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## A Political Eulogy that Dazzles: Yang Jiong's (650–ca. 694) “*Fu* on the Old Man Star”

### ABSTRACT:

Canopus ( $\alpha$  Carinae), known in China as “Old Man Star,” is the second brightest star after Sirius. In China by the first century BC it was commonly believed that a ruler's virtue causes the star to be easily visible, which would thus augur well for political legitimacy. The star's astrological significance was noted when Wu Zhao (regent 664–690; r. 690–705) ascended the throne in 690. The renowned poet Yang Jiong presented to Wu Zhao a *fu* (or, rhyme-prose) on the Old Man Star that stressed the Mandate of Heaven and promoted Wu Zhao's authority. This article studies the political, astrological, and literary context of Yang Jiong's “*Fu* on the Old Man Star” as well as its linguistic and rhetorical features. It discusses the interplay among astrology, politics, and literature in premodern China and analyzes the narrative structure and literary devices that helped achieve the political efficacy sought by the piece. The present study also sheds light on Yang Jiong's less-studied works and court eulogistic literature. An annotated translation of Yang's *fu* is appended.

### KEYWORDS:

*Yang Jiong, Wu Zhao, eulogistic literature*

Canopus ( $\alpha$  Carinae), known in China as Laorenxing 老人星 (Old Man Star), had become a favorite subject of writers by the third century AD. Many literary works that based their arguments on portentous astrology were written to celebrate the clear visibility of the star, this being an auspicious omen (*xiangrui* 祥瑞) believed to reveal Heaven's approval of and blessings to the ruler.<sup>1</sup> Among such works, Yang Jiong's 楊炯 (650–ca. 694) “Laorenxing fu” 老人星賦 (“*Fu* on the Old Man

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<sup>1</sup> For the meaning of *fu* 符, *rui* 瑞, *xiangrui* 祥瑞, *fuming* 符命, etc., see Jack Dull, “A Historical Introduction to the Apocryphal (Ch'an-wei) Texts of the Han Dynasty,” unpub. Ph.D. diss. (University of Washington, 1966), pp. 48, 119–21; Tiziana Lippiello, *Auspicious Omens and Miracles in Ancient China: Han, Three Kingdoms and Six Dynasties* (Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 2001), pp. 21–22. For general studies on auspicious and/or calamitous omens that are relevant to this article, see Hu Xiaoming 胡曉明, “Furui yanjiu: cong xian Qin dao Wei Jin Nanbeichao” 符瑞研究, 從先秦到魏晉南北朝, unpub. Ph.D. diss. (Nanjing daxue, 2011); Jin Xia 金霞, “Liang Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao xiangrui zaiyi yanjiu” 兩漢魏晉南北朝祥瑞災異研究, unpub. Ph.D. diss. (Beijing shifan daxue, 2005); Ding Yulian 丁玉蓮, “Sui Tang xiangrui wenhua yanjiu” 隋唐祥瑞文化研究, unpub. M.A. thesis (Xibei shifan daxue, 2010).

Star”),<sup>2</sup> written in or shortly after 690, demonstrates an individual’s contribution to the creation of political legitimacy for Wu Zhao 武曩 (624–705, r. 690–705) and has some importance in Chinese political, literary, and cultural history.

Yang’s *fu* has two related and equally important purposes. The political purpose is to justify Wu Zhao’s legitimacy, glorify her, and celebrate the appearance of the Old Man Star as a sign of the receipt of Heaven’s mandate. The literary purpose is to delight, dazzle, and impress, all of which showcases the author’s flamboyant talent. Contemporary political needs motivated Yang as well, and his literary virtuosity helped achieve a political purpose. By weaving together historical precedents and literary conventions, empowering conventional themes, and arousing enthusiasm and awe, his *fu* perfectly illustrates the political function of congratulatory literature: to legitimize and mythologize the ruler and his or her dynasty, and to praise and propagate his or her authority and power. This article studies the political, astrological, and literary context of “*Fu* on the Old Man Star” as well as its linguistic and rhetorical features. It explores the lore and literature about the Old Man Star and discusses the interplay among astrology, politics, and literature in premodern China. A chief aim here is to analyze how the narrative structure and literary devices of Yang’s *fu* help it to achieve its intended political efficacy. An annotated translation of the *fu* is given in the appendix.

It is the author’s desire to contribute to the history of medieval Chinese literature by shaping the present work as an introduction to two neglected yet important areas, both of which will be briefly discussed. One is Yang Jiong’s non-*shi* 詩 works, especially his *fu* and prose that share certain political concerns and literary characteristics with his “*Fu* on the Old Man Star.”<sup>3</sup> The other area is court eulogistic literature, such

<sup>2</sup> Xu Mingxia 徐明霞, punct., *Yang Jiong ji* 楊炯集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980; hereafter cited as *Yang*), pp. 11–12. Yang’s collected works as listed in Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) et al., *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975; hereafter cited as *XTS*) 60, p. 1600, and Liu Xu 劉昫 (887–946) et al., *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975; hereafter cited as *JTS*) 47, p. 2075, have been lost. See Li Jianxiong 李建雄 and Xing Yixuan 邢藝讓, “*Xin Jiu Tang shu suojian Yang Jiong ji*, Yang Jiong *Linchuan ji* zuozhe, shuming kao” 新舊唐書所見楊炯集·楊炯臨川集作者·書名考, *Yan’an daxue xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 2014.6, pp. 122–25; Cheng Sudong 程蘇東, “Yang Jiong *Linchuan ji* banben yuanliu kao” 楊炯臨川集版本源流考, *Wen xian* 2010.2, pp. 108–19. Xu Mingxia’s edition is based on Tong Pei’s 童佩 edition compiled during the Wanli 萬曆 period (1572–1620); see *Yang*, pp. 6–7. For a recently published annotated edition of Yang Jiong’s works, see Zhu Shangshu 祝尙書, *Yang Jiong ji jianzhu* 楊炯集箋註 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Jonathan Pettit discusses one of Yang’s epitaph inscriptions in “The Erotic Empress: Fantasy and Sovereignty in Chinese Temple Inscriptions,” *Tang Studies* 26 (2008), pp. 131–32. A partial translation and a brief explanation of Yang’s “Yulanpen fu” 盂蘭盆賦 is in Stephen

as the congratulatory memorial (*hebiao* 賀表) and the eulogy (*song* 頌), from which Yang’s *fu* drew inspiration and various conventions.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF COMPOSITION,  
AND YANG JIONG’S INTEREST AND CONCERNS

Judging from several lines in the “*Fu* on the Old Man Star” such as “majestic and illustrious the venerable Zhou 赫赫宗周” (line 1) and “profound and majestic the divine emperor 穆穆神皇” (line 47),<sup>4</sup> the *fu* seems to have been written not long after the founding of the empress Wu’s Zhou dynasty in October of 690. The *terminus ad quem* for the *fu* is probably 694 when Yang Jiong was appointed commandant of Yingchuan 盈川 (east of modern Qu 衢 county in Zhejiang) where he died shortly afterwards.<sup>5</sup>

The specific circumstance of Yang’s composition is unclear, but the historical background surrounding Wu Zhao’s pursuit of political legitimacy can contribute to our understanding.<sup>6</sup> Wu Zhao began to involve herself in government affairs after the mid-660s when emperor Gaozong’s 高宗 (628–683; r. 649–683) health began to deteriorate. She ruled as empress-dowager from 684 to 690, and then in 690 proclaimed herself emperor of the Zhou dynasty (690–705). As a woman, her engagement in government was not only unacceptable to but also stigmatized by the traditional patriarchal society,<sup>7</sup> and her rule met re-

Teiser, *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1988), pp. 73–77. Paek Sŭng-sŏk 白承錫, “Chu Tang fu yanjiu” 初唐賦研究, unpub. Ph.D. diss. (Taiwan guoli zhengzhi daxue, 1994), chap. 4, analyzes Yang Jiong’s *fu*.

<sup>4</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all translations from the Chinese are by the author. Wu Zhao’s title from June 21, 688, to October 19, 690, was “Saintly Mother, Divine and August” 聖母神皇. See *XYS* 4, p. 87 and Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086) et al., *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1956; hereafter cited as *ZZTJ*) 204, p. 6448. On October 19, 690, she adopted a new title “Saintly and Divine Emperor” 聖神皇帝, which lasted till October 13, 693. For an annotated translation of Yang’s “*Fu* on the Old Man Star,” see the appendix to the present article.

<sup>5</sup> Yang Jiong’s last datable work was written in 693. See Fu Xuancong 傅璇琮, “Lu Zhaolin, Yang Jiong nianpu” 盧照鄰楊炯年譜, in *Yang*, p. 233. On the year of Yang’s death, see Tao Min 陶敏, “Yang Jiong zunian qiushi” 楊炯卒年求是, *Wenxue yichan* 1995.6, pp. 114–15.

<sup>6</sup> On the meaning of legitimation in early China and in modern Western perspective, see Howard L. Goodman, *Is’ao P’i Transcendent: The Political Culture of Dynasty-Founding in China at the End of the Han* (Seattle: Scripta Serica, 1998), pp. 16–18; Howard Wechsler, *Offerings of Jade and Silk: Ritual and Symbol in the Legitimation of the Tang Dynasty* (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1985), pp. 10–12.

<sup>7</sup> Richard Guisso, *Wu Tse-t’ien and the Politics of Legitimation in T’ang China* (Bellingham, Wash.: Western Washington University, 1978), pp. 3–4; Norman H. Rothschild, *Emperor Wu Zhao and Her Pantheon of Devis, Divinities, and Dynastic Mothers* (New York: Columbia U.P., 2015), pp. 2–3. Rebecca Doran discusses the development of the literary-historical narratives that criticize and condemn Wu Zhao’s rule in *Transgressive Typologies: Construc-*

sistance from various court officials and imperial family members.<sup>8</sup> Wu Zhao and her supporters therefore sought various ways to expand her authority, influence public opinion, and, especially during the late 680s, justify her legitimacy. In premodern China, legitimacy was pursued through many, and often related, traditions (for example, the tenets of Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, the anonymous so-called weft texts, or apocrypha, which acted as political oracles that spoke through the ancient classics, and astrology) and was manifest through various media such as symbols, texts, rituals, and monuments. As a female ruler, Wu Zhao resorted to a number of alternative sources and methods of legitimation within and beyond the Confucian tradition.<sup>9</sup>

One method that Wu Zhao and her supporters utilized concerned the management and manipulation of symbols.<sup>10</sup> A basic type of political symbol is what Lasswell and Kaplan called *miranda*, that is, gestures, rites, and the things associated with them that could “arouse admiration and enthusiasm, setting forth and strengthening faith and loyalties.”<sup>11</sup> Howard Wechsler points out that “of all the *miranda* surrounding the assumption of power by a new dynasty, perhaps the most powerful in its ability to generate sentiments of political legitimacy and diffuse support was the auspicious omen.”<sup>12</sup>

The conception of political legitimacy and its association with auspicious omens were developed from the Shang to the Han dynas-

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*tions of Gender and Power in Early Tang China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 2017), pp. 109-49, 186-226.

<sup>8</sup> For instance, Li Jingye 李敬業 (a.k.a. Xu Jingye 徐敬業, d. 684) and some other officials rebelled in 684 (*ZZTJ* 203, pp. 6422-31). A number of imperial family members such as Li Chong 李沖 (d. 688) and Li Zhen 李貞 (627-688) rebelled in 688 (*ZZTJ* 204, pp. 6449-52). These events, however, did not seriously threaten Wu Zhao's rule.

<sup>9</sup> Wu Zhao was well-versed in the politics of legitimation. See, for example, Guisso, *Wu Tse-t'ien and the Politics of Legitimation*, pp. 26-28, 35-45, 52-57, 66-68; Riccardo Fracasso, “The Nine Tripods of Empress Wu,” in Antonino Forte, ed., *Tang China and Beyond. Studies on East Asia from the Seventh to the Tenth Century* (Kyoto: Istituto Italiano di Cultura, 1988), pp. 85-96; Chen Jo-shui, “Wu Zhao and Proto-Feminist Sentiments in T'ang China,” in Frederick P. Brandauer and Chun-chieh Huang, eds., *Imperial Rulership and Cultural Change in Traditional China* (Seattle: U. Washington P., 1994), pp. 77-114; Stephen Bokenkamp, “A Medieval Feminist Critique of the Chinese World Order: The Case of Wu Zhao (r. 690-705),” *Religion* 28 (1998), pp. 383-92; Puay-peng Ho, “Architecture and Legitimacy in the Court of Wu Zhao,” in Frederick Hok-ming Cheung and Ming-chiu Lai, eds., *Politics and Religion in Ancient and Medieval Europe and China* (Hong Kong: The Chinese U.P., 1999), pp. 101-26; and Rothschild, *Emperor Wu Zhao and Her Pantheon*, pp. 2, 3-5, 15-29.

<sup>10</sup> For a definition and discussion of symbol and its political use, see Wechsler, *Offerings of Jade and Silk*, pp. 31-33.

<sup>11</sup> Harold D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan, *Power and Society: A Framework for Political Inquiry* (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1950), p. 119.

<sup>12</sup> Wechsler, *Offerings of Jade and Silk*, p. 55.

ty.<sup>13</sup> Already seen early in the Zhou dynasty (1046–256 BC) was the idea that being a member in the imperial lineage does not qualify for political legitimacy by default. Rather, Heaven confers its mandate to rule (*ming* 命, equivalent to political legitimacy) to a particular virtuous person and his clan.<sup>14</sup> Later, in the Former Han, this idea was combined with the theory of celestial-terrestrial correspondences that had been developed since the late Warring States period.<sup>15</sup> The new doctrine claims that Heaven constantly monitors the behavior of a ruler and his administration and reveals its approval or warning by showing auspicious or calamitous omens.<sup>16</sup> Auspicious omens therefore came to be “regarded as indispensable signs that the ruler possessed the surpassing virtue required by the Mandate of Heaven doctrine.” They were thus eagerly sought after, interpreted, evaluated, and manipulated by “all would-be dynastic founders and insecure rulers” as well as their advisors and supporters, especially during politically sensitive periods.<sup>17</sup> By the third century AD, presenting congratulatory memorials to the

<sup>13</sup> There are many studies on this subject. E.g. *ibid.*, pp. 12–20; Aihe Wang, *Cosmology and Political Culture in Early China* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2000), pp. 129–209; Michael Loewe, “Imperial Sovereignty: Dong Zhongshu’s Contribution and His Predecessors,” in S. R. Schram, ed., *Foundations and Limits of State Power in China* (London: University of London, 1987), pp. 33–57.

<sup>14</sup> A good summary of this key concept can be found in David Pankenier, *Astrology and Cosmology in Early China* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2013), p. 238; and Wechsler, *Offerings of Jade and Silk*, p. 12.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13. According to David Pankenier, a theory of astral-terrestrial reciprocity already existed in late Shang (13th to mid-11th c. BC), and the theory of correspondences was established during the Warring States period; *idem*, *Astrology and Cosmology in Early China*, pp. 6, 299. Mark Elvin discusses the origin of the belief in correspondences (*ganying*) and its heyday in the mid-Qing court (late-17th to early-18th c.) in “Who Was Responsible for the Weather? Moral Meteorology in Late Imperial China,” *Osiris* 13 (1998), pp. 213–37.

<sup>16</sup> There are many studies on this subject. E.g. David Pankenier, “Astrological Origins of Chinese Dynastic Ideology,” *Vistas in Astronomy* 39 (1995), pp. 503–16; Xiaochun Sun, “Connecting Heaven and Man: The Role of Astronomy in Ancient Chinese Society and Culture,” in D. Valls-Gabaud and A. Bokseberg, eds., *Proceedings IAU Symposium* 260 (2011), pp. 98–106; Zhao Zhen 趙真, *Tang Song tianwen xingzhan yu diwang zhengzhi* 唐宋天文星占與帝王政治 (Beijing: Beijing shifan daxue chubanshe, 2016); Lilian Lan-ying Tseng, *Picturing Heaven in Early China* (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 2011), pp. 89–110. The many omens recorded in the “Treatise on Celestial Offices” in *Shi ji* 史記 demonstrate the popularity of this doctrine during the first century BC; also Gongsun Hong’s 公孫弘 (200–121 BC) discussion on court policies in 130 BC in *ZZTJ* 18, pp. 594–95.

<sup>17</sup> Wechsler, *Offerings of Jade and Silk*, pp. 13–14, 56. The manipulation of omens for political purposes flourished in the hands of Wang Mang 王莽 (45 BC–23 AD) and Liu Xiu 劉秀 (5 BC–57 AD), at a moment when political legitimacy was intensely contested. In 581 when Yang Jian 楊堅 (541–604) received the abdication from the emperor of the Northern Zhou, “fearing that the masses were not yet content, he often spoke about auspicious omens in order to dazzle them. Those [portents] which others fabricated and presented were countless 恐民心未服, 故多稱符瑞以耀之, 其偽造而獻者不可勝計”; *ZZTJ* 179, p. 5589 (trans. Wechsler, *Offerings of Jade and Silk*, p. 57). The official histories of both the Liu-Song and the Southern Qi dynasties contain a separate treatise on auspicious omens; for that given in *Song shu* 宋書,

current or the would-be ruler after someone's report of an omen had become a common practice for court officials.<sup>18</sup>

Wu Zhao is said to have been “fond of auspicious omens 好祥瑞,”<sup>19</sup> an interest derived mainly from her political needs. To support her rule and cater to her will, many men at or beyond the court reported or fabricated auspicious omens,<sup>20</sup> as had happened during other periods of dynastic transition.<sup>21</sup> A large number of congratulatory memorials on auspicious omens survived from the late 670s to the late 690s when Wu Zhao tried to expand her authority and maintain her rule. Many were written by some of the best writers of the time, for example Li Jiao 李嶠 (ca. 646–ca. 715) and Cui Rong 崔融 (653–706), often on behalf of officials from central or local government.<sup>22</sup>

Considering the political background of the second half of the seventh century, Yang Jiong's political stance as well as his interest and erudition in astrology can explain why he chose to write about the Old Man Star. Yang's adult life happened to coincide with Wu Zhao's rise to power. Born in 650, Yang passed the Examination for Child Prodigies (*shentong ju* 神童舉) in 659 and was thereupon summoned to the court where he spent most of his remaining life. He experienced a five-year exile to Zizhou 梓州 (modern Santai 三台, Sichuan) in the 680s and spent the last few years of his life in Yingchuan in the 690s.<sup>23</sup> Judging from his extant writings, Yang Jiong was a firm supporter of Wu Zhao. He was not only sensitive to the specific needs and concerns at different stages of her struggle for power but also good at drawing from a variety of traditions and creating new ways to strengthen and promote her authority. In the early 680s when Wu Zhao's title was Heavenly Empress (*tianhou* 天后), Yang wrote the stele inscription for

see Lippiello, *Auspicious Omens and Miracles*, pp. 122–54, 265–322. During the Tang, two officials from the Board of Rites (Libu 禮部) were assigned to take charge of auspicious omens. On the different categories of auspicious omens, see *XTS* 46, p. 1194.

<sup>18</sup> During the Tang, court officials were required to submit congratulatory memorials (*XTS* 46, p. 1194).

<sup>19</sup> *ZZTJ* 205, p. 6484. Wu Zhao was aware of the importance of astrological signs in general (*JTS* 36, p. 1335). See also Lin Shitian 林世田, “Wu Zetian chengdi yu tuchen xiangrui: yi S.6502 *Dayun jing shu wei zhongxin*” 武則天稱帝與圖讖祥瑞, 以 S.6502 大雲經疏為中心, *Dunhuang xue jikan* 2002.2, pp. 64–72; Liu Yonghai 劉永海, “Lüelun Wu Zetian chengdi yu xiangrui” 略論武則天稱帝與祥瑞, unpub. M.A. thesis (Shoudu shifan daxue, 2008).

<sup>20</sup> See, e.g., *ZZTJ* 203, p. 6421.

<sup>21</sup> See, e.g., Wang Mang's biography in *Han shu* 漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1964) 99A, pp. 4077–79, 4093–95.

<sup>22</sup> Li Fang 李昉 (925–996) et al., *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1966; hereafter cited as *WYYH*), j. 561–565, contains over a dozen congratulatory memorials for Wu Zhao written by Li Jiao, Cui Rong, Zhang Yue, and other courtiers.

<sup>23</sup> Fu, “Lu, Yang nianpu,” pp. 207–9, 232.

the Temple of the Younger Sister (Shaoyi miao 少姨廟) on Mount Song 嵩.<sup>24</sup> At the surface, the inscription commemorates the imperial couple’s visit to Mount Song and praises emperor Gaozong’s achievements. The underlying purpose was to augment Wu Zhao’s status, champion her involvement in political affairs, and support her plans to establish a new political center in greater Luoyang, including elevating the status of Mount Song.<sup>25</sup> In autumn of 692, Yang presented “Yulanpen fu” 盂蘭盆賦 (“Fu on *Ullambana*”) to commemorate Wu Zhao’s presence in the celebration of the Ghost Festival. In this effusive eulogy, Yang praises Wu Zhao as a successor of the lineage of ancient sage-kings and expresses his high hopes for her to be “a model and exemplar for all emperors and kings 作皇王之軌躅.”<sup>26</sup> “Fu on the Old Man Star” adds to these works by its context of astrology. Yang was clearly eager to use his erudition and literary eloquence to extol Wu Zhao through traditional and innovative ways.

An enthusiastic stargazer, Yang had more than a passing knowledge of cosmology, astronomy, and astrology, which is demonstrated mainly in his “Huntian fu” 渾天賦 (“Fu on the Theory of Sphere-Heavens”).<sup>27</sup> In this *fu* Yang states that after receiving his first official post in 676, he “spent days and nights at the Luminous Terrace studying all the figures on the bronze armillary sphere 朝夕靈台之下，備見銅渾之象。”<sup>28</sup> The court discussion he submitted to the throne in 677 on the proper symbolic

<sup>24</sup> “Shaoshi shan Shaoyi miao bei ming bing xu” 少室山少姨廟碑銘並序, *WYTH* 878, pp. 6a–11b; *Yang* 5, pp. 65–71. The visit was on March 18 of 680. See *JTS* 5, p. 106. Cui Rong wrote the inscription for an epitaph for Qi’s mother to commemorate the imperial visit on the previous day. Both inscriptions were written soon after the visit and no later than their dedication in early 683. See Jonathan Pettit, “Erotic Empress,” pp. 129–30, esp. n. 22. Cf. Zhao Mingcheng’s 趙明誠 (1081–1129) criticism of Yang Jiong’s inscription in *Jinshi lu* 金石錄 24, pp. 8b–9a; see *Song ben Jinshi lu* 宋本金石錄 (rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), pp. 570–71.

<sup>25</sup> Rothschild, *Emperor Wu Zhao and Her Pantheon*, pp. 87–90, who comments that Yang and Cui “made a concerted effort to resuscitate the cults [of the Tushan sisters] and invest these neglected sites with ceremonial significance”; idem, pp. 47–51. On the important role that Luoyang and Mount Song played in Wu Zhao’s struggle for legitimacy and power, see Cai Yunzhang 蔡運章, “Shendu, shenyue yu Wu Zhou wangchao” 神都·神嶽與武周王朝, in Wang Wenchao 王文超 and Zhao Wenrun 趙文潤, eds., *Wu Zetian yu Songshan* 武則天與嵩山 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002), pp. 225–29.

<sup>26</sup> *JTS*’s compilers highly praised this *fu* for elegance and eloquence; *JTS* 190, p. 5003. For its textual history, see Teiser, *Ghost Festival in Medieval China*, p. 73, n. 46.

<sup>27</sup> Perhaps written between 676 and 680.

<sup>28</sup> According to Edward Schafer, “[i]n this elegant composition he lays before us a grand panorama of all the powerful asterisms and describes their orderly and responsible movements, with the great aim of reconciling ‘enveloping sky’ theory with the orthodox systems of morals, divination, and religion”; *Pacing the Void: Tang Approaches to the Stars* (Berkeley: U. California P., 1977), p. 36. On the armillary sphere, see Joseph Needham, with Wang Ling, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 3: *Mathematics and the Sciences of the Heavens and the Earth* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1959), pp. 339–59.

meanings of the Twelve Emblems further demonstrates his knowledge and concerns on the cosmological and symbolic aspects of proper ritual.<sup>29</sup> It is also clear from his other writings that Yang was interested in astronomical and astrological theories and symbolisms, and that he used them often to strengthen arguments, create atmosphere and emotions, and enhance the expression of his central themes.<sup>30</sup>

Taking into account Yang's political concerns and personal interest as well as the political situations at the end of the seventh century, there is little surprise that Yang chose to write on an astrological symbol soon after the founding of the Zhou in 690. Written mainly for a non-literary purpose, based on Yang's erudition in astrology, and empowered by Yang's literary skills, "*Fu* on the Old Man Star" is an apt text to show the relationship and interaction among politics, astrology, and literature. Before a detailed discussion of it, we should explain why this particular star was selected as the subject of a *fu*.

#### "FU ON THE OLD MAN STAR" IN TERMS OF ASTRONOMY AND ASTROLOGY

Old Man Star is the second brightest star in the sky after Sirius and since ancient times has attracted the notice of observers and writers in all parts of the world.<sup>31</sup> It was important in premodern China for its location on the celestial sphere in relation to the locations of the major dynastic capital cities such as Chang'an (modern Xi'an), Luoyang, Jiankang (modern Nanjing), and Bianjing (modern Kaifeng). The star is invisible to those living north of the 37th parallel.<sup>32</sup> The capital cities of the just mentioned dynasties were located between about 32 to 35 degrees north, very close to the northern limit of visibility of Old Man Star.<sup>33</sup> As observed from the imperial bureaus of astronomy dur-

<sup>29</sup> "Gongqing yixia mianfu yi" 公卿以下冕服識, *Yang* 5, pp. 75-77. The Twelve Emblems refer to twelve patterns embroidered on the ritual robes of the emperor and courtiers, which is first mentioned in *Shangshu*; see Kong Anguo 孔安國 (fl. 156-74 BC) and Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574-648), annot., *Shang shu zhengyi* 尚書正義 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999) 5, p. 115.

<sup>30</sup> E.g. "Da Tang Yizhou dadudu fu Xindu xian xue xiansheng miaotang beiwen bing xu" 大唐益州大都督府新都縣學先聖廟堂碑文並序, *Yang* 4, pp. 49-56; "Zizhou Huiyi si chonggeming" 梓州惠義寺重閣銘, *idem*, 5, pp. 72-73.

<sup>31</sup> Richard H. Allen, *Star Names: Their Lore and Meaning* (rpt. New York: Dover Publications, 1963), pp. 67-72; Chen Jiujin 陳久金, *Zhongguo xingzuo shenhua* 中國星座神話 (Taipei: Taiwan guji chubanshe, 2005), pp. 298-302.

<sup>32</sup> To be precise, Canopus is currently invisible to those living above latitude 37°18' north at zero elevation.

<sup>33</sup> E.g. the latitude of the center of modern Xi'an is about 34° north.

ing these dynasties, the star was close to the southern horizon, barely visible. This is perhaps why the central concern of historical records and literary writings about it, including Yang Jiong’s *fu*, is its visibility and brightness. The common pattern of the relevant official records is that on a certain day of a certain month the star “appeared” or “became visible 老人星見。” It should be noted that the Old Man Star is easily visible in the relatively deep southern regions of China.<sup>34</sup> However, the belief that the star is not steadily visible persisted throughout the medieval period. Perhaps this is in part because the imperial court monopolized the observation and interpretation of astronomical phenomena in premodern China,<sup>35</sup> and imperial bureaus of astronomy were in the capital cities where Canopus was not easily visible.

Yang Jiong’s *fu* draws concepts and phrases about Old Man Star from many pre-Tang sources. Extant documents show that interpretations of the star’s astrological significance began by the fourth century BC and was further developed and politicized after the first century AD. The two earliest extant records about it show a simple “cause-effect” pattern, which is common in early astrological prognostication. The pattern is that a celestial phenomenon’s position, path, or interaction with other bodies can cause changes on the earth. The early astronomer and astrologer Shi Shen 石申 (fl. fourth century BC) states that, “When the Old Man Star is bright, the sovereign will enjoy longevity and prosperity and many worthies will appear in the realm 老人星明, 主壽昌, 天下多賢士.”<sup>36</sup> An entry in the “Treatise on Celestial Offices” of the well-known first-century BC history *Shi ji* 史記 adds astronomical observations, such as where and when to observe the star, as well as some new astrological meaning to Shi Shen’s divination: “In the vicinity of the Wolf [Sirius] there is a big star named the Old Man of the Southern Culmen. When the Old Man Star appears, society will be in good order; if not, armed men will rise. Often one awaits it on the autumnal equinox at the southern suburb 狼比地有大星, 曰南極老人. 老人見, 治安,

<sup>34</sup> In 724, a number of court officials went to Jiaozhou 交州 (modern Vietnam) to measure the shadow of the sun. There, in the ocean, they saw Old Man Star at a high ascension; *JTS* 35, p. 1303; *ZZTJ* 212, p. 6759; Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, p. 70.

<sup>35</sup> Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 3, pp. 186–94; Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, p. 12; Pankenier, *Astrology and Cosmology in Early China*, pp. 9, 300; idem, “Astrological Origins of Chinese Dynastic Ideology,” p. 1.

<sup>36</sup> Gautama Siddhārtha 瞿曇悉達 (fl. early to mid-8th c.), *Kaiyuan zhanjing* 開元占經 (rpt. Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1994) 68, p. 724. Perhaps quoted from Shi Shen’s 8-j. *Tian wen* 天文 (a.k.a. *Shi shi xingjing* 石氏星經). For Shi Shen and his work, see Sima Qian 司馬遷 (b. ca. 145 BC), *Shi ji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1964; hereafter *SJ*) 27, p. 1343–44; Sun Xiaochun and Jacob Kistemaker, *The Chinese Sky during the Han: Constellating Stars and Society* (New York: E. J. Brill, 1997), pp. 37–94.

不見，兵起。常以秋分時候之於南郊。”<sup>37</sup> Phrases from these two earliest records are interspersed in Yang’s *fu* (lines 9–10, 28–30, 37, 83).

Along with the development of the theories of celestial-terrestrial correspondences and the conceptions of Heaven’s mandate since the Former Han, many phenomena came to acquire a two-fold significance in divination works: a phenomenon is caused by the government here on earth and is Heaven’s response to that government. The earliest such extant records about the Old Man Star are found in several weft texts (*weishu* 緯書, or apocrypha), which emerged as political propaganda only toward the very end of the Former Han.<sup>38</sup> One of them, titled *Sun shi ruiying tu* 孫氏瑞應圖 (*Diagram of Auspices and Correspondences by Mr. Sun*) and written during the Wei-Jin period (220–280 AD) notes that, “When the king obediently receives influences from Heaven, Old Man Star will shine upon his realm 王者承天，則老人星臨其國。”<sup>39</sup>

The uniqueness of the Old Man Star was that its significance tripled by the second century AD. It was believed that a virtuous ruler and his benign government would cause the star to become easily visible, which, in turn, was not only a sign demonstrating Heaven’s approval of the ruler, but also Heaven’s potential bestowal upon him of longevity. One of the earliest extant congratulatory memorials concerning the Old Man Star, written by Bian Kun 卞壺 (281–328), reflects this point: “Your Majesty’s sagacious virtue has corresponded with Heaven, [thus] auspicious omens have appeared repeatedly. Mysterious phenomena let down their brilliance, and the Old Man Star reveals the omen: longevity without end 陛下聖德應乾，嘉瑞屢臻。玄象垂耀，老人啓徵，萬壽無疆。”<sup>40</sup> This trifold significance is also the fundamental underpinning of Yang’s *fu*, which not only praises the virtue of Wu Zhao but also celebrates Heaven’s mandate and blessings to her and her new dynasty. To emphasize that other auspicious omens do not carry such reports of Heaven-sent longevity, Yang’s *fu*, section V, comments, after enumerating famous auspicious omens, that they all pale before the bright Old Man Star: “Compared with longevity bestowed from August Heaven,

<sup>37</sup> *Sf* 27, pp. 1306–8.

<sup>38</sup> On weft texts and their rise in popularity, see, e.g., Yasui Kōzan 安居香山, ed., *Shin’i shisō no sōgōteki kenkyū* 讖緯思想の総合的研究 (Tokyo: Kokushō, 1984), pp. 427–39; Yang Quan 楊權, “Chenwei yanjiu shulue” 讖緯研究述略, *Zhongguo shi yanjiu dongtai* 中國史研究動態 2001.6, pp. 12–22; Zhong Zhaopeng 鍾肇鵬, *Chenwei lunlue* 讖緯論略 (Shenyang: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 1991), esp. pp. 1–33 and 116–46.

<sup>39</sup> Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 (557–641) et al., *Yiwen lei ju* 藝文類聚 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982; hereafter cited as *YWLJ*) 1, p. 12. For Sun’s work, see Chen Pan 陳槃, *Gu chenwei yantao jiqi shulu jieti* 古讖緯研討及其書錄解題 (Taipei: Guoli bianyiguan, 1991), pp. 631–42.

<sup>40</sup> *YWLJ* 1, p. 13.

/ How can even one ten-thousandth of them be worth mentioning? 比夫皇穹之錫壽，何足以談其萬一” (lines 77-78).

Old Man Star is recorded and depicted numerous in earlier histories, prognostication works, court memorials, poems, and other *fu*.<sup>41</sup> By utilizing the structure and topoi of the eulogistic literature and political discourses on legitimation, Yang Jiong intentionally placed his *fu* in the same political and literary traditions as those writings. In this respect, Yang’s *fu* is different from the two other extant *fu* on the Old Man Star.<sup>42</sup> The next section will discuss these aspects.

#### THE THEMATIC AND STRUCTURAL CONVENTIONS OF YANG JIONG’S *FU*

This section discusses the structural and thematic conventions of three types of writing that influenced Yang’s *fu*. The first type concerned political discourse on legitimation, that is, texts that discuss, create, or transfer political legitimacy. Such discourse originated in the Shang dynasty and flourished noticeably in state discussions after the early part of the Former Han.<sup>43</sup> These discussions were usually delivered through various forms of court communication between the ruler and his advisers, for example in the form of critiques (*yi* 議), memorials (*biao* 表), imperial edicts (*zhao* 詔), patents of enfeoffment (*ce* 冊), and scholarly treatises (*lun* 論). The second type of writing is court eulogistic literature, which aimed at praising and glorifying an empire, a ruler, a minister, or a general and is often written in the forms of *fu* as well as eulogy (*song* 頌).<sup>44</sup> The third type, which began to appear by the third century AD and is an overlap between the first two types, may be called congratulatory literature that uses auspicious omens. This

<sup>41</sup> E.g. seven records during the Southern Qi in *Nan Qi shu* 南齊書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1972) 13, pp. 239-40; forty records during the reign of emperor Wu of the Liang in *Liang shu* 梁書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973) 2, pp. 42, 44-45, 47-50, 54-59; 3, pp. 63-67, 69-72, 74-77, 79-81. For a discussion on the references to the star during emperor Wu of Liang’s reign, see Okamura Sadao 岡村貞雄, “Rōjinsei miharu” 老人星見はる, *Chūgoku chūsei bungaku kenkyū* 中国中世文学研究 10 (1974), pp. 45-51; Jiang Xiaoyuan 江曉原 and Niu Weixing 鈕衛星, “Tianxue shi shang de Liang Wu di” 天學史上的梁武帝, in *Jiang Xiaoyuan zixuan ji* 江曉原自選集 (Nanning: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2001), pp. 222-23. For a prognostication concerning the star, see Gautama, *Kaiyuan zhanjing* 68, pp. 723-24. For pre-Song poetry, *fu*, and congratulatory memorials about the star, see *WYH*, j. 8, 181, 561.

<sup>42</sup> Written respectively by Xi Ang 郗昂 (fl. mid-8th c.) and Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989-1052). See below for further discussion.

<sup>43</sup> Goodman, *Is’ao P’i Transcendent*, p. 16: “With the advent of a court culture that relied on advisers, texts, and ritual, the ruling group [of the Han] seems to have become more conscious of the problems of legitimation that were imbedded in history. ... The culture of ideas became just as important as the blunt exertion of authority.”

<sup>44</sup> E.g. Sima Xiangru’s 司馬相如 (179-117 BC) “Shanglin fu” 上林賦, Yang Xiong’s 揚雄

was done mostly in the form of court memorials or eulogies (*he xiang-rui biao/song* 賀祥瑞表/頌). It celebrated the appearance of auspicious omens and thus could praise a current or would-be ruler with the aim of creating legitimation for him.<sup>45</sup> The rest of this section will explore how Yang Jiong's *fu* utilizes the thematic and the structural convention of the aforementioned three types of writing.

### *Conventional Topoi*

A common topos in early political discourses on legitimation might be termed "outdoing." In this category we encounter the virtue of the current or would-be ruler, the quantity and variety of auspicious omens that have appeared in order to support his enlightened rule, and the extent that the number of those who have been transformed under his influence exceeded those of the past.<sup>46</sup> For example, "[Your Majesty's] virtue matches that of all who came before, and no one's achievements can be compared with yours 德侔往初, 功無與二."<sup>47</sup> A related topos is enumeration of auspicious omens. These two topoi are often combined, and Sima Xiangru's 司馬相如 (179–117 BC) "Fengshan wen" 封禪文 ("Essay on the *feng* and *shan* Sacrifices") is a good example of that.<sup>48</sup> Section V (lines 57–78) of Yang Jiong's *fu* consists solely of the combination of the two topoi (discussed, below, in further detail).

A third topos is to argue for legitimacy via the classics, historical precedents, and/or prognosticatory writings. The memorials presented to Cao Pi 曹丕 (187–226), then king of Wei, from such Wei court offi-

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(53 BC–18 AD) "Yulie fu" 羽獵賦, a number of capital *fu* written during the Later Han such as Ban Gu's 班固 (32–92) "Xidu fu" 西都賦, and the many instances of granting the Nine Distinctions 九錫 to powerful ministers and generals.

<sup>45</sup> The earliest extant congratulatory memorials, all on the appearance of the Old Man Star, were written during the 3d–4th cc.; *YWLJ* 1, pp. 11–13. *WYH* collects a large number of memorials of this kind in *j.* 561–565, 612.

<sup>46</sup> This is also a common topos in Western panegyrics. See, for example, David R. Knechtges, "Uncovering the Sauce Jar: A Literary Interpretation of Yang Hsiung's 'Chü Ch'in mei Hsin,'" in David T. Roy and Tsuen-Hsuei Tsien, eds., *Ancient China: Studies in Early Civilization* (Hong Kong: Chinese U. Hong Kong P., 1977), p. 248 and n. 67; Susanna Morton Braund, "Praise and Protreptic in Early Imperial Panegyric: Cicero, Seneca, Pliny," in Mary Whitby, ed., *The Propaganda of Power. The Role of Panegyric in Late Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), p. 75.

<sup>47</sup> Sima Xiangru, "Fengshan wen," in *Wen xuan* 文選 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1986) 48, p. 2142.

<sup>48</sup> Liu Xie's *Wenxin diaolong* praises Sima Xiangru's "Fengshan wen": it "lets shine the mysterious tallies, mirrors the grand achievements, drives the past and the ancient inferior to the present, extols the brilliant ruler above an array of sages, praises it with auspicious omens 炳玄符, 鏡鴻業, 驅前古於當今之下, 騰休明於列聖之上, 歌之以禎瑞"; see Yang Mingzhao 楊明照, annot., *Zengding Wenxin diaolong jiaozhu* 增訂文心雕龍校註 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000) 5, pp. 295–96.

cials as Xu Zhi 許芝 and Dong Ba 董巴 to persuade Cao to ascend the throne fall into this category.<sup>49</sup> Yang Jiong in his *fu* touches on this topos by quoting a weft text and a work of astrological divination to explain the significance of the Old Man Star (lines 27–30).

A fourth topos is to link the current or would-be ruler to the lineage of legendary sage kings or to glorify his genealogy. For example, again in the case of Cao Pi, two Wei officials, Su Lin 蘇林 and Dong Ba, tried to demonstrate in their memorials that Zhuanyu 顓頊 was the ancestor of the Cao clan.<sup>50</sup> Lines 49–50 in Yang Jiong’s *fu* reflect his effort to employ this type of mythologization for the benefit of Wu Zhao: “How remote, the north of Tai Province, / Indeed deep and profound, the northern bank of Fen River” 邈矣台州之北，窅然汾水之陽。 (See the appendix for comments on these lines.)

Last but not least is the topos of joy and celebration: officials, ordinary people, and even animals sing and dance to express joy and enthusiasm. The philosophical background of this comes from the Confucian classics about the will of the people.<sup>51</sup> Section III of Yang Jiong’s *fu*, especially lines 39–46, is a significant expansion of this topos. In some cases the topoi discussed above overlap. For example, that concerning the link back to sage-kings may quote historical precedents or weft texts.

### *Structural Conventions*

Yang Jiong’s *fu* employs a certain conventional framework for congratulatory memorials, which had become fixed by the end of the sixth century.<sup>52</sup> This framework had a narrative structure, which is analyzed in what follows.

Among the extant, relatively complete pre-Tang pieces, the earliest are three memorials and four eulogies from the 440s. They were written, variously, by He Chengtian 何承天 (370–447), Liu Yigong 劉義恭

<sup>49</sup> Xu Zhi’s memorial quotes many weft texts. See *Xiandi zhuan* 獻帝傳, preserved in Pei Songzhi’s 裴松之 (372–451) annotation to Chen Shou’s 陳壽 (233–297) *San guo zhi* 三國志 (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 1971; hereafter, *SGZ*) 2, pp. 63–65. Cf. the memorial by Dong Ba and others that justifies Cao Pi’s legitimacy with astrological omens and historical precedents in idem, 2, pp. 70–71. For studies on the memorials presented to Cao Pi in 220 urging him to ascend, see David R. Knechtges, “The Rhetoric of Imperial Abdication and Accession in a Third-Century Chinese Court: The Case of Cao Pi’s Accession as Emperor of the Wei Dynasty,” in David R. Knechtges and Eugene Vance, eds., *Rhetoric and Discourses of Power in Court Culture: China, Europe, and Japan* (Seattle: U. Washington P., 2005), pp. 3–35; Goodman, *Ts’ao P’i Transcendent*, pp. 61–166.

<sup>50</sup> *SGZ* 2, pp. 70–71; Goodman, *Ts’ao P’i Transcendent*, pp. 145–55.

<sup>51</sup> Jiang Xiaoyuan points out that according to *Shi jing* and *Shang shu*, Mandate of Heaven also represents the will of the people and can be known through omens; *Xingzhan xue yu chuantong wenhua* 星占學與傳統文化 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1992), pp. 6–12.

<sup>52</sup> As evidenced in Yu Xin’s 庾信 (513–581) three memorials written in the 570s that pre-

(413-465), and Shen Yanzhi 沈演之 (397-449) and were all presented to emperor Wen of the Liu-Song dynasty (Liu Yilong 劉義隆, 407-453).<sup>53</sup> They make full use of the topoi and rhetoric discussed above and share a narrative structure that can be summarized as follows.

1. Introduction to the Mandate of Heaven and heaven-earth correspondence as the main argument and the philosophical foundation of the memorial. For example, “Auspicious omens never fail to appear for a wise lord 休瑞之臻, 罔違哲后.”<sup>54</sup>
2. Praise of the emperor in the form of one or more topoi, discussed above. Praise is common in court communications, but in congratulatory memorials it is more excessive and often serves the purpose of explaining the cause of the omen. For instance, “Your majesty inherited the achievements and virtue of your ancestors,<sup>55</sup> and walks in the steps of your forefathers,<sup>56</sup> ... therefore the nine [hierarchically assigned] territories [all] share the same mind, ... and all auspicious omens appear 陛下重光嗣服, 永言祖武, ...故能九服混心, ...景瑞畢臻.”<sup>57</sup>
3. Description of the specific auspicious omen for which the memorial is written, including data such as where and when the omen was discovered. A brief explanation was sometimes given that concerned the significance of the omen and did so through quotations from the classics, historical documents, and/or weft texts. The order of 2 and 3 was in some cases reversed.
4. Conclusion that expressed joy. For example, “I cannot overcome the emotions from clapping and swaying 不勝抃舞之情.”<sup>58</sup>

Yang Jiong’s *fu* uses this conventional narrative structure. It is precisely by putting the *fu* in the same literary and political context as that of congratulatory memorials that Yang highlights its political purpose, implying that the *fu* is not simply a literary piece written for pleasure. In fact, his *fu* can be divided into six sections based on the change of rhymes and the content. Section I (lines 1-8), an introduction of Heav-

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sent auspicious omens to the throne on behalf of Yuwen Xian 宇文憲 (545-578); see Ni Fan 倪璠 (fl. 1705), annot., Xu Yimin 許逸民, punct., *Yu Zishan jizhu* 庾子山集注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980) 7, pp. 526-34.

<sup>53</sup> He Chengtian, congratulatory memorial that presented a “Baijiu song” 白鳩頌 in 441; Liu Yigong, congratulatory memorial presenting a “Jiahe ganlu song” 嘉禾甘露頌 in 447; Shen Yanzhi’s “Jiahe song” 嘉禾頌 and his congratulatory memorial presenting a “Baijiu song” in 447. All are preserved in the “Treatise on Auspicious Omens” in Shen Yue 沈約 (441-513), *Song shu* 宋書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974; hereafter, *SS*) 29, pp. 830-31, 848-50.

<sup>54</sup> Shen Yanzhi, “Baijiu song,” in *SS* 29, p. 850.

<sup>55</sup> From “Guming” 顧命 in *Shang shu zhengyi* 18, p. 497.

<sup>56</sup> From “Xiawu” 下武 in *Shi jing*, Mao 243.

<sup>57</sup> He Chengtian, “Baijiu song,” *SS* 29, p. 849.

<sup>58</sup> From Liu Yigong’s congratulatory memorial on auspicious grain; *SS* 29, p. 830.

en’s blessings for the Zhou dynasty and Heaven’s mandate for Wu Zhao in Yang’s own time, leads the narrative to the celestial omen that will be elaborated in the next section. Section II (lines 9–30), corresponding to number 2 in the conventional structure discussed above, is an extensive description of the Old Man Star. Section III (lines 31–46), echoing number 4 in the conventional structure, is about the joy of court officials, common people, and animals. Sections IV through VI are devoted to praises, which, considered together, correspond with number 2 in the conventional structure. Section IV (lines 47–56) praises Wu Zhao’s genealogy and female power. Section V (lines 57–78) is an expansion of the “outdoing topos.” Section VI (lines 79–86) further extols Wu Zhao, celebrates the portent of the star, and expresses the author’s good wishes.

But Yang’s *fu* is not a mere imitation or expansion of earlier congratulatory memorials. Expansion of traditional topoi already appeared in congratulatory literature by the late-sixth century. A good example is Xu Shanxin’s 許善心 (558–618) preface to his “Shenque song” 神雀頌 (“Eulogy of the Divine Sparrow”) presented to emperor Wen of the Sui (Yang Jian 楊堅, 541–604) in 596.<sup>59</sup> The preface, functioning as a congratulatory memorial that explains the reason to present a eulogy, is framed in the conventional structure. All the topoi are fully developed with elaborate description and exaggeration, and each section in the narrative becomes prolonged accordingly. In comparison, Yang’s *fu* tweaks and rearranges the order of the conventional topoi, expanding some and simplifying some others, to accentuate the emotions of joy and celebration and fulfill his political and literary purposes. The interpretation of the omen in section II of Yang’s *fu* (lines 29–30), for instance, is very brief. After all, the portent carried by Old Man Star had been established by the early Tang and did not need further explanation. The topos of joy and celebration is often treated with brevity in congratulatory memorials, usually conveyed in a couple of short phrases such as “all of your subjects and concubines far and near rejoice like ducks in duckweed 臣妾遠近, 莫不覺藻.”<sup>60</sup> Yang’s *fu*, on the other hand, devotes nine lines in section III (lines 38–46) to the topos. In addition, the topoi that are expanded in Yang’s *fu* are embellished by such literary devices as enumeration and series of parallelism. For example, lines 9 to 26 are perhaps the longest and the most beautiful depiction

<sup>59</sup> *Sui shu* 隋書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973) 58, pp. 1425–27.

<sup>60</sup> See *SGZ* 2, p. 63, Pei Songzhi’s note, which quotes a memorial given in *Xiandi zhuan* and presented to Cao Pi in 220 by several officials at the Wei court.

of Old Man Star yet seen in any writings about it. The literary devices of Yang's *fu* will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

In terms of structure, Yang's *fu* is different from the two other extant "*Fu* on the Old Man Star," one by Xi Ang 郗昂 (*js.* ca. 735) and the other by Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989–1052).<sup>61</sup> These are relatively more descriptive, and they alternate depictions of and praises to the Old Man Star in no particular order; but neither has a clear narrative structure. This is in part because of their different purposes of writing. Xi Ang's *fu* is on an object (*yongwu* 詠物) and is written probably for amusement or practice. It does not have an explicit political message or any "outdoing topos" that is usually used in eulogistic literature.<sup>62</sup> Fan's *fu* seems to have been written to wish the ruler a long life, so its focus is not on political legitimacy but stressing the association between the Old Man Star and longevity. It does not use the "outdoing topos" either. The different ways these two *fu* are framed underline Yang's intention to put his *fu* in the context of political discourses on legitimacy rather than the literary tradition of *yongwu*.

#### THE LANGUAGE AND LITERARY DEVICES OF YANG'S "FU ON THE OLD MAN STAR"

This section takes up first of all the development of literary features of eulogistic writing, which influenced Yang's *fu*, and then analyzes the characteristics and creativeness of Yang's *fu*.

Eulogistic literature of the early Tang, including Yang's *fu*, shows a confluence of several literary genres and styles that had taken place since the first century BC. Blending of literary genres began during the Han dynasty when passages in a variety of genres started to resemble the *fu* style. For example, some political discourses on legitimacy such as Sima Xiangru's essay on the *feng* and *shan* sacrifices and Yang Xiong's 揚雄 (53 BC–18 AD) "Ju Qin mei Xin" 劇秦美新 ("Denigrating Qin and Praising Xin") contain short passages of literary description and exaggeration that are reminiscent of the *fu* genre.<sup>63</sup> During the Six Dynas-

<sup>61</sup> Xi Ang's *fu* can be found in *WYYH* 8, pp. 1a–2a; *Quan Tang wen* 全唐文 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983) 361, p. 3668. For Fan's *fu*, see *Fan Zhongyan quanji* 范仲淹全集 (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 2007) 1, pp. 10–11.

<sup>62</sup> There are several other indicators that Xi's *fu* was not written for the imperial house. First, the author at the end of the *fu* addresses himself as *yu* 余, not a self-reference that a subject uses addressing his ruler. Secondly, the tone is not as elevated as that of congratulatory literature.

<sup>63</sup> See the discussion in Knechtges, "Literary Interpretation of Yang Hsiung's 'Chü Ch'in mei Hsin,'" p. 247. A number of scholars have pointed out that during Han the genres of eulogy, encomium (*zan* 贊), inscription (*ming* 銘), and admonition (*zhen* 箴), though having dif-

ties, political discourses and eulogistic prose, including imperial edicts, congratulatory memorials, and prefaces to court gatherings, developed longer passages that incorporated the stylistic elements of the *fu* such as enumeration, hyperbole, and ornate diction.<sup>64</sup> In addition, parallelism, a well-suited vehicle for flowery exposition and showcasing rhetorical eloquence that appeared at the end of the second century, reached a pinnacle of popularity by the sixth century, as most literary genres were developing a strong tendency towards parallelism.<sup>65</sup>

From the Sui to the early Tang, eulogistic literature used hyperboles, elaborate description, and elevated diction more extensively. For example, in a memorial that celebrates the appearance of an auspicious stone in 643, Shangguan Yi 上官儀 (d. 665) devotes forty-six lines to praising the emperor.<sup>66</sup> In addition, the meter, predominantly four and six syllables in pre-Tang literature, developed greater variation. For instance, the twenty-two lines that describe an auspicious stone in a memorial Li Jiao submitted to Wu Zhao use a meter that varies among four, five, six, and eight syllables.<sup>67</sup> Translated below is a hyperbolic elaboration on the topos “praising the ruler” from a memorial presented by an important courtier to Wu Zhao sometime between 695 and 700 to celebrate the appearing of the Old Man Star.<sup>68</sup>

ferent uses in practice, share a similar style, and that many pieces demonstrate some stylistic characteristics of the *fu*. For example, Wang Bao’s 王褒 (fl. 73–49 BC) “Ganquan gong song” 甘泉宮頌 and Ban Gu’s “Feng Yanran shan ming” 封燕然山銘 (including its preface). See Liang Fuming 梁復明 and Fei Zhengang 費振剛, “Lun Handai song zan ming zhen yu Han fu de tongti yiyong” 論漢代頌贊銘箴與漢賦的同體異用, *Xueshu luntan* 學術論壇 2008.7, pp. 82–86, 90; David R. Knechtges, “To Praise the Han: The Eastern Capital *Fu* of Pan Ku and His Contemporaries,” in W. L. Idema and E. Zürcher, eds., *Thought and Law in Qin and Han China* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), p. 139.

<sup>64</sup> E.g. the two “Sanyue sanri qushui shixu” 三月三日曲水詩序 by Yan Yanzhi 顏延之 (384–456) and Wang Rong 王融 (467–493) respectively, in *Wen xuan* 46, pp. 2049–70; Shen Yue, “He Qi mingdi dengzuo qi” 齊齊明帝登祚啓, in *YWLJ* 14, p. 265; the edict that emperor He of the Southern Qi (Xiao Baorong 蕭寶融, 488–502) abdicated and transferred imperial authority to Xiao Yan 蕭衍 (464–549) in 502, in *Liang shu* 1, pp. 25–26. Cf. Liu Xie’s discussion (“Song zan” 頌贊) of the eulogy, encomium, and *fu* in Yang, annot., *Zengding Wenxin diaolong jiaozhu* 2, pp. 108–9.

<sup>65</sup> Yu Jingxiang 于景祥, *Zhongguo pianwen tongshi* 中國駢文通史 (Changchun: Jilin renmin chubanshe, 2002), pp. 245–426.

<sup>66</sup> “Wei chaochen he Liangzhou ruishi biao” 爲朝臣賀涼州瑞石表; *WYH* 564, pp. 1b–3a.

<sup>67</sup> “He tianzun ruishi ji yu biao” 賀天尊瑞石及雨表 written in the late 690s; *ibid.*, pp. 6b–7b.

<sup>68</sup> *WYH* 561, pp. 3a–b. Presented by Wu Sansi 武三思 on behalf of 4,841 court officials whose ranks were ninth or higher. The memorial addresses Wu Zhao as “Heavenly Endowed Sagely Divine Emperor, Cakravartin of the Golden Wheel” 天冊金輪聖神皇帝, a title she held from October 22, 695, to May 26, 700. See *JTS* 6, p. 124, and *XIS* 4, p. 101. *Cakravartin* is the universal Buddhist sovereign, that is, “the Holy and Divine Emperor [who makes] the Golden Wheel [turn]”; see Erik Zürcher’s discussion of *cakravartin* in Wu Zhao’s title in “MAHĀ-CĪNA: The Buddhist Reinterpretation of the History of China.” English trans. T. Crujisen, in Jonathan A. Silk, ed., *Buddhism in China: Collected Papers of Erik Zürcher* (Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 289–92.

- 1 潤色丕業, [Your Majesty] adds embellishment to the  
 great achievements,  
 光赫寶祚, Shines brightly on the imperial throne,  
 執大象而御風雲, Holds the grand symbol to harness the winds  
 and the clouds,  
 鼓洪鑪而運寒燠. Blows the giant furnace to revolve coldness  
 and hotness.
- 5 浹洽四海, You have made the four oceans harmonious,  
 輝華六幽. The six directions effulgent.  
 希代符來, Tallies rarely seen for generations have ap-  
 peared,  
 超今邁昔. Outnumbering this era and surpassing the past.
- 9 浪委波屬, Like breakers piling up and waves jointing one  
 another,  
 故合遷而無窮. They come continuously and endlessly.  
 日臻月見, They appear every day and reveal themselves  
 every month,  
 尚殷勤而未已. In repetition, in succession, and have not yet  
 paused.

Two characteristics in the above are typical in eulogistic literature of the early Tang. One is to mythologize the ruler as a participant in the proper functioning of the cosmos (lines 3–6), which was uncommon before the Tang. The other is the hyperbolic elaboration on the conventional topoi of eulogistic literature, in this case the “outdoing topos” (lines 7–12). The metaphor of cosmological creation and changes (lines 3–4) and the imagery of numerous auspicious omens appearing like breakers and waves continuously piling up on top of each other (lines 9–10) create divinity for Wu Zhao and a feeling of awe. The political message is expressed partly through the change of meter from four to six or seven when the author presents images of gigantic objects and notions of endlessness (lines 3, 4, 10, 12).

These new developments of eulogistic literature can also be found in Yang Jiong’s “*Fu* on the Old Man Star,” a product of the further blending of genres and styles during the early Tang. The *fu* is written mainly in parallel couplets, contains many variations in meter, depicts Wu Zhao as the creator of the universe, organizes several conventional topoi within a conventional structure, and contains many passages of elaborate descriptions and hyperboles. In essence it is a rhymed congratulatory memorial on an auspicious omen.

The uniqueness of Yang’s *fu*, in addition to its individualistic treatment of conventional structure and topoi, is that it creates strong and

multi-layered literary effects designed to articulate its political purposes and enhance its literary value. What is more, despite its use of hyperbole, enumeration, and ornate diction that are typical for its genre, the *fu* is not laden with excessive exaggeration and verbose descriptions as many early-Tang congratulatory memorials are. These unique characteristics remind us of the comment that Yang Jiong made on the literary style that had been in fashion since the early 660s: “[Writers] were outdoing one another to construct the delicate and subtle, vying to make the ornamented and the crafted, confounding the gold and the jade, the dragon and phoenix, confusing vermilion and purple, green and yellow 爭構纖微, 競爲雕刻. 糝之金玉龍鳳, 亂之朱紫青黃.”<sup>69</sup> This criticism was traditionally believed to be directed at Shangguan Yi’s poetry, but it was perhaps the eulogistic literature from the 660s, including congratulatory memorials by Shangguan Yi and Xu Jingzong 許敬宗 (592–672) late in their lives, that also represents the style that Yang criticizes. For Yang, the ideal style would be “powerful but not empty, vigorous yet able to enrich, refined but not fragmented 壯而不虛, 剛而能潤, 雕而不碎.”<sup>70</sup>

This section from here forward will discuss four aspects of Yang’s “*Fu* on the Old Man Star”: its overall metrical pattern, its handling of allusions, its variation within regularity, and its methods of describing the star. The discussion will show that the *fu*, with many layers of intricacy, is Yang’s self-conscious display of literary virtuosity and erudition, demonstrating the literary ideal that Yang advocates and revealing his understanding of the political function of literature.

First of all, the overall metrical pattern of the *fu* is carefully designed to create an orderly, solemn feeling. Forty-two of the eighty-six lines are tetrasyllabic. The dominating tetrasyllabic meter is reminiscent of that of the eulogy, and quite a few tetrasyllabic lines are directly quoted from the classics such as the *Shi jing* and the *Shang shu*, giving the entire piece the sort of ritual solemnity that had been associated with that meter even before Tang.

A few things are clear from the table below that shows the metrical pattern of each section. Yang groups shorter lines together and matches them with series of longer lines, as in the case of section I. This pattern repeats itself in sections III, IV, and V. And finally, each section ends with one of the (if not the) longest lines in that section. Each sec-

<sup>69</sup> See “Wang Bo ji xu” 王勃集序, in *Yang* 3, p. 36; cf. Stephen Owen, *The Poetry of the Early Tang* (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1977), p. 79.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

tion is thus like a pyramid both in terms of visual and auditory effect, conveying a sense of solid foundation and order.

In the following table, the “-” symbol represents a change in the direction of narrative at that point, such as a new subtopic; numbers in parentheses are extra-metrical syllables and prose phrases.

Section	Meter (or, syllables per line)
I	4,4,4,4,4,4,7,7
II	4,4,4,4,7,7,7,7 - 4,4,6,6,4,6,4,6,5,5 - 6,6,6,6
III	4,4,6,6,4,4,6,6 - 4,4,6,6,6,6,6,6
IV	4,4,6,6 - 4,4,4,4,6,6
V	(2) 4,4,4,4,7,7 - 4,4,6,6,6,7 - (2) 3,3,3,3,4,4,4,4,7,7
VI	(4) 3,3,4,4,4,4 - 4,4

The other two *fu* devoted to Old Man Star, written respectively by Xi Ang and Fan Zhongyan, do not have this kind of orderly metrical pattern. For example, in Xi’s *fu*, the meter of the section that describes Old Man Star (lines 35–54) is as follows: 7,7,4,4,7,7,4,7,4,4,6,6,6,6,4,6,4,6. The meter of its concluding section (lines 61–74), including a prose line at the beginning, is: (6),(2),3,3,7,7,6,6,4,6,4,6,(1),6,6,7,6. Meters like Xi’s here reveal an intention to alter the rhythm and avoid being static: they do not have the organized order and solemnity created by the metrical pattern of Yang’s *fu*.

Secondly, Yang’s use of allusions and references creates solemnity, enthusiasm, and other emotions that show a favorable attitude to Wu Zhao’s rule. The *fu* contains many similes and metaphors that refer to specific objects and concrete historical examples in the form of references and allusions, all of which are further organized by subtopics and into well-designed parallel couplets. This is different from many congratulatory memorials of Yang’s time that are a pile of abstract adjectives or unrelated images.

It will be worthwhile at this point to examine the *loci classici* and the different types of allusion in Yang Jiong’s *fu* and then to focus on the ways in which he handles the allusions. His choice of allusions is closely related to the philosophical underpinning of the *fu* and its handling of emotional elements. He quotes many lines from the Confucian classics. These confer an authority and solemnity that buttress Wu Zhao’s political legitimacy with the power of tradition (the concept of Heaven’s mandate, the importance of a ruler’s virtue, and so forth). For example, half of the beginning section (lines 1, 6, 7, 8) quotes directly from the classics *Shi jing*, *Shang shu*, and *Zhou yi*, and by doing so the references indicate the divinity of Wu Zhao and highlight the

roots of her authority in the Confucian tradition. Daoist allusions are concentrated in section IV, which works by means of myth: it connects Wu Zhao to the origin of the universe and the everlasting heaven and earth (see below for more discussion on this point). Yang adds richness to the mythical flavor by quoting writings that dealt in fantasies, myths, and legends, for example, the “Fu on Gaotang” 高唐賦 (line 12), *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (line 21), the *Nine Songs* 九歌 (line 22), *Liexian zhuan* 列仙傳 (line 24), *Shiyi ji* 拾遺記 (line 49), and *Hainei shizhou ji* 海內十洲記 (line 76).<sup>71</sup> Lastly, a number of descriptive phrases (lines 3, 11, 32, 45) are quoted from grand eulogistic *fu* of the Han dynasty, drawing upon their ceremonial pomp.<sup>72</sup>

Two categories of allusion are particularly pertinent because they are appropriate for the specific political circumstance in which the *fu* was written. One category points to the ancient Zhou, a dynasty that later generations considered a model of ritual propriety and beneficent rule. It lends historical and ritual legitimacy to Wu Zhao’s namesake Zhou dynasty.<sup>73</sup> The very first line of Yang’s *fu*, which reads “majestic and illustrious the venerable Zhou,” harks back to the ancient Zhou capital mentioned in the *Shi jing*. Line 6, “issuing orders and giving commands 發號施令,” is from the *Shang shu*’s chronological section known as the “Book of Zhou” 周書. Line 35, “during the day they observe the colors of clouds 晝觀雲物,” is quoted from *Zhou li* 周禮 and refers to the proper method of observing meteorological phenomena in the ancient Zhou. The word *mumu* 穆穆 in line 47 is a *Shi jing* usage used to describe king Wen of Zhou. Line 48, “[the divine emperor] receives the blessings from Heaven 受天之祥,” is slightly changed from a line in *Shi jing* that expresses best wishes for the Zhou kings Wu and Cheng, implying that Wu Zhao will receive endless blessings from Heaven just as did the two Zhou kings. Lines 72 and 75, about auspicious grain and a tranquil south sea, are good omens that appeared during the reign of king Cheng.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> *Hainei shizhou ji*, traditionally attributed to Dongfang Shuo 東方朔 (fl. 140–130 BC), is a 1-j. collection of strange tales and anomalies compiled during the Six Dynasties.

<sup>72</sup> As Jack W. Chen points out, in the early days of empire the *fu* was arguably the primary genre through which articulations of imperial power were made; *The Poetics of Sovereignty: On Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty* (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 2010), pp. 267–68.

<sup>73</sup> Wu Zhao’s father Wu Shiyue 武士彠 (559–635) was given the title Duke of Zhou 周國公 in 656. Li Jiao’s 李嶠 “Panlongtai bei” 攀龍台碑 (*WYH* 875, pp. 1a–14b), the inscription for the mausoleum of Wu Shiyue dated to early 702, made an association between the ancestor of the Wu clan and a younger son of king Ping of the ancient Zhou (d. 720 BC).

<sup>74</sup> Mark Edward Lewis argues that imperial power survived in great measure based on the guides to political and social reality that were indicated by numerous signs found in the canon and associated texts; *Writing and Authority in Early China* (Albany: SUNY P., 1999), pp. 10, 144–45. It is in this textual tradition that Wu Zhao’s Zhou dynasty is compared, le-

The other category of allusion is related to women and is concentrated in section IV. “North of Tai Province” 台州之北 (line 49) is about Huaxu 華胥, either the name of a legendary kingdom where Fuxi 伏羲, an ancestor of the Yellow Emperor, was born, or the name of Fuxi’s mother.<sup>75</sup> The word *yaoran* 杳然 (line 50) in the late-Zhou work *Zhuang zi* not only alludes to a paragraph about the sage king Yao but is also used in another paragraph to describe the Dao, that is, origin of the universe. Line 55, “she resembles the nebulous and the complete, solitary and standing alone 有混成之獨立,” is a clear reference to the Dao, which “was born before Heaven and Earth 先天地生” and “may be regarded as the Mother of all under heaven 可以爲天下母.”<sup>76</sup> In this way, the category creates a broad sense of “origin,” from the actual ancestral place of Wu Zhao to the beginning of the universe and humanity, serving to link the femininity of Wu Zhao to the mysterious power of the cosmos.<sup>77</sup>

Yang Jiong’s use of allusion to glorify female power is in line with one of the many methods that Wu Zhao and her supporters used to expand her political authority and empower her female identity. The method is to create female political ancestors and honor female deities. The focus of extant eulogistic literature that was dedicated to Wu Zhao, however, is on the assistant’s role taken up by the spouse or on exemplars for women.<sup>78</sup> Few extant court eulogistic pieces after the mid-680s, when Wu Zhao steadily prepared her ascendance and then established a new dynasty, praise the female power of reproducing life or identify Wu Zhao as the origin of the universe and Mother of all, as Yang’s *fu* does.<sup>79</sup>

Yang’s deft handling of references and allusions – skillfully modifying original texts, coining new phrases, and packing layers of references in a single line – reveals his great literary skill. His weaving of classical allusions into his narrative, namely, the integrated manner in

gitimized, and praised.

<sup>75</sup> See notes to line 49, appendix.

<sup>76</sup> Zhu Qianzhi 朱謙之, annot., *Lao zi jiaoshi* 老子校釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984) 25, pp. 100–1: “There was something nebulous and complete, born before Heaven and Earth. It is... standing alone and unchanging. ... It may be regarded as the Mother of all under Heaven. I know not its name, and give it the designation of Dao 有物混成, 先天地生. ... 獨立不改. ... 可以爲天下母. 吾不知其名, 字之曰道.”

<sup>77</sup> Rothschild, *Emperor Wu Zhao and Her Pantheon*, pp. 145–47. On Wu Zhao’s ancestral place, see the notes to line 50 in the appendix.

<sup>78</sup> E.g., Cui Rong, “He tianhou zhicao biao” 賀天后芝草表, *WYTH* 563, pp. 5a–5b; “Songshan Qimu miao bei” 嵩山啓母廟碑, *WYTH* 878, pp. 1a–6a.

<sup>79</sup> Among other extant congratulatory memorials, only one by Zhang Yue advocates imperial authority and power for a female ruler; see “Wei liushou zuo ‘Zou qingshan liqian biao’”

which this is done in section I, is of singular skill. In addition to playing an organic part in Yang’s narrative, some of the quotations also allude to the original context from which they are taken, adding new layers of connotation and tone. Other writers use this method, too, but Yang uses it so extensively that it becomes his trademark. Lines 6, 47, 56, and 76 are good examples. In particular, line 56, “[she] wields the immensity and vastness of the Primordial Breath 運元氣之茫茫,” is from Cao Zhi’s 曹植 (192–232) “Qi qi” 七啓, in which the original context states that the Primordial Breath is everlasting.<sup>80</sup> Yang thus implies longevity, one of the astrological qualities of the Old Man Star, which is decidedly praise for Wu Zhao.

Besides the use of allusions, as just discussed, another method that we encounter in Yang Jiong is the coining of a phrase from multiple sources. Lines 51–54, for instance, interweaves four lines from *Zhou yi* and two lines from *Zhuang zi* to create a rich semantic tapestry of longevity, myth, and praise: “She is said to be continuously shining bright, / Her brilliance is as luminous as the sun and moon. / She is said to be constantly revealing herself, / She shall endure while Heaven and Earth endure 貞明也者, 日月同光. 貞觀也者, 天地爲常.” Moreover, two metaphors in lines 22 and 24 (purple cowry 紫貝 and bright pearls 明珠, respectively), are found in both “Hebo” 河伯 (in the *Nine Songs*) and in *Liexian zhuan* and concern river gods or goddesses, which adds a mysterious air to the Old Man Star. Under the surface, however, lies another allusion to a paragraph on auspicious omens in *Baihu tong* 白虎通, which states that big cowries will emerge from rivers and bright pearls will appear from the oceans when the waters resonate with a ruler’s virtue.<sup>81</sup>

These ways of creating multi-layered meaning, connotation, and aura can be found in Yang Jiong’s other writings, including a personal self-assessment written during his exile in the 680s.<sup>82</sup> The short piece

爲留守作奏慶山醴泉表, in *WYTH* 612, p. 4b–5b. A number of ceremonial songs written for the ritual occasions that Wu Zhao participated in implied her gender and political legitimacy; see Doran, *Transgressive Typologies*, pp. 74–79.

<sup>80</sup> “All that have forms will decay, / All that have a beginning will be exhausted. / Immense and vast the primordial breath, / Nobody knows when it ends 有形必朽, 有跡[端]必窮. 茫茫元氣, 誰知其終”; Zhao Youwen 趙幼文, annot., *Cao Zhi ji jiaozhu* 曹植集校注 (Beijing: Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 1998) 1, p. 7.

<sup>81</sup> Chen Li 陳立 (1809–1869), *Baihu tong shuzheng* 白虎通疏證 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994) 6, p. 285.

<sup>82</sup> *Yang*, p. 183. In 684, Yang was involved in the case of a brother who had joined Li Jingye’s rebellion and was exiled to Zizhou. See Fu Xuancong, “Lu Zhaolin, Yang Jiong nianpu,” in *Yang*, p. 228.

is worth quoting in whole since it demonstrates all the methods of handling allusion, as discussed above.

“Self-Appreciation of Judicial Manager Yang Jiong”

司法參軍楊炯自贊

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| 1 吾少也賤, | When I was young I was poor and lowly, <sup>83</sup>                  |
| 2 信而好古. | I believed and took delight in the classics. <sup>84</sup>            |
| 3 遊宦邊城, | Serving the government in a distant border town,                      |
| 4 江山勞苦. | I toil and suffer among the rivers and mountains. <sup>85</sup>       |
| 5 歲聿雲徂, | The year is about to fly by, the clouds drifting about, <sup>86</sup> |
| 6 小人懷土. | The man of little virtue yearns for his own land. <sup>87</sup>       |
| 7 歸歟歸歟, | Return, oh return, <sup>88</sup>                                      |
| 8 自衛返魯. | Going back from Wei to Lu. <sup>89</sup>                              |

Yang’s masterful choice and handling of allusions here create an evocative self-image patterned on the words of Confucius. Five out of the eight lines are drawn directly from the *Analects* and fit naturally into his narrative. Much like Confucius, the sage nonpareil he seeks to emulate, Yang’s layered self-image depicts a scholar confident of his erudition (lines 1–2), yet capable of healthy self-mockery when confronting adverse circumstances (line 6), and remaining optimistic in exile (lines 7–8). The last two lines express Yang’s wish to return to his homeland and settle down, a desire that Confucius bore in his late years.

Yang’s virtuosity in alternating variation with regularity was yet another technique that he employs to amplify his political message. Section II of the *fu* in particular shows Yang’s skill of adjusting the rhythm by mixing and matching parallel couplets of different meters and content. For example, lines 17 through 24, which describe the color

<sup>83</sup> *Analects* 9.6.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.1.

<sup>85</sup> Lu Ji 陸機, “Wei Gu Yanxian zeng fu” 爲顧彥先贈婦, no. 2: “Serving the government, away from home and not returning for a long time, / Mountains and Rivers are long and wide 遊宦久不歸, 山川修且闊”; *Lu Ji ji* 陸機集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982) 5, p. 54.

<sup>86</sup> “Xiaoming” 小明 in *Shi jing*, Mao 207: “In the past when I set off, / The sun and moon had bid farewell to the old year. / When will I return? / The year is coming to an end 昔我往矣, 日月方除. 曷雲其還? 歲聿雲莫.” “Guajian” 寡見, in Wang Rongbao 汪榮寶, annot., *Fa yan yishu* 法言義疏 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987) 10, p. 229: “The clouds drift about to all directions, and the rain flows into the abyss 雲徂乎方, 雨流乎淵.”

<sup>87</sup> A self-reference expressing homesickness. *Analects* 4.11: “A man of virtue yearns for morals; a man of little virtue yearns for his own land 君子懷德, 小人懷土.”

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.22.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.15.

and the brightness of the Old Man Star, combine two sets of different meters (4,4,6,6 and 4,6,4,6):

晃如金粟,	Luminous like a grain of golden millet,
燦若銀燭.	Glinting as the flame of a silver candle,
比秋草之一螢,	Comparable to a firefly in the autumn grass,
狀荆山之片玉.	Appearing like a piece of jade from Mount Jing.
渾渾熊熊,	Glowing with vigor and profusion, blazing and burning,
懸紫貝於河宮.	A purple cowrie hangs high in the River God's palace,
曄曄曄曄,	Darting forth its beams, radiant with brilliance,
曜明珠于漢水.	Bright pearls glitter by the Han River.

The first set is composed of four similes linked by *ru* 如, *ruo* 若, *bi* 比, and *zhuang* 狀, respectively. In the second set, each couplet has a binome and a metaphor. The second set is also more densely allusive than the first.

Section II ends with four hexasyllabic lines (lines 27–30):

稽元命之攸述,	We examine what the <i>Original Mandate</i> states,
按星經之所紀.	Inspect what the <i>Star Catalogue</i> records:
見則化平主昌,	When it appears, the society shall be peaceful, the monarch flourishes,
明則天下多士.	When it is bright, the realm shall boast myriads of talents.

The preceding two couplets create variations in three ways. The first couplet is grammatically parallel, while the second is metrically parallel. The first couplet places the particle *zhi* after the third syllable of each line, while the second couplet uses another particle *ze* after the first syllable.

In section V, it is the adjustment of tempo that accumulates rhetorical forces, gives new life to the two conventional “outdoing topos,” and further evokes the feeling of admiration and enthusiasm. The general pattern of each topos is enumeration and then negation. The first “outdoing topos” (lines 57–68) contains two enumerations. The first is about sage kings of the past and the astrological omens harbingering their birth or ascendance, with a metrical pattern of 4,4,4,4,7,7. The second enumeration is a list of four auspicious omens of stars with a metrical pattern of 4,4,6,6. Both enumerations, with the repetition of a similar metrical pattern (short-long) and the rhetorical force that have been built up in them, are negated in the heptasyllabic lines 67 and 68, both being prose. The second “outdoing topos” (lines 69–78)

glorifies the Old Man Star by putting it on top of a long list of eight auspicious omens with the meter of 3,3,3,3,4,4,4,4. Affirmative forces accumulate in the repetition of quick tempo, but the two heptasyllabic lines written in prose style at the end negate all.

The power of rhetoric in sections II and V of Yang's *fu* stands out among congratulatory pieces that contain the "outdoing topos," which usually list two examples and then negate. For instance, Xing Shao 邢邵 (b. 496; Shao is also written as 劭) wrote in his congratulatory memorial on the Old Man Star: "Neither [such rare auspices as] the Three Stars emitting the same color nor the Five Elders jointly roaming can match the auspicious splendor of the Old Man Star 雖三星共色, 五老同遊, 擬之於此, 故無與匹."<sup>90</sup>

Lastly, the use of descriptive binomes in section II adds sensory and intellectual beauty to the Old Man Star, arousing the feeling of admiration and serving to effusively praise Wu Zhao and impress the audience. The binomes are carefully chosen for their forms, meanings, and sounds. Both *yuyu yueyue* [yuk<sub>3B</sub> yuk<sub>3B</sub> yak<sub>3</sub> yak<sub>3</sub>] 煜煜燿燿,<sup>91</sup> and *huanghuang yingying* [ghwang<sub>I</sub> ghwang<sub>I</sub> ghweing<sub>4</sub> ghweing<sub>4</sub>] 煌煌熒熒 (lines 11–12), contain two alliterative binomes. These binomes describe stars or lightning in the original texts from which they are drawn. Their original meanings all have to do with fire, as indicated by their shared radical "fire." The color and brightness these binomes convey also fit the description in a work named *Huangdi zhan* 黃帝占 (*Prognostication of the Yellow Emperor*), which says that the Old Man Star portends well if it appears "yellow-colored and bright 色黃明."<sup>92</sup> Later in section II Yang uses four other alliterative binomes that match [ghwang<sub>I</sub> ghwang<sub>I</sub> ghweing<sub>4</sub> ghweing<sub>4</sub>] 煌煌熒熒: *hunhun xiongxiong* [ghwen<sub>I</sub> ghwen<sub>I</sub> ghung<sub>3B</sub> ghung<sub>3B</sub>] 渾渾熊熊 (line 21) and *yeye weiwei* [ghep<sub>3X</sub> ghep<sub>3X</sub> ghwi<sub>Q3A</sub> ghwi<sub>Q3A</sub>] 曄曄曄曄 (line 23). These four binomes, except for *hunhun* that refers to profusion of vital breath (and in this context, profusion of light), mean brightness, as indicated by their radicals "fire" and "sun." Five of these eight binomes originally refer to concrete objects or ideas, so that the description does not become abstract despite Yang's repeated use of binomes.

<sup>90</sup> YWLJ 1, p. 13. On the Three Stars and the Five Elders, see Xu, punct., *Yu Zishan jizhu* 7, p. 544. Other examples include Lu Sidao 盧思道 (531–582), "Zai Qi wei baiguan he ganlu biao" 在齊爲百官賀甘露表, in *Chuxue ji* 初學記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962) 2, p. 35; Li Jiao, "Bailiao he ri baodai qingyun xian biao" 百寮賀日抱戴慶雲見表; WYH 562, pp. 4a–5b.

<sup>91</sup> I have used David Branner's Yintong phonological database of Chinese here; <<http://yintong.info/yintong/public/index.php>>.

<sup>92</sup> Gautama, *Kaiyuan zhanjing* 68, p. 724.

The effect of the eight binomes is enhanced by the four similes and two metaphors that are paired with them. The similes and metaphors themselves also reveal some sense of color and/or brightness, such as the golden millet, the firefly, and the jade. In addition, the firefly born from autumn grass, the jade hidden in the mountain, the cowrie hanging in River Lord’s palace, and the pearl of the River Goddesses all imply the presence of a hidden wonder, revealed only in a rare, exceptional circumstance. This suits an Old Man Star characteristic, namely that it was not easily visible. Yang’s use of binomes in section II reveals his skill of packing carefully chosen alliterations, sounds, colors, brightness, similes, metaphors, and their connotations into well-ordered parallelism so as to create richly layered meaning. For this reason, his writing, while elegant and embellished, is not empty, abstract, or fragmented.

Yang Jiong’s *fu* is the first among extant works on the Old Man Star to have extensively depicted and extolled the star’s beauty. The description in section II influenced later writings on Old Man and other stars, including some thought of as auspicious stars (*jingxing* 景星). For example, although *huanghuang yingying* had been a well-known phrase since the composition of “*Fu* on Gaotang,” it was not widely used to describe any stars until Yang’s *fu*. Xi Ang’s *fu* on Old Man Star, as Yang’s does, also compares the star to candlelight, a pearl, and a firefly. It also borrows from Yang’s *fu* a listing of ancient astrologers and their talents. Fan Zhongyan’s *fu* on the Old Man Star likewise compares the star’s significance with jade discs and pearls. An anonymous Tang-dynasty *fu* on auspicious stars even copied a full couplet from Yang’s *fu* with minor modification: “Bright as golden millet, / Shiny like a silver pebble 炳如金粟, 粲若銀礫.”<sup>93</sup> None of these writings, though, lavished on the star so many binomes, which tended to dazzle the eyes and ears.

## CONCLUSION

The discussion of Yang Jiong’s “*Fu* on the Old Man Star” has shown that the *fu*, while adopting the basic narrative structure of congratulatory memorials and incorporating some conventional topoi of eulogistic literature, contains a number of innovations. The *fu* also demonstrates a strong literary eloquence that enhances its persuasive and emotional effect and thus helps achieve its political efficacy. For example, it empowers the traditional “outdoing topos” with rhetorical eloquence, and it uses a fairly large number of descriptive binomes as well as allusions associated with female power, both being rare in eulogistic literature related to Wu Zhao.

<sup>93</sup> “Jingxing xian fu” 景星見賦; *WYTH* 9, p. 9a.

The entire *fu*, just like its second section that skillfully incorporates literary eloquence with political and astrological traditions, creates multiple layers of intellectual, sensory, and rhythmic connotations. The carefully designed metrical pattern of regularity and order sets a frame and weaves together parallelism and variation. The dense sensory and semantic aggregation of allusions, references, and concrete metaphors and similes elegantly compressed clearly makes Yang's work more than an abstract pile of descriptive words or hyperboles. In this sense, the *fu* demonstrates Yang's ideal that literary works should be "powerful but not empty," "refined but not fragmented." By legitimizing, exalting, and mythologizing the imperial power and authority with literary embellishment and rhetorical eloquence, this *fu* also demonstrates Yang's comprehensive grasp of the political function of literature.

The political concerns and the literary virtuosity seen in Yang's *fu* can be found in his many other writings – court discussions, prefaces, commemorative epitaphs, and some other *fu*. In one or more aspects, these writings reveal the high premium Yang places on political legitimacy, proper ritual, symbolism, and the Confucian classics and traditions. His knowledge in astronomy and astrology and his frequent references to them, his creation and deployment of many descriptive binomes, and his multiple rhetorical strategies to justify and uphold the authority of a female ruler stand out among the writers of his time.<sup>94</sup> Paul W. Kroll points out that the true skill of Yang Jiong "as a writer is best exhibited in the eight *fu*."<sup>95</sup> This article has shown that Kroll's evaluation should be expanded to include Yang's prose. However, neither Yang's *fu* nor his prose has received much scholarly attention. The present analysis of Yang's "*Fu* on the Old Man Star" can serve as an introduction to his other non-*shi* works, which contain many concrete examples of the political concerns and literary prowess of a major writer in the second half of the seventh century. More studies on this trove of work will furthermore complement the political and literary history of the early Tang.

This article also hopes to shed light on how court eulogistic literature should be read and thus it might spur further studies on the genre. It has shown that eulogistic literature demonstrates a close relationship between politics and literature. Eulogistic literature played a fundamental role in the fashioning of political legitimacy; it weaved

<sup>94</sup> E.g., the extant writings of Lu Zhaolin 盧照鄰 (ca. 635–ca. 689) and of Luo Binwang 駱賓王 (ca. 626–ca. 684) employ very few binomes and little of astrological allusion.

<sup>95</sup> William H. Nienhauser, ed., *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana U.P., 1986) 1, p. 910.

for the ruler a textual reality based on traditions and legends, a reality that was tailored to contemporary political needs, inspiring awe and arousing favorable emotions among courtiers and the elite public. It not only reveals the development of political and intellectual conceptions concerning sovereignty and authority but also reflects the confluence and transformation of literary genres and styles.

At the end of the seventh century, eulogistic literature served as an important rhetorical vehicle through which Wu Zhao’s supporters legitimized her rule and strengthened her power. It contained a wealth of specific statements on contemporary politics and literary innovations. The large number of surviving congratulatory memorials from Wu Zhao’s years as regent and ruler cannot be dismissed as florid sycophantic efforts to “curry favor.”<sup>96</sup> Indeed, these memorials often express the reason why scholar-officials, including Yang Jiong, supported Wu Zhao’s rule. As Antonino Forte noted, “[T]here certainly was a Tang political elite that was strongly interested in the policies carried out by the first Tang thearchs and in the survival of Wu Zhao as sovereign in order to safeguard those policies.”<sup>97</sup> This reminds us of the main theme of Yang Xiong’s “Denigrating Qin and Praising Xin” much earlier in time. David R. Knechtges once demonstrated that what Yang Xiong found most laudatory about the Xin dynasty was its espousal of classical learning, which matched his own ideal.<sup>98</sup> Therefore, scholars both ancient and modern who dismissed Yang Xiong’s writing as a eulogy to the “usurper” Wang Mang,<sup>99</sup> and who simply have equated eulogistic literature with flattery, miss the point.

Up until now, scholars have overlooked medieval Chinese eulogistic literature, tending to categorize such themes as belonging to that older type of sycophancy.<sup>100</sup> But morality should not be the evaluation

<sup>96</sup> For example, while discussing a number of Li Jiao’s and Cui Rong’s eulogies and congratulatory memorials, Qu Jingyi 曲景毅 constantly passes moral evaluations on those works and their authors. See “Wenzhang siyou’ xinlun: yi Li Jiao, Cui Rong yingyongwen shuxie wei tantao zhongxin” 文章四友新論，以李嶠、崔融應用文書寫為探討中心, in *Shida xuebao: yuyan wenxue lei* 師大學報，語言文學類 57.2 (2012), pp. 29–57. Ma Jigao 馬積高 writes that “there is no need to discuss” Yang Jiong’s “Fu on the Old Man Star” and “Fu on Ullambana” because both were “composed on imperial command in order to praise the sage emperor”; *Fu shi* 賦史 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), p. 267.

<sup>97</sup> The *Commentary to the Great Cloud Sutra* 大雲經疏 is “clear on the point that Wu Zhao represented the true continuation of the first three Tang sovereigns”; Antonino Forte, *Political Propaganda and Ideology in China at the End of the Seventh Century*, 2d edn. (Kyoto: Scuola Italiana di Studi sull’Asia Orientale, 2005), pp. xv–xvi.

<sup>98</sup> Knechtges, “Literary Interpretation of Yang Hsiung’s ‘Chü Ch’in mei Hsin,’” pp. 249, 251.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 230–34.

<sup>100</sup> There are a small number of recent studies on early Tang eulogistic literature. For example, Norman H. Rothschild’s *Emperor Wu Zhao and Her Pantheon* focuses on Wu Zhao’s

standard for eulogistic literature. Eulogistic writings should instead be studied in a deep context. Aspects of that might be, for example: the political needs of a particular short period that gave impetus to certain literary techniques and transformed literary currents and genres; the specific political circumstances and the larger concerns that inspired the composition of a particular work; the recurring literary motifs that supported a political strategy; the methods that a work weaved together from traditional writings associated with the topic; and the way a work created rhetorical eloquence. This article perhaps may provide an example of the deep-context technique, through its analysis of Yang Jiong's "*Fu* on the Old Man Star." It is hoped that future studies on eulogistic literature would not only supplement political and literary history but also reveal how politics and literature interact.

*Appendix: Annotated Translation of Yang Jiong's "Fu on the Old Man Star"*

— TEXT —

SECTION I

- |   |          |  |
|---|----------|--|
| 1 | 赫赫宗周,    | Majestic and illustrious the venerable Zhou,                       |
| 2 | 皇天降休.    | August Heaven sends down blessings.                                |
| 3 | 麗哉神聖,    | Magnificent indeed the divine sage,                                |
| 4 | 皇天降命.    | August Heaven sends down the Mandate.                              |
| 5 | 開綱布網,    | Setting guidelines and laying out laws,                            |
| 6 | 發號施令.    | Issuing orders and giving commands.                                |
| 7 | 河出圖兮五雲集, | The Diagram appears in the River, the five-color<br>clouds gather, |
| 8 | 天垂象兮三光映. | Heaven displays signs, the Three Illuminants shine<br>bright.      |

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strategy of elevating the status of women and expanding her political authority; Jonathan Pettit's "The Erotic Empress" concerns two temple inscriptions written under the same strategy; Stephan Kory's "A Remarkably Resonant and Resilient Tang-Dynasty Augural Stone: Empress Wu's *Baotu*" discusses a congratulatory memorial by Li Jiao; *Tang Studies* 26 (2008), pp. 99-124.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

JTS	Liu Xu 劉昫 et al., <i>Jiu Tang shu</i> 舊唐書
SGZ	Chen Shou 陳壽, <i>San guo zhi</i> 三國志
SJ	Sima Qian 司馬遷, <i>Shi ji</i> 史記
SS	Shen Yue 沈約, <i>Song shu</i> 宋書
WSJC	Yasui Kōzan 安居香山 and Nakamura Shōhachi 中村璋八, <i>Weishu jicheng</i> 緯書集成
WYYH	Li Fang 李昉 et al., <i>Wenyuan yinghua</i> 文苑英華
XTS	Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 et al., <i>Xin Tang shu</i> 新唐書
Yang	Xu Mingxia 徐明霞, <i>Yang Jiong ji</i> 楊炯集
YWLJ	Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 et al., <i>Yiwen leiju</i> 藝文類聚
ZZTJ	Sima Guang 司馬光 et al., <i>Zizhi tongjian</i> 資治通鑑

Appendix: Annotated Translation of Yang Jiong’s “Fu on the Old Man Star”

— ANNOTATION —

The text of the translation is based on WYYH 8, pp. 2a–3a.

LINE 1: From “Zhengyue” 正月, in *Shi jing*, Mao 192.

LINE 3: “Yulie fu” (cited n. 44, above): “Magnificent indeed the divine sage, / He abides in the Dark Palace” 麗哉神聖, 處於玄宮. See *Wen xuan* 8, p. 390 (edn. used is cited n. 47, above); David R. Knechtges, trans., *Wen xuan, or Selections of Refined Literature*, vol. 2: *Rhapsodies on Sacrifices, Hunting, Travel, Sightseeing, Palaces and Halls, Rivers and Seas* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1987), p. 117.

LINE 6: See “Jiong ming” 罔命, in *Shang shu zhengyi* 19, p. 531 (edn. cited at n. 29, above): “All their [Zhou king Wen’s and king Wu’s] orders and commands were good 發號施令, 罔有不臧.”

LINE 7: See “Xi ci,” in Wang Bi 王弼 (226–249) and Kong Yingda, annots., *Zhou yi Zhengyi* 周易正義 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999) 7, p. 290: “In the River appears the Diagram; in the Luo River comes forth a script. The sage models after them 河出圖, 洛出書, 聖人則之.” Kong Anguo notes that when Fuxi was the king, a dragon-horse emerged from the River and brought with it a diagram. See *Shang shu zhengyi* 18, p. 503. See also Michael Saso, “What Is the Ho-t’u?,” *History of Religions* 17.3–4 (1978), pp. 399–416. Grégoire Espeset notes that both the “River Diagram” and the “Luo Writing” refer to “different documents depending on the sources and context”; “Epiphanies of Sovereignty and the Rite of Jade Disc Immersion in Weft Narratives,” *EC* 37 (2014), pp. 395–96, n. 8.

LINE 8: “Xi ci” in *Zhou yi zhengyi* 7, p. 290: “Heaven displays signs, indicating auspiciousness and inauspiciousness 天垂象, 見吉凶.” The Three Illuminants are the sun, the moon, and the stars.

SECTION II

- |    |          |   |
|----|----------|---|
| 9  | 南極之庭,    | In the court of the Southern Culmen,  |
| 10 | 老人之星,    | The Old Man Star,   |
| 11 | 煜煜燦燦,    | Shining and dazzling, flashing and flickering,                                  |
| 12 | 煌煌熒熒.    | Bright and brilliant, gleaming and glistening.                                  |
| 13 | 秋分之旦見乎丙, | At dawn on the autumnal equinox it appears in the southeast,                    |
| 14 | 春分之夕入乎丁. | At dusk on the vernal equinox it disappears in the southwest.                   |
| 15 | 配神山之呼萬歲, | It matches the divine mountain's calling out the greeting "Ten Thousand Years," |
| 16 | 符水德之兆千齡. | Accords with the Water Power's portent of one thousand ages.                    |
| 17 | 晃如金粟,    | Luminous like a grain of golden millet,   |
| 18 | 燦若銀燭,    | Glinting as the flame of a silver candle,                                       |
| 19 | 比秋草之一螢,  | Comparable to a firefly in the autumn grass,                                    |
| 20 | 狀荆山之片玉.  | Appearing like a piece of jade from Mount Jing.                                 |
| 21 | 渾渾熊熊,    | Glowing with vigor and profusion, blazing and burning,                          |
| 22 | 懸紫貝於河宮.  | A purple cowrie hangs high in the River God's palace.                           |
| 23 | 曄曄曄曄,    | Darting forth its beams, radiant with brilliance,                               |
| 24 | 曜明珠于漢水.  | Bright pearls glitter by the Han River.   |
| 25 | 其光也如丹,   | Its light approximates that of cinnabar,  |
| 26 | 其大也如李.   | Its size is close to a plum's.  |
| 27 | 稽元命之攸述,  | We examine what the <i>Original Mandate</i> states,                             |

LINE 10: These two lines are from *SJ* 27, p. 1306.

LINE 11: “Xidu fu”: “[When the six divisions embark on the chase, they speed like thunder] rumbling and rattling, [they strike like lightning] flashing and flickering” 震震爚爚; *Wen xuan* 1, p. 19; David R. Knechtges, trans., *Wen xuan, or Selections of Refined Literature*, vol. 1: *Rhapsodies on Metropolises and Capitals* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1983), p. 137.

LINE 12: “Gaotang fu” (see n. 72, above): “[Dark trees that bloom in winter are] bright and brilliant, gleaming and glistening. / They overwhelm one’s power of sight, / They sparkle like stars arrayed in the sky 煌煌熒熒, 奪人目精, 爛兮若列星”; *Wenxuan* 19, p. 878; David R. Knechtges, trans., *Wen xuan, or Selections of Refined Literature*, vol. 3: *Rhapsodies on Natural Phenomena, Birds and Animals, Aspirations and Feelings, Sorrowful Laments, Literature, Music, and Passions* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1996), p. 331.

LINE 14: “Treatise on Astronomy and Astrology” in *Jin shu* 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974) 11, p. 306: “[The Old Man Star] usually appears at dawn on the autumnal equinox in the southeast, and disappears at dusk on the vernal equinox in the southwest 常以秋分之旦見於丙, 春分之夕而沒于丁.” On a traditional *luopan* 羅盤 compass, *bing* covers the 15-degree area (157°6′–172°5′) east of due south, and *ding* covers the 15-degree area (187°6′–202°5′) west of due south.

LINE 16: See *SJ* 6, pp. 237–38: “[Qin shi huang 秦始皇 in 220 BC] changed the name of the River to Virtuous River and made it the beginning of the Water Power [that the Qin ruled by] 更名河曰德水, 以為水德之始.”

LINE 20: On Bian He’s 卞和 finding the jade on Mount Jing (west of Nanzhang 南漳 county, modern Hubei), see *Han Fei zi jiaozhu* 韓非子校注組, *Han Fei zi jiaozhu* 韓非子校注 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1983), pp. 121–22.

LINE 21: “Xishan jing” 西山經, in *Shanhai jing* (SKQS edn.) 2, p. 13a: “[From Mount Huaijiang 槐江] looking south at Mount Kunlun, its light is blazing and burning, its vital energy plentiful and vigorous 南望昆侖, 其光熊熊, 其氣魂魂.”

LINE 22: See “He bo,” in Hong Xingzu 洪興祖, *Chu ci buzhu* 楚辭補注 (Taipei: Da’an chubanshe, 1995) 2, p. 133: “Building watchtowers of purple cowries and painting the palaces with vermilion 紫貝闕兮朱宮.”

LINE 24: Jiaofu of Zheng 鄭交甫 encountered two goddesses on the bank of the Han River. They wore on their belts two big pearls; *Lie xian zhuan* (CSJC edn.) A, pp. 19–21. The allusions in l. 22 and l. 24 can also be found in *Baihu tong* (cited n. 81, above).

LINE 26: On comparisons like “as big as X” (e.g., 大如錢 “as big as a coin”), a common way to describe the size of stars, supernovae, meteors, sunspots, etc. in premodern Chinese astronomical records, see Zhuang Weifeng 莊威鳳 et al., *Zhongguo gudai tianxiang jilu de yanjiu yu yingyong* 中國古代天象記錄的研究與應用 (Beijing: Zhongguo kexue jishu chubanshe, 2009), pp. 340–41, 373–74.

LINE 27: This probably refers to the apocryphon *Chunqiu yuanming bao* 春秋元命苞; see Yasui Kōzan and Nakamura Shōhachi 中村璋八, comps., *Weishu jicheng* 緯書集成 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1994; hereafter, *WSJC*), p. 650.

- 28 按星經之所紀。 Inspect what the *Star Catalogue* records:  
29 見則化平主昌, When it appears, the society shall be peaceful, the  
monarch flourishes ,  
30 明則天下多士。 When it is bright, the realm shall boast myriads of  
talents.

SECTION III

- 31 經始靈台, To plan and commence the construction of the Nu-  
minous Terrace,  
32 嵯峨崔巍。 Lofty and steep, tall and towering.  
33 星則唐都講藝, On the stars, Tang Du discourses on the arts,  
34 氣則王朔呈材。 As for auras, Wang Shuo showcases his competence.  
35 晝觀雲物, During the day they observe the colors of clouds,  
36 夜察昭回。 At night they examine the shining and revolving  
Milky Way.  
37 睹南郊之炳耀, Upon seeing the glowing brilliance at the southern  
suburb,  
38 欣北極之康哉。 They rejoice at the grand peace of the North Pole.  
39 三公輔弼, The Three Excellencies assisting and supporting,  
40 戍官文武, Guarding officials civil and martial,  
41 獻仙壽兮祝堯, They offer up the longevity of immortals, in bless-  
ing Yao,  
42 奏昌言兮拜禹。 They submit important speeches, in bowing to Yu.  
43 瞻太霄而踴躍, They look skyward at the great empyrean, leaping  
and jumping,  
44 伏前庭而俯僂。 Then prostrate in the front court, bowing and stoop-  
ing.  
45 萬人於是和歌, Then, tens of thousands people sing the harmony,  
46 百獸於焉率舞。 There, hundreds of animals lead one another to  
dance.

LINE 28: Perhaps this refers to Shi Shen’s *Tian wen* (cited n. 36, above).

LINE 30: This couplet combines what Shi Shen said about Old Man Star (n. 36, above) and a line in the “Treatise on Astronomy and Astrology” in *Jin shu* 11, p. 306: “[When Old Man Star] appears, the government shall be peaceful, and the monarch shall have longevity and prosperity 見則治平, 主壽昌。”

LINE 31: This line is from “Ling tai” 靈台, in *Shi jing*, Mao 242.

LINE 32: See “Shanglin fu” quoted in Sima Xiangru’s biography in *SJ* 117, p. 3022: “And then the high mountains arching aloft, / Tall and towering, jaggedly jutting 於是乎崇山巖巖, 崔巍嵯峨。” Trans. by Knechtges, in *Wen xuan, or Selections of Refined Literature* 2, p. 91, l. 190. The original line from “Shanglin fu” is slightly different: “And then the lofty mountains spire on high, / Arching aloft, tall and towering 於是乎崇山矗矗, 巖從崔嵬”; *ibid.*, p. 83, ll. 107–8.

LINE 34: “Treatise on Astronomy and Astrology” in *SJ* 27, p. 1349. Tang Du was a 1st-c. BC astronomer. Wang Shuo, a magician of the Former Han, was good at reading portents from auras (*qi* 氣); see *Han shu* 54, p. 2446 (cited n. 21, above).

LINE 35: For a discussion on the meaning of *yunwu*, see Yang Bojun 楊伯峻, *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan zhu* 春秋左傳注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), pp. 302–3.

LINE 36: “Yunhan” 雲漢, in *Shi jing*, Mao 258: “Distinct was the Milky Way, / Shining and revolving in the sky 倬彼雲漢, 昭回於天。”

LINE 37: On “the southern suburb,” see *SJ* 27, pp. 1307–8.

LINE 38: “Yi Ji” 益稷, in *Shang shu zhengyi* 5, p. 130: “The ruler is intelligent, the assistants are worthy, and all businesses are prosperous 元首明哉, 股肱良哉, 庶事康哉。”

LINE 39: The Three Excellencies refers to the three highest official positions in the central government.

LINE 41: “Tian di” 天地, in *Zhuang zi*: “Yao visited Hua. The people on Hua’s border said: ‘Ah, the sage! Please allow us to bless you the sage. May you live long’ 堯觀乎華。華封人曰: 嘻, 聖人。請祝聖人, 使聖人壽”; See Cao Chuji 曹礎基 and Huang Lanfa 黃蘭發, punct. and ed., Guo Xiang 郭象 (252–312), annot., *Nanhua zhenjing zhushu* 南華真經註疏 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998) 5, p. 240.

LINE 42: This line is from “Gaoyao mo” 皋陶謨 and “Yi Ji,” in *Shang shu zhengyi* 4, p. 102; and 5, p. 112, respectively.

LINE 45: From “Shanglin fu” (see above, re. line 32): “They present the dances of Taotang, / Perform the songs of Getian. / A thousand voices sing the lead, / Ten thousand sing the harmony 奏陶唐氏之舞, 聽葛天氏之歌, 千人倡, 萬人和”; trans. by Knechtges, *Wen xuan, or Selections of Refined Literature* 2, p. 105, ll. 382–85.

LINE 46: This happened during the reign of Shun; see “Shun dian” 舜典, in *Shang shu zhengyi* 3, p. 79.

SECTION IV

- 47 穆穆神皇,                    Profound and grave the divine emperor,  
48 受天之祥.                    Receiving blessings from Heaven.  
49 邈矣台州之北,               How remote, the north of Tai Province,  
50 窅然汾水之陽.               Indeed deep and profound, the northern bank of the  
  Fen River.  
51 貞明也者,                    She is said to be continuously shining bright,  
52 日月同光.                    Her brilliance luminous as the sun and moon.  
53 貞觀也者,                    She is said to be constantly revealing herself,  
54 天地爲常.                    She shall endure while Heaven and Earth endure.  
55 有混成之獨立,               Like the nebulous and complete, solitary and stand-  
  ing alone,  
56 運元氣之茫茫.               She wields the immensity and vastness of the Pri-  
  mordial Breath.

SECTION V

- 57 若夫大虹流渚,               As for: the giant rainbow trailing onto the islet,  
58 金天當寧.                    Metal Heaven holds an audience.

LINE 47: “Wen wang” 文王, in *Shi jing*, Mao 235: “Profound was king Wen 穆穆文王.” The second half of the same stanza says that hundreds of thousands of descendants of the Shang became subjects of the Zhou according to the command of the High God.

LINE 48: A similar line can be found in “Xiawu” 下武, in *Shi jing*, Mao 243, which praises king Wu and king Cheng of the Zhou.

LINE 49: The Yellow Emperor in his dream traveled to Huaxu, a kingdom to the north of Tai Province. *Lie zi* (SKQS) 2, pp. 1b–2a. Paoxi’s 庖犧 mother became pregnant when a blueish rainbow circled around her at the islet of Huaxu. Twelve years later she gave birth to Paoxi. See Qi Zhiping 齊治平, annot., Wang Jia 王嘉 (fl. fourth century), *Shiyi ji* 拾遺記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981) 1, p. 1. For a discussion on Huaxu and Paoxi, see idem, 1, p. 2. According to *Shi wei han shenwu* 詩緯含神霧, “Huaxu stepped on the footprint of a giant in Lei Marsh and thereupon gave birth to Fuxi” 大跡出雷澤, 華胥履之, 生宓犧. *WSJC*, p. 461. Cf. *SS* 27, p. 759.

LINE 50: “Xiaoyao you” 逍遙遊 in *Zhuang zi*: Yao, after bringing order and peace to all in the realm, went to Mount Guye to the north of the Fen River to visit the four masters. Upon returning, he fell into a trance (*yaoran* 杳然) and forgot all about his kingdom. “Zhibei you” 知北遊 in *Zhuang zi*: “As for the Dao, it is deep and profound, difficult to describe” 夫道, 杳然難言哉. See *Nanhua zhenjing zhushu* 1, p. 15; and 7, p. 425 (edn. cited above, re. line 41). The Fen River flows across the central part of Shanxi where Wu Zhao’s ancestral place was located; see Li Jiao, “Panlongtai bei”: “[Wu Shiyue] broke through thorn brushes in the wilderness of Jin, / Borrowed chopsticks [to lay out strategies] on the bank of the Fen River 披荆晉野, 借箸汾圻,” in *WYTH* 875, p. 14a; Cui Rong, “Zetian dasheng huanghou aicewen” 則天大聖皇后哀冊文: “On the northern bank of the Fen River, ... the sage thearch shall prosper 河汾之陽, ... 聖后其昌”; *WYTH* 837, p. 4a.

LINE 54: For ll. 51–54, see “Xi ci” in *Zhou yi zhengyi* 8, p. 296: “The Way of Heaven and Earth constantly reveals itself. The Way of the sun and moon is constantly illuminating 天地之道, 貞觀者也. 日月之道, 貞明者也”; and “Zai you” 在宥, in *Zhuang zi*: [Guangchengzi 廣成子 says that] “I will blend my light with that of the sun and moon, and will endure while heaven and earth endure” 吾與日月參光, 吾與天地爲常 (*Nanhua zhenjing zhushu* 4, p. 221).

LINE 55: See n. 76, above.

LINE 56: See n. 80, above.

LINE 57: The mother of Shaohao 少昊 saw a giant shooting star, a flash of rainbow-shaped light streak, trailing onto the islet of Hua 華. She thereupon gave birth to Shaohao. The story is recorded in several weft texts; e.g., *Chun qiu yuanming bao*, in *WSJC*, p. 590.

LINE 58: “Metal Heaven” refers to Shaohao’s having ruled by the Five Agents power of metal; *Han shu* 21B, p. 1012. “Holds an audience” refers to Son of Heaven’s standing between the door and the screen 當甯而立 when holding the spring audience (*chao* 朝); see Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200), and Kong Yingda, annots., *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義 (SSJZS edn.) 5, p. 5a.

JIE WU

- 59 大電繞樞,                   The huge flash of lightning circles the Pivot,  
60 軒轅受圖.                   Xuanyuan receives the Diagram.
- 61 殷馮則黃星見楚,           Yin Kui predicted the appearance of a yellow star  
  in Chu,  
62 雷煥則紫氣臨吳.           Lei Huan explained the purple auras hanging above  
  Wu.
- 63 青方半月,                   In the east are [the auspicious stars in] half-moon  
  shape,  
64 東井連珠.                   At Eastern Well, the five planets gather like a string  
  of pearls.
- 65 辰極之齊七政,              The Luminary Culmen harmonizes the Seven Regu-  
  lations,

LINE 59: “Pivot” refers to Tianshu 天樞, or the Heavenly Pivot Star (α Ursae Majoris). The mother of Xuanyuan (i.e. Huangdi 黃帝), similar to Shaohao’s mother (see comments, above, at lines 57–58), witnessed a giant lightning that circled the Tianshu and thereupon became pregnant; see *Hetu woju ji* 河圖握矩記, in *WSJC*, p. 1144. Cf. Zhang Shoujie’s annotation to *SJ* 1, p. 2; Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, p. 51.

LINE 60: There are several versions of Xuanyuan’s receiving the Diagram; e.g., *Chun qiu hecheng tu* 春秋合誠圖, in *WSJC*, p. 763, and *Hetu tingzuofu* 河圖挺佐輔, pp. 1108–9.

LINE 61: During the reign of emperor Huan of the Later Han (r. 146–168), a yellow star was visible in the areas of Song 宋 and Chu 楚. Yin Kui, a master astrologer, predicted that fifty years later a “perfected one” (*zhenren* 真人) would rise from the areas of Liang 梁 and Pei 沛. The perfected one turned out to be Cao Cao 曹操 (155–220); *SGZ* 1, p. 22.

LINE 62: The renowned scholar and political leader Zhang Hua 張華 (232–300) saw purple auras between two Lunar Lodgings (namely, Southern Dipper 南斗, including six stars in Sagittarius, and Ox 牛, including six stars in Capricorn). He asked Lei Huan 雷煥, an astrologer from Yuzhang 豫章 (in modern Jiangxi province), to explain it. Lei said that the auras were the spirits of swords rising to the heavens, and the swords themselves were in Yuzhang. This resonates with the traditional theory of “field allocation” (*fenyé* 分野), according to which the field applicable to Southern Dipper and Ox is an area south of the Yangzi River, and Yuzhang was in the southern state of Wu 吳; See *Jin shu* 36, pp. 1075–76; Ho Peng Yoke, *The Astronomical Chapters of the Chin Shu* (Paris and the Hague: Mouton & Co., 1966), p. 95; Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, pp. 75–77, 81.

LINE 63: This refers to auspicious stars (*jingxing*) that are in half-moon shape; some of them appeared as auras in the eastern sky. See Meng Kang’s 孟康 (fl. 3d c. AD) and Zhang Shoujie’s annotation in *SJ* 27, p. 1336.

LINE 64: When Liu Bang’s 劉邦 (d. 195 BC) troops occupied the Qin capital in 207 BC, the conjunction of the five planets occurred in the lunar lodge Well 井 (*dongjing* 東井, including eight stars in Gemini). The field allocation covered areas of Qin, which was based in the Yong 雍 region. See *SJ* 27, p. 1348; Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, p. 77; Ho, *Astronomical Chapters of the Chin Shu*, p. 95.

LINE 65: *Chenji* (Luminary Culmen) is the Northern Dipper. During the Han it was established that the Northern Dipper controls the four directions of the sky as it pivots around the North Star like the emperor’s chariot, and assists the supreme deity to govern the Central Palace. See Tseng, *Picturing Heaven in Early China*, pp. 306–10. The “Seven Regulations” refers to the total of the sun, the moon, and five planets. See “Shundian,” in *Shang shu Zhengyi* 3, p. 54: “[Shun] examined the circumpolar constellation template and the three stars of the handle in order to obtain a harmonious system of the movements of the Seven Regulations 在璇璣玉衡, 以齊七政.” See Yoke, *Astronomical Chapters of the Chin Shu*, p. 59. On *xuanji* and *yuheng*, see *ibid.*, p. 59, n. b; Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China* 3, pp. 261–62, 333–39.

JIE WU

- 66 泰階之平六符.           On the Grand Stairs the Six Stars are even.  
67 雖前皇之聖德,           Despite the sagely virtue of former emperors,  
68 又何以加於此乎?       How can all of them exceed this [Wu Zhao's virtue]?  
69 至若甘露溢,           As for: sweet dew flows out,  
70 醴泉出,                Delicious spring water gushes forth,  
71 蓂莢生,                The calendar plant sprouts,  
72 嘉禾實,                The auspicious grain seeds,  
73 鳳凰丹彩,            Phoenixes of vermilion color,  
74 騶虞白質,            Zouyu of white texture,  
75 南海無波,            The south sea's being calm and tranquil,

LINE 66: Grand Stairs (*Taijie*) is a group of six stars in Ursae Majoris that is also known as *tianjie* 天階 or *santai* 三台. The six stars are arranged in three pairs of two, each pair representing a stair step in the sky that Taiyi 太一, the emperor of the heavens, sets foot on when he ascends and descends from his throne. The set of stars sets *yin* and *yang* in harmony and regulates all things. When the three separate steps are in parallel, *yin* and *yang* will be in harmony, winds and rain will come in time, and the empire will be in great peace; see *Jin shu* 11, p. 293; trans. Ho, *Astronomical Chapters of the Chin Shu*, p. 80. “Six Stars” (*Liufu*) refers to the astrological portents of those six stars; see Yan Shigu’s 顏師古 comment quoting Meng Kang, at *Han shu* 65, p. 2851.

LINE 69: The four auspicious omens mentioned in ll. 69–72 appeared when Heaven and Earth were in harmony and the government was benevolent, and they were traditionally among the most frequently reported; e.g., “Wang dao” 王道 in Lai Yanyuan 賴炎元, annot., *Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露 (Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1984) 4, p. 87; Chen, *Baihu tong shuzheng* 6, pp. 283–87; *YWLJ* 98, pp. 1694–95. For sweet dew, see Lippiello, *Auspicious Omens and Miracles*, pp. 102–4; *YWLJ* 98, pp. 1697–98.

LINE 71: This was a legendary auspicious plant associated with the era of Yao. Starting on the first day of the month it is supposed to have grown out a leaf every day, and from the sixteenth day forward it drops a leaf every day. The last leaf would come off on the last day of the month; *SS* 29, p. 862.

LINE 72: “Weizi zhi ming” 微子之命, in *Shang shu zhengyi* 13, pp. 355–56. Tang Shu 唐叔 (i.e. Shu Yu 叔虞), a younger brother of king Cheng of the Zhou, presented the king an unusual grain from his fief as an auspicious omen. King Cheng asked Tang Shu to send it to the Duke of Zhou who was at the time away in the east quelling a rebellion. Kong Anguo commented that the grain was a sign of a harmonious empire, and it was the Duke of Zhou’s virtue that had caused its appearance. See Tseng, *Picturing Heaven in Early China*, pp. 128–30; and Lippiello, *Auspicious Omens and Miracles*, pp. 109–10.

LINE 73: *YWLJ* 99, pp. 1707–8. Chen, *Baihu tong shuzheng* 6, p. 288.

LINE 74: A *zouyu* was a virtuous, tiger-like animal with a long tail and black stripes on white fur. It never killed other animals and only ate animals that had died naturally; *YWLJ* 99, p. 1716.

LINE 75: This was purported to have happened during the reign of king Cheng of the Zhou when the Duke of Zhou was regent; see *Han shi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳 (Han Wei congshu edn.) 5, p. 7b.

- 76 東風入律. The east wind's entering into the pitch-pipes.  
77 比夫皇穹之錫壽, Compared with longevity bestowed from August  
Heaven,  
78 何足以談其萬一. How can even one ten-thousandth of them be worth  
mentioning?

SECTION VI

- 79 聖上猶復招列仙, The sagely emperor still continues to recruit ranks  
of immortals,  
80 擇群賢, Select throngs of worthies.  
81 日慎一日, She is discreet day by day,  
82 玄之又玄. Profound and mysterious more and more.  
83 兵戈不起, Armed men and weapons will not rise,  
84 至德承天. Perfect virtue receives influences from Heaven.  
85 臣炯作頌, Your minister, Jiong, composes this eulogy,  
86 皇家萬年. May the imperial house last ten thousand years.

LINE 76: *Lü* refers to *lüguan* 律管, a series of twelve bamboo (later, bronze) pipes used for a court’s musicological tuning of the twelve pitches of the ancient Chinese octave. Later, mostly from Later Han forward, bamboo sections of prescribed lengths functioning as flutes were used in court ritual and festive ensembles; and perhaps since Former Han, but more so beginning in the W. Jin and Period of Division, such tubes were used to “watch for the ethers” (*hou qi* 候氣) that were supposed to come up from the earth at the right seasonal point and blow into the tubes. Watchers would notice the scattering of ash that had been placed on top of the tubes when that blowing occurred. The line here is from the Six Dynasties work *Hainei shizhou ji* (see n. 71, above) (Baibu congshu jicheng edn.), pp. 6b–7a. It asserts that in 98 BC messengers from Yuezhi 月氏 paid tribute to emperor Wu of the Han, reporting that in their kingdom “the east wind has been continuously going into the pitch-pipes for a hundred *xun* (10-day periods) 東風入律, 百旬不休.” They took it as a sign that a virtuous ruler would appear in the Chinese realm and thus came to pay tribute.

LINE 80: See Shi Shen’s divination, n. 36, above; also the notes to lines 29 and 30, above.

LINE 81: “Chujian Qin” 初見秦, in *Han Fei zi jiaozhu zu*, annot., *Han Fei zi jiaozhu* 1, p. 9.

LINE 82: Zhu, annot., *Lao zi jiaoshi* 1, p. 7.

LINE 83: *SJ* 27, p. 1306.

LINE 84: On “receives influences from Heaven,” see n. 39, above. Under the hexagram “Kun” 坤, in *Zhou yi zhengyi* (*Shisanjing zhushu*) 1, p. 13b, we read: “All things owe their birth [to Kun]; it obediently receives Heaven 萬物資生, 乃順承天.”