieve were issues derived from their life in the mundane world, such as the restraints, the melancholy, the unfulfilled ambitions, the desires, and worldly considerations. These issues could have been a burden in the daily life, negative to a healthy and happy life, and thus the poets needed to dissipate or relieve them. It was the scenery that helped them to achieve the goal, which was summarized by Sun Chuo in the epilogue of the collection of the Orchid Pavilion poems:

Just as tranquil water remains clear and becomes muddy when agitated, so does a man have his head turned by success in the agitation of the court, but when he walks leisurely in the forest and moors, his mind is stimulated by the vastness of the space he sees about him.¹¹¹

In the above quotation, Sun stated different lifestyles, engagement or disengagement, had different effects on one’s mind or feeling. Literati could keep calm via disengagement, and they could be restless via engagement. In a sense Sun Chuo suggested that as a part of life, leisure, especially the leisure involved in landscape appreciation, has its own value. The meaningful lines thus could be understood as a justification of their disengagement in their early years.

Facing the old dilemma, engagement or disengagement, Sun Chuo felt perplexed, and attempted to find a solution:

¹¹⁰ The word “*san*” also refer to express. The poets could have expressed their nostalgia in the natural settings.

¹¹¹ Texts in QJW, 61:1808a-b. Translations in Holman, 1996, pp. 152-153. Different translations could be found in Lavalley, p.261, and Bischoff, "The Songs of the Orchis Tower", pp.205-206.

When, during this period of muddled thought, I hope to find a Way that will polish and clarify my spirit, I time and again turn towards the landscape, the mountains and rivers, to drive away the unresolved worries that plague my heart. I hope that in one day's excursion I will find enough [pleasure] to last one hundred years.¹¹²

The solution he found was landscape appreciation that literati used to eliminate their worries and restore their calmness. Having clarified his understanding of the sense of landscape appreciation, he then narrated the historic gathering and their appreciation of scenery, ending up with telling the experience shared by the fourth century literati: they indeed appreciated the beauty of nature in spite of the intrusion of metaphysical meditations (Holzman, 1996, pp. 153-154). It was landscape that brought them pleasure by satisfying their aesthetic needs, and took away their worries and negative feelings.

¹¹² Ibid.

CHAPTER VI: THE LONG JOURNEYS ASSOCIATED WITH SCENERY

Through the appreciation of garden and suburban scenes, the intellectual society had forged a strong consciousness of landscape as shown in the lifestyle of Kuaiji literati. With the strong awareness of scenery, the Jin literati's travel took on a new look, which then differentiated them from ancient travelers. While landscape awareness influenced travel, travel had a reverse effect on landscape appreciation. To a large extent, it was travel that made early medieval literati encounter fresh scenic settings and begin to concern with the details of landscapes. With these considerations, this chapter aims to examine the interrelationship between landscape appreciation and travel.

FROM KUAJI TO JIANKANG

Most of the aristocratic families, as mentioned previously, settled down in Kuaiji Commandery and enjoyed living there. Frequent travels then became necessary since the male members of these aristocratic families needed to pursue their political careers in the capital, Jiankang 建康, 1355 *li*¹ away from Kuaiji by water or over land² (See Figure 3). Living in retirement was a temporary lifestyle, which was disclosed by the cases of Kuaiji literati. Most of its members took their offices sooner or later.³ At the moment of gathering at the Orchid Pavilion, Wang Xizhi was the

¹ A Chinese unit of length (1 *li* is 0.5 kilometer or 0.3 miles).

² SS, 35: 1030.

³ Among the Kuaiji literati coterie Xu Xun appeared to be the only one who held the belief of disengagement in a whole life and never took an office.

governor of Kuaiji Commandery, Sun Chuo his subordinate, Sun Tong the former magistrate of Yuyao Prefecture, and Xie Wan a secretarial official. Xie An remained in retirement, but he had already prepared for taking office.

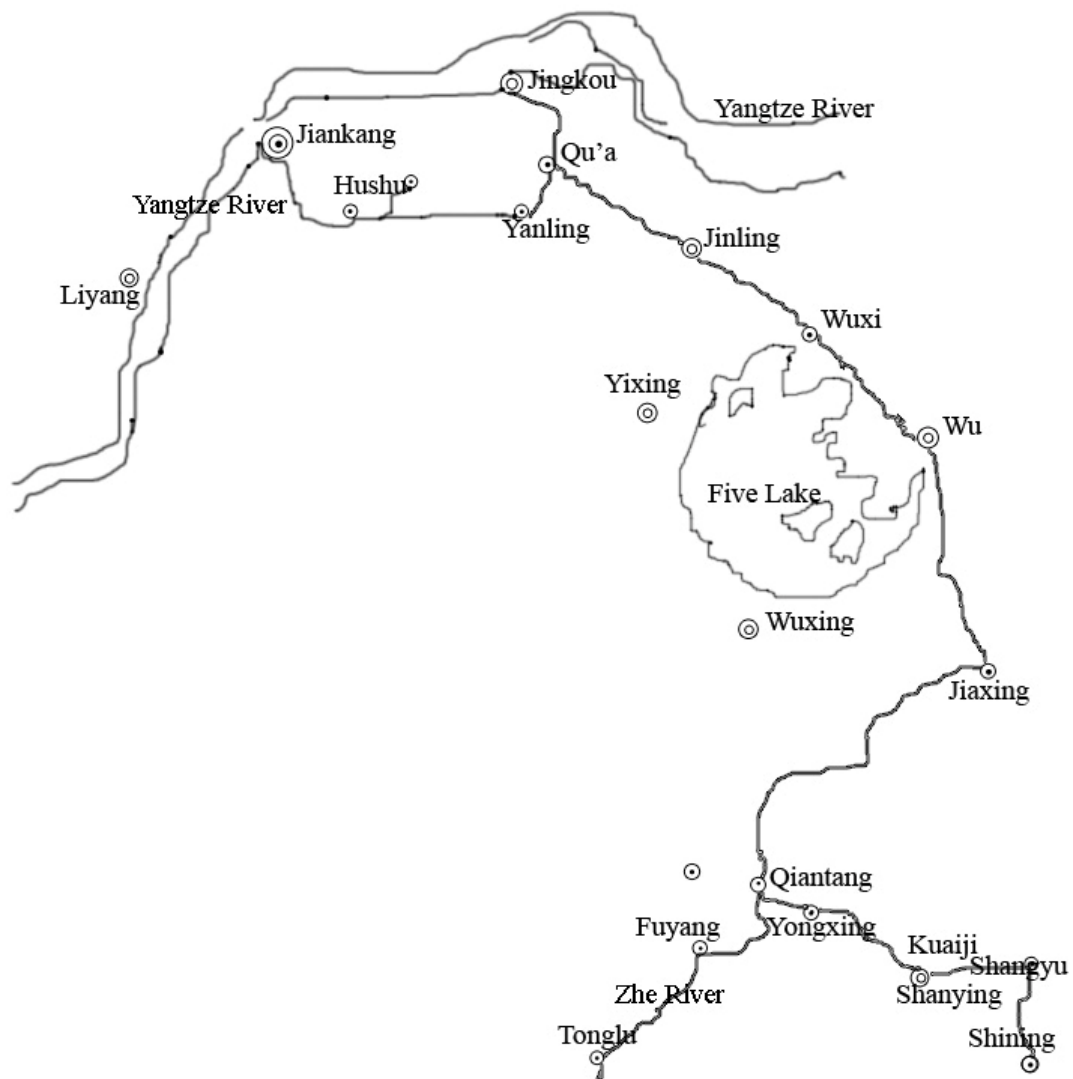


Figure 3: The route from Kuaiji to Jiankang⁴

When the literati came out of Kuaiji, they were inclined to travel by water rather than over land. In the lower reach of the Yangtze River, there were a considerable number of rivers and lakes that could be used for transportation. Most of the rivers in

⁴ Redrawn from Tan Qixiang, "The historical atlas of China" [中國歷史地圖集] (Beijing: Ditu chubanshe, 1982).

China flow from west to east, and because of that, since antiquity canals connecting the South and the North had been constructed for supplementing watercourses. The natural rivers and the canals then formed a network for water transportation, which was more effective than its overland counterpart. In early medieval China, the imperial highways (*chidao* 馳道) were relatively smooth, but the highways needed a considerable amount of labor for maintenance, and were less efficient than watercourse in terms of transportation, thus playing an insignificant part in the whole transportation network (Lü, 1983, pp. 1207-1208, 1214-1215). Furthermore, movement on the highways was often accompanied with hardships. When it was sunny, the sands blown by the wind were annoying; when it was rainy, the mud would make the marching harder than usual. Still another issue helps to explain the literati's disinterest in overland travels: the upper class in the Six Dynasties period preferred ox cart to horse carriage. This means travel by ox cart would be slow to a degree that the travelers could not bear. Ox cart might be graceful for suburban excursions as in the time of Western Jin, but if used in long-distance travels, it would be a torture. Therefore, when Kuaiji literati were leaving for the capital or other remote place, boat would be their first choice, supplemented by sedan chairs (*jianyu* 肩輿) for short-distance mobility. It was most likely that the traveling literati could, whether in boat or in sedan chair, enjoy their journeys comfortably and contemplate scenery en route.

It appeared that travelers from Kuaiji to Jiankang would spend most of their time

in ship on the canals. From Shanyin to Qiantang, there was a canal later called the Eastern Canal of Zhejiang (An, 2001, p. 61).⁵ Through sailing on the canals, they could reach Wu Commandery, where they might, if time permit, stay for several days for appreciation of famous landscape gardens, suburban hills and other attractions. After that, they continued their journeys till they arrived in Qu'a Prefecture, where they might stay for a view of a crooked lake whose original appearance was changed by the First Emperor. If they have no interest in detours for a visitation of the city of Jingkou, they would continue their boat trips on the Splitting-hill Ditch (*pogang du* 破岡瀆) excavated in the third century (Shi, 1988, pp. 131-134). Thanks to the ditch, they could avoid the dangerous route from Jingkou to Jiankang, a watercourse in the downstream Yangtze River, full of large waves. The final passage of their navigation was on the Huai River, where they could appreciate the hills scattered on the outskirts of the capital Jiankang.

Ships were not merely a traffic tool for traveling literati since they had other functions, e.g. accommodation and sites for gathering. Ships could, if necessary, offer accommodation for early medieval travelers.⁶ Furthermore, ships could be a meeting site for travelers and their friends. The two functions, together with the point that ships were appropriate for appreciating scenery along the watercourse, made ships significant in literati's journeys.⁷

⁵ The canal extended from Shanyin 山陰 to Shangyu 上虞 and Yuyao 餘姚 prefectures, with a length of 400 *li*.

⁶ The early medieval travelers should have not much difficulty in finding hostels along the route from Kuaiji to Jiankang since the Jin period saw the prosperity of accommodation business, and temples and monasteries also received guests. See Lü Simian, "Liangjin Nanbeichao shi", pp.1211-1213.

⁷ Ships also played an important part in the military respect and large scale transportation. See Lü Simian,

In the Six Dynasties period, there was no transportation industry. The businessmen managed to transport the commodities by themselves (Lü, 1983, p. 1213). The merchant ships offered an opportunity for travelers to hitchhike as shown in the following source:

(In 323) when Chu Pou 褚裒 set out toward the east (to take up his new post in the capital), he boarded a merchant ship, and several of his fellow officials escorted him on his way, stopping for the night at the Qiantang Inn.⁸

But it should be noted that the traveling literati-officials could have their ships offered by the government, as illustrated by the quotation below.

(In 290) when He Xun 賀循 was on his way up to Luoyang from Kuaiji to take up his post ..., his boat passed through the Glorious Gate of Wu Commandery. He was sitting in the boat playing a seven-stringed zither.⁹

Furthermore, it appeared to be uncommon for the traveling literati to rent ships, due to the lack of a transportation business.

Above is an overview of the situation of travel from Kuaiji to Jiankang, and following that, the researcher will examine the linkages between the journeys and landscape appreciation. The examination follows the sequence of stopovers on the route from Kuaiji to Jiankang.

“Liangjin Nanbeichao shi”, pp.1214-1217.

⁸ SSHY, 6/18: 196.

⁹ SSHY, 23/22: 407.

Without leaving Kuaiji Commandery, the literati travelers could already be excited with its beautiful scenes. The gazetteers of Kuaiji Commandery described that:

In the Kuaiji area there is an especially large number of famous mountains and streams, where peaks tower, lofty and precipitous, disgorging and swallowing clouds and mist; where pines and junipers, maples, and cypresses rise with mighty trunks and gaunt branches; and where lakes and pools lie mirror-like and clear.¹⁰

After viewing the scenery, Wang Xianzhi 王獻之 (344-386), who had participated in the Orchid Pavilion gathering as a nine-year old child, mentioned his unforgettable impression on the landscape in the area of Kuaiji to his friends as below:

Whenever I travel by the Shanyin road (in Kuaiji Commandery), the hills and streams naturally complement each other in such a way that I can't begin to describe them. And especially if it's at the turning point between autumn and winter, I find it all the harder to express what's in my heart.¹¹

The tone in the above quotation appeared to have been derived from a traveler rather than a local. The date that Wang attained such travel experience in Shanyin Prefecture was unknown, but his biography says that when he grew up, he took offices outside Kuaiji, and married the Xin'an princess.¹² Accordingly, he might have already moved to the capital or somewhere else and no longer lived in Kuaiji as did in his childhood. Although Wang had not made specific description of the

¹⁰ SSHY, 2/91: 75, n.1.

¹¹ SSHY, 2/91: 75.

¹² See JS, 80: 2105.

landscape in Shanyin, his contemporaries, who favored his artistic achievements, appreciated his above discourse which was an overall impression on the scenery in Shanyin. His discourse became one of the famous descriptions of the scenery in the area of Kuaiji. In the above quotation, the phrase “*yingjie buxia* 應接不暇” in the original text was translated as “I can’t begin to describe them”. The translation suggests that the beauty was more than Wang’s saying could describe, but it should be noted that Wang might be emphasizing that the diversity and variety of landscape reached such a degree that he had not enough time to appreciate them at the speed of travel. The layer of meaning was made even clear by the discourse discussed below.

Another influential description of the landscape in Kuaiji was offered by an excellent artist in Eastern Jin, Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (c.349-c.410). Like the Orchid Pavilion poets, he had spent much time in viewing landscape.¹³ Not only did he gaze on the scenery, but he also drew them in his landscape paintings. He appeared to have visited Kuaiji more than once. Having returned to Jiangling from a vacation travel to Kuaiji, he responded to friends’ and colleagues’ inquires about the scenes he had viewed in Kuaiji as follows:

A thousand cliffs competed to stand tall,
 Ten thousand torrents vied in flowing.
 Grasses and tress obscured the heights,
 Like vapors and raising misty shrouds.¹⁴

¹³ See Frodsham, “The origins of Chinese nature poetry”, p.101. Frodsham mentioned that Gu Kaizhi had a close relationship with the Orchid Pavilion poets.

¹⁴ SSHY, 2/88: 74.

In the above quotation, Gu Kaizhi described the diversity and variety of landscape in the area of Kuaiji. In a sense, his description could be understood as supplement of Wang Xianzhi's discourse since the diversity and variety of landscapes explains why a traveler would feel that his time was not enough for a thorough gaze on sceneries in the region. By contrast with Wang Xianzhi's subjective depiction, Gu's above description was a relatively objective representation of scenery in the region. His talent in the art of painting offered him the ability of making a picturesque description. There is still another issue related to Gu's animate description of sceneries in Kuaiji. Gu was a local of Wu Commandery, thus being a pure visitor of Kuaiji. The contrast between landscape in his home town and that in Kuaiji might contribute to his accurate understanding of the characteristics of landscapes in Kuaiji.

The two discourses discussed above suggest that references to the beauty of scenery, especially those about the area of Kuaiji, were not uncommon in meetings or gatherings of friends and colleagues. Inquires about what scenes the travelers had appreciated in their journeys might disclose a shared interest in landscapes among the literati class. In the latter part of this chapter there are still other cases of such inquires. The fourth century literati's inquiries on travelers' landscape experiences might explain why a century later, Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456-536) in a letter to his friend had the following statement: "The beauty of landscape is an ancient topic"¹⁵. But Tao might be misleading since even in the first two centuries AD, there was no

¹⁵ See "Da Xiezhongshu shu" 答謝中書書.

such a topic on scenery, not to mention the antiquity (Frodsham, 1967a). Thus it is likely that the period he referred to is the third and fourth centuries.

In existing studies of landscape literature, the literati who made exciting descriptions of landscape drew much attention. It should be noted those literati who made inquiries of landscape were also important for the evolution of landscape appreciation however. Without them, Wang Xianzhi, Gu Kaizhi, etc. might lose their audience, and their interest in landscape would be an individual phenomenon. The existence of those literati who made inquiries of travelers' landscape experience is to a certain extent evidence of the shared interest in landscape in the Six Dynasties period.

On the route from Kuaiji to Jiankang, the first place for stopover was Qiantang Prefecture, where the traveling literati had entered the territory of Wu Commandery. Qiantang was the site where the Zhe River joined the sea. The tide broke into the estuary of the Zhe River, producing a grand waterscape (later named as “Hangzhou Bore”) for travelers to contemplate. Gu Kaizhi had ever written a poetic essay after viewing the waterscape. The essay opened with the following lines:

I have come to the estuary of the Zhe River and looked to the north,
To admire the grand waves of the great sea.
The boundless water connects the two banks, a long distance in-between,
The hills beside look like floating in the river.¹⁶

¹⁶ Gu Kaizhi, *Guantao fu* 觀濤賦. Texts in QJW, 135: 2236.

Having passed Qiantang, the traveling literati might be eager to head for Wu Prefecture, a place in the middle of the route from Kuaiji to Jiankang. In the city of Wu there were famous landscape gardens, which the literati travelers would take their opportunities to appreciate. The private gardens were not open for common travelers, but literati-officials might be welcome. Therefore Wang Xizhi's two sons had no difficulty in accessing the well-known landscape gardens which were representative for the well-designed southern landscape constructions.

Wang Huizhi was once traveling through Wu Commandery, when he noticed that at the home of a certain gentleman and great officer there were some extremely fine bamboos... Wang went by in a small sedan chair directly to a spot beneath the bamboos, where he intoned poems and whistled for a long while.¹⁷

The literati class shared similar interest in appreciation of bamboos since the antiquity, but Wang Huizhi's 王徽之 (c. 338-386) strong interest in bamboos appears to be without parallel in his time. Referring to his love of bamboo, he claimed: "How could I live a single day without these gentlemen?"¹⁸ In his eyes, the slender bamboo became graceful gentlemen, and thus he would never fail to take opportunities to appreciate them. In the trip as mentioned above, he visited the landscape garden merely for his aesthetic needs, having no intention of meeting the host. The situation applied to his younger brother, Wang Xianzhi:

¹⁷ SSHY, 24/16: 430.

¹⁸ SSHY, 23/46: 418-419.

Once when Wang Xianzhi was passing through Wu Commandery on his way to Kuaiji, he heard that Gu Pijiang had a famous garden there. Although he had previously never been acquainted with the owner, he went directly to his house. ... Wang wandered about at will through the garden, and when he had finished, pointed around to indicate its good and bad features, just as no one else were present.¹⁹

The two cases of the Wang brothers show that unacquaintance with the host would not hold back their desires for visiting the famous landscape gardens in Wu Prefecture. The Wang brothers might have strong aesthetic awareness. They might have the capability of making commentaries on the planning of landscape constructions and discerning the successful and unsuccessful aspects. If this is true for them, then their aesthetic capability in terms of appreciation of garden sceneries would far surpass their precursors, e.g. the Western Garden poets and the Golden Valley poets. The lack of sources makes it impossible for further discussions of their aesthetic appreciation of garden scenes.

Besides the famous landscape gardens, literati travelers might have a must-visit landscape site, i.e. Tiger Hill (*huqiu* 虎丘) in the suburb of the city of Wu. The Ming Dynasty literati Xie Zhaozhe 謝肇淛 (1567-1624) had an exciting reference to the hill:

Mountains and rivers have to be in the right place. If they are located in remote areas, and have no accessibility, they will remain unknown to the world. By contrast, the Tiger Hill in Gusu²⁰, beside a grand mountain, appears to be nothing more than a hillock and not worthy of allusions. But it

¹⁹ SSHY, 24/17, 430-431.

²⁰ Referring to Wu city in early medieval China, present Suzhou.

is near the regional hub of traffic, both over land and by water, therefore, it has been frequently visited and appreciated in the last one thousand years. So mountains could be categorized into two types, fortunate and unfortunate (according to their location and accessibility).²¹

Xie Zhaozhe is correct in pointing out the relationship between the fame of a landscape site and its location, as well as the relationship between its accessibility and visitations received. Tiger Hill is indeed a typical case to support his idea. The relationship he disclosed can be further explained by the modern theory of distance decay (see McKercher & Lew, 2003). The suburban hills enjoyed their fames brought about by frequent visitations and allusions. Xie is also correct in pointing out that suburban hills, like the Tiger Hill, has been visited since the early medieval age. Apparently, he could find evidence in travel records of the Tiger Hill. For instance, Gu Kaizhi had visited the hill and described his experience of the site as written below:

The Tiger Hill is located in the northwest of Wu City. It contains the Truth and the Antiquity, being a reminder of the metaphysics. Among many hills around, it looks nothing spectacular; but once you climb it, you will feel that it is lofty and steep, and could even compatible to the peaks of Mount Hua.²²

Gu told that Tiger Hill had the air of lofty mountains and hid something similar to the Tao of Taoism. The unusual aspects of the hill were further explained by Gu's contemporary, Wang Xun 王珣 (349-400):

²¹ Xie Zhaozhe, "Wuza zu" 五雜俎, cited in "An outline of the tourist culture of literati-officials in late Ming China" (J.-S. Wu, nd.).

²² Gu Kaizhi, *Huqiu shan xu* 虎丘山序, texts in YWLJ, 8: 141-142.

On all of four sides of the hill are ranges, and in its southern part, a trail, along which are cliffs and woods, winds its way from the bottom to the top of the hill. The trail ascends and descends occasionally, thus prolonging the necessary time of climbing, and making the hill somewhat secluded.²³

As Wang pointed out, the trail twisted along the south slope, with the woods and cliffs along the path, and thus literati travelers needed to spend some time climbing the hill and enjoying the scenery although the relative height of the hill was less than forty meters. When ascending the top of the hill, the literati travelers could have a bird-view of the cityscape of Wu.

In the area of Wu Prefecture, the Pavilion of Golden Glory, “*Jinchang ting* 金昌亭” was also on the route from Kuaiji to Jiankang. It was a site ideal for landscape appreciation, and additionally there were inns, so the travelers liked to stay there, and the locals would hold banquets there.²⁴ Xie Xin 謝歆 (fl. fourth cent. AD) recorded his experience of the pavilion:

Once while I was looking for a teacher, I was passing through Wu and came to the Glorious Gate, where suddenly I spied this pavilion flanking a canal parallel to the river. The signboard on it read, “Jinchang” (“Metal Prosperity”).²⁵

As literati, Xie paid special attention to the name of the pavilion, and his curiosity about the origin of the name was aroused. He then consulted with an old local, and received a satisfied explanation:

²³ Wang Xun, *Huqiu ji* 虎丘記, texts in *YWLJ*, 8: 141.

²⁴ See *SSHY*, 26/7: 465; 23/22: 407.

²⁵ *SSHY*, 26/7: 465-466, n.1.

Long ago when Zhu Maichen (fl. second cent. B.C.) was holding office under the Han, he was returning on his way to become governor of Kuaiji Principality, and met his welcoming officers, who were staying in an adjoining room in an inn here. (Not aware of his identity), they began competing with him for the best seat at table, until Maichen took out his (metal) seal and sash of his office, whereupon all the officers prostrated themselves before him shamefacedly and took the lower seats. Because of this incident, they built a pavilion here and called it “jinshang” (‘metal-wound’). It’s just the original meaning of the words was lost (that the pavilion is now known by the homophonous name, “Jinchang”).²⁶

The quotation above discloses that the locale of the pavilion had a history of at least four centuries when Xie Xin visited it. In the Former Han, there was already an inn at the site, and the inn could offer accommodation as well as food and beverage. The existence of such inns facilitated travels on the route from Kuaiji to Jiankang. For a literati traveler, the linkage to historical figures made the landscape site more attractive. Xie Xin’s exploration of the meaning of the pavilion’s name suggests that besides the scenery, literati travelers tended to explore the historical background of the site he visited. Furthermore, in the quotation above was the mention of an event worthy of attention, i.e. the officers of Kuaiji traversed a long distance to welcome their newly appointed governor. The phenomenon shows that travel could be involved in the building of social network. The Jin Dynasty saw a considerable number of excursions, escorting the travelers to the suburbs and saying farewell there, which was a common phenomenon on the outskirts of the capital Jiankang. The present author would not go so far as to explore the links between travel and

²⁶ Ibid.

relationship building, and the reference to the issue is to show that besides landscape appreciation, there were still other issues associated with literati-officials' journeys, which are beyond the focus of the present study.

The suburbs cultivated a collective interest in landscape as discussed in the previous chapter, and thus when literati travelers passed by the outskirts of cities, they might habitually gaze at the suburban scenes. The monk literati, Zhu Daoyi 竺道壹 (d. c. 400 AD), once returned from Jiankang to Kuaiji, when he passed the suburb of Wu city, he had a chance to view the outskirts that were by chance covered with snow. Having arrived in Kuaiji, he described the snow scenery that he had appreciated in the field of Wu to his fellow monks:

The wind and frost, of course, need not be told,
But snow 'first gathering' – how dark and dense!
Villages and towns seemed of themselves to whirl and dance,
While wooded hills then naturally turned white.²⁷

Zhu's discourse above shows the appreciation of winter scenes, which is helpful for understanding the appreciation of nature in the fourth century. His case demonstrates that the Jin literati had interest in sceneries in different seasons rather than merely in spring.

Near the west of Wu Prefecture was the Five Lake (present Lake Tai). The

²⁷ SSHY, 2/93: 76.

circumference of the lake was five hundred *li*, from which the name was derived.

There appeared to be no direct sources showing that Jin literati travelers on the route from Kuaiji to Jiankang or vice versa made a detour for viewing the waterscape of the lake. The extant sources are related to other routes taken by travelers, showing that appreciation of the Five Lake was not uncommon. Li Yong 李颢, whose father Li Chong 李充 settled in Kuaiji and was a member of the Kuaiji literati coterie,²⁸ once passed the territory of Yixing Commandery and gazed at the grand lake. In his literary piece titled “A poem on boating on the lake”, he depicted the sublime scenery as below:

The heaven far above looks like the banks (of the lake),
And the real banks extended like ribbons.²⁹

The aesthetic image “heaven as banks” created by Li Yong was helpful in describing the vastness of water surface and thus was echoed by later literati.

Another case about appreciating scenes of the Five Lake was involved in Huan Xuan 桓玄 (369-404), who had excellent narrative of his experience of mountain scenery³⁰. The following source shows that he once gazed at the waterscape of the lake:

In the end of Taiyuan Era (376-396), Huan Xuan was appointed as the grand warden of Yixing Commandery. He felt gloomy since his ambition was not

²⁸ See JS, 80: 2098-2099.

²⁹ JShi, 11: 858.

³⁰ See Nanyou Hengshan shixu 南遊衡山詩序, texts in QJW, 119: 2145a.

fulfilled. He once climbed the high and looked down upon the Zhen Marsh³¹, sighing: “My father was a Duke of China, and thus I was shameful to have been merely a governor of the Five Lake”.³²

Huan Xuan was too ambitious to attain calmness via viewing scenery despite Sun Chuo’s statement that landscape appreciation could make a literati attain calmness in the inner heart. Sun Chuo’s argument was echoed by later literati. In a letter to his friend Song Yuansi, Wu Jun 吳均 (469-520) wrote,

Viewing the peaks, the ambitious would give up their enterprises; gazing at the valleys, those who are used to being busy with worldly affairs would forget to return.³³

Sun and Wu are reasonable in pointing out that the appreciation of nature is helpful to relieve the tension and pressure brought by social life. But for Huan Xuan, the viewing of the Five Lake did not have such an effect; on the contrary, viewing the lake stimulated his desire of pursuing fame and feasts. He resigned after the excursion since the post was insignificant for him. Several years later, he managed to be an emperor for several months and then was killed.

Past Wu Prefecture, the literati travelers headed for the third stopover, Qu’a Prefecture, where the Lake of Crooked Banks, “*Qu’a* 曲阿”, was located. Xie Zhaozhe’s discourse, mentioned previously, about fortunate mountains applies to the Lake of Crooked Banks. Located in a regional hub of traffic, the lake was apparently

³¹ Zhenze 震澤, an alterantive name of the Five Lake. See Yangzhouji, cited in TPYL, 66: 524.

³² JS, 99: 2586.

³³ Wu Jun, Yu Song Yuansi shu 与宋元思書.

in the right place: it was on the route from Kuaiji to Jiankang and close to the two large cities, i.e. Jiankang and Jingkou. The location of the lake determined that it was extremely convenient for visitation, and thus the lake fell into the category of fortunate landscape sites. The Lake of Crooked Banks was unlike the unfortunate Five Lake that received little patronage in early medieval China even though the latter's circumference was five hundred *li*, by contrast with the small area of the former. In the following is a brief allusion to several cases of visiting the Lake of Crooked Banks in the fourth century.³⁴ Chu Pou 褚裒, after a drinking, once had a boating excursion with the Orchid Pavilion poet Sun Chuo on the lake.³⁵ The locale also saw farewell parties as shown in the following case: “(In 379) when Wang Yun became governor of Kuaiji Principality, Xie Xuan came out of the capital as far as Qu’a to give him a farewell party.”³⁶

Apart from its location and natural features, the Lake of Crooked Banks was related to the First Emperor, which added to its attractiveness in the eyes of the traveling literati.

Qu’a was originally named Yunyang, but the First Emperor, supposing that the place had the quality of a rival royal seat, gouged out the earth and leveled the mountains in order to destroy its efficacy, intercepting its straight course and making its banks crooked; therefore it was called Qu’a, the Lake of Crooked Banks.³⁷

³⁴ In the fifth century, the lake even received imperial patronages, considering that the hometown of the Song royal family was in Jingkou, near Qu’a.

³⁵ TPYL, 66: 528.

³⁶ SSHY, 25/54: 455.

³⁷ SSHY, 2/77: 70, n.1.

The Jin literati travelers should have been fairly acquainted with the story, which was helpful for their appreciation of the lake. Xie Wan, who produced excellent description of sceneries at the Orchid Pavilion, once visited the lake. On hearing the name of the lake, he understood the flow of the water and noted, “Undoubtedly it is profoundly filled and quietly limpid, receptive but not flowing on.”³⁸

Having left Qu’a, the literati travelers would spend some time on the Splitting-hill Ditch, through which they entered the Huai River that brought them to the capital. On the watercourse of the Huai River, they might stop their boats, appreciating the scenes around as well as receiving friends’ visitations. Wang Huizhi, who appreciated the fine bamboos in the garden of a literati-official in the Wu City, had an unforgettable experience on a tributary of the Huai River:

Wang Huizhi once came out of retirement to the capital and his boat was still moored by the banks...he had long known that Huan I was skilled at playing the transverse flute, but had never made his acquaintance. It happened that Huan was passing by along the shore while Wang was in the boat. ...Wang immediately had someone convey his greetings, saying, “I hear you’re skilled at playing the flute. Would you try playing for me once?”³⁹

In the beautiful natural setting, the general Huan I temporarily forgot his noble identity and played three tunes for Wang who appreciated Huan’s performance.

There were still other cases of such short sojourns on the Huai River. For instance, Huan Xuan, who once sighed at the time of looking over the Five Lake, had moored

³⁸ SSHY, 2/77: 70.

³⁹ SSHY, 23/49: 419.

his boat at the Rush Island in the Huai River, waiting for his friends' visitation.⁴⁰

Finally, the literati travelers arrived in the capital, where they, after finishing their business, might visit the famous temples in the metropolis. The specific situation of temple visitation is beyond the focus of the present study that focuses on the appreciation of natural landscape, however. In short, the main purpose of the journeys from Kuaiji to Jiankang appeared to be involved in position hunting and social network building, but this did not hold back literati travelers' appreciation of scenery on the route. Their appreciation was not a glimpse but contemplation, and thus they could have excellent descriptions of the scenes they had viewed. In their landscape descriptions there are almost no reflections of their feelings, especially the negative type, which makes them essentially different from their Han Dynasty counterparts. Their attention to the scenery en route is also a reminder of the taste of landscape cultivated on the outskirts of cities in the third century. To a large extent, it was the landscape experience accumulated in the suburban settings that made the journeys from Kuaiji to Jiankang associated with scenery. With the landscape consciousness they inherited from their precursors, the Eastern Jin traveling literati could not neglect the scenes on the route any more.

TAKING OFFICES AWAY FROM THE CAPITAL

⁴⁰ SSHY, 23/50: 420.

For most literati the route from Kuaiji to Jiankang was involved in their political careers. As mentioned previously, the aristocratic literati in Kuaiji went to the capital to hunt for governmental positions. If certain literati, including those from Kuaiji, were appointed for local positions, they would leave the capital to take their offices. They could appreciate the sceneries en route, like the literati travelers on the route from Kuaiji to Jiankang. If they were fortunate, the places where they were to take offices would be full of landscape sites, thus greatly fulfilling their aesthetic needs. At the extreme situation, a literati-official neglected his responsibilities and sought for beautiful scenery in the area he administrated, which was the case for Sun Tong mentioned in the previous chapter, as well as the case for Xie Lingyun discussed later in this section. Apart from the extreme cases, the literati-officials might take advantage of their leisure time to explore the region he administrated. These explorations then contributed to the qualitative changes of landscape appreciation at the turn of the fifth century and onwards, which was demonstrated by the following cases of three literati-officials who took offices respectively in Changsha (present capital of Hunan), Yidu (present Yidu City in Hubei), and Yongjia (present Wenzhou City in Zhejiang) (see Figure 4).

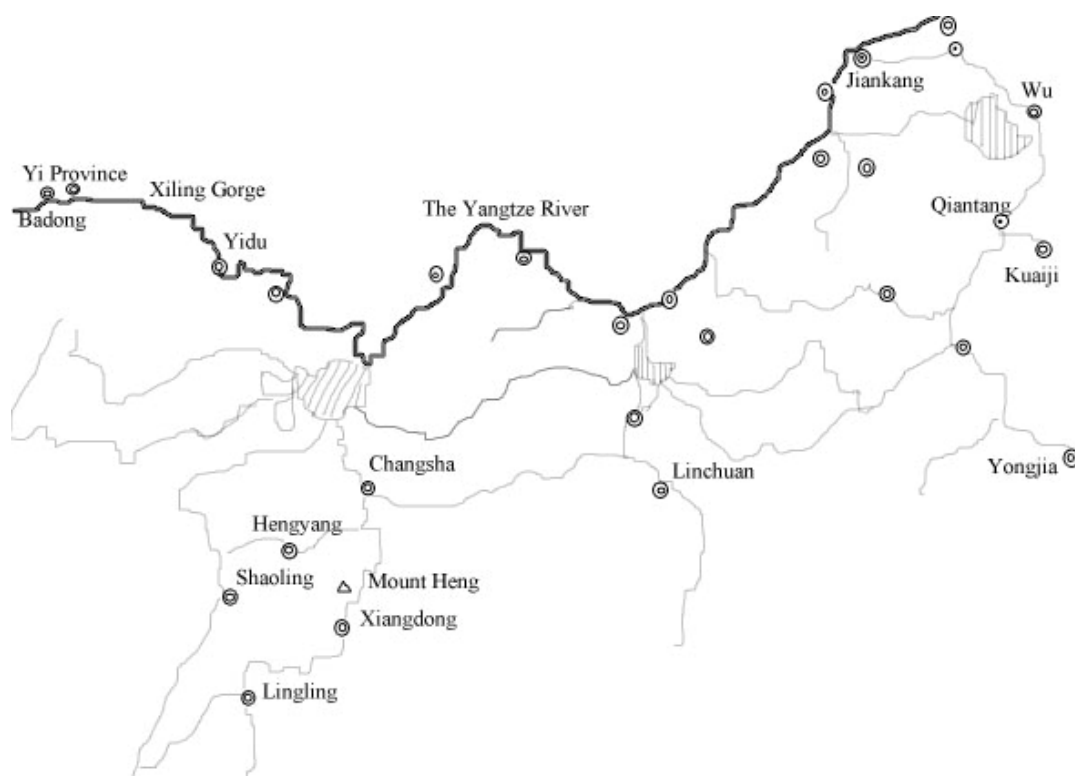


Figure 4: Travels of taking offices⁴¹

The qualitative changes of landscape appreciation occurred not only in the respect of the manner of appreciation but in the respect of the ideas of appreciation as well. Unlike the poets gathered at the Orchid Pavilion who were inclined to be satisfied with an overview of scenery, the literati-official who took offices away from the capital would pay attention to the detailed features of scenery. The concerns of landscape features then differentiated them from their precursors. Approximately several years after the historic gathering at the Orchid Pavilion, Luo Han 羅含 (292-372) took his office at Changsha Commandery. Based on his travel experiences, he described his appreciation of sceneries in the region. The first to examine here is the Xiang River that presented a vivid picture to Luo Han:

⁴¹ Redrawn from Tan Qixiang, "The historical atlas of China" (Beijing: Ditu chubanshe, 1982).

The Xiang River is so clear that I can see the riverbed, five or six *zhang*⁴² below the water surface. The pebbles are as large as the counters of *chupu*⁴³, with five bright colors. The white sands looks like frost and snow, and the red banks the rosy cloud of dawn.⁴⁴

The above quotation shows how Luo Han represented the scenes before his eyes. He used relatively accurate numeric description on the depth of the river, by contrast with his precursors who were inclined to use vague impression in landscape writing when they attempted to describe the scale of landscape.⁴⁵ He explained the degree of clearness of the water by stating that he could see the riverbed and the pebbles there. He could even discern the shapes and the colors of those cobbles, and he used the objects familiar to his contemporaries to describe the pebbles. In the quotation above, following the allusion to the clear water that offered Luo the most unforgettable impression was two images of the sands and the banks. Luo's observation includes two levels, microscopic and macroscopic, which makes his appreciation mode clearly differ from that of the Orchid Pavilion poets.

Besides the above case of the Xiang River, Luo Han's attention to features of scenery was also reflected in his appreciation of the natural objects discussed below. He once traveled to Gaoping Prefecture in Shaoling 邵陵 Commandery and ascended the Mount of Mottled Bamboos, "*wenzhu shan* 文竹山", where he had

⁴² A Chinese unit of length, approximately equal to 3.3 meters.

⁴³ A gambling game popular in early medieval China.

⁴⁴ HTDLSC, 431a.

⁴⁵ In Zhan Fangsheng's poem "Sailing Back to the Capital", he wrote "High mountains, a million feet, skyward./Long lakes, a thousand miles, clear." Similar descriptions could be found in Sun Chuo's description of scenery at Orchid Pavilion, mentioned previously.

specific findings:

On the mountain is a stone terrace like a bed, with its circumference and highness of one *zhang*. Around the terrace is a flourishing bamboo grove, whose trigs and leaves always sweep the terrace whenever there is a breeze.⁴⁶

In the above quotation, Luo employed numbers again for the description of the terrace, and what is more worthy of concern is his narrative of the lively scenery: the bamboo constantly sweeps the terrace. With such a description, he presented a dynamic, rather than motionless, picture of what were in his eyes. Maybe a stone terrace on the mountain is not uncommon, nor a flourishing bamboo grove, but once they were integrated into such a harmonious as well as animated scene, the mix of the two natural objects became unusual and unforgettable for the viewer.

At another time, Luo Han, passing Hengyang Commandery, visited Mount Heng 衡山, one of the Five Sacred Mountains (*wuyue* 五嶽).

In Mount Heng there are hanging springs, ticking and ticking among the rocks, which sound like the chords of strings. There are also white cranes hovering above, which look like they are dancing.⁴⁷

The description of springs in secluded mountains is a reminder of Lu Ji and Zuo Si, whose poems “Summoning the Recluses” had been discussed in the previous chapter.

The clear voice is much like what Lu Ji had depicted, “How the mountain brooks

⁴⁶ HTDLSC, 431b.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 430a.

gurgle; as the gushing fountains rinse the singing jade-like stones!” And the analogue to the chords of strings reminds the present author of Zuo Si’s classical line, “Mountains and streams give force their pure notes”. Apparently, Luo Han combined the aesthetic images he learned from his precursors. However, Luo Han had his own findings, e.g. the hovering cranes that made the mountain look like dwellings of immortals. It had been believed since the Han period that crane was one type of the animals that immortals rode. In this sense, the authentic scenery before Luo’s eyes looked like the fairly land, but it should be noted that he did not use his imagination in the representation, nor any exaggeration, as were in the Han rhapsodies or in the Wei-jin “wandering immortal” poems.

The style of essay, unlike poetry that needs many artifices, appears to be fairly appropriate for the representation of detailed features of scenery that literati-officials explored. In this respect Luo Han was apparently among the precursors who used the style of essay to record their aesthetic experience of landscape. In a sense, Wang Xianzhi’s discourse on the scenery in Shanyin road, discussed previously, can be regarded as a short essay of landscape. The act of employing the style of essay to record aesthetic experience of nature was optimized by Yuan Shansong 袁山松 (c. 344-401). During his tenure in Yidu Commandery, Yuan extensively explored landscape sites in the region. He collected his travel accounts of the place in the collection “A record of Yidu” (*yiduji* 宜都記), a part of which is extant today. The extant pieces show a continuity of concern with landscape features. Yuan’s essays,

together with other literati's similar works, also show that the style of essay is appropriate for the description of landscape features, which is similar to the situation that the style of poetry is appropriate for the depiction of aesthetic images.

Yuan Shansong described the Xiling Gorge, one of the Three Gorges in the upper reach of the Yangtze River Valley, as follows:

As one enters from Ox Rapids eastward into the area of West Mount Gorge, it is more than thirty miles to the mouth of the gorge. Both the mountains and the water twist and turn, while along both banks are tall mountains forming layers of screens. Only at noon and at midnight can one see the sun and the moon. The sheer cliffs may be more than a thousand *chang* high. The color of the rocks and their shapes, for the most part, resemble various kinds of things.⁴⁸

When wandering there, I frequently felt as if there were no paths in the front, but when I reached the place, I found it was not the case..⁴⁹

In the two quotations above, Yuan Shansong depicted the secluded valley according to his own experiences, i.e. disillusion of no path extended before him, and no sight of sunshine throughout most of the daytime. The latter also serves as a reflection of the towering of the cliffs, "sheer cliffs hang suspended"⁵⁰. He further narrated the seclusion with the feeling of hearing the voices of monkeys when passing the valley:

The loud cry of a gibbon is often heard, prolonged and mournful. As it echoes through the empty valleys, its despairing wail lingers before disappearing.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Translations in Strassberg, "Inscribed landscape", p. 90.

⁴⁹ Texts in YWLJ, 6: 106.

⁵⁰ SSHY, 2/58: 61.

⁵¹ Translations in Strassberg, "Inscribed landscape", p. 89.

(Hearing the sound) the travelers will sigh: “In the Three Gorges in Badong Commandery, the screaming of gibbons is so mournful that three of their cries will make my clothes become drenched with tears.”⁵²

The cries of gibbons had an apparent effect on the travelers who heard them. Hearing the cry of gibbons in the gorges could be an unforgettable experience. Yuan’s elder contemporary, Huan Wen 桓温 (312-373) had an even deeper impression of the gibbon cry because of his special experience:

As Huan Wen entered Shu (western Sichuan, in 347) and had come into the midst of the Three Gorges, someone in the ranks captured a baby gibbon. Its dam, clinging to the bank and crying pitifully, followed for a hundred li and would not go away. Finally she leaped onto the boat and on landing immediately expired. When they tore her open and looked into her abdomen they found her entrails all cut, inch by inch. When Huan Wen heard of it he was furious, and ordered the man dismissed.⁵³

According to Huan Wen’s story, it appears that gibbons have feelings much like those of human being, and the gibbon’s care of its baby showed no essential difference from that of its human counterpart. What is most moving is that the grief of losing its baby even made the gibbon’s entrails broken thoroughly. The experiences of Yuan and Huan were known to the later world, and several centuries later, the Tang poets extensively employed the aural image of “hearing gibbons” in their poems, writing about their homesickness, or other melancholies (Bao, 2004).

Apart from the aural image discussed above, based on his observations Yuan

⁵² Texts in YWLJ, 95: 1652.

⁵³ SSHY, 28/2: 485.

Shansong had successfully created a classical visual image about clear water and sporting fish:

The clear water and the muddy water of the Grand River divide in the same watercourse. Through the pure water, the riverbed, ten *zhang* below the surface, can be seen. The fish look as if they were swimming in the air, and wherever it is shallow there are pebbles of five colors.⁵⁴

In the quotation above, a reader can discern the description of clear rivers similar to that of Luo Han: the water is so pure that the travelers can see the riverbed and the pebbles there. Yuan's impression of the clear water was enhanced by his attention to the fish in the river. The clearness of the river was expressed in an alternative way that fish appeared not to be immersed in anything and looked as if they were moving in the air. The indirect description might be more effective than a direct one, and thus was deliberately imitated by later literati when depicting clear water. This way of describing clear water was repeatedly used in landscape writings, e.g. approximately one century later in Li Daoyuan's (470-527) geography works, "The guide to waterways with commentary"⁵⁵, and four centuries later in Liu Zongyuan's 柳宗元 (773-819) landscape essay, "Record of a little rock pond". The latter greatly enriched the visual image of clear water as can be seen in the following quotation:

There are a hundred or so fish in the pond who seem to be swimming in the air without any support. Sun rays penetrate down through the water, and their shadows spread out on the rock bottom as they contentedly remain immobile. Suddenly, they swim off, swiftly darting back and forth, seeming amusing the

⁵⁴ Texts in TPYL, 60: 483.

⁵⁵ SJZ. Translation of the book title was by Strassberg, see "Inscribed landscape", p.78.

travelers.⁵⁶

According to his records, Yuan appeared to have an in-depth understanding of the art of appreciation of scenery by changing perspectives in the process of appreciation. On the southern bank of the Xiling passage of the Yangtze River, there was a mountain, solitary and scenic. Looking up from the river, the towering cliffs were extremely precipitous. Yuan was not satisfied with a view from the bottom, and thus climbed the steep mountain and looked around. His records read:

Ascending the mountain from its south side, I reached the peak, which could accommodate ten persons or so. To the four directions I looked the mountains around and had an overview of their forms. Then I looked upon the Grand River and found that it looked like a curving ribbon, and ships the mallards or the wild geese.⁵⁷

When viewed from the peak, the waterscape appeared to have been reduced to a minute size, which could be an exciting experience for the travelers. Furthermore, changing positions were helpful to explore the beauties of sceneries, as Yuan felt in his appreciation of the crags and woods in the gorge:

Its layered crags and graceful peaks, of unique construction and unusual shape, are indeed difficult to describe. Its forests and trees form intricate woods, randomly rooted and densely flourishing, which protrude above the mists. As I gazed up and peered down, it grew ever more familiar and ever more beautiful.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Translations in Strassberg, "Inscribed landscape", p.144, with slight modifications.

⁵⁷ SJZ, 34: 533.

⁵⁸ Texts in SJZ, 34: 533. Translations in Strassberg, "Inscribed landscape", p. 90.

The art of appreciating scenery from different standing points makes him differ from the literati gathering at the Orchid Pavilion, who sat along the stream and viewed scenery from a fixed point, without mobility in the process of appreciation.

Besides changing standing points, Yuan also used other ways for appreciation, e.g. comparing some natural objects to something else in similar shapes. In the gorges, he found that “The color of the rocks and their shapes, for the most part, resemble various kinds of things”.⁵⁹ The way of appreciation is related to the employment of aesthetic imagination when facing scenes, which could enhance travelers’ impression of scenery and enrich their experience. Such comparisons are different from the Confucian idea of regarding mountains and water as analogues of moralities of gentlemen. Yuan’s comparisons were based on the similarities in shapes, while the Confucian analogies were on the basis of the internal similarities induced by human being. The former used instinct and the latter employed somewhat logical thinking.

Travel usually brings about findings, and it is especially the case for Yuan Shansong. Yuan’s tours in the region brought him plentiful aesthetic experience of natural objects, including the secluded valley, the mournful cries of gibbons, the divisions of clear water and muddy water in the Yangtze River, the fish that appeared to swim in the air, the rocks resembling various objects, the layered crags and graceful peaks, the woods and peaks in the mist, and the river and ships as if reduced

⁵⁹ Ibid.

to minute size. All of these scenes were fresh and exciting for literati travelers who had strong aesthetic consciousness. Yuan was thoroughly immersed in the beauties of the gorges, and thus spent two nights there, forgetting to return. It should be noted that his forgetting returning is different from that of Ruan Ji, considering that Ruan's lingering in the mountains was mainly related to his negative feelings about social life rather than the appreciation of nature. Sun Tong, one of the leading figures in chanting poems in the Orchid Pavilion gathering, showed similar behavior, i.e. lingering in mountains and forgetting to return, but it appeared that Sun regard his wandering more as a favored lifestyle than as an opportunity for the appreciation of beauties of nature.

With many exciting findings as mentioned above, Yuan began to understand that travel is important for the exploration of the beauties of nature. He also realized that that travelers should have aesthetic eyes, and if not, even when passing a site with unique sights, they could not see the beauties. So in his travel accounts, he wrote down his understanding as below:

I had often heard of the perilous water throughout the gorges. All the written records and oral accounts cautioned travelers and warned them – none ever praised the beauty of the scenery. Then I came to visit this area. After arriving, I happily realized that hearing is not as good as personally observing.⁶⁰

In the above quotation Yuan told that before arriving in the area, he had a negative

⁶⁰ Texts in SJZ, 34: 533. Translations in Strassberg, "Inscribed landscape", p. 90.

impression, i.e. an image of the dangerous gorges; after arriving he attained a positive impression, i.e. an image of the beautiful gorges. Prior to traveling to Yidu Commandery, he heard about the beauties of landscapes in Kuaiji but had no idea of the beautiful scenery in a place as remote as Yidu. Traveling to the area broadened his insights, and he began to understand that the lack of references to the beauties of the gorges was simply because that nobody before him had ever praised the scenery there. Thus he was proud to claim that he was the first one to do so:

I am delighted to have experienced these unique sights. And if this landscape has a soul, it ought to be pleasantly surprised to find that it has finally encountered a true admirer for the first time in history.⁶¹

From the quotation above it can be realized that Yuan's idea of mountains and water thoroughly falls into the aesthetic domain. His idea is different from the Confucian ethic perspective that regards natural objects as symbols of moralities. His idea also differs from the Taoist perspective that regards landscape as a medium for seeking the Way, or the truth (Bao, 2004). Yuan regards mountains, streams, and other landscape elements as independent beings, and further treats them as bosom friends. Yuan's idea is contributed to the evolution of appreciation of nature in the respect that to a certain extent it helped to get rid of the restraints from Confucian and Taoist perspectives. His idea was echoed by later literati, for instance, the Tang Dynasty poet Li Bai 李白 (701-762) had similar expressions in his poem "Sitting alone by Mount Jingting":

⁶¹ Ibid. With a slight modification.

Birds fly high till out of sight;
 A lone, lazy cloud floats thither.
 Only Mount Jingting and I,
 Never tire of seeing each other.⁶²

In the poem above, the first couplet writes the background: the birds fly away, and even the cloud is leaving; and the second part says the poet does not care their leaving, since he and the mountain appear to be appreciating each other in the quiet environment. The whole poem is almost an annotation of Yuan's idea of regarding mountains and streams as bosom friends.

The significance of travel to the explorations of sceneries, just as Yuan Shansong stated, can not be overemphasized. It was travel that offered the literati-officials opportunities to appreciate scenery different from that on the outskirts of cities. In early medieval China, taking local office was an outstanding reason for the literati-officials to travel. Previous discussion has disclosed that since the late fourth century, travel caused by taking office had been linked to the appreciation of scenery en route or in the place a literati-official governed. With aesthetic eyes, literati-officials' journeys were full of freshness and explorations. Having described the beauties of scenery in the Three Gorges, Yuan was proud to be the first admirer of landscape in the area. The similar situation occurred to Yuan's younger contemporary Xie Lingyun 謝靈運 (385-433), who recorded the same feeling in "A poem on Stone

⁶² Translations by Lengshan, <http://www.poemlife.com/TranslateColoum/lengsha>.

House Mountain”:

In the cool of dawn I sought a strange seclusion,
 Cast loose my boat and passed through the suburbs and Wilds.
 Past banks of massed orchids the river went flowing rapidly.
 How remote is this high and mossy peak!
 A waterfall comes hurtling from its summit.
 Its vacant flow has gone for thousands of years;
 These sheer heights were not just the work of a day.
 Nor sight or sound here of the world of men,
 Wind and mist drive away gathers of woods and herbs. . . .
 The joy of meeting each other can not be expressed,⁶³
 I pluck a scented frond and play with its cool branches.⁶⁴

In the lines above, Xie wrote that with a strong motive of seeking secluded sceneries, he traversed the suburb and went directly to his destination. The landscape tour turned out to be worthwhile since he had appreciated the torrents together with the banks of orchids, and as he expected, the locale he explored was genuinely remote, as those who collected woods and herbs would not approach the site. The quiet and secluded place well met the poet’s expectation, and thus he felt a joy by appreciating the scenes before his eyes. He even felt that his presence was appreciated by the mountain.

The quoted lines show Xie Lingyun’s interest in exploring unique sights. His biography says, “When traversing the mountains and peaks he unexceptionally

⁶³ In the original text there is a phrase “hehuang 合歡”, which was translated by Frodsham as “the Tree of Joy”. The translation was not consistent with the original meaning the poet’s feeling of . To a large extent, the phrase literally refers to “joy on both sides”, which was employed to suggest the mutual understanding between the poet and the scenery, as well as the pleasure derived from facing desirable scenery.

⁶⁴ Shishishan shi 石室山詩. Tr. Frodsham, “The murmuring stream”, p.148, with modifications. The original texts of Xie Lingyun’s poems were in Huang Jie’s “Xie Kangle shizhu” (XKLSZ), and full translations were in “The murmuring stream: the life and works of the Chinese nature poet Hsieh Ling-yün (385-433), Duke of K’ang-Lo” (Frodsham, 1967b).

reached the sites which were secluded, or high and precipitous. When facing a thousand peaks, he explored them one by one.”⁶⁵ Besides individual reasons, Xie’s behaviors might be explained in part by the following two reasons. One is the family aesthetic cultivation that dated back at least to the time of Xie An and Xie Wan, uncles of Xie Lingyun’s grandfather, Xie Xuan. The other is that Xie Lingyun’s father and grandfather had left him a large sum in legacy, which was enough to support his affluent and leisurely life when living in retirement. He was so fond of explorations of nature that he even invented a sort of wooden clog that was especially appropriate for climbing mountains: “When climbing he gets rid of the front teeth; and when going down the back teeth.”⁶⁶

The poet Xie Lingyun was fortunate that the two places where he took offices, Yongjia and Linchuan, were full of landscape sites waiting for him to explore. In the autumn of the year 422, two years after the end of Eastern Jin, Xie was edged out of the capital for political reasons, and gloomily set off for Yongjia, where he was appointed as the Grand Warden:

At the end of the hot season, I reported to my office,
 The boat was made ready at the change to ‘metal and white’.
 On the autumnal shores lies pure evening shadow,
 From the sky of the Fire-star falls thick morning dew.
 Who will suffer as I shall do,
 A wanderer now in my declining years?...
 I shall walk the untrodden ways of mountains and sea,
 Yet never more meet the one who delights my heart.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ SS, 67: 1775.

⁶⁶ SS, 67: 1775.

⁶⁷ Frodsham, “The murmuring stream”, p.116.

Because of setbacks in politics, the journey from the very beginning was full of melancholy feelings. At that time, the poet was thirty-eight, and thought it was not an age appropriate for long-distance travel, not to mention his bad health conditions, “Repeated illness has made me despair of life”⁶⁸. His melancholy feelings were enhanced when facing unwilling farewell to friends in the capital:

When I cast loose the moorings to meet the flowing tide,
Through thinking of my old friends I could hardly depart.
The wind moan as the sere woods move by,
Such radiance from the shining autumn moon!⁶⁹

Xie did not directly head for his destination, and after arriving in Qiantang Prefecture, he made a detour to his hometown in Kuaiji he had not visited for many years, “Clutching my bamboo tally I must warden the blue sea, so I turn my boat from its course to visit the hills I once knew”⁷⁰. Viewing the familiar scenes, his gloomy feelings were apparently relieved:

Worn-out and defiled, I make my excuse to the pure wildness,
Exhausted and ill, I stand shamed before all the honest men. ...
Climbing and camping in mountains has quite worn me out,
I’m weary of fording rivers, of pushing on downstream and up.
Craggs are towering about me, peak upon peak,
Sandbanks are winding around me, island after island.
White clouds are clinging to the shadowing rocks,
Green dwarf-bamboos adorn these crystal waves.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 117.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 118.

⁷¹ Ibid.

The above lines show that the poet did not remain in the boat during the detour or stay at home meeting neighbors and friends; instead, the active poet climbed mountains seeking desirable sceneries. He found the beauty of scenery that in his youth he had not enough aesthetic cultivation to appreciate. In doing so, his initial melancholy feelings gave place to tiresome caused by mountain tours. During the short sojourn, he ordered to make some landscape constructions, “I’ve repaired the roof beside the winding stream, and built a tower upon these loft heights.”⁷²

Following the arrangement was the second farewell, and the poet told his neighbors that he would return in three years’ time.

After the detour to the Shining estate, Xie Lingyun returned to his route and left Qiantang, going upstream along the Zhe River. In spite of going against the stream the travel speed appeared to have been not too slow, considering that the poet spent a day and a night covering a distance of more than one hundred *li*, from Qiantang to Fuchun, “By night we sailed across the Yupu Deep; at dawn we came abreast of Fuchun town.”⁷³ The schedule appeared to be tight, and thus the poet did not linger on the route, not having time to appreciate Mount Ding which was “wrapped in clouds and mists”, not letting the boat drop anchor at the Red Pavilion. Most of the time the poet saw the hard movement of his boat as he wrote: “We pushed up-stream against the furious current, the rock-strewn shallows barred us from the shore.”⁷⁴

The journeys along the Zhe River might have been fresh to the poet, who, like most

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid, p. 119.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

literati of Kuaiji, was very familiar with the route to the north of Qiantang that led to Wu Commandery, but relatively unfamiliar with the route to the south of Qiantang. The journey to the distant destination even brought about somewhat excitement for the fulfillment of the desire for far wandering. The initial melancholy feelings were further dissolved, and then the poet could learn some principles for life from nature, “This flowing water taught me to live with danger, these serried mountains taught me to sit still.”⁷⁵

The next site Xie Lingyun passed was the Seven League Shallows (*qililai* 七里瀨) of Tonglu Prefecture. The long-distance travel brought about a lonely sense, but this feeling changed with viewing of the harmonious scenery:

A traveler feels sadder than ever on autumn mornings,
And only the morning landscape gives him solace.
Lonely voyage that I am, in the gloom of rushing torrents,
A wayfarer harassed by landslides from the peaks.
Over the stony shallow the water goes swirling,
As the sun goes down the mountains throw back the glare.
The desolate woods are strewn with glossy leaves,
The mournful birds are whistling to each other.⁷⁶

Xie might have spent approximately twenty-five days on the whole journey. He left the capital on the sixteenth day of the seventh lunar month⁷⁷ and it took him ten days or so to cover the distance of 1355 *li* from Jiankang to Kuaiji. Having arrived at

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ See Frodsham, p. 157.

⁷⁷ Frodsham, p.116.

Shining estate, he stayed there for several days⁷⁸ and made some arrangements. Then he hurried to Yongjia and arrived there on the twelfth day of the eighth month. Frodsham argued that it should be the ninth month, which means that Xie spent more than forty-two days from Kuaiji to Yongjia. If so, the poet could travel in a leisurely manner and even make some detours for landscape appreciation. However, that might not be the case, considering that the poet slept on the moving boat at night and kept going in the daytime, having no sojourns at most of the pavilions and towns on the route from Kuaiji to Yongjia, not having enough time for contemplating scenery. The boating trip went on day and night, only interrupted by a short distance of land travel. Additionally, the last passage of watercourse, approximately several hundred *li*, was downstream, therefore it is not without possibility that Xie merely spent two weeks or so traveling from Kuaiji to Yongjia.

The tenure as the Grand Warden of Yongjia was three years, but Xie Lingyun stayed there for only one year and then resigned with an excuse of illness. In that year, like Sun Tong in his tenure as the Magistrate of Yin Prefecture, he neglected the petty duties⁷⁹ and wandered around for viewing scenery. There was a subtle difference between the two literati's wanderings. For Sun Tong the purpose was seeking pleasure or something else, and for Xie Lingyun it was viewing scenery. It appeared that the latter had a relative apparent purpose linked to landscape appreciation, while the aim of the former was vague.

⁷⁸ Just as Frodsham points out, Xie Lingyun dared not delay too long for fear of further disfavor. See "The murmuring stream" (vol.2), p.35, n.53.

⁷⁹ In recent years, researchers have argued that this is not the case since Xie Lingyun had inspected the land, considered agricultural constructions, and encouraged the farmers to plant mulberry trees.

Xie's wanderings in the area of Yongjia can be categorized into two types. One is suburban excursions within a distance of ten *li* from Yongning 永寧, the seat of Yongjia Commandery. The other is tours beyond that distance, varying from eleven *li* to two hundred *li*. The following discussions were arranged according to travel distance rather than the temporal factor.⁸⁰

Several days after his arriving in Yongjia, Xie made an excursion to the West Hall of Archery (*xishetang* 西射堂) at an autumn dusk, "I went walking out through the gate in the western wall, and saw, far off, the hills west of the wall."⁸¹ He appreciated the scenes before a strong nostalgia entered his mind:

Long ranges of crags that tower to the peaks,
Whose green and blues run deepening to darkness.
With morning frost the maples flush cinnabar red,
As twilight falls the mountain mists swirl dark.⁸²

The site, two *li* away southwest of the commandery seat, appeared to be appropriate for a promenade after dinner. Dusk tended to be a moment that reminded literati travelers of homesickness or melancholies, and Xie was not an exception. However, it should be noted that Xie's nostalgia appeared to have not overshadowed his appreciation of the evening scenes. In other words, his appreciation is independent of the nostalgia expressed in the latter half of the poem. He did not chose natural

⁸⁰ Although spring and autumn were his preferred seasons, Xie Lingyun also toured in summer and winter.

⁸¹ Frodsham, "The murmuring stream", p. 120.

⁸² Ibid.

objects for the purpose of expressing his melancholy, if not, he could have written lines similar to that of his contemporary Tao Qian 陶潛 (365-427), “The tame bird long for his old forest; the fish in the house-pond thinks of his ancient pool.”⁸³ Because of his strong awareness of landscape, Xie could notice the long ranges and towering peaks, the evening mists on the mountain, the color of mountains at dusk – dark green, as well as the vivid cinnabar red of maples caused by autumn frost. These images appeared not to involve nostalgia.

At the beginning of the spring of year 423, the poet did not fully recovered from an illness, and lying in bed for some time made him almost unaware of the changing of seasons. He drew back the screens and looked out from the Lakeside Tower, three *li* southeast to the city of Yongning (Y. Yang, 2001, p. 81). It was not a casual glance but a deliberate gaze, as the poet mentioned, “I inclined my ears to listen to the waves; I raised my eyes and beheld the steep mountain forest.”⁸⁴ The gaze then offered the sick poet a strong sense of changes brought by the spring:

The early sun is changing the last winds of winter,
 The new Light is altering the old Shadow.
 Upon the pool, spring grass is growing,
 The garden willows change, so do the singing birds.⁸⁵

The first couplet is a reminder of Xie Wan’s five-character poem of the Orchid

Pavilion, which opened with the following lines: “The spirit of winter curls up its

⁸³ CCL, p.499.

⁸⁴ Frodsham, “The murmuring stream” p. 121.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, with modifications in the last line.

dark banner; the deity of spring unrolls its bright flag.”⁸⁶ After that Xie Wan used six lines described the following objects, divine water, bright wind, verdant forest, red blooms, soaring birds, and leaping fish, which were not necessarily before his eyes. The vague, half authentic description was somewhat inferior to Xie Lingyun’s couplet at the end of the above quotation. The couplet described the poet’s experience of an unexpectedly encounter with the spring sceneries, without deliberate artifices of chanting poems (cited in Y. Yang, 2001, p. 82).

The original text of the couplet discussed above could be misunderstood, particularly in cross-cultural studies. The original text of the latter half of the couplet is “*yuanliu bian mingqin* 園柳變鳴禽”, which was translated as “The garden willows have changed into spring birds.”⁸⁷ In so doing, what the poet saw would not be the natural objects but their divine counterparts in the fairyland since the willows could change into birds. It should be noted that what the poet described was not a magic but the authentic objects he gazed at from the tower beside a lake, which means that the word “*bian* 變” (literally “change”) can not be translated as “change into”. In other words, the singing birds were not the object of the verb “change” or “change into”, not something changed by the willows or something that the willows changed into. Virtually, the two objects, willows and birds, are parallel in the line. In his annotations to the poem, Ye Xiaoxue interprets the couplet as follows:

⁸⁶ Lavalley, p. 253.

⁸⁷ Frodsham, “The murmuring stream”, p.121.

The willows in the garden have changed their appearances and put on a new suit with a color of bright orange. In view of the variety of garden willows, the birds are in a good mood. Now the singing of orioles from the willow twigs is more sweet-sounding.⁸⁸

Needless to say, Ye's explanation is helpful for reasonable understanding of the poem.

Several days later, Xie felt better, and thus could make an excursion to the Eastern Mountain, which was in the east of the commandery seat, four *li* away, looking upon the Ou River (*oujiang* 甌江) and the sea. He hoped the excursion could eliminate the melancholy in his inner heart, "I gave in to my wishes and yielded to happiness, and thought to forget my cares by gazing on the sea."⁸⁹ However, he failed to achieve the goal, and the grief still tortured him as he wrote: "The herb of forgetfulness brought me no consolation, so now I shall seek it in silence and solitude."⁹⁰ The grief in his heart even held back his appreciation of the grand sea or the Ou River, and the poet was immersed in his melancholy feelings, and expressed them with many phrases borrowed from the Odes of Chu.⁹¹ With addition of the wording from ancient odes that was appropriate for describing the poet's gloom, the narrative lost its authenticity in terms of recording the excursion and the scenery of the wetland. For instance, it is doubtful on his ridding horse, "I whipped my horse, then walked it past the orchid-covered marshes; halted and tethered it, then rested on a hill of pepper-trees." The poet was born in a first-class aristocratic family in 385, when the Southern aristocrats made its increasingly habitual to take boats and ox carts rather than to ride horses.

⁸⁸ XLYSX, p. 45, n. 16.

⁸⁹ Frodsham, "The murmuring stream", p. 130.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ See XLYSX, pp.39-40.

Thus it is more likely that Xie Lingyun employed the allusions from the Odes of Chu rather than described his own activity.

At the turn of spring and summer, Xie made an excursion to the Southern Pavilion, five *li* away in the south of the commandery seat (Y. Yang, 2001, p. 82).

At the end of spring the weather cleared up towards evenings,
 Clouds drifted home as the sun hurried down to the west.
 In the deep forest a cooling breeze still lingered,
 A distant peak would hide half the disc of the sun. ...
 Marsh orchids are gradually covering the path,
 The lotus just emerging from the pool.⁹²

In the above description of sceneries, the last couplet represents the ongoing changes of natural objects, making a deep impression of the scene. The description in the last couplet has an apparent linkage to the past. The key words of the couplet appeared to be borrowed from the Odes of Chu⁹³ and Cao Zhi's poems. Cao had written the following lines that inspired Xie: "Fall's orchids blanket the long slopes; red blooming covers green pools."⁹⁴

From the autumn of the year 422 to the summer of the year 423, Xie Lingyun mainly explored sceneries in the south of the Ou River, and by contrast, the north of the river received far less patronage from the poet. The familiar sceneries became boring to him, and thus he was interested in the less explored region, "I was weary

⁹² Frodsham, "The murmuring stream", p. 122.

⁹³ XLYSX, p.50, n.6,7.

⁹⁴ Translations in Lavalley, p.106.

from sight-seeing south of the river, it was long since I'd wandered north of the river."⁹⁵ The poet was eager to view the unfamiliar landscapes, and thus felt that the roads seemed too long even though his destination, the Solitary Island in the Ou River, was merely several *li* away from the commandery seat (Hong, 2001). He sighed that he did not have enough time to seek the unique sights and thus felt the days seemed all too short. The feelings reflect his strong desire for viewing the uncommon scenery. The excursion to the Solitary Island appeared to have met his expectation, and he could not help but admire the scene:

Across the current I hastened to the Solitary Island,
The solitary Island, lovely in mid-stream.
The clouds were dazzling bright with sunlight,
How fresh and pure the air and water seemed!⁹⁶

The poet was apparently not satisfied with explorations of the suburbs, as discussed above. The local of suburbs might be appropriate for promenades, but lacked unusual scenery in which the poet was extremely interested. Among the five sites he visited, only the Solitary Island offered him a sense of freshness. The dissatisfaction with common scenes on the outskirts of cities led him to tour to the sites relatively far from the commandery seat. The following cases serve as an examination of how the remote sceneries satisfied the poet's need for unique sights and how he appreciated them.

⁹⁵ Frodsham, "The murmuring stream", p.128.

⁹⁶ Frodsham, p. 128.

In the autumn of the year 422, the poet Xie Lingyun, after inquiring from the locals, could not wait to climb the Green Crag Mount 綠嶂山, which was forty *li* away from the commandery seat and could be reached in three hours by boat going against the Nan Stream (*nanxi* 楠溪) (Y. Yang, 2001, p. 78). Before setting off in the early morning, the poet made necessary preparations, packing some provisions and taking his light staff. Having arrived at the foot of the mountain, the poet, maybe together with several monks and attendants, began climbing the long, winding path, seeking secluded scenery. All the way the poet was excited, “As I walked up-stream, the path led me further away; when I reached the mountain-top, my heart was still rejoicing.” The excitement of climbing the Green Crag Mount is in a vivid contrast to the experience on the suburban hill, Eastern Mountain. Climbing the hill did not bring him happiness or excitement, and the poet was not interested in viewing the seascape presented before his eyes. However, climbing a remote mountain was a different story. The ascendance of the Green Crag Mount brought the poet worthy experiences of the secluded sceneries:

The calm shallows were congealed in frozen beauty,
 Glossy bamboos seemed heedless of the frost.
 In the windings of the gorge, the water went straying away,
 Far-off stretched the forest, with crags crowding it in.⁹⁷

Following the above description, the poet went on with narrative of his experience with the fascinating scenery in an alternative way:

⁹⁷ Frodsham, p.129.

I peered westwards, looking for the sickle-moon,
I gazed back to the east, wondering if the sun had set.⁹⁸

The poet was thoroughly immersed in the beauties of nature, and the deep explorations in the mountain forest even made him lose his sense of direction, being unaware of where the east was, and where the west. Viewing the desirable scenes, the poet felt time passed so fast that he thought at dusk he just arrived there for a moment. A day's wandering in the mountain made the poet acquainted with all the secluded scenery in the locale, and he was fairly satisfied with the one-day trip.

Winter might not be appropriate for travel, but Xie Lingyun appeared to have not cared much about this issue. The winter of the year 422 saw the longest distance he had covered during sojourn in Yongjia Commandery, i.e. a tour to Mount Lingmen 嶺門山, two hundred *li* from the commandery seat (Y. Yang, 2001, pp. 78-79). The mountain located near the seat of Hengyang 橫陽 Prefecture, and the visitation of Hengyang appeared to have been more an inspection tour than a landscape one. As the Grand Warden of Yongjia, Xie Lingyun had been busy with inspecting prefectures of the commandery since his arrival. In that winter he inspected the remote Hengyang Prefecture, in spite of the climate, the distance, as well as his weak physical state. If his purpose was merely viewing scenery there, it would not be necessary to cover a long distance in winter since the landscape sites not too far from

⁹⁸ Ibid.

the commandery seat could meet his aesthetic taste, as shown by the case of his visitation of the Green Crag Mount. His poems disclose the difference between visitations of the two mountains. In the poem “Wandering on Mount Lingmen”, there is no excitement and pleasure of exploring secluded mountain scenery unlike in the case of the Green Crag Mount, but only overall impressions on the place of Yongjia and its people. As he praised, the local people had established virtue, which was responsible for that not too much effort was necessary for governing the commandery. This appears to be a justification of his attentions to landscape in the inspection tours. In the poem there is no specific observation of the mountain he climbed, but an overall impression of the landscapes of Yongjia:

A thousand bent shores, yet not two the same,
Ten thousand peaks, but all of different shapes!⁹⁹

The description is a reminder of Gu Kaizhi’s picturesque depiction of the landscapes of Kuaiji, and the poet might attempt to compare the landscapes of the two places, Yongjia and Kuaiji, thus going on with his impressions of sceneries of Yongjia:

High overhead tower the Three Mountains,
While the Twin Rivers go rushing on with a roar.¹⁰⁰

In the lines quoted above, the two phrases, “Three mountains” and “Twin Rivers”, appear to be general references to mountains and rivers on the land of Yongjia. The

⁹⁹ Frodsham, “The murmuring stream”, p.131, with slight modifications.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

poet might be comparing these mountains and rivers with their counterparts in Kuaiji, suggesting that the former were no inferior to the latter.¹⁰¹

In the spring of the year 423, Xie Lingyun, besides making excursions to the suburbs, mainly visited the following two sites. One was the Stone Strum Mountain (*shigu shan* 石鼓山), forty *li* away in the west of the commandery seat (Y. Yang, 2001, p. 79). The advent of spring stimulated his homesickness and nostalgia, and he felt lonely without old friends to communicate with. The poet thus set out to find a scene that suited his melancholy. Having ascended the mountain, he looked around as he wrote: “Now I stare out to the plains that lie to the left; then turn my gaze to the gorges on my right.”¹⁰² His action of viewing reminds the researcher of similar action of the Orchid Pavilion poets, who contemplated scenery by “looking up, looking down” (Lavalley, 2004, p. 167). The gaze to the left and the right on the peaks of the Stone Strum Mountain failed to differentiate him at that moment from the poets gathering at the Orchid Pavilion, who usually appreciated landscape at a distance and were satisfied with an overall impression. Therefore, the scenery before his eyes lacks the details of natural beauties, and in the poem there are merely vague images: “As the sun goes down, the mountain stream swells higher; as the clouds are born, the peaks are plunged in mist.”¹⁰³ The following lines, “White flag is vying with the young tree-creeper; green duckweed is just venturing into leaf”, appear to be microscopic descriptions, but they turn out to be the wording he borrowed from the

¹⁰¹ XLYSX, p.38, n.11,12.

¹⁰² Frodsham, “The murmuring stream”, p. 126.

¹⁰³ Frodsham, p. 126.

Odes of Chu to express his gloom.¹⁰⁴

The other site Xie visited in that spring was the White Bank Pavilion 白岸亭, eighty-seven *li* away from the commandery seat and on the upstream of the Ou River (Hong, 2001, p. 34). At that site, the poet paid sufficient attention to the scenery before his eyes as he did on the Green Crag Mount. He mentioned that along a white sandy dike, he leisurely strolled and then passed the pavilion covered with erigeron. Emotionally he was in a relatively calm state, which was appropriate for appreciating landscape. The poet gazed at the scene along the path and looked into the distance, while enjoying the sounds of birds and animals:

Through the rock-strewn gorge a near-by stream goes trickling,
While distant mountains glint through sparse trees....
On these green shores I listen, grasping the creepers,
Spring and my heart have now become as one.
The call of yellow birds among the oaks,
The cry of deer browsing on the duckweed.¹⁰⁵

In the beginning of summer, Xie Lingyun made a boating trip to Red Rocks 赤石 and then sailed out on the sea. The site was in the south of the commandery seat, approximately thirty *li* away. According to Xie's poem and later sources, the area of Sail Sea 帆海 he visited was still sea and did not become land until several centuries later. In this trip, the poet mentioned his boredom with familiar scenes as he expressed in the poem on the excursion to the Solitary Island. The boredom with the

¹⁰⁴ See XLYSX, p.42, n.12.

¹⁰⁵ Frodsham, p. 125.

familiar scenes made him long for the seascape as he wrote, “I’ve seen enough; the sea-coast wearies me.”¹⁰⁶ The time was appropriate for sailing on the Sail Sea since there were no large waves, “This time of year, the River Lord flows quietly; the Earl of the Waters does not stir at all.”¹⁰⁷ While sailing on the sea, the poet was attracted by the scene that locals were collecting seafood, and imagined he participated in the activity, “I hoist my sail to go off gathering rock-flowers, and haul up the matting on a trip for window-shells.”¹⁰⁸ The freshness brought by the seascape and the scene of collecting seafood contributed to a happy boating trip, “The immensity of ocean knows no bounds, yet my light boat goes skimming over it.”¹⁰⁹

At the turn of summer and autumn, Xie visited Mount Quxi 瞿溪山, the last visitation of mountains in Yongjia before he resigned in autumn. The site was in the southwest of the commandery seat, thirty *li* away (Y. Yang, 2001, p. 79). There are several issues worthy of note in the poem on this trip. For the first time, the poet mentioned the monks that accompanied him in mountain tours, “I go for walks with men of tranquil mind”.¹¹⁰ In his poems, he sometimes wrote about his sense of loneliness when touring in mountains, which might make an impression on the readers that he was alone. This might not be the case, however. As the Grand Warden of Yongjia, he should have been accompanied by subordinates, attendants and maybe several monks. His biography says that he once traveled from Shining Prefecture to

¹⁰⁶ Frodsham, p. 127.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. Both rock-flowers and window-shells are seafood, see Ye Xiaoxue, pp.52-53, n.8; Hong Yuping, p. 35.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Frodsham, p.124.

Linhai 臨海 Commandery, followed by hundreds of people. The large travel party was mistaken as hijackers.¹¹¹

The second issue is that there appeared to be a temple on Mount Quxi, “The cell’s stone doors are plastered with river mud. Their criss-cross rafters are not scarlet beams.”¹¹² The monks in the temple lived on their own labor, “For fields these monks must cultivate the wastes.”¹¹³ When visiting the temple, Xie gave alms to the monks. He saw the smokes above the temple and heard the drums from the temple, “Light smoke drifts wind-born on the pure air; through the empty woods echoes the Buddhist Drums”.¹¹⁴ What he saw and heard were reminders of the Buddhist thought, and thus he went on with:

One looks at these hills and longs for Vulture Peak,
One’s mind is led to thoughts of the Pure Land.
Do but fix the heart on the Four Virtuous feelings,
And for ever escape the woes of the Triple world.¹¹⁵

Even though Xie tended to have been a Buddhist layman, he seldom expressed his belief in the landscape poems, and the poem on passing Mount Quxi was an exception. In the poem, all the scene and thoughts point to Buddhism, which suggests that a mountain temple could be an attraction for literati travelers in the early fifth century.

¹¹¹ SS, 67: 1775.

¹¹² Frodsham, p. 124.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

The landscape tours in Yongjia Commandery significantly cultivated Xie Lingyun's aesthetic taste and artifices of composing landscape poems (Kōichi, 2001, p. 34). After resigning from the post of the Grand Warden of Yongjia, he lived a leisurely life in his Shining estate for four years. During the period, he, together with friends and master monks, extensively explored the landscape sites in Kuaiji and in nearby regions and wrote many landscape poems and essays, including his master piece "A rhapsody on mountain dwelling" (*shanju fu* 山居賦). Xie Lingyun's literary works made a significant contribution to the dissemination of the landscape culture:

Every time when his poems were delivered to the capital, whoever was noble or humble would competitively make his own copies. In a short period, Xie's poems found their ways into every household, aristocratic or not. Xie was admired by his contemporaries, far and near, and enjoyed his fame in the capital.¹¹⁶

The landscape tours associated with taking office, as shown in the above cases respectively of Luo Han, Yuan Shansong and Xie Lingyun, are signs that the aesthetic vision of Jin literati had been apparently broadened since the later half of the fourth century. The appreciated objects were no longer bound to be garden scenery, suburban scene, and landscape en route. Instead, the gazed-upon objects extended to sites relatively far from cities. The literati class was no longer satisfied with the common scenes to which they had convenient accesses. Thus they would

¹¹⁶ SS, 67: 1745.

like to travel a distance to explore the secluded sights or unique scenery. Xie Lingyun was undoubtedly an outstanding representative of them, who took pains to explore the desirable scenery as suggested in his following lines:¹¹⁷

I stand on a rock to fill my cup from a cataract,
I pull down the branches and pluck their leafy scrolls.¹¹⁸

When dark returned, I slept on the fringe of the clouds,
Enjoying the moon above these rocky heights.¹¹⁹

I climbed the cliffs to watch the Stone Mirror shining,
I pushed through the forest and entered the Gates of Pine.¹²⁰

I climbed the crags to peek on Dragon Pond,
And held the branches to gaze at the grottoes.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ These lines had been used as illustrations of Xie's adventure tours in Zhu Yaqi's paper, "Exploring the aesthetic experiences hidden in the Shan-shui poems of Ling-yun Hsieh".

¹¹⁸ Tr. Frodsham, p.147.

¹¹⁹ Tr. Frodsham, p.145.

¹²⁰ Tr. Frodsham, p.154.

¹²¹ Xie Lingyun, "Deng Lushan jieding wang zhuqiao".

CHAPTER VII: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study mainly derives from a realization that in imperial China there had been a tourism tradition independent of Europe, but the genesis of the tradition has not been well explained. Previous chapters noted that the discipline of literary studies had done a lot of work in explaining the birth of landscape literature, and the explanations unavoidably involved in the emergence of landscape appreciation. However, existing explanations of the birth of the travel culture of landscape appreciation appeared to have been merely a byproduct of literary studies when researchers investigated the birth of certain literature genres, e.g. landscape poem and landscape essay. The situation thus calls upon a study that regards the travel culture of landscape appreciation as a historic phenomenon to be studied in its own right rather than as a subordinate or precondition of the birth of landscape literature. To meet the intellectual need in terms of offering a comprehensive explanation of the emergence of landscape appreciation, the present study thus focuses on the factors bringing the phenomenon of landscape appreciation to its flourish. In this chapter, the four major contributing factors are revisited and discussed.

THE QUEST FOR MEANING OF LIFE

In a sense, the quest for meaning of life could be regarded as a push factor in the emergence and flourish of landscape appreciation. As discussed in Chapter 1, the instability of society and the risks of engagement in politics, plus the natural disasters,

made life in early medieval China extremely fragile. Meanwhile, the deterioration in politics made the Wei-jin literati class less interested in the public domain than their Han Dynasty counterpart. The Confucianism-oriented values of life were reexamined. Under these circumstances, the meaning of life became a primary concern in intellectual society, and the literati class began to ponder what a worthy life meant. The result was that they put aside the restraints of Confucian canons and began their explorations in the individual domain.

The social conditions of the Six Dynasties period turned out to have been appropriate for the acceptance of Taoism, both as a philosophy and as a religion, which led to the rectification of the overemphasis of sociality by Confucianism. In the Han period, the emphasis of morality and social responsibility overshadowed the pursuits in individual life. Once the rectification began, the life of the literati took on a new look. In the first half of the third century, Cao Pi and his friends frequently visited the Western Garden in a suburban setting, and members of “Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove” wandered in mountains and forgot to return for days. The second half of the third century witnessed the transformation of Confucian literati. The general Yang Hu often took advantage of opportunities for his leisure pursuits, including landscape appreciation; the Taikang literati, Zuo Si and Lu Ji made suburban excursions and praised the beauty of nature. Similar behaviors involving rectification of the Confucian life value were continued in the fourth century: nuclear members of the Kuaiji literati coterie, e.g. Xie An and Sun Chuo, lived in retirement

for decades before their political engagement; Wang Xizhi resigned from the post of the Grand Warden of Kuaiji Commandery and then devoted himself to the pursuits of leisure as well as arts. In the fourth century, it was a common situation that the literati-officials from aristocratic families were inclined to neglect their post duties and were immersed in pursuits of leisure, arts and religion instead.

The rectification was accompanied by the pursuits of sensual pleasure as the Taoist classic “*Liezi*” advocated. Life in early medieval China was both fragile and short, which led to extensive concerns for extending life. Different literati had different understanding of how to extend life. Some held the belief that life could be extended through self-cultivation, which was related to herb gathering as well as wandering in mountain forests. Others accepted the argument in *Liezi* which emphasized that to live a happy and unrestrained life was an alternative way of extending life. Their understanding of a happy life or tending life was mainly the satisfaction of sensual pleasure and living according to one’s nature, as illustrated by the following discourse that was said to be Guan Zhong’s answer to master Yan’s inquiry about tending life:

It is simply living without restraints; do not suppress, do not restrict. Giving yourself up to whatever your ears wish to listen to, your eyes to look on, your nostrils to turn up, your mouth to say, your body to ease in, your will to achieve. ... What the will wishes to achieve is freedom and leisure, and if it is denied, I say that man’s nature is restricted.¹

¹ LZ, 7: 142.

Guan further explained that unrestricting the senses constituted a worthy life, as shown below:

All these restrictions are oppressive masters. If you can rid yourself of these oppressive masters, and wait serenely for death, whether you last a day, a month, a year, ten years, it will be what I call ‘tending life’. If you are bound to these oppressive masters, and cannot escape their ban, though you were to survive miserably for a hundred years, a thousand, ten thousand, I would not call it “tending life”.²

The above understanding of the meaning of life was helpful to explain the behavior of early medieval literati, e.g. the Jian’an poets’ seeking pleasure in suburban excursions, Kuaiji literati’s fascination in suburban settings. With the guidelines attaching importance to sensual pleasure in individual life, Sun Chuo, who wrote the epilogue for the Orchid Pavilion poem collection, made “a female dancer to brandish and break”³; the Wang brothers, who appreciated the famous gardens of Wu, were addicted to the quest for sensual pleasure and accordingly lived a short life.

The lifestyle of Jin aristocratic literati shared considerable similarities with Duanmu Shu 端木叔, who was described in “*Liezi*” as follows:

He lived on his inheritance... He did not bother with the issues of time, but followed his impulses and did as he pleased. The things which all men desired to do, with which our inclinations desire to be amused, he did them all, amused himself with them all. His walls and rooms, terraces and pavilions, parks and gardens, lakes and ponds, his food and drink, carriages and dress, singers and musicians, wife and concubines, bore comparison

² Ibid.

³ SSHY, 26/20: 471.

with those of the rulers of Qi and Chu.⁴

In a sense, the story of Duanmu was told in Jin Dynasty for the justification for a lifestyle that emphasized sensual pleasure. Duanmu was regarded as a person who knew the art of life since he fully enjoyed his life, did not care for his treasures and scattered them to poor people in his late years. He was admired by those who were not restrained by the traditional ritual, as shown in the following comments:

Duanmu Shu was a man who understood; his qualities surpassed those of his ancestor. All his actions, everything he did, astonished commonplace minds, but truly reason approves them. Most of the gentlemen in Wei live by the manners they have been taught; naturally they are incapable of grasping what in this man's mind.⁵

It is worthy of noting that as an example for the Jin upper class, Duanmu Shu had a strong desire for sightseeing and regarded the activity as a way to satisfy his sensual needs:

When he traveled he always went wherever he pleased, however perilous the mountains and rivers, however long and distant the roads, as other men walk a few paces.⁶

The idea of regarding travel as a sensual pleasure might have furthered the development of sightseeing, mainly referring to the appreciation of natural landscape. The sensual pleasure brought by landscape appreciation might be one of the reasons

⁴ LZ, 7: 146.

⁵ LZ, 7: 147.

⁶ LZ, 7: 146.

for Wei-jin literati's interest in contemplating scenery.

The emphasis of sensual pleasure could be regarded as a rectification of the neglect of individual life in Confucian canons, and what accompanied the justification for the quest for sensory pleasure was the advocacy of living according to nature. To a large extent, to live according to nature means to live an unrestrained life, as shown in the anecdotes collected in the chapter "The Free and Unrestrained" of "A New Account of Tales of the World". The satisfaction of natural needs was consistent with the guideline. The guideline of living according to nature was even understood as equal to the concept of "Free Wandering", referring to the quest for the ideal spiritual freedom, but the understanding was doubted by Zhi Dun.⁷ Considering that evil men also lived according to their nature, but that sort of life should not be regarded as close to the pursuit of "Free Wandering". Accordingly, whether a person's practice of the guideline was close to what "Free Wandering" meant was involved in what his nature was.

In the process of quest for a meaningful life, the early medieval literati enriched the meaning of nature based on their practices of landscape appreciation as well as on the Confucian moral perspective toward mountains and water. In other words, the concept of literati's nature was linked to the behavior of landscape appreciation, which was another justification for literati's interest in landscape, besides the issue of

⁷ SSXYJS, p. 221, n.4.

sensual pleasure discussed previously.

Approximately at the turn of the fifth century BC, Confucius claimed that:

The wise find pleasure in water; the virtuous find pleasure in mountains. The wise are active; the virtuous are tranquil. The wise are joyful; the virtuous are long-lived.⁸

The Han scholars, Han Ying 韓嬰 (c. 200-130 BC) and Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (c. 175-105 BC) made influential annotations to the above discourse, explaining Confucian gentlemen's interest in mountains and water as that the two types of objects have many characteristics similar to the moralities of the wise and the virtuous.⁹ Confucius' discourse, together with the annotations from the two leading scholars in the Han period, had an effect on the intellectual society, which could be glimpsed through the literati class's views of literati's personality and nature, as discussed below.

The Confucian perspective toward mountains and water might have a certain degree of relationship with the phenomenon that later literati regarded the inclinations for mountains and water as signs for owing a noble mind or a lofty personality. The earliest evidence in this respect comes from Xuan Shuang's 荀爽 (128-190) letter to Li Ying 李膺 (110-169), one of the major leaders of the literati

⁸ Translations by Chang, "Chinese literature 2: nature poetry", p. 2, with slight modifications.

⁹ Han's texts in "Hanshi waizhuan", sections 3, chapter 25, 26; translations by Holzman, "Landscape appreciation", pp.32-33, and by Chang, "Nature poetry", p.2. Dong's explanation in his essay "In praise of mountains and streams" 山川頌, translations by Holzman, "Landscape appreciation", p.36.

class's protest against political corruption in the Later Han. The letter reads:

...Since you have realized that there is no longer any place in our times for those who live according to the Way of Rectitude, you have made your home in Yangcheng [southeast of Mt. Song, Henan] to delight in the mountains and take pleasure in the rivers...¹⁰

Just as Holzman (1996, p. 70) pointed out, the letter employed several allusions, including the one in the quotation above, to “*Lunyu*” to praise Li Ying, “implying in a roundabout way that he is both ‘good’ (since he delights in mountains) and ‘intelligent’ (because he takes pleasure in the rivers)”¹¹. It is likely that Xun used the wording to admire Li Ying rather than to show that the latter really walked into nature and appreciated landscape.

When it came to the Six Dynasties period, there were increasing discourses that employed the wording of inclination for mountains and rivers for evaluation of other literati's character, or for self-evaluation. In Jin-song literati's biographies or their literary works, the term “love landscape by nature” (*xing ai shanshui* 性愛山水) was frequently used. On the one hand, the frequent use of the term shows a continuity of Confucian ideas of mountains and water, as demonstrated in Wang Xizhi's poem answering Xu Xun:

I take my joy where the good and the wise take their pleasure,
Finding release in the shade of the mountains and waters,

¹⁰ HHS, 67: 1484. Translations by Holzman, 1996, p.69.

¹¹ Holzman, 1996, p. 70.

In the freshness of the shadows where the torrent levels out,
In the bamboo and pine groves scattered here and there.¹²

On the other hand, the term was used to show an ideal character for Jin literati, “vacancy and tranquility” (*xujing* 虛靜), which was appropriate for the quest for Taoist truth (Chung, 2003, pp. 36-39). It was believed that individual literati who had such a character were close to the sages and masters. In a sense, the two schools, Confucianism and Taoism, reached an agreement in understanding the connotation of the concepts of mountain and water, and both linked it to ideal personality in spite of the differences in interpreting what ideal personality was.

The Jin intellectual society believed that different people had different natures, which accordingly differentiated them and categorized them into different levels (Chung, 2003, pp. 25-36). With the inclination for mountains and water being thought to have a close linkage to the ideal personality, whether in Confucianism or in Taoism, the behavior of landscape appreciation was regarded as a sign of the ideal personality. Under this circumstance, the love of landscape naturally became a criterion for differentiating the noble from the common. In other words, landscape appreciation attained a sense of identity that differed literati who loved landscapes from those who merely concerned with fames and interests, or worldly affairs. A typical case of the situation can be glimpsed from Sun Chuo’s despising Wei Yong 衛永 as well as his doubting on the latter’s literary ability: “This man’s spirits and

¹² Translations in Holzman, 1996, p. 146.

feelings have nothing in common with mountains and streams, how could he compose essays?”¹³

The Jin literati class regarded proximity to nature as a sign of ideal personality, which in part accounted for the phenomenon that they extensively employed the wordings for landscape description in admiring contemporary gentlemen. The attempts in this respect at least dated back to the time of Ji Kang (224-263), whose appearance was described as “Ji Kang is majestically towering, like a solitary pine tree standing alone. But when he’s drunk he leans crazily like a jade mountain about to collapse.”¹⁴ The grand marshal Wang Yan 王衍, who was outstanding in pure conversations, was portrayed as “high towering the unsullied peak, standing like a cliff a thousand *ren* high.”¹⁵ In a similar manner, the two leaders of the Kuaiji literati coterie were admired. Wang Xizhi was “now drifting like a floating cloud; now roaring up like a startled dragon.”¹⁶ And Xie An looked like “in his moments of leisure, without so much as even chanting aloud, but merely sitting composedly tweaking his nose and looking out of the corner of his eye, he naturally had the air of someone living in retirement among hills and lakes.”¹⁷ His younger brother, Xie Wan was characterized by Wang Xizhi as “Living as he does among woods and lakes, he’s naturally on a more vital and higher plane.”

¹³ SSHY, 8/107: 254. The translation was slightly modified.

¹⁴ SSHY, 14/5: 331.

¹⁵ SSHY, 8/37: 238.

¹⁶ SSHY, 14/30: 338.

¹⁷ SSHY, 14/36: 339.

It is likely that the increasing use of the terminology “love landscape by nature” and the employment of landscape terms in admiring contemporaries strengthened the linkage between the ideal personality and the interest in landscape. The trend could be glimpsed through Yu Liang’s 庾亮 epitaph written by Sun Chuo, which reads:

Those things which Yu Liang always loved and to which his heart was committed were constantly beyond the defilement of the world’s dust. Even though from time to time he compromised his heart to accommodate to the world, he would retract his traces like the inchworm so that the square inch space of his heart remained profoundly tranquil, and he would continue as before in mystic contemplation of hills and streams.¹⁸

Throughout history the Chinese were inclined to attach high importance to what was inscribed on the gravestone, and the inscribed content was usually as an overview of one’s whole life. In Yu Liang’s epitaph, his “mystic contemplation of hills and streams” overshadowed any other aspects, e.g. his feats. Sun Chuo used the phrase as the highest praise that he could sing for the dead, suggesting that Yu had the noble mind close to those of sages and masters.

When it came to the fifth century, Xie Lingyun drew a conclusion to the relationship between landscape and literati’s nature, “Mountains and streams were as important to souls as food and clothing to the livelihood”¹⁹. Herein, landscape was apparently regarded as the opposite of the mundane world, as the spiritual needs contrasting to the material needs. In other words, landscape appreciation was

¹⁸ SSHY, 14/24, n.1.

¹⁹ See Xie’s essay “you mingshan zhi” 遊名山志, in XLYJ.

regarded as a necessary part of literati life, as concluded by Xie.

This section discusses the impact of social values on the literati class, mainly involved in the emphasis of sensual pleasure with sightseeing as a way to satisfy sensual needs, and the claim of the love of landscape as a noble nature. The two factors played a certain part in the evolution of landscape appreciation, but it should be noted that the two factors are far not sufficient to explain the emergence and flourishing of a travel culture of landscape appreciation in the third and fourth century China. What follows is a continuity of discussion of the contributing factors, which involved in the different parts respectively played by religion and philosophy, the meaningful suburbs, and long-distance travels.

THE PERMISSION FROM RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

In his comparative study of landscape appreciation in medieval China and medieval Europe, Holzman (1995) mentioned that sources suggest that whether in China or in Europe, the permission from religions and philosophies is important for the initiation of aesthetic appreciation of nature. In other words, the knowledge from the two domains paved the way for landscape appreciation. The present study supported Holzman's argument that points out the significance of the two domains, religion and philosophy, in facilitating the emergence of landscape appreciation. What follows is an examination of the specific role they played in the evolution of landscape appreciation.

In the fifth century BC, Confucius added moral values to mountains and water, which could be regarded as surpassing nature worship. By regarding mountains and water as symbols of morality, the Confucian perspective made literati theoretically close to mountains and streams, thus being different from the attitude derived from nature worship which was characterized by fear and prayers. The Confucian perspective added a new level to the relationship between nature and humans, but it might have no direct contribution to the emergence of landscape appreciation since regarding mountains and water as symbols of the virtues of Confucian gentlemen would not necessarily lead to immediate and practical proximity to nature. The mountains and water in which the Confucian gentlemen delighted were more abstract concepts rather than physical objects²⁰, which in part explained that in the eyes of the traveling literati in the Former Han Dynasty, mountains and water were mainly signs or reflections of their encounters in their political careers²¹, not aesthetic objects. Furthermore, landscape appreciation as a sort of leisure was not encouraged by Confucian canons that emphasized individuals' devotion to the society in which they lived. The Confucian gentlemen's preoccupations, morality and politics, overshadowed the beauty of nature.

The Confucian moral perspective toward mountains and water might have a

²⁰ Confucius integrated morality into beauty on the basis that they have similar justifying grounds, see "Beauty in Kant and Confucius: A First Step" (Wenzel, 2006). The integration had a certain effect on the eras after the Six Dynasties period, but during the period, the intellectual society separated morality from beauty, thus furthering the evolution of landscape appreciation.

²¹ The famous mountains and prestigious large rivers were also symbols of imperial power, see "The evolution of aesthetics of Jin and Tang landscape poets" (Ma, 1992).

certain extent of effect on the aesthetics of Chinese throughout the history, as suggested by its use in the appreciation of natural objects, e.g. pine, cypress, bamboo, orchid, and chrysanthemum. The influence of the Confucian perspective, however, should not be overemphasized, especially when contrasted with its Taoism counterpart. The above-mentioned natural objects were appreciated more from a Taoist perspective than from a Confucian perspective in the Wei-jin period. For instance, the appreciation of plants represented by pine and bamboo appeared to have been aroused by their inspirations of immortality rather than by their analogues of moralities. The situation applied to the appreciation of mountains.

Different from the Confucian perspective that regarded mountains and water as moral symbols, the Taoist perspective regarded mountains as the abodes of immortals as well as ideal sites for self-cultivation. The two perspectives had different effects on the emergence of the travel culture of landscape appreciation. While the Confucian perspective would not necessitate practical proximity to nature, the Taoist ideas of mountains impelled early Taoists to go to the mountains, thus converting the culture of landscape appreciation to a travel culture of landscape appreciation. It is generally believed that Taoists were among the earliest people who went to the mountains for nonmaterial reasons. For their ultimate goal of turning into immortals, the early Taoists lived in the mountains, collecting herb and edible minerals, and seeking immortals. The essential reason for the early Taoists' going to the mountains was the Taoist ideas of mountains, and it was these ideas that firmed their belief and

motivated their behaviors. The Taoist ideas cultivated a strong interest in mountains, which then urged Taoists to come to the mountains which were worshiped before.

The significance of early Taoists' mountain exploration to the emergence of landscape appreciation could be understood from the following two aspects: firstly, alleviating the fear of mountains; secondly, offering demonstration for the literati class as shown in literati's imitation of Taoists' herb-collection tours. In the evolution of landscape appreciation, the role of the former is implicit, and that of the latter explicit.

The early Taoists' mountain exploration helped rid commoners of their fear of mountains, broadening the number of people who might travel for aesthetic pleasure. In the long process of entering mountain forests to practice the divine process, the early Taoist developed a complicated system to deal with risks of wandering in mountains, which was summarized in the chapter "Into mountains: Over streams" (*dengshe* 登涉) of "*Baopuzi*", a Taoist classic by Ge Hong 葛洪 (283-363). The chapter introduced a variety of methods of going to the mountains, as a summary of what Ge Hong learned from others and from his own travel experiences. The methods mainly covered the following three aspects.

The first was choosing the auspicious, i.e. selecting the right time to head for the right mountain. The early Taoists had a systematic method to determine when the right time and where the right place would be.

The second was the material preparations, including taking certain medicines that helped the early Taoists protect themselves from winds and dampness in the mountains, fasting for seven days before heading for the mountains, and filling their packages with certain articles. What they put into their packages included the guidebooks²² of the Five Sacred Mountains, and medicines and drugs in case of being bitten by poisonous snakes and insects. The preparation was somewhat similar to the case of modern travelers, but the following two uncommon articles differentiated their travel bags from modern ones. One was a bronze mirror that was believed to have the magic power of reflecting the original appearance or true form of any ghosts and spirits, and thus was capable of deterring them from doing harm to travelers. Ge Hong spared no space to describe the validity of using the bronze mirror, since the early Taoists thought that the article was very important for their security in mountains. The other uncommon article in early Taoists' travel bags was enter-mountain amulets (*rushan fu* 入山符). These amulets were mainly certain words and special signs which were similar to the writing of ancient Chinese characters but took on a more complicated appearance. They were written or drawn on silk, or inscribed on wooden plaques. Like the bronze mirror, various amulets were believed to have the magical power of repelling tigers and wolves. Both articles had psychological effects on Taoists, and gave them courage for going to the

²² The phrase "guidebook" was not so accurate in referring to "*Wuyue zhenxing tu*" 五嶽真形圖, which, besides as travel guides since the end of the third century B.C., also served as important amulets. See "A study of Taoism history" (Pan, 2003), pp. 202-209; "An exploration of immortality: Baopuzi" (F. Li, 1992), pp. 458-461. "*Wuyue zhenxing tu*" were also believed to have the magic power of instantly making one travel far away, for which Sun Chuo's virtual travel on Mount Tiantai is a case.

mountains and sojourning there.

The third aspect about methods of going to the mountains was the intellectual preparations, which was somewhat similar to modern tourists' information collection before departure. Firstly, Taoists who planned to stay in the mountains needed to know what existed as well as what could happen in their destinations. Secondly, they also needed to bear in mind the names of ghosts, in hopes of that mountain ghosts would depart for fear of being recognized. To a certain extent the familiarity with ghost names diminished the strangeness of destinations for the early Taoists, and the knowledge of ghosts' names was helpful to decrease risks as Ge Hong concluded, "Only if you know the names of these creatures will they be unable to do harm to you"²³. Thirdly, the early Taoists needed to learn the following issues: incantations which had a function similar to that of enter-mountain amulets, the ways of concealment, and Yu's Pace.

The systematic methods of heading for and sojourning in the mountains eliminated the fear of mountains, which paved the way for going to the mountains to view scenery, and thus again transforming the nature of travel. The part played by these methods appeared to be implicit and thus was usually neglected in studies involved in the evolution of landscape appreciation. Through the narrative above it can be understood that the methods that offered early Taoists the necessary courage and

²³ BPZ, pp. 288-289.

confidence to head for mountains. The early Taoists extensively went to the mountains, accumulating considerable experience of staying in the mountains. Their practices told the mundane world that mountains did permit sojourns of humans.²⁴

The mountain-dwelling Taoists' beliefs as well as their behaviors attracted the Taoist laymen, who imitated the Taoists' pursuits by wandering in the mountains with the excuse of herb gathering. As discussed in Chapter 4, sources disclose that with the participation of the leisurely, affluent literati, herb gathering gained an aspect of outdoor recreation. The literati who wandered in the mountains appeared to have been absent-minded for herb gathering, not caring too much about how many herbs they could gather, since their attention had transferred to the scenes around, as suggested by the previously mentioned cases of Ji Kang, Guo Pu, Wang Xizhi, Zhi Dun, Yu Chan, and Bo Daoyou. In this sense, the activity of herb gathering offered opportunities for proximity to mountains and streams.²⁵ Once the literati placed themselves in the mountains with the excuse of herb gathering, it was almost certain that they would derive the stimulation from beautiful scenes, considering that they had already begun their aesthetic pursuits in various respects of daily life. In the mountains, they would look around, not merely to find herbs, but to contemplate the mountain setting in which the immortals or recluses lived as well. Such behavior,

²⁴ The initial ideas regarded mountain as not a place for human beings since the mountains were full of fierce animals, damp and secluded, and thus inhospitable, as suggested by the two poems in "The Odes of Chu" 楚辭, "Crossing the River" 涉江 and "A Call to a Man Hidden in Retirement" 招隱士.

²⁵ Other activities, e.g. sacrifice to famous mountains, might also bring literati to the natural world and present them with the beauty of nature, as demonstrated by Ma Dibo's record of the imperial sacrifice to Mount Tai in A.D. 56, but it should be noted that in the evolution of landscape appreciation, the part played by sacrifices to mountains was not parallel to that of herb collection, considering that sacrifices were rare by contrast with herb collection. The former was in large-scale and consumed considerable financial resources and manpower, while the latter was individual business and easy to put into practice.

together with their aesthetic cultivation derived from daily life, helped them to find the beauty of mountain scenery.

In the evolution of the travel culture of landscape appreciation, the factor of herb gathering, besides drawing literati to the natural world and helping them find the beauty of nature, further functioned as a justification of traveling to and wanderings in the famous mountains. Throughout the history of imperial China, travel was not encouraged unless it has a sound reason. Seeking knowledge, hunting for positions, taking offices, doing business and participating troops were among the sound reasons. In the Six Dynasties period, herb gathering became an additional and acceptable reason for travel. In the period, Taoism as philosophy and religion was extensively accepted among the literati class. Under this circumstance, it was not uncommon that some literati, as Taoist laymen, imitated the Taoist behavior of herb gathering and wandered in the famous mountains. Their imitations then made herb gathering a justified reason for visiting the famous mountains.

At the early stage of landscape appreciation, herb gathering was relatively outstanding among the above-mentioned travel reasons in the respect of drawing literati to the scenic mountains.²⁶ The part played by herb gathering could be glimpsed through a contrast with that of taking office in the Han period. The Han literati-officials traversed wild areas and sometimes crossed hundreds of miles to

²⁶ Once a collective consciousness of landscape was formed, taking offices in local places began to play a more significant part in the evolution of the travel culture of landscape appreciation.

take their offices. In their journeys, they might pass or climb a mountain, but their hurried glimpses en route appeared to have been not helpful for cultivating their aesthetic consciousness as demonstrated by the cases of Liu Xin, Ban Biao, Ban Zhao, and Cai Yong (see Knechtges, 2002). Their minds were full of considerations on issues of moralities as well as the prospects of their political careers, which thus blocked their sight for aesthetic appreciation of nature. The mountains and rivers they viewed aroused no awareness of beauty, but merely served as reflections of the feelings in their inner hearts. When they were gloomy, the heaven and the earth would be darkened and all the landscape elements would be overshadowed by their melancholy; when they felt there was an optimistic prospect, the scenes around them would be tinted with a bright color. The unforgettable preoccupation of political and moral concerns, together with the limited time spent on viewing, makes Han literati's journeys of taking office less effective in cultivating their consciousness of landscape.

However when it came to the tours associated with herb gathering, the story was different since the literati who wandered in mountain forests had enough time for gazing at scenery. At the sites for gathering herb, temporarily forgetting the worldly affairs, they were isolated from the mundane world and immersed in the tranquil mountain settings. Just as political and moral concerns occupied the minds of the Han traveling literati, the Wei-jin literati who visited famous mountains had their primary concern beyond the interest in herbs: to view the fairyland in which the immortals lived. They had read many descriptions of the mysterious mountains, but

had no deep physical experience of the latter before their tours for gathering herbs. With the curiosity toward the abodes of immortals, they came to the famous mountains with the excuse of herb gathering, and then every scene in the mountains was presented freshly before their eyes. In the mountains, even the common herb gatherers would notice something fresh or unusual as the official history of Jin says, not to mention the literati who already had sufficient aesthetic cultivation in the domains of literary, arts, and music. Viewing scenery was undoubtedly a fresh experience to the literati who imitated early Taoists and wandering in the famous mountains.

In short, the permission from religion and philosophy were an important prerequisite for the emergence of a travel culture of landscape appreciation. The Confucian perspective on mountains made the literati class close to nature in theory, and the Taoist perspective turned the desire of exploring mountains into reality. Taoism regarded mountains as abodes of immortals, which forged a strong interest in mountains. Then the early Taoists entered mountains for self-cultivation, and in the long process they developed a complicated system of coping with dangers in mountains, which was helpful for eliminating their fear of mountains. The experiences of precursors changed the initial image of mountains and told the mundane world that mountains accommodated human sojourns. Under this circumstance, the Wei-jin literati imitated the early Taoists by entering mountains for herb gathering. With the excuse of herb gathering, literati wandered in the mountains,

contemplating scenery there.

While admitting the significance of herb gathering in the evolution of landscape appreciation, it should be noted that the locales for herb gathering were not accessible for most of the literati because of spatial and temporal constraints. Accordingly, the literati class needed an alternative setting to satisfy their need of appreciating the natural beauties.

THE MEANINGS ADDED TO THE SUBURBS

The above section noted that the early Taoists' behavior of entering mountains was a demonstration to the literati class. A few literati followed suit, but most literati, who might have desires for wandering in remote, famous mountains, had no convenient access to their desirable destinations. It was especially the case for the "Three Cao": Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220) who is said to have written the first landscape poem²⁷, and his two sons. In spite of their different attitudes toward Taoism²⁸ they all expressed a desire for wandering in famous mountains (see Owen, 2006, pp. 139-177). Their desires, together with their admiration for immortality-seeking in famous mountains, might have a close relationship with the event that Cao Cao summoned most of the famous Taoists to the capital of Wei Kingdom. While the initial purpose of the

²⁷ If the ratio of landscape lines in a poem is the sole criterion of judging whether a poem fall into the category of landscape poems, then Cao Cao's piece "Gazing at the Great sea" (Guan canghai 觀滄海) is; but if count in the substance of a given poem, then it is not. See Holzman, 1996, pp.79-84. The two criteria for landscape poems appear to have been first forwarded in "A history of landscape poems in China" (W. Li et al., 1991), p.21.

²⁸ Their attitudes toward Taoism appeared to have been complicated, and Cao Zhi even showed the world his transformation, from thoroughly repelling to believing in part (see Holzman, 1998, pp. III, 15-57).

convergence of those influential Taoists was mainly related to political considerations, the event objectively facilitated the communication between individual Taoists. To a certain extent, Cao Cao also wanted to learn the ways of extending life, which would be helpful for fulfilling his ambition of unifying China. The activity of immortality-seeking on famous mountains and the spiritual freedom Taoists enjoyed deeply affected the three poets and literati like them, as demonstrated in their “wandering immortal” poems.

Having a desire for wandering in famous mountains but no immediate access, the literati class brought the mountains to them by using suburban hills as a substitute (see Chapter 5). In doing so, more people could travel, further enhancing the establishment of the aforementioned travel culture. The suburban hills might not be as sublime as the famous mountains, but this did not weaken literati’s interest in excursions to the suburbs. After all, suburban hills were easy to reach by ox cart or boat, or by riding a horse.

At the heart of the suburban excursions was the unfulfilled desire for far-off journey. Wandering in the remote yet famous mountains was a common practice for Taoists, but remained as a dream for most literati because of temporal and spatial constraints. When there were no conveniences for visiting distant mountains, literati resorted to the suburbs, where gardens and hills were located. They regarded the suburbs as a locale that suited their mind as Emperor Jianwen stated, which justified

their choice. To a large extent, the Jin literati class's perception of the suburbs was related to the prevalence of the proposition of reclusive life²⁹, or disengagement in politics.

Since antiquity there had been a dilemma for literati in imperial China: to engage or not to engage. Engaging in politics was advocated by Confucianism, which claimed that serving the society and the people was the ultimate goal for Confucian gentlemen. While engaging in politics could bring fame and benefits to individuals, it was also regarded as an effort for the peace and wellbeing for the society and the people. By contrast, disengagement was proposed by philosophical Taoism, which emphasized that individual freedom brought by disengagement was more worthy for individual life. The two value orientations tended to have been in a state of disequilibrium: one outweighed the other from the antiquity to early medieval times. In the Han period, the literati class was inclined to hold a positive attitude toward politics and thus extensively participated in governance of the large empire. However the Confucian value orientation caused serious frustrations for the literati class because of political deteriorations since the Later Han, and thus was doubted. The decline of Confucian value orientation made room for the wide acceptance of its Taoist counterpart.

In the Jin period, the concept of disengagement or living as a recluse was so

²⁹ To a large extent, the thoughts of Master Lao and master Zhuang could be regarded as the systematic theory of the lifestyle of recluse as Wang Yao suggested, see "The medieval literati life" (Yao Wang, 1951), p. 90.

popular among the upper class that some members of royalty expressed their admiration of hermit life. Members of the upper class, engaging or disengaging in civil service, extensively praised the lifestyle of recluses as a sign of noble mind. The original meanings of hermit life, i.e. to show discontent with the reality, to avoid social disasters and to survive and wait for opportunities for engagement, were slowly lost (Yao Wang, 1951, pp. 78-109). The Jin literati chose to disengage from politics to show their noble mind rather than to show their dissatisfaction with the reality and noncooperation with the governors, and thus were admired by the ruling class who regarded them as a decoration of the society. The governors were glad to show their mercy by permitting some talented literati's to live a hermit life, not serving the society. The admiration for recluses or hermits could be glimpsed through the ruling class's positive sponsorship for the former, as shown in the following two sources:

While Xu Xun was living in retirement in a secluded cave south of Yongxing Commandery, gifts from noblemen from all around would keep coming in.³⁰

Every time Xi Chao heard of someone desiring to live in lofty retirement, he would always put up subsidy for him of a million cash, and in addition would build a residence for him.³¹

Although the whole society admired the lifestyle of recluses, i.e. living in mountain forests and discarding worldly affairs, the lifestyle was difficult to be put into practice for the literati class since the material life of recluses was hard by

³⁰ SSHY, 18/13: 361.

³¹ SSHY, 18/15: 361.

contrast with the comfortable life of governmental officials, and literati who admired recluses had difficulties in giving up sensual pleasures in the mundane world. They did not want to follow recluses and move into mountains forest, but they still wanted to attain some experience of reclusive life, which in part accounts for their excursions to the suburbs where they could achieve some superficial experience. Previous cases of Zuo Si and Lu Ji are helpful in understanding the link between the admiration of recluses and the excursions to the suburbs. In their poems of summoning the recluses, they described their excursions to the suburbs as motivated by the quest for recluses, and highly praised the setting of reclusive life.

The link between admiration of reclusive life and excursions to the suburbs was further disclosed by the Orchid Pavilion poems. A careful reading of those poems helps to understand that the excursions, as a short-term practice of reclusive life, added meaning to the life of the literati class. The gathering at the Orchid Pavilion reminded the participants of the ancient tradition derived from master Zhuang (c. 369-286 BC), who contributed a lot to the theorization as well as justification of the lifestyle of recluse. Accordingly, the Orchid Pavilion poets frequently made allusions to ancient recluses, master Zhuang in particular, and suggested that their suburban gathering was something of a temporary experience of reclusive life as Xi Tan 郗曇 wrote: “Sitting straight up rouses distant thoughts; with light chatter we roam the suburbs.”³² While poets like Xi Tan referred to the ancient recluses in an implicit

³² Translation in Lavalley, p. 254.

manner, the following poets expressed their admiration of ancient recluses explicitly, suggesting that their suburban excursions had a link to the ancient traditions:

Sun Si:

Gazing at cliffs I recollect the reclusion of Xu You;
Looking down on the flowing waves I think of Zhuangzi.

Wang Ningzhi:

Zhuangzi was unrestrained at Hao ford;
Chao Fu stepped to the shores of the Ying.
The profound mind and its grasp of truth
After one thousand years came together.

Yuan Qiaozhi:

The honored guests have arrived,
Together we roam strolling about for pleasure...
If we were all to attain unity;
I would think of Zhuangzi's fishing in the Pu River.³³

Yu Yue:

The spirit scatters in the universe;
External appearances flow by Hao Bridge.
Trusting in freedom for an instant of happiness;
Yet still thinking of the style of the ancient ones.

Cao Hua:

Turning my head to gaze at the accomplished ones roaming;
Loosening the knot rambling for pleasure by Hao Bridge.³⁴

All the above quotations referred to master Zhuang, who was an influential recluse as well as a theorist of reclusive life. Specifically, these allusions point to the two issues recorded in the Taoist classic “*Zhuangzi*” 莊子: master Zhuang’s discourse about keeping freedom by disengagement while fishing in the Pu River, and his claim of knowing the pleasure of fish when wandering with friends on a bridge over

³³ Translations slightly modified based on original texts.

³⁴ For the lines quoted from five poems, texts in JShi, and translations by Lavalley.

the Hao River³⁵. As suggested in the poems quoted above, wandering in the suburbs stimulated the memory of ancient recluses and offered a sort of experience close to that of ancient recluses. The chapter on suburban excursions discussed that the locale of the suburbs was to a large extent regarded as a substitute for famous mountains. Furthermore, the idea of regarding the suburbs as a substitute for famous mountains was also related to the attempts at experiencing reclusive life. With such an idea in the mind, the literati class thought that their excursions to the suburbs were essentially similar to the recluses' wanderings in the famous mountains.

In short, in spite of the superficial experience of scenery on the outskirts of cities, the literati found these sites to a certain extent could satisfy their needs of aesthetic appreciation of nature. As a compromise of the desire for far-off journeys to famous mountains, the suburban excursions offered a convenient opportunity for proximity to the natural world. More importantly, the suburban settings suited their minds, an intensive inclination for reclusive life. In this sense, besides a superficial experience of landscape, the suburban sites offered the literati class a temporary experience of reclusive life. Accordingly, in the outskirts of cities like Ye of Wei, Luoyang of Western Jin, Jiankang and Kuaiji of Eastern Jin, a collective interest in landscape was increasingly cultivated.

As a substitute for famous mountains appropriate for wandering and immortality-

³⁵ See "Chuang Tzu, mystic, moralist and social reformer", pp. 217-218.

seeking, as a setting that could offer physical experience of reclusive life which was admired by the Wei-jin upper class, the locale of the suburbs is significant for the evolution of landscape appreciation. It is in the meaningful suburbs that the early medieval literati cultivated a shared interest in landscape. However, the aesthetic experiences they attained in the suburbs appeared to be superficial, and the literati class needed a broader space to enrich their experiences of landscapes. The space that brought about landscape appreciation in its full sense was offered by long-distance travels.

OPPORTUNITIES BROUGHT BY LONG-DISTANCE TRAVELS

The literati class's landscape consciousness cultivated on the outskirts of cities interacted with their long-distance travels. The strong awareness of landscape aroused them to pay more attention to the landscape en route, which means Jin literati's journeys were not merely acts of mobility from one place to another. The long-distance travels brought about fresh stimulations in terms of landscape appreciation, and urged the exploration of landscape features, finally making landscape appreciation reach its maturity in the early fifth century.

The relationship between travel and landscape appreciation is somewhat neglected in existing studies on the emergence and flourish of landscape appreciation. To a large extent, the two sorts of long-distance travels, respectively of position-hunting

and office-taking, not only brought landscape appreciation to its maturity, but also set examples for later literati. From then on, the two types of travels played a significant part in the history of landscape appreciation as well as in the social life of literati.

As was discussed in Chapter 6, travel for position-hunting mainly refers to the trips between Kuaiji where outstanding literati and artists converged, and Jiankang, the capital of Eastern Jin. Settling down in Kuaiji Commandery made travel an important issue in literati's social life as most of the literati there need to head for the capital for the pursuit of positions and other business. These journeys, plus the collective consciousness landscape cultivated in Kuaiji, further stimulated the aesthetic consciousness of Kuaiji literati. The distance between Kuaiji and Jiankang was more than one thousand and three hundred *li*, and Wu Commandery was in the middle of the travel route. For most of the time, the literati comfortably³⁶ stayed on ships in the canals, which was appropriate for appreciating sceneries along both sides. A short distance from Shanyin, the commandery seat of Kuaiji, was Qiantang Prefecture, where the literati could have a thrilling experience of tide-watching. In the city of Wu, there were delicate gardens which were representative of landscape constructions in the Wu areas, and thus the traveling literati like the Wang brothers would not fail to visit them despite not knowing the hosts of these gardens. The Tiger Hill on the outskirts of Wu City was an important landscape site on the route from Kuaiji to Jiankang, and almost became a must-visit site for the traveling literati.

³⁶ By contrast with the hardship of land travel.

Accordingly, in a letter Wang Xizhi wanted to confirm his friend had visited the landscape site.³⁷

The second type of travel discussed in Chapter 6 refers to the official travels (*huanyou* 宦遊): the journeys to take local offices as well as the tours in the area that a literati-official governed. Attaining a post away from the capital or from a literati-official's hometown meant an important opportunity to encounter the landscape which otherwise might be inaccessible. Accordingly, Wang Xizhi had no opportunities to view the gorgeous mountain in Yi Province because of not attaining a post in the area, and Xie Lingyun's appreciation of sceneries outside the area of Kuaiji were mainly associated with his two posts respectively in Yongjia and in Linchuan.

For the Jin literati-officials, the landscapes they encountered might have never been praised before their arrivals, as seen in the typical cases of Luo Han, Yuan Shansong and Xie Lingyun. The fresh scenes stimulated them to explore the details of landscapes, which made them different from the landscape viewers in the suburbs of Kuaiji. In his official travels, Luo Han noticed the colorful pebbles on the riverbeds of Xiang River, the stone terrace swept by bamboo trigs in the wind, and the ticking springs among the rocks of Mount Heng. Also in his official travels, Yuan Shansong found that in the Xiling Gorge the cliffs were so steep that a traveler in

³⁷ QJW, 25: 1601a.

the valley could not see the sun unless at midday. He sensed that the cries of gibbons were clear as well as mournful and their echoes in the valley were unforgettable. He noticed the division of clear water and muddy water in the Yangtze River, the fish looking as if they were swimming in the air, and the ships looking like being reduced to a minute size. Literati's desire for long journeys was fulfilled by official travels. The type of long-distance travel was important for the exploration of scenery and for the accumulations of individual experience of landscape. The nuclear significance of official travel to landscape appreciation is disclosed by Yuan Shansong, who concluded that personally viewing is better than hearing.

The significance of official travels to the exploration of natural beauties applies to the case of Xie Lingyun. With the opportunity of taking local office, Xie Lingyun praised the landscapes in Yongjia. In his one-year sojourn in the place, he wandered, unless sick in bed, in different directions to explore desirable sceneries, secluded or unusual. Unlike his precursors till the mid fourth century, the poet became choosy about what sort of scenery to view. For the quest for natural wonders, he could take pains to travel a long distance and climb dangerous rocks for the best view of scenery. He preferred the unexplored scenery rather than familiar landscape, which differentiated him from the Western Garden poets and the Orchid Pavilion ones.

The significance of official travel to landscape appreciation could be alternatively understood via the opposite case of Xu Xun, a member of the Kuaiji literati coterie.

He liked wandering between mountains and streams, and was admired by his contemporaries as having superb feelings and the physical condition for landscape tours, but he surprisingly did not leave a single poem praising the beauty of nature. Among the complicated reasons for the phenomenon might be his lack of stimulations from unfamiliar and unusual sights which could have been encountered in official travels. Xu Xun had not the least idea of hunting for a governmental position, which correspondingly led to his lack of opportunities to view the fresh, unfamiliar sceneries. The stimulation from fresh scenes, which was brought by official travels, is very important for the description of landscape, as was proved by the case of Xie Lingyun (Kōichi, 2001).

In short, the two types of long-distance travels, i.e. journeys between Kuaiji and Jiankang and the official travels, significantly contributed to the evolution of landscape appreciation. To a large extent, it can be said the opportunities for encountering unfamiliar landscape brought by the two types of long-distance travels facilitated the maturity of landscape appreciation approximately in the early fifth century.

SUMMARY

This study showed that there were four major factors that contributed to the emergence and flourish of a travel culture of landscape appreciation in early

medieval China. The first was the quest for meaning of life, which was brought about by the decline of Confucianism. In the process of reconstructing the meaning of life, two issues emerged. One was that satisfying sensual pleasure was regarded as a worthy pursuit with landscape viewing as a way of satisfying sensual needs. The other was that the Jin literati class widely accepted the proposition of living by nature and regarded the inclination for natural landscape as a noble nature. In a sense, the two issues can be understood as push factors for the travel culture of landscape appreciation.

The second factor was the part played by Confucianism and Taoism. The early medieval intellectual society forged a strong interest in landscapes with the permission from religion and philosophy. The Confucian moral perspective on mountains and rivers made the literati class close to nature in theory. By contrast, Taoism played a more significant part in the emergence of landscape appreciation. Firstly, the religious Taoism directly drove people to head for mountains for nonmaterial reasons, as early Taoists regarded famous mountains as abodes of immortals. They also regarded famous mountains as ideal sites for their self-cultivations. Early Taoists accumulated many experiences in the respect of controlling risks in the mountains, and their experiences and methods helped to alleviate the fear of mountains. Wandering forged strong consciousness of aesthetics in daily life and found the beauty of nature, thus broadening aesthetic horizons. Secondly, the philosophical Taoism, especially its proposition of disengagement, was

related to the Jin literati class's excursions to the suburbs. The Jin literati thought they could attain some desirable experience of reclusive life and thus made frequent excursions to the landscape sites on the outskirts of cities.

The third factor was the role of the suburbs. The Wei-jin literati class tended to have a desire to wander in famous mountains. However, the desire was difficult to fulfill because of temporal and spatial constraints. By contrast, the suburbs were convenient to reach. The early medieval literati made frequent excursions to the suburbs for their accessibility and the rich meanings that they held. Suburbs were regarded as a substitute for famous mountains. The Wei-jin literati's excursions to the suburbs were mixed with the two sorts of feelings, which were closely related to the idea of disengagement. Influenced by the social value, the early medieval literati favored excursions to the outskirts of cities, wandering around and contemplating scenery. They employed suburban excursions as a way to show that they inherited the ancient tradition, i.e. the thought as well as practice of disengagement, which was an explicit way to show the world their noble minds. In this sense, the admiration for reclusive life resulted in emotional proximity to nature and drove literati to the outskirts of cities. In the suburbs, the literati gazed at scenery while recalling the ancient recluses. In the frequent excursions to the suburbs, the literati class cultivated a collective interest in natural landscape.

The fourth factor is the significance of long-distance travels. The appreciation of

scenery was in a crude manner until the mid fourth century. This story was changed by the two types of long-distance travels: the journeys between Kuaiji and Jiankang, and; official travels. These long journeys brought the traveling literati fresh experience and stimulated them to explore the details of landscape. They began to explore the secluded and unusual sights. In so doing, the literati class was no longer satisfied with the common scenes in suburban settings, but deliberately sought the unexplored or unfamiliar sceneries and praised them. They could travel a long distance merely for the appreciation of desirable scenery as Feifer (1985, p. 3) points out.

As a result of the long journeys associated with landscape, considerably exciting descriptions of sceneries frequently appeared in their discourses, poems, essays, letters, etc. In so far, the Wei-jin period saw the emergence as well as flourish of the travel culture of landscape appreciation with the following signs: literati's collective consciousness of landscape, their special attention to sceneries en route, and the maturity of their aesthetic appreciation of natural landscape. Landscape appreciation had been integrated into literati's travel life from then on, and the travel culture of landscape appreciation became an important cultural tradition in literati's social life.

In so far, the tentative conclusion of the present study is that to a large extent what caused the emergence and flourish of the travel culture of landscape appreciation in early medieval China is mainly the four factors discussed previously: the quest for

meaning of life which led to regarding landscape appreciation as a worthy pursuit, the permission from religion and philosophy which paved the way for landscape appreciation, the locale of the suburbs which was given rich meanings and thus attracted the literati class, and the long-distance travels which brought opportunities to encounter unfamiliar as well as unusual sights. The four factors worked together and brought the travel culture of landscape appreciation to its flourish in early medieval China.

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