Qu Yuan and the *Chuci*

New Approaches

Edited by

Martin Kern
Stephen Owen

BRILL

Contents

Reconstructing Qu Yuan

Martin Kern

1   **Qu Yuan and His Successors: The Han Account**

No preimperial text known to the Chinese literary tradition mentions the historical figure Qu Yuan 屈原 (fl. ca. 300 BCE?),[1] nor are there any known preimperial traces of the poetry attributed to his name. Likewise the numerous manuscripts on bamboo, wood, or silk that in recent decades have been excavated or looted from aristocratic and lesser elite tombs in the area of the ancient state of Chu 楚: dating from the late fourth century onward and otherwise containing a wealth of historical, philosophical, and literary writings, none of them ever hints at Qu Yuan. Only one newly discovered text—the *Fan wu liu xing* 凡物流形 (All Things Flow into Form)—found in two versions among the looted manuscript corpus held at the Shanghai Museum and tentatively dated to around 300 BCE—contains verses resembling those of the "Tian wen" 天問 (Heavenly Questions) poem in the *Chuci* 楚辭 (Verses of Chu) anthology and thus suggesting a wider context—in this specific case not only poetic but also philosophical—for the verses for which Qu Yuan is known to the tradition.[2] In addition, two separate sequences of four and six graphs have

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1   Qu Yuan's dates traditionally given as 343–278 BCE are fanciful. As noted by Hawkes (1985: 61), "in fact no one has, or is ever likely to have, the foggiest idea when Qu Yuan was born or when he died." Qu Yuan's purported birth year is based on an astronomical misreading of the second line of the "Li sao"; his death year of 278 BCE is derived from the idea that he drowned himself immediately after the fall of the old Chu capital Ying 郢. Neither date is supported by actual evidence. See further below.

2   In strikingly teleological fashion, Cao Jinyan (2021) reads not only *Fan wu liu xing* but also four very short and fragmentary bamboo texts from the Shanghai Museum corpus as some kind of proto-*Chuci* poetry in both style and themes; likewise, see Xu Guangcai and Zhang Xiuhua 2021: 26–39. Cao's evidence from the four fragments is extremely tenuous. The much longer *Fan wu liu xing* he reads as a "sister piece" (*jiemei pian* 姐妹篇) to "Tian wen." According to Cao, *Fan wu liu xing* should be understood as "a publication of material of [poetic] phrases from Chu prior to the time of Qu Yuan" (早於屈原時代的楚辭資料之公佈); see Cao Jinyan 2021: 176–177. One may well appreciate Cao's notion of anonymous, more broadly circulating "published material" of *Chuci*-style poetry without sharing his teleological inclinations, and certainly without connecting these texts to the Qu Yuan persona. Remarkably, philosophical readings of *Fan wu liu xing* such as Perkins (2015, 2016) or Chan (2015) never once mention this poetic connection.

been discovered in the fragmentary bamboo manuscripts from Shuanggudui 雙古堆 (Fuyang 阜陽, Anhui) tomb no. 1 (tomb sealed 165 BCE) that would match partial phrases in "Li sao" 離騷 (Encountering Sorrow)[3] and the "Jiu zhang" 九章 (Nine Manifestations) poem "She jiang" 涉江 (Crossing the River), respectively—enough to let some scholars speculate about them as early remnants of the *Chuci* anthology.[4]

Qu Yuan emerges as a native and high official of the state of Chu—a state destroyed by Qin 秦 in 223 BCE, shortly before Qin's imperial unification of China in 221 BCE—only in Western Han (202 BCE–9 CE) sources, and so does his poetry. Since then, he has been canonized as the greatest poet of Chinese antiquity and his "Li sao" as ancient China's greatest poem. This canonization developed in three ways: first, through the compilation and gradual growth of the *Chuci* anthology probably at the successive hands of Liu An 劉安 (179–122 BCE),[5] Liu Xiang 劉向 (77–6 BCE),[6] and finally Wang Yi 王逸 (89–158);[7] second, in Sima Qian's 司馬遷 (ca. 145–ca. 85 BCE) Qu Yuan biography in the *Shiji* 史記;[8] and third, in the poetic as well as critical responses attributed—not in every case convincingly—to Han imperial authors such as Jia Yi 賈誼 (200–169 BCE),[9] Yan 嚴 [or Zhuang 莊] Ji 忌 (fl. ca. 150 BCE),[10] Dongfang Shuo 東方朔 (fl. 130–120 BCE),[11] Wang Bao 王褒 (ca. 84–ca. 53 BCE),[12] Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53 BCE–18 CE),[13] Ban Gu 班固 (32–92),[14] and others.

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3   "Encountering Sorrow" is the conventional translation based on the Han gloss of *li* 離 as *zao* 遭. Alternative interpretations of *li* 離 would yield "Leaving Sorrow Behind," "Leaving After Sorrow," "Entangled in Sorrow," "Sorrow at Parting," and others more.

4   See Fuyang Han jian zhenglizu 1987.

5   With either a commentary (*zhuan* 傳) or—by a mistranscription of the original graph—a poetic exposition (*fu* 傅 > 賦) on the "Li sao," see *Hanshu*, 44.2145; *Chuci buzhu*, 1.1; further see below.

6   Also including his "Jiu tan" 九歎 (Nine Laments) in the anthology; see *Chuci buzhu*, 16.281–312.

7   Also including his "Jiu si" 九思 (Nine Longings) in the anthology; see *Chuci buzhu*, 17.313–327.

8   *Shiji*, 84.2481–2491.

9   With his "Diao Qu Yuan" 吊屈原 (Mourning Qu Yuan); see *Shiji*, 84.2492–2496. In addition, "Xi shi" 惜誓 (Regretting the Oath) is attributed to Jia Yi in *Chuci buzhu*, 11.227–231.

10 With his "Ai shi ming" 哀時命 (Lamenting the Fate of One's Time); see *Chuci buzhu*, 14.259–267.

11 With his poetic cycle "Qi jian" 七諫 (Seven Remonstrations); see *Chuci buzhu*, 13.235–258.

12 With his poetic cycle "Jiu huai" 九懷 (Nine Yearnings); see *Chuci buzhu*, 15.268–280.

13 Primarily with his "Fan Sao" 反騷 (Refuting Sao) but also other texts (see below); see *Hanshu*, 87A.3515–3521.

14 In the *Hanshu* "Monograph on Geography" (Dili zhi 地理志), 28B.1668; see below. In addition, Ban Gu is credited with one "preface" (*xu* 序) and another "Li sao zan xu" 離騷贊序

According to the *Hanshu* 漢書 "Monograph on Arts and Letters" (Yiwen zhi 藝文志), the genre of the "poetic exposition" (*fu* 賦) at once arose and peaked with Qu Yuan (and Xun Kuang 荀況 [ca. 310–ca. 210 BCE]):[15]

> 春秋之後，周道浸壞，聘問歌詠不行於列國，學詩之士逸在布衣，而賢人失志之賦作矣。大儒孫卿及楚臣屈原離讒憂國，皆作賦以風，咸有惻隱古詩之義。其後宋玉、唐勒，漢興枚乘、司馬相如，下及揚子雲，競為侈麗閎衍之詞，沒其風諭之義。

> After the Springs and Autumns period, when the Way of the Zhou gradually fell into ruin, the singing and chanting when on diplomatic mission was no longer practiced among the various states, the men of service who were learned in the *Odes* hid among the common folk, and the poetic expositions of worthy men who failed to realize their ambition arose. The great *ru* scholar Excellency Sun and the Chu minister Qu Yuan, when encountering slander and grieving about their states, both created poetic expositions of indirect admonition which all contained the ancient *Odes*' meaning of concealed pain. Thereafter came Song Yu, Tang Le, and, with the rise of the Han, Mei Sheng and Sima Xiangru, and down to Yang Xiong, who all vied to compose phrases greatly gorgeous and grossly aggrandizing while drowning the principle of indirect admonition and moral illustration.[16]

Accordingly, the "Yiwen zhi" catalog of poetic expositions (*fu* 賦) opens as follows:

> 屈原賦二十五篇。楚懷王大夫，有列傳。唐勒賦四篇。楚人。宋玉賦十六篇。人，與唐勒並時，在屈原後也。

> Qu Yuan, twenty-five poetic expositions. [He was a grandee under King Huai of Chu and has a biography (in the *Shiji*)]. Tang Le, four poetic expositions. [He was a man from Chu.] Song Yu, sixteen poetic expositions. [He was a man from Chu and a contemporary of Tang Le, in the time after Qu Yuan.][17]

(Appraisal preface [or postface] to Encountering Sorrow) to the "Li sao" in *Chuci buzhu*, 1.49–50, 51.

15   Here mentioned as Sun Qing 孫卿, "Excellency Sun." He is better known as the philosopher Xunzi 荀子, "Master Xun."

16   *Hanshu*, 30.1756.

17   *Hanshu*, 30.1747. The passages in brackets are Ban Gu's commentary.

The *Shiji* concludes Qu Yuan's biography as follows, leading directly into Jia Yi's:

屈原既死之後，楚有宋玉、唐勒、景差之徒者，皆好辭而以賦見稱；
然皆祖屈原之從容辭令，終莫敢直諫。自屈原沈汨羅後百有餘年，漢
有賈生，為長沙王太傅，過湘水，投書以弔屈原。。。賈生既辭往
行，聞長沙卑溼，自以壽不得長，又以適去，意不自得。及渡湘水，
為賦以弔屈原。

After Qu Yuan's death, Chu had Song Yu, Tang Le, and Jing Cuo as his
followers who all were fond of eloquent phrases and used poetic exposi-
tions to gain renown; however, even though they all took as their ances-
tral model Qu Yuan's calm conduct and befitting language, in the end
none of them dared to remonstrate frankly. More than a hundred years
after Qu Yuan had drowned himself in the Miluo River, the Han had
Mister Jia who served as Grand Tutor to the King of Changsha. When
passing the Xiang River, he tossed his writing [into the water] to mourn
Qu Yuan … [After having been banished from the imperial court to serve
the King of Changsha,] Mister Jia bid farewell and left; he had heard that
Changsha was low-lying and damp, and that he would not reach old age
there; moreover, having departed [from the imperial court], he could no
longer realize his ambition. When crossing the Xiang River, he composed
a poetic exposition to mourn Qu Yuan.[18]

Finally, the Eastern Han historian Ban Gu completes the early accounts of
Qu Yuan's poetic lineage in the *Hanshu* "Monograph on Geography" (Dili zhi
地理志):

始楚賢臣屈原被讒放流，作離騷諸賦以自傷悼。後有宋玉、唐勒之屬
慕而述之，皆以顯名。漢興，高祖王兄子濞於吳，招致天下之娛游子
弟，枚乘、鄒陽、嚴夫子之徒興於文、景之際。而淮南王安亦都壽
春，招賓客著書。而吳有嚴助、朱買臣，貴顯漢朝，文辭並發，故世
傳楚辭。

In the beginning, when the Chu worthy minister Qu Yuan was slandered
and banished, he composed "Encountering Sorrow" and various poetic
expositions to express his pain and grief. Later there were those like Song
Yu and Tang Le who admired and transmitted these [poetic expositions]

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and thereby all gained fame. After the Han arose, Emperor Gaozu's nephew Liu Bi (216–154 BCE) at [the kingdom of] Wu summoned [to his court] the junior traveling entertainers from around the realm. The likes of Mei Sheng, Zou Yang, and Master Yan [i.e., Yan Ji] flourished there during the reigns of Emperors Wen (180–157 BCE) and Jing (157–141 BCE), while [Liu] An, the King of Huainan (179–122 BCE), established his capital at Shouchun where he summoned retainers to compose writings. Though [the court at] Wu had [initially] Yan Zhu and Zhu Maichen, they [subsequently] came to enjoy eminence and prestige at the Han imperial court where their refined phrases issued forth. Thus, their generation transmitted the [poetic] phrases of Chu.[19]

All these accounts are fully consistent with one another: the Chu minister Qu Yuan was the first ancestor of a particular type of poetry, namely, the poetic exposition composed as a way to remonstrate with a ruler but also to lament one's fate.[20] (In the *Shiji* biography, note the phrase 然皆祖屈原之從容辭令, "even though they all took as their ancestral model Qu Yuan's calm conduct and befitting language.") He was followed first by Song Yu, Tang Le, and Jing Cuo (all no dates) before the empire, and then, starting with Jia Yi, by those who first at the courts of the kingdoms of Wu 吳, Liang 梁, and Huainan 淮南, and from Emperor Wu's 武 reign (141–87 BCE) onward at the imperial court, composed their writings over the course of the Western Han dynasty. Qu Yuan's biography is included in the *Shiji* and in its gist is repeated in Wang

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19   *Hanshu*, 28B.1668; see also *Chuci buzhu*, "Mulu" 目錄, 1, which includes the entire passage except for the penultimate phrase ("where their elegant phrases issued forth"). The initial phrase stating that Qu Yuan as a "worthy minister" was "slandered and banished" and composed the "Li sao" is also repeated in the *Hanshu* biography of Jia Yi; see *Hanshu*, 48.2222. The association of what may be translated as "phrases," "verses," or "poetic expositions" of Chu (*Chu ci* 楚辭/詞) with Yan Zhu 嚴助 and Zhu Maichen 朱買臣—at the time already at the imperial court in Chang'an—is also noted in *Hanshu*, 64A.2791. In *Shiji*, 122.3143, Zhu Maichen is said to have become close to Yan Zhu for his involvement with "phrases from Chu" (*Chu ci* 楚辭). In *Hanshu*, 64B.2821, Wang Bao orders a certain Beigong 被公 from Jiujiang 九江, said to be "able to do phrases from Chu" (*neng wei Chu ci* 能為楚辭), to recite them. (Jiujiang jun 九江郡 was the name of the Han commandery that in 203 BCE had been renamed as the Kingdom of Huainan 淮南; after Liu An's forced suicide in 122 BCE, the kingdom was abolished and its former name of Jiujiang commandery restored; thus, Beigong hailed from the area of Liu An's former court. To what extent the phrase *Chu ci* 楚辭/詞 is either broadly generic or can be applied to some of the texts in the received *Chuci* anthology remains unclear.

20   A distinct subgenre of the "poetic exposition," then fully developed during the Western Han dynasty and sometimes known as "Shi buyu fu" 士不遇賦, "Poetic Exposition of the Man of Service Not Meeting his Time"; see Wilhelm 1957.

Yi's introduction to "Encountering Sorrow" in Wang's *Chuci zhangju* 楚辭章句 (Chapter and Verse Commentary to the *Chuci*) anthology.[21]

Neither there nor anywhere else does Qu Yuan have any predecessor for his poetic production; but following him, the transmission of Chu verse was not merely about copying or preserving. Instead, in the hands of successive generations of literary authors, it was a matter of extending the poetic tradition associated with Qu Yuan as its ancestor by contributing ever new poetic compositions—a fact finally manifested in the very structure of the *Chuci* anthology, including the poetry of the anthologizers Liu An, Liu Xiang, and Wang Yi themselves. Thus, Qu Yuan and the "Li sao" existed as historical fact and artifact, first author and first poem, which Han authors recounted and to which they responded. The model for these literary activities was the structure of the ancestral sacrifice, the principal religious institution of early China where every new generation emulated—and literally embodied—the model of the first ancestor (see below).[22]

Thus, when Jia Yi mourned Qu Yuan in "Diao Qu Yuan," he recalled the earlier hero (though not his text or authorship) in poetry; when Sima Qian compiled the joint biography of Qu Yuan and Jia Yi (Qu Yuan Jia sheng liezhuan 屈原賈生列傳), he arranged what he had learned; when Yang Xiong composed his "Fan Sao" and two other lengthy poetic expositions,[23] he criticized Qu Yuan's decision to commit suicide yet did so in the diction of the poetic exposition; when Liu Xiang wrote his "Jiu tan," he directly impersonated Qu Yuan's voice. All of these responses, and others more, are directly tied to the Western Han imagination of Qu Yuan.

2   Cultural Memory and the Qu Yuan Epic

The story of Qu Yuan is directly tied to Qin's destruction of Chu. When Qin captured the old Chu capital of Ying 郢 in 278 BCE, the royal court of Chu fled east from place to place before finally settling its last capital some five hundred kilometers northeast at Shouchun 壽春 (in modern Anhui) in 241 BCE. Eighteen years later, in 223 BCE—just two years before Qin's creation

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21   *Chuci buzhu*, 1.1–2.

22   See Kern 2008.

23   In his autobiography in *Hanshu*, 87A.3515, Yang Xiong only provides the full text of "Refuting Sorrow" (*Hanshu*, 87A.3516–3521); he notes that two other pieces he had written in response to Qu Yuan's poetry were too long to be included. For a translation, see Knechtges 1982: 13–16.

of the unified empire in 221 BCE—Chu fell completely. By this time, Qu Yuan had long been dead, yet remained alive in Chu political memory.

Qu Yuan's actual birth and death dates are entirely dubious, including the idea that he committed suicide in 278 BCE in response to the fall of Ying.[24] But the Qu Yuan story, however fanciful, clearly responded to the concerns of Han dynasty court intellectuals, and in this can be fruitfully analyzed from the theoretical perspective of "cultural memory" developed by Jan and Aleida Assmann.[25] According to Jan Assmann,

> What counts for cultural memory is not factual but remembered history. One might even say that cultural memory transforms factual into remembered history, thus turning it into myth. Myth is foundational history that is narrated in order to illuminate the present from the standpoint of its origins … Through memory, history becomes myth. This does not make it unreal—on the contrary, this is what makes it real, in the sense that it becomes a lasting, normative, and formative power."[26]

And furthermore:

> It is generally accepted that the poetic form has the mnemotechnical aim of capturing the unifying knowledge in a manner that will preserve it. Also familiar is the fact that this knowledge is customarily performed through multimedia staging in which the linguistic text is inseparable from voice, body, mime, gesture, dance, rhythm, and ritual action … Through regular repetition, festivals and rituals ensure the communication and continuance of the knowledge that gives the group its identity. Ritual repetition also consolidates the coherence of the group in time and space.[27]

In turn, Aleida Assmann has noted that such a collective vision of the past "cannot be 'remembered'; it has to be memorialized," and that while it can be studied and acquired, "only through internalization and rites of participation does it create the identity of a 'we'."[28] As a result,

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24   See Hawkes 1985: 60–61.
25   For a more comprehensive account of the theory of cultural memory than shall be offered here, see Kern 2022. A useful outline of the theory is provided in Erll 2011.
26   Jan Assmann 2011: 37–38.
27   Jan Assmann 2011: 41–42.
28   Aleida Assmann 2008: 52.

Abstract and generalized "history" turns into re-embodied collective "memory" when it is transformed into forms of shared knowledge and collective participation. In such cases, "history in general" is reconfigured into a particular and emotionally charged version of "our history" and absorbed as part of a collective identity.[29]

This collective, memorialized past took shape in the Qu Yuan story precisely because it was not merely composed and told once before but, in its poetic form that was both durable and continually expandable, could be continuously recomposed, retold, and performed. Some of the results of this process that unfolded over decades, if not centuries, are visible in the different layers of the *Chuci* anthology, beginning with its earliest pieces such as the "Li sao" that already represent a composite diversity of source materials.

According to the *Shiji*, Qu Yuan had warned King Huai of Chu 楚懷王 (r. 328–299 BCE) that Qin was "a state of tigers and wolves that cannot be trusted" 秦虎狼之國，不可信也.[30] Both in the *Shiji* and elsewhere, this phrase is attributed to various other pre-Qin historical figures,[31] while in the Qu Yuan biography it is only spoken by him, who thus appears as the single prophet of Chu's demise: after Qu Yuan's death, "Chu was diminished by the day, until several dozen years later it was finally extinguished by Qin" 其後楚日以削，數十年竟為秦所滅.[32] Since then, Qu Yuan must have been a figure of mythological significance in the territory of the former state of Chu, now a Western Han kingdom ruled by Liu An at Shouchun, the former last capital of preimperial Chu after the traumatic loss of Ying in 278 BCE.

It was probably at Liu An's court that the first *Chuci* anthology was compiled and the persona of Qu Yuan clearly defined.[33] But at Shouchun Qu Yuan was not only remembered as the prophet who had foreseen the demise of Chu. His earlier comment on Qin as being "the land of tigers and wolves" also presaged why Qin would ultimately fail, only to be replaced by a new dynasty, the Liu 劉 family's Han, that emerged from the former Chu territory. From a Western Han perspective, Qu Yuan had foreseen both the loss of Chu to Qin and the subsequent collapse of Qin that led to the revival of Chu, now in the form of the Han empire.

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29   Aleida Assmann 2008: 65.

30   *Shiji*, 84.2484.

31   *Shiji*, 6.230, 7.313, 40.1728, 44.1857, 69.2254, 69.2261, 71.2308, 75.2354.

32   *Shiji*, 84.2491.

33   For summaries of the history of the *Chuci* anthology, see Hawkes 1985: 28–41; Walker 1982; Du 2019 and in this volume; Chan 1998.

A second way in which Qu Yuan represents Han concerns is related to this political and cultural chronology. In the Western Han view from Shouchun, Qu Yuan—descendant of one of the three royal lineages of the old state of Chu[34]—was a veritable ancestor. The culture and history of preimperial Chu, now commemorated at its last former capital, had metamorphosed into the culture and history of the Han imperial house.[35] The story of Qu Yuan offered a view of both the former Chu aristocracy—now with its remnants surviving at Liu An's court—and of Chu history, mythology, and religion, distributed across different parts of the *Chuci* anthology. Like no other hero from the glorious past of Chu, Qu Yuan literally embodied all of the above in his person. It is from this perspective that his purported suicide as a response to the fall of Ying made sense to later readers: when Ying fell, Qu Yuan had to fall as well—*and only then*. The year 278 thus marked the pivotal point: when Qu Yuan's wandering in the southern exile ended in his drowning in the Miluo 汨羅 River, the Chu court's exile in the east began, to be settled only decades later at Shouchun as a brief shadow of its former glory. In this context, the attribution of "Ai Ying" to Qu Yuan is of critical importance: just as the poem, together with "Huai sha" 懷沙 (Embracing Sand; see below), literally seals his life, the profound sense of loss and pain felt over the fate of Ying was now personified as Qu Yuan's own fate. Not only Qu Yuan was lost, and not only Ying. Looking back first from the Western Han kingdom of Huainan at Shouchun, and then further from the imperial capital at Chang'an 長安, what was lost was the cultural and political identity of the proud and ancient state of Chu under the assault of Qin and with the establishment of the imperial state—an identity never to be recovered but only to be mythologized. Myths need heroes, and the myth of Chu needed Qu Yuan.

The third way in which the Qu Yuan persona spoke to the intellectual and political needs of the early Han was that it exemplified and embodied the ruler-minister debate that regularly surrounded the court: the centrality of loyal and upright advisors for good rulership—a position of self-interest for Han intellectuals—together with the outcry over unjust punishment (as experienced by both Jia Yi and Sima Qian).[36] In the middle of the Qu Yuan biography, there is a curious paragraph—not narrative but political evaluation—elaborating on exactly this point, noting that King Huai had failed to recognize Qu Yuan as a loyal minister (*zhong chen* 忠臣) and instead had "put him at a distance" (*shu* 疏); the anonymous judgment continues with

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34   *Shiji*, 84.2481.
35   See Li Zehou 2000.
36   See Schneider 1980; Schimmelpfennig 2004; Waters 1985.

a quotation from hexagram 48 of the *Zhou Yi* 周易 before exclaiming in conclusion, "If the king is not enlightened, how can there be prosperity!" 王之不明，豈足福哉.[37] According to this logic, the disastrous consequence of a king's blindness was not limited to his own demise—King Huai died miserably as a captive of Qin before his corpse was sent back to Chu[38]—but also extended to his entire state, and first of all to his loyal ministers, a message no reader of the *Shiji* could have missed: Jia Yi, just like Qu Yuan, ended exiled to the miasmic south; and Sima Qian himself avoided suicide only by submitting to castration. (By that time, Liu An had already been forced into suicide.) Thus, in their shared *Shiji* biography,[39] Qu Yuan and Jia Yi are mirrored and explained against each other—yet clearly from the perspective of their Han biographer.

The fourth and final way in which the Qu Yuan persona responded to Han political and cultural imagination was his stature as the first heroic poet. Over the past twenty years or so, it has become common understanding in Western Sinology that the figure of the individual author had little purchase before the empire and is fundamentally an early Han construction at the hands of Liu An, Sima Qian, Liu Xiang, Yang Xiong, Ban Gu, and others.[40] The urgency of this new idea is nowhere more clearly expressed than in Sima Qian's *Shiji*, where the historian presents himself as both the foremost reader and a new author in the image of those from the past whom he imagines as his intellectual and moral ancestors, first among them Confucius and Qu Yuan. Even if Sima Qian's authorship of the Qu Yuan biography seems far from certain,[41] only twice does he claim—or is represented to claim—to visualize the persona of the author just from reading, each time in a *taishigong yue* 太史公曰 ("The Grand Lord Archivist says") statement that caps the respective chapter:

余讀離騷、天問、招魂、哀郢，悲其志。適長沙，觀屈原所自沈淵，未嘗不垂涕，想見其為人。

When reading "Encountering Sorrow," "Heavenly Questions," "Calling Back the Soul," and "Lament about Ying," I grieve over his resolve. Ever since I traveled to Changsha and saw where Qu Yuan drowned himself in

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37   *Shiji*, 84.2485.

38   *Shiji*, 84.2484.

39   *Shiji*, 84.2481–2504.

40   For some recent work see Lewis 1999; Du 2019 and in this volume; Li 1994 and 2017; Kern 2015, 2016 and 2018a; Nylan 2014; Zhang 2018; Beecroft 2010; Goldin 2020; Vankeerberghen 2010; Walker 1982: 22–87.

41   See below for the biography as an incoherent, poorly arranged compilation of different source materials that falls well short of authorship in the sense of controlling agency.

the abyss, I never can help shedding tears, and I see him before me as the person he was.[42]

余讀孔氏書，想見其爲人。

When reading the writings of Master Kong, I see him before me as the person he was.[43]

As I commented in an earlier context,

> To Sima, the supreme reader and biographer, it is the text that leads us to the true nature of the person, where the author is finally known and understood. In this, the author becomes dependent on his reader: it is the latter who now imagines the former, and who rescues the text and with it the person. This, of course, is how Sima Qian not only remembers Qu Yuan and Confucius but also imagines himself, as he—another fated author—longs for his own posterity in the minds of later readers. The same is true for Du Fu. Like the ancient historian, the Tang poet seeks to create the prospective memory of himself. Qu Yuan as much as Confucius, and Sima Qian as much as Du Fu, is the noble person without power, the high-minded individual who insists on nothing but his moral excellence, and who creates a textual legacy that has no audience except in posterity.[44]

In sum, in the Western Han *imaginaire*,[45] the Qu Yuan persona as a figure of cultural memory was inscribed with a set of concepts supremely important to the writers of the time, one that in this constellation had not existed before. As a result, far beyond being celebrated as China's arch-poet, Qu Yuan embodies an entire set of identity-generating paradigms—first among them that of the high-minded, noble, and loyal political advisor who ends in exile and suicide—that have sustained the ideals and aspirations of many a

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42   *Shiji*, 84.2503. To these statements in the *Shiji*, one may add how Qu Yuan is included in Sima Qian's famous list of suffering authors; see *Shiji*, 130.3300, and *Hanshu*, 62.2735 ("After Qu Yuan was banished and expelled, he presented [*fu* 賦] 'Encountering Sorrow'" 屈原放逐，乃賦離騷).

43   *Shiji*, 47.1947.

44   Kern 2018a: 168.

45   I am using the French sociological notion of the "imaginaire" to refer to the social and cultural image that Han scholars collectively created of and for themselves, similar to what Anderson (2006) has described.

Chinese intellectual ever since. In the following, building on my earlier studies on aspects of the Qu Yuan persona, his authorship, and the "Li sao" poem,[46] I expand this analysis in various ways: having already raised "cultural memory" and "the imaginaire" as concepts that radically challenge the historical positivism prevalent in traditional Qu Yuan scholarship, we shall consider notions such as "epic narrative," "repertoire," "composite text," and "distributed authorship" useful for a new understanding of the Qu Yuan persona and of the poetry attributed to it, together with reflections on what we mean by "reception," "imitation," or "literary impersonation" of that poetry at the hands of Han dynasty writers.

To begin with the notion of "epic narrative," it seems legitimate to speak of "the Qu Yuan Epic" as long as it is understood that this epic is not a single poem but a cluster of texts in both prose and poetry, including the Qu Yuan biography in Sima Qian's *Shiji*, the "Li sao" and other poems in the *Chuci* anthology, and writings outside of that particular collection. Even in this form, the notion of the epic is helpful for grasping some of the characteristics of the textual corpus surrounding Qu Yuan. Consider a standard definition of the epic:

> An epic is a long narrative poem of heroic action: "narrative," in that it tells a story; "poem," in that it is written in verse rather than prose; "heroic action," while reinterpreted by each major epic poet, in that, broadly defined, it recounts deeds of great valor that bear consequence for the community to which the hero belongs. An epic plot is typically focused on the deeds of a single person or hero, mortal though exceptionally strong, intelligent, or brave, and often assisted or opposed by gods. Epic is set in a remote or legendary past represented as an age of greater heroism than the present. Its style is elevated and rhetorical.[47]

From a European perspective, an epic is considered a single long narrative poem, but there is no reason why this should be the only definition of the genre. What counts is not that there is a single long text—most long texts are not epics at all. What counts is what makes this long text an epic: it is narrative, poetic, and focused on the heroic action of a single protagonist who in both spirit and abilities stands high above the experiences of other mortals, and whose community, in this particular case, is destroyed for not having heeded the hero's prophecy. For Chu, this hero is Qu Yuan.

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46   Kern 2016 and 2018a.
47   *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 439.

In other words, one may consider the Qu Yuan story as an epic for these qualities, while also noting that as a text distributed across multiple and diverse sources, the Qu Yuan story is an epic sui generis.[48] David Hawkes has characterized the *Chuci* as a whole as the "*Matière de Ch'u*" or "*Matière de Ch'ü Yüan*" (see below), pointing to the distributed nature of the Qu Yuan lore. I agree; yet in using the notion of the epic, I wish to highlight in particular the elevated, heroic contents of this lore, including the attendant phenomenon of the heroic poet. While "epic" in this usage stretches the boundaries of its European definition relating to a single long poem, it accounts well for all its other characteristics that are not rendered explicit with *matière*.

Compare in this context Qu Yuan with the famous figure of Wu Zixu 伍子胥 (d. 484 BCE), another solitary hero, and one far more widely known in early China.[49] Wu Zixu's multifaceted story rich in historical detail and development appears already extensively in preimperial texts; Qu Yuan's appears in none. Yet according to all available sources, in pre-Qin or Han times Wu Zixu's hero-ism is never told in poetry, the uniquely powerful medium of commemorative representation in ritual performances,[50] let alone in pseudo-autobiographical poetry attributed to himself; he merely survives in stories and anecdotes. Qu Yuan, by contrast, is unique not only as China's first great poet but also in attracting an entire anthology of poetry centered on his paradigmatic experi-ences, not to mention the broader lore, written and oral, that clearly existed along and beyond what was selected and collected for transmission. Entirely unknown to the textual tradition before the Han, it was Qu Yuan alone who emerged as the exemplary figure of poet-hero and maligned royal advisor in whom Han intellectuals—and countless Chinese scholars since—were to recognize themselves. His total absence to date in the numerous manuscript finds from pre-imperial Chu, and even in Chu-area manuscripts from the early Western Han, only further confirms how completely the Qu Yuan Epic was

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48   Earlier, C.H. Wang (1987: 73–114), had proposed to read a series of five poems on King Wen 文 in the "Daya" 大雅 (Major Court Hymns) section of the *Shijing* 詩經 as the epic of King Wen (in Wang's coinage, the "Weniad"). It should be noted, however, that in sheer scope, the poetic representation of King Wen is nowhere close to that of Qu Yuan, nor does it develop the protagonist's interiority through his experiences of heroic struggle over time.

49   See Wu Enpei 2007; Johnson 1981. Note Johnson's use of the term "epic" in this essay.

50   This would change only a millennium later, in the late medieval period, with the inven-tion of the prosimetric storytelling genre *bianwen* 變文; see Johnson 1980. It is futile to speculate whether or not there existed poetic versions of the Wu Zixu story in pre-Qin texts long lost. If they existed, they were not considered important enough to leave traces in the subsequent tradition; with Qu Yuan, poetry is central not only to the medium of the story but also to the figure of the hero as autobiographer.

constructed by Western Han scholars who found their own identity in the mirror image of a true ancestor: an ancestor remote enough no longer to be known but only to be created in cultural memory, and endowed with heroic powers not real but ideal, heroic failures not pathetic but tragic and transcendent.

Compare to the definition of the epic noted above the opening three stanzas of the "Li sao," as they literally *stage* the protagonist as a mythological persona of divine ancestry who on an auspicious day "descends" into the world like a god and introduces himself in an intensely personal voice:

Stanza 1

帝高陽之苗裔兮	Distant descendant of the God Gao Yang am I,
朕皇考曰伯庸	My august father's name was Bo Yong.
攝提貞于孟陬兮	The *sheti* constellation pointed to the first month of the year,
惟庚寅吾以降	It was the cyclical day *gengyin* when I descended.

Stanza 2

皇覽揆余初度兮	The august one surveyed me and took my original measure,
肇錫余以嘉名	Rising to bestow on me auspicious names:
名余曰正則兮	He named me "Correct Standard,"
字余曰靈均	Styled me "Numinous Balance."

Stanza 3

紛吾既有此內美兮	Lush am I, possessed of this inner beauty,
又重之以脩能	Further doubled in fine appearance:[51]
扈江離與辟芷兮	Shrouded in lovage and angelica,
紉秋蘭以為佩	Weaving the autumn eupatory as my girdle.

Chuci buzhu, "Li sao," 1.3–5

The "I" in this presentation, present in seven first-person pronouns, is not the author of the poem but the hero remembered; no ancient Chinese poet could have called himself a descendant of the gods. The performative nature of this impersonation is linguistically marked: "*this* inner beauty" (*ci neimei* 此內美), like deictic expressions in performance contexts in general, can only be understood as an actual gesture within the dramatic staging in front of an audience. The protagonist's "inner beauty" remains invisible except when represented through his lavish outward appearance. This does not necessarily mean that the "Li sao" as a whole was a text for public performance. It means that it

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51   Reading—necessitated by the rhyme—*neng* 能 as an abbreviated form of *tai* 態.

contains *elements of performance texts*, just as it contains elements of other textual materials.

In my analysis the "Li sao" is best understood not as a single poem but as an anthology of modular fragments, a collection of expressions of different kinds and different origins. This analysis is centrally directed at four elements: first, different types of discourse, lexicon, and poetic register within the "Li sao"; second, blocks of texts that stand paratactically next to other blocks, typically without transition; third, elements of intratextuality and repetition within the "Li sao"; and fourth, the intertextuality between the "Li sao" and certain other texts from the early layer of the *Chuci* anthology. In this, I treat the Qu Yuan Epic in general, and the "Li sao" in particular, as the manifestation of cultural memory in the form of a broader, authorless discourse that took shape over time before becoming fixed within the specific parts of the *Chuci* anthology, including in the discrete textual entities we now call "Li sao," "Jiu ge" 九歌 (Nine Songs), "Jiu zhang," "Jiu bian" 九辯 (Nine Changes), and so on. This Qu Yuan Epic is a text both *composed* from diverse materials and *distributed* across several textual forms. The version we see in the received anthology is merely the final, canonical version of the text, defined by the successive efforts and decisions of a series of commentators, biographers, poets, and editors noted above.

But how did the Qu Yuan persona, and with it the Qu Yuan Epic, come about? The "Li sao" does not lend itself to a biographical reading; it mentions nothing about the historical Qu Yuan. Its biographical (or autobiographical) reading depends entirely on external material collected from a range of several other sources: the biography in the *Shiji*; the two short pieces in the *Chuci* anthology, "Bu ju" 卜居 (Divining Where to Stay) and "Yufu" 漁父 (The Fisherman),[52] that speak about Qu Yuan in the third person but are nevertheless attributed to him; other Han poems both within and outside the anthology; and various Han dynasty comments and entire commentaries, most fully Wang Yi's *Chuci zhangju*, received through Hong Xingzu's 洪興祖 (1090–1155) *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注 (Supplementary Annotations to the *Chuci*).[53] One cannot reconstruct a Qu Yuan persona from the "Li sao" itself—in fact, nobody could have connected the poem to the person were it not for the various external materials that, functionally serving as a paratext,[54] relate the person to the text.

The single most substantial source for Qu Yuan as a historical figure is Sima Qian's biography in the *Shiji*. Unfortunately, the text is an incoherent

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52   *Chuci buzhu*, 6.176–7.181.

53   For studies of the *Chuci zhangju*, see especially Schimmelpfennig 1999 and 2004; Du 2019 and in this volume; Chan 1998.

54   See Du 2019 and in this volume.

patchwork of multiple sources poorly stitched together that cannot even agree with itself on the name of its protagonist, Qu Yuan (identified as the author of "Huai sha") or Qu Ping 屈平 (identified as the author of the "Li sao"). It cannot agree with Sima Qian's comment elsewhere as to whether the "Li sao" was composed before or in response to its author's exile.[55] And it cannot agree with Sima Qian's *taishigong yue* statement (quoted above) at the end of the Qu Yuan–Jia Yi double biography that identifies Qu Yuan as the author of "Ai Ying" 哀郢 (Lament about Ying): given the story of how Qu Yuan was exiled from Ying—which seems to be the principal point of the poem[56]—how is the poem not mentioned at that moment in the biography itself? Qu Yuan and Qu Ping—neither one mentioned in the "Li sao"—may well refer to the same historical person, but the biography does not succeed in harmonizing them into one. Compiled from a range of different sources,[57] it opens a window on the rich and diverse nature of early Qu Yuan lore and its different traditions of mythological narrative and poetic performance. The biography reveals that literary material surrounding Qu Yuan existed in multiple parallel versions, none of which may be privileged as original or diminished as derivative. Thus, when we find direct textual parallels between the "Li sao" and Jia Yi's "Diao Qu Yuan"[58] or then again between "Xi shi" (also attributed to Jia Yi),[59] "Diao Qu Yuan," and other pieces in the *Chuci* anthology,[60] this does not suggest acts of "quotation" in the sense that one author cites the work of another (or even himself), which would presume that the earlier text was already available—but how and to whom?—in a fixed form, something for which there exists no other evidence. Instead, it suggests a shared body of expressions in the Han *imaginaire*. The *Shiji* biography is but one composite artifact of various fragments; it is both incoherent and incomplete.

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55   The biography—like Ban Gu's "Li sao zan xu" in *Chuci buzhu*, 1.51—places the composition squarely into the time of King Huai and before Qu Yuan's exile under his son and successor, King Qingxiang 頃襄 (329–269 BCE); Sima Qian's famous genealogy of suffering authors (*Shiji*, 130.3300, similar in *Hanshu*, 62.2735), on the other hand, states that "when Qu Yuan was banished, he composed 'Encountering Sorrow' 屈原放逐，著離騷; see also the discussion in Hawkes 1985: 52–54.

56   While lines 1–2 and 39–40 of the poem could be read as pointing to the destruction of Ying, line 62 expresses explicitly the hope to return to the city one day. In other words, the interpretation of "Ai Ying" as Qu Yuan's lament about the fall of Ying is itself, just like Qu Yuan's death date, a figment of much later imagination.

57   Hawkes 1985: 51–61; Walker 1982: 88–108.

58   Schimmelpfennig, 2004: 114–118.

59   *Chuci buzhu*, 11.327–331.

60   Hawkes 1985: 239; Walker 1982: 165–167.

While in preimperial times Qu Yuan may have been a persona whose story circulated in Chu, it is only in the Western Han that we see the full extent of his composite image, as told in different parts of the *Shiji* biography: the political hero standing against the ruler, the minister wronged by his king, the aristocratic representative of a social order that is on the verge of collapse, and the autobiographic poet who laments his fate in verse. Particularly instructive is the passage that leads to the account of the composition of the "Li sao":

屈平疾	Qu Ping was distressed that:
王聽之不聰也	The king's listening was undiscerning,
讒諂之蔽明也	Slander and slur obscured insight,
邪曲之害公也	The twisted and the crooked harmed the common good,
方正之不容也	The square and the straight were no longer afforded a place.
故憂愁幽思而作離騷	Thus, [he] worried and grieved in dark thoughts and made "Encountering Sorrow."[61]

The four rhymed lines in the middle,[62] all following the same syntactical and rhythmic structure, are a poetic fragment of unknown origin. This passage was almost certainly not invented by the historian himself; it must have come from some longer poetic account possibly in Qu Yuan's own voice, or as an impersonation of that voice, or of a narrator's voice telling Qu Yuan's story. It shows the existence of "Qu Yuan poetry" outside of the known anthology, poetry that may have circulated in smaller units and could be combined with other texts, in this case the prose narrative of the biography. In such combinations, the figures of subject and object, of protagonist and autobiographical poet, could easily switch sides—just as the lines between biography and autobiography are blurred among the "Jiu zhang," "Bu ju," and "Yufu."

This blurring occurs one more time in the *Shiji* biography.[63] Without being marked as such, the dialogical piece "Yufu," otherwise included in the *Chuci* anthology and there attributed to Qu Yuan himself, appears as part of the biographical account. In it, a fisherman challenges Qu Yuan for being stubborn and unhappy because he cannot adapt to changing circumstances. Once again, by Occam's razor, it is not plausible that the biographer invented an extra layer of stylized exchange for his narrative; he more likely incorporated it from an earlier literary version available to him. At the same time, compared to the

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61   *Shiji*, 84.2482.

62   Line 2 rhymes in the *yang* 陽 category; the other three rhyme in *dong* 東. For their inter-rhyming in Han poetry, see Luo Changpei and Zhou Zumo 1958: 187–188.

63   The following four paragraphs follow closely Kern (2018a: 172–173).

anthology, the *Shiji* version does not include the full text of "Yufu." It leaves out the fisherman's short song at the end that, as it happens, also appears independently in *Mengzi* 4A.8, where it has nothing to do with Qu Yuan (or a fisherman). Perhaps the *Shiji* author excluded the song; perhaps he did not know it. Either way, in the biography the story works better without it, giving Qu Yuan—now both hero and poet—the final word, highly emotional and personal:

> 寧赴常流而葬乎江魚腹中耳，又安能以皓皓之白而蒙世俗之溫蠖乎！

> I shall better throw myself into the ever-flowing stream and bury myself in the bowels of the river fish! How could I take my brilliant clarity and have it obscured by the confused blur of the world![64]

This is followed by a single sentence: "Then [he] made the poetic exposition of "Huai sha" 乃作懷沙之賦. After the text of "Huai sha," only one more thing is left to say: "Thereupon [he] embraced a stone and drowned himself in the Miluo River" 於是懷石遂自投汨羅以死.[65]

This is the moment when the dual nature of Qu Yuan as both poetic hero and heroic poet—as figure in the text and author of the text—breaks down. If Qu Yuan the hero is an archaic figure of noble solitude who acts decisively in the final moment of his life, Qu Yuan the poet, whose work then survived his suicide, cannot have just "made" (*zuo* 作) his highly sophisticated poem impromptu, nor could his creation have survived from such a moment. If Qu Yuan the hero, facing his fate, was alone when drowning himself in the Miluo river—with loneliness being a central motif of his legend—Qu Yuan the poet, responding to fate, was not alone when composing and reciting "Huai sha" moments earlier. Within the Han Qu Yuan Epic, this contradiction did not matter: poet and hero could easily switch places.

Nearly a century later, Yang Xiong in his "Fan Sao" challenged Qu Yuan's decision: there was no reason for Qu Yuan to drown himself after having been slandered and exiled. He could have gone into hiding or he could have left Chu. But Yang Xiong aimed at a pre-imperial Qu Yuan persona: a man of other options. Sima Qian instead imagined Qu Yuan entirely under the conditions of the imperial state, which were Sima's own: a man facing his single ruler and having nowhere to go but into demise. The dilemma and voice Sima Qian imagined for Qu Yuan was that of an imperial scholar-official: a voice not yet

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64   *Shiji*, 84.2486.
65   *Shiji*, 84.2490.

heard before the empire, but a voice eminently meaningful to Han scholars at the imperial court.

All of the texts discussed here, including Sima Qian's Qu Yuan biography, thus participate in a larger corpus of Qu Yuan lore that is fundamentally composite, fragmentary, and made up of a range of historically unreliable and to some extent mutually incongruent sources.[66] This corpus is not history but the construct of cultural memory that was finalized only over the course of the Western Han dynasty.

3   Repertoire and Authorship

The received *Chuci buzhu* anthology lists altogether eight pieces or poetic cycles under Qu Yuan's name, and scholars have found ways to match these to the number of twenty-five pieces attributed to Qu Yuan in the *Hanshu* "Monograph of Arts and Letters." At least one earlier version of the *Chuci* anthology, the *Chuci shiwen* 楚辭釋文 (Textual Explanations of the *Chuci*, before 937 CE), however, had listed the individual sections in a different sequence compared to the *Chuci buzhu*. It also started with the "Li sao" but then immediately moved to the "Jiu bian" attributed to the elusive Song Yu 宋玉. Scholars have long expressed doubts about Qu Yuan's authorship of several of the titles under his name in the *Chuci buzhu*, but except for those who outright deny the historical existence of Qu Yuan,[67] all—including the *Chuci shiwen*—accept at a minimum the attribution of the "Li sao," following Qu Yuan's biography in the *Shiji*.

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66   In his discussion of the *Shiji* biography, Okamura (1966: 89–91) notes that already in Sima Qian's time, actual historical knowledge about Qu Yuan had become uncertain and haphazard, and that Sima Qian himself did not have much material—let alone reliable historical sources—to work with. Instead, he attributed to Qu Yuan words that are otherwise attributed to others and filled the biography with the lengthy "Huai sha," a version of "Bu ju," and fragments from other discources, including Liu An's. These source materials themselves were already shaped by legend and cannot be taken as reliable historical accounts.

67   My take on Qu Yuan should not be misconstrued as a revival of the twentieth-century debates of "the Qu Yuan Question" (Qu Yuan wenti 屈原問題) but as a new departure in discussing both Qu Yuan and "his" texts. I see no particular evidence to question the existence of Qu Yuan as a historical figure at the Chu court around 300 BCE; but instead of lionizing him as China's first patriotic poet, I am interested in how his story was imagined and told through subsequent generations. Important critical voices in the earlier debate include Liao Jiping 廖季平 (1852–1932), Hu Shi 胡适 (1891–1962), He Tianxing 何天行 (1913–1986), Wei Juxian 衛聚賢 (1898–1990), and Zhu Dongrun 朱東潤 (1896–1988) in China, and Okamura Shigeru 岡村繁 (1922–2014), Suzuki Shūji 鈴木修次 (1923–1989), Shirakawa Shizuka 白川静 (1910–2006), Ishikawa Misao 石川三佐男, Misawa Reiji

While it is not clear whether or not Jia Yi knew of any "Li sao,"[68] one generation later, Liu An, King of Huainan, was apparently the first, in 139 BCE, to produce either a "commentary" (*zhuan* 傳) or a "poetic exposition" (*fu* 傅 > 賦)[69]—on some "Li sao" during his only statutory visit to Emperor Wu's 武 (r. 141–87 BCE) court at Chang'an.[70] If, as is assumed by most scholars, a first *Chuci* anthology was compiled at Liu An's court, it was there at the latest that Qu Yuan was defined as the progenitor of the entire *Chuci* poetic tradition, and that this tradition was headed by the "Li sao." This does not mean that Liu An's "Li sao" was the very poem we have in the surviving *Chuci* anthology, nor that it was a single poem altogether, that now attracted Liu An's commentary. Liu An may well have been contributing his own composition to a larger "Li sao" discourse that existed in a range of forms in both prose and poetry; after all, the *Hanshu* "Yiwen zhi" lists Liu An as the single most prolific Western Han author of poetic expositions, with eighty-two pieces to his name (all of them lost).[71]

Be that as it may, in different early traditions, it appears that the designation "Li sao" was used in at least three different ways: for the longest and most important one of several poems attributed to Qu Yuan; as the general title for the Qu Yuan corpus possibly inclusive of various pieces; and, visible in the traces of the *Chuci shiwen*, for the "Li sao" poem as the only work of Qu Yuan and regarded as a *jing* 經 (core text or canon), while all subsequent texts were considered subordinate *zhuan* 傳 (commentary),[72] albeit with "commentary" in the sense of "extended elaboration," which itself is not far away from "poetic

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三澤鈴尓, Inahata Kōichirō 稻畑耕一郎, and Taniguchi Mitsuru 谷口滿 in Japan. The earlier debates can be conveniently surveyed in Inahata 1997; Huang Zhongmo 1987, 1990a, and 1990b; Xu Zhixiao 2004; Hightower 1954. While Republican period Chinese scholars often expressed doubts about Qu Yuan's historical existence or authorship, more recent Chinese scholarship has moved into the opposite direction.

68 *Pace* traditional commentary, a single line in Jia Yi's piece shared with the "Li sao" (see below) should not be regarded as a direct quotation; both texts may have drawn on a shared repertoire of Qu Yuan lore. As Okamura (1966: 87) has noted, it appears that in the early Han, Qu Yuan was known as an upright and loyal Chu minister, but not yet as a poet.

69 As first proposed by Wang Niansun 王念孫 (1744–1832) in his *Dushu zazhi* 讀書雜志 and further discussed in Kominami (2003: 341–348), Schimmelpfennig (1999: 175–182, 565, note 409), and Chan 1998: 296–304.

70 *Hanshu*, 44.2145. For Liu An's visits that began in 158 BCE and then occurred at six-year intervals until the final visit—and first to Emperor Wu—in 139 BCE, see Vankeerberghen 2001: 49–51.

71 For what I take as an example of Liu An's literary activity of this kind, see Kern 2014: 124–150. Liu An's retainers at Shouchun are credited with an additional forty-four poetic expositions.

72 Chan 1998.

exposition.[73] (I will return to this question below.) As reflected in the table of contents of the *Chuci buzhu*, the title "Li sao *jing*" 離騷經 was still known to Wang Yi, yet apparently—judging from Wang's commentary—no longer understood.[74] For Wang Yi himself, Qu Yuan was the author of no fewer than eight items in the anthology, including those pieces that clearly speak about Qu Yuan in the third person, "Bu ju" 卜居 and "Yufu" 漁父, with "Yufu" being also embedded as part of the narrative in Qu Yuan's *Shiji* biography.

Within the *Chuci* anthology, Heng Du—to some extent following David Hawkes and others before her—has distinguished between an early, interrelated core and a later set of imitation pieces; in her reading, they are separated by pieces that serve a paratextual function, in particular "Bu ju" and "Yufu," both of which name and define the Qu Yuan persona, mark his death, and hence close the canon attributed to him.[75] Reception, quotation, commentary, or imitation all become possible only after this textual closure. While most scholars at a minimum still accept Qu Yuan's authorship for the "Li sao"—and hence the text as a single, discrete poem—my own analysis leads me to a more iconoclastic reading of the early layers of the *Chuci* that, in the poststructuralist tradition of Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes, and Renate Lachmann (all going back to Mikhail Bakhtin), does not view the "Li sao" as the anthology's origin and not even as a single, self-contained text,[76] but as a compilation of textual materials of different types and different origins that otherwise got reorganized

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73   Consider that even the commentary attributed to Wang Yi in *Chuci buzhu* contains numerous rhymed or rhythmic passages that may be partially his own, partially derived from other—earlier or later—commentarial layers; for the most detailed study of the problem see Schimmelpfennig 1999.

74   It is actually not clear how to interpret the title "Li sao *jing*" 離騷經 as noted in *Chuci buzhu* because *jing* is used in two, albeit interrelated, ways in Han times: first there is the usage of *jing* in the sense of "classic" or "canon," as in the Confucian *Five Classics* (*wu jing* 五經). But second there is the codicological use of *jing*, for example in the *Hanshu* "Yiwen zhi" in titles such as *Yi jing* 易經 or *Shi jing* 詩經 where *jing* means "the core text without commentary or further elaboration"; thus, 易經 and 詩經 in the *Hanshu* "Yiwen zhi" (30.1703, 1707) are not to be interpreted as book titles but as the *jing* ("core text") of the *Yi* and *Shi*, respectively. Of course, only a text that has a "commentary" or other form of elaboration can be distinguished as "core text"; and only a text that has a "commentary" can be called a "classic" or "canon." In sum, the two usages of *jing* are closely related, but they are not identical.

75   Du 2019 and in this volume. Du's use of "paratext" comes from Genette 1997.

76   Kristeva 1980; Barthes 1978; Lachmann 1990. Recent scholarship in the Digital Humanities that examines large amounts of text through computer-assisted, corpus-based analysis has only further weakened previous claims on the sanctity of discrete authorship in traditional literature; see, e.g., Moretti 2013 and Stallybrass 2007.

separately into "Jiu ge," "Jiu zhang," and so on. This dissolution of the "Li sao" as a self-contained poem brings with it the dissolution of its author.

The following discussion will address the very textuality with regard to both the earlier and the later layers of the anthology: while the earlier layer—in particular "Li sao" "Jiu ge," "Jiu zhang," "Tian wen," and possibly also "Jiu bian"—is marked by the fluidity of its components and the absence of individual authorship before the corpus sedimented and stabilized into a series of discrete texts, the later layer contains the writings of individual Han authors who recognized those discrete texts and responded to them in their own poetic voice, be it in the form of critique, elaboration, or impersonation. These two layers are defined by very different types of intertextual relations.

In recent years, I have developed a model of "repertoires and composite texts" to analyze *Shijing* 詩經 poetry not as an assembly of discrete, individual poems, but rather as an anthology of "repertoires": clusters of poems that are directly related to one another and are essentially a single poem in multiple variations.[77] This model is useful primarily to examine the earlier layer of the *Chuci* anthology. It downplays the notion of individual authorship and assumes instead the existence of certain poetic themes that were associated with particular sets of poetic expression, and that could be flexibly actualized in ever new variations, written or oral. Such poetry is not stable at the level of the individual text, but it is largely stable at the level of the repertoire, or body of material from which any such individual text draws. The result is multiple interrelated poems that are similar but not identical, with the textual material mobilized and reorganized in modular ways.

There is nothing unusual with such a model of ancient poetic composition. For the medieval European poetic traditions, its instability at the level of the poem has been called *mouvance* in Paul Zumthor's terminology[78] and *variance* in Bernard Cerquiglini's[79] with respect to both oral and written compositions, respectively. Importantly, the "author function"[80] does not exist as a controlling factor in the interpretation or stability of such texts. Any effort to retrospectively "reconstruct" or "discover" a particular author or specific historical moment of composition is conceptually misguided and artificially limiting for poems that come into being as ever-renewed instantiations from "poetic material" or "repertoires." Stephen Owen, in conceptualizing the intertextuality of

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77   Kern 2018b and 2019. For "composite text," see the seminal study by Boltz 2005. I use the word "composite" to denote literary production out of distinct, pre-existing themes, expressions, or materials. For "repertoire," see Owen 2006.

78   Zumthor 1992.

79   Cerquiglini 1999.

80   Foucault 1979.

early medieval Chinese poetry in these terms, speaks of "one poetry," that is, a textual corpus where the individual text is but "a single realization of many possible poems that might have been composed" within "a single continuum rather than as a corpus of texts either canonized or ignored. It has its recurrent themes, its relatively stable passages and line patterns, and its procedures."[81] In other words, these phenotexts are all variations of the same underlying genotext.

Such a model of circumscribed poetic fluidity proves immensely productive in reconsidering the nature of ancient Chinese poetry across a wide range of genres. It relieves us of authorial attributions whose fictionality is blindingly obvious; it obviates the need to create chronologies, hierarchies, and linear directions of quotation; it accounts for the dense intertextual relations and modular textual "building blocks"[82] that move with ease between different textual instantiations across early Chinese writing; and it situates the poetic text in social practices of poetic exchange, performance, and variation. Finally—and pertinent to the present analysis—the distributed nature of poetic expression as found in the Qu Yuan Epic falls together with the collective dimension of cultural memory: the Western Han Qu Yuan is the result not of some individual textual construction but responds to the shared concerns of its time. The Qu Yuan Epic emerges from the interplay of composite texts, textual repertoires, and the social operations of cultural memory that is at work both between the "Li sao" and other texts and within the "Li sao" itself.

In his essay "The Quest of the Goddess," first published in 1967, David Hawkes already advanced a similar view of the *Chuci* anthology; his words are very much worth recalling here:

> *Ch'u-tz'u,* as a vague collective title, may be compared with the "*Matière de Bretagne*" which in medieval times designated the whole vast corpus of prose and verse romance woven around the legend of King Arthur and his knights and the quest of the Grail. *Ch'u-tz'u* is the "*Matière de Ch'u* … If, then, there is no formal consistency between the different parts of this "*Matière de Ch'u,*" what is it that they have in common? The answer to this, I believe, is that all of them represent the cannibalization by a new secular, literary tradition of an earlier religious, oral one. As an alternative to this it might be suggested that all of them are in one way or another

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81   Owen 2006: 73.
82   For "building blocks," see Boltz 2005; for "modularity," see Ledderose 2000. I use both concepts in a slightly more expansive way than how they were originally presented by Boltz and Ledderose.

associated with the name of Ch'ü Yüan: that the "*Matière de Ch'u*" is really the "*Matière de Ch'ü Yüan*"—or in other words, that *Ch'u-tz'u* may be defined as the writings of Ch'ü Yüan and his School. In fact this is merely to restate the first definition in different terms, since the secularization of a religious tradition is precisely what Ch'ü Yüan is supposed to have done.[83]

Others may wish to downplay the "cannibalization by a new secular, literary tradition of an earlier religious, oral one." What matters more to me about Hawkes' notion of a *Matière de Ch'u*, however, is that it describes a composite work: a body of both prose and poetry distributed across different texts that, however, all draw on, and resolve around, a shared content matter. Their early layers emerged from a living tradition in which many participated and to which many contributed: authors, performers, and audiences.

It is, in fact, Wang Yi himself who offers the lead. For the "Jiu zhang" (including "Huai sha"), he notes that after Qu Yuan's death, "the people of Chu grieved and mourned him; generation after generation selected his phrases and transmitted his verses from one to the next" 楚人惜而哀之，世論其詞，以相傳焉.[84] Likewise with "Tian wen": "The people of Chu mourned and grieved over Qu Yuan; they collectively selected and transmitted [the poem], and this is why it is said not to be in a meaningful order" 楚人哀惜屈原，因共論述，故其文義不次序云爾.[85] For "Yufu," Wang Yi states that "the people of Chu longed and yearned for Qu Yuan and for this reason arranged his phrases so as to transmit them onward" 楚人思念屈原，因敘其詞以相傳焉.[86]

For Wang Yi, it is implausible that the pieces of "Jiu zhang" emerged from his suicide; "Yufu" talks about Qu Yuan in the third person; and "Tian wen" is too disorderly to be Qu Yuan's own final composition. Morever, for the "Jiu ge," Wang Yi sees Qu Yuan more as an editor than as an original author: because the southern religious songs which he encountered in exile were *bilou* 鄙陋 ("vulgar and base"), Qu Yuan remade them in order to give expression to his own vengeance and remonstrance. Thus, "their textual sense is incoherent, their stanzas and lines are mixed up, and they broadly diverge in their principal meaning" 故其文意不同，章句雜錯，而廣異義焉.[87]

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83   Hawkes 1974: 44.
84   *Chuci buzhu*, 4.120–121.
85   *Chuci buzhu*, 3.85.
86   *Chuci buzhu*, 7.179.
87   *Chuci buzhu*, 2.55.

Authorship understood in this sense is itself communal, composite, and distributed across the roles of compilers, editors, collators, and commentators; and it further involves performers, transmitters, and their audiences. This would not have been lost to figures like Liu An, Liu Xiang, and Wang Yi as they engaged in successive efforts of reorganizing the *Chuci* anthology, and of the Qu Yuan legend with it. But through their own poetic contributions to the anthology they also still created an authorial model for themselves, with Qu Yuan as their spiritual ancestor. As this new author, "Qu Yuan" came into view: perhaps not yet with Jia Yi (who mourns Qu Yuan as a failed statesman, not as an author of texts), but certainly with Liu An. Western Han writers responded to him explicitly: Liu An with his "Li sao zhuan" 離騷傳 (or "Li sao fu"), Sima Qian (or whoever else) with the *Shiji* biography, and in particular Liu Xiang with his "Jiu tan" where for the first time he mentions the "Jiu zhang" and attributes them to Qu Yuan (see below).

I would therefore divide the anthology into three layers: an early layer that shows multiple instances of textual overlap (especially "Li sao," "Jiu ge," "Jiu zhang," "Jiu bian"); a later layer that explicitly refers to these earlier texts (most prominently "Jiu tan"); and a third layer whose texts seem to stand largely separate from both the earlier and the later layers (such as the "summons" poems, "Bu ju," "Yufu," "Yuan you" 遠遊 [Far Roaming] and largely also "Tian wen") but were at some point added to the anthology. What distinguishes the earlier from the later layer is a much greater degree of horizontal, nonhierarchical intertextual fluidity within the textual repertoire before its canonization into discrete poems. The earlier and later layers thus represent two different modes of textual production and textual reproduction: one modular, derived from a shared repertoire, and without emphasis on authorship; the other consciously authored in response and as such far more controlled, non-repetitive, and self-contained. For example, while the "Jiu ge" poems share sentences among themselves with considerable frequency, indicating a text that is not controlled by conscious authorial design, Wang Yi's "Jiu si," the final addition to the anthology, never do.[88]

"Jiu ge," "Jiu zhang," and "Jiu bian" are themselves anthologies of distinct repertoires. While a few of their parts stand apart,[89] the clustering of the others in these series may reflect their original mutual diffusion (consider, e.g., the proximity of "Xiang jun" 湘君 [Goddess of the Xiang River] and "Xiang furen" 湘夫人 [Lady of the Xiang River] within the "Jiu ge"). A particular expression

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88   Walker 1982: 132, 175–178.
89   "Ju song" 橘頌 (Ode to the Orange Tree) in the "Jiu zhang"; "Guo shang" 國殤 (The Fallen of the State) and "Li hun" 禮魂 (Paying Tribute to the Souls) in the "Jiu ge."

of this fluidity is found in the "Jiu bian" whose individual sections are not even marked by separate titles. But for textual repertoires to function, it is not enough that their poems share ideas and expressions. They also must stand separate from poems of other repertoires—as they clearly do, for example, between the "Jiu ge" and the "Jiu zhang." Only one composite text finally unites these distinct repertoires in a single poem that is for this very reason then marked by a striking diversity of voice, perspective, and lexicon, and by ruptures, repetitions, and sudden moments of discontinuity: the "Li sao."

4 The "Li sao" as Poetic Intertext

Every Western Han and later source places the "Li sao" at the head of the *Chuci* corpus as its unquestionable origin and master text. But how does a poem of 373 lines[90] appear out of nowhere? How does it circulate through generations, especially during the tumultuous third century BCE, when Chu had to change capitals between 278 and 241 BCE before becoming annihilated in 223 BCE? How did it get into the hands of early Han scholars, be it at the imperial court at Chang'an or at Liu An's at Shouchun?

Since at least the Southern Song (1127–1279), scholars have noted the "Li sao" structure of discontinuous, nonlinear, mutually independent sections. One could, in fact, move some of these sections around without much consequence, especially as the text spirals forward with numerous repetitions. The many attempts to divide the text into two, three, four, five, eight, ten, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, or sixteen segments[91] all remain inconclusive for the same reason: while acknowledging the ruptures and repetitions, they still take the "Li sao" as a single poem by a single author, with a single voice and a single meaning.[92] As Pauline Yu has noted, "for all the valiant attempts by commentators, particularly during the Qing dynasty, to divide 'Encountering Sorrow' into

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90 I count 93 stanzas, including the final *luan* 亂 (envoi). Each stanza has four lines with end-rhymes on lines 2 and 4. The *luan* stanza I count as five lines, thus arriving at 373 lines. The additional two lines in stanza 11 (see below) I do not count.

91 For two recent summaries, see Shi Zhongzhen and Zhou Jianzhong 2010; Zhou Jianzhong 2005. A different approach to the "Li sao" was taken by Akatsuka (1977) who reconstructs the poem as a dramatic, polyvocal text to be performed and danced. While this is impossible to prove (or disprove), I find Akatsuka's proposal not at all unreasonable, in particular in the context of the Western Han "poetic exposition" (*fu* 賦) with its frequently staged dialogues. Akatsuka accepts the attribution of the "Li sao" to Qu Yuan and thus dates it into the Warring States period.

92 For Jin Kaicheng (2010: 112–113), those who consider the "Li sao" chaotic do not understand it.

sections and discern in it a logical pattern of events, no arrangement emerges as necessarily more convincing than any other … the sequence of episodes and the shifts in mode of discourse throughout the poem remain as bewildering and unrecalcitrant as ever."[93]

However, together with their own patterns of repetitions, the individual sections across the "Li sao" show very specific intertextual relations with other texts in the *Chuci* anthology, especially "Jiu ge," "Jiu zhang," and "Jiu bian" (and even "Tian wen") that all carry their own themes, linguistic patterns, and lexicons. These differences create jarring effects on poetic voice, perspective of speech, and typology of imagery. To quote Yu once again, "the object of desire even shifts in gender: from being, apparently, male at the beginning of the poem it becomes female in the second half (the suitor's sex presumably changes as well)."[94] From this appearance I conclude that the "Li sao" is neither the composition by a single poet nor a single poem. It is an anthology of different elements of the Qu Yuan Epic, just as the *Shiji* biography is a composite of different, mutually incongruous sources. In this reading, the "Li sao" does not precede the poetry of the "Jiu ge," "Jiu zhang," or "Tian wen." Qu Yuan is not its author but the protagonist of his story that was told in a range of different sources. The "Li sao" is the canonical *jing* not as the first expression of that story—that is, the original core text around which commentaries and elaborations accumulated—but as its ambitious *summa*; the other works are secondary not in the sense that they follow the "Li sao" but that they are limited to specific contents and poetic registers. This reading does not claim a chronology for the received texts of "Jiu ge," "Jiu zhang," "Jiu bian," or "Tian wen" relative to either the "Li sao" or one another; in the form we have these texts, none of them is necessarily earlier or later than any other. Instead, it suggests that all their different registers and lexicons preceded our anthologized versions, including that of the "Li sao," before they all became separately, and probably at separate times, organized into the anthology. Together, they represent particular aspects of the cultural memory of Chu as it was relevant to Han authors: its ancient religious practices ("Jiu ge"), its history and mythology ("Tian wen"), and the lament of the upright official ("Jiu zhang," "Jiu bian"), the latter since Jia Yi identified with the figure of Qu Yuan. What matters for these texts is less their elusive moments of original creation but, instead, their time of compilation and organization into the form in which they are known to us, that is, the time, or times, over the course of the Han dynasty when

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93   Yu 1987: 86.
94   Yu 1987: 88.

they became anthologized as a distinct collection.[95] We do not know how and how much each anthologizer intervened in the texts he was assembling, but we should not assume that to anthologize meant simply lining up texts that already existed in their final form known *post factum* from the anthology itself—and only from there.

The process of textual integration and compilation may have been accomplished by the literary scholars at Liu An's court, including Liu An himself, or may be the work of Liu Xiang. Note, however, how both "Li sao" and "Jiu zhang" still retain strongly performative elements, beginning with the presentation of the hero in the first three stanzas of the "Li sao." Before its final textualization, the Qu Yuan story must have been told and retold, performed and reperformed, composed and recomposed over time in both oral and written forms. This is suggested not only by the performative elements, repetitions, and ruptures but also by the fact that certain sections of the "Li sao" are impossible to understand because they completely lack context—a context that must have existed in some earlier version, or was provided contextually, that is, externally to the text of the "Li sao."[96] Despite its length, the "Li sao" is not a self-contained text.

Traces of the textualization of the Qu Yuan Epic can be found everywhere: in the overlap of "Yufu" with the *Shiji* biography as well as in the poetic fragment within the latter, both noted above; extensive sharing of text both within the "Li sao" and between the "Li sao" and other poems; and sharing between texts outside of the "Li sao." To cite just one example of the latter, consider the final ten lines (before the *luan* 亂, "envoi") of the "Jiu zhang" poem "Ai Ying,"[97] a text that has no overlap with the "Li sao" at all.[98] These same ten lines also appear in the latter sections of "Jiu bian"—a text that otherwise shares multiple lines with the "Li sao"—but in "Jiu bian" spliced apart and scattered across four passages.[99] While some scholars proceed on the traditional claim that "Ai

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95 Note that the *Hanshu* "Yiwen zhi" shows no awareness or concept of a *Chuci* anthology; instead it lists untitled "poetic expositions" under the names of individual authors, starting with twenty-five pieces attributed to Qu Yuan—which to Liu Xiang may well have been an anthology (see Hawkes 1985: 30).

96 This is obvious from the numerous speculative and mutually exclusive interpretations of specific phrases and entire passages over the past two millennia; see the collected commentaries in You Guo'en 1982. Consider, for example, the sudden appearance of Nüxu 女嬃 in stanza 33 or of Fufei 虙妃 (or Mifei 宓妃) and Qianxiu 蹇修 in stanza 56.

97 *Chuci buzhu*, 4.136; Huang Linggeng 2007: 5.1431–1432.

98 See the discussion in Walker 1982: 169–170.

99 See *Chuci buzhu*, 8.193–195, Huang Linggeng 2007: 2.690, 693–694, 701–704, 725; Walker 1982: 147–149.

Ying" was written by Qu Yuan and the "Jiu bian" afterward by Song Yu 宋玉,[100] this would imply (a) the written stability and canonicity of "Ai Ying" at an early time and (b) a practice of "quotation" from that stable version for which there is little further evidence. It is at least as plausible that the compact ending of "Ai Ying" was at some point attached to the text, compiled from sentences somewhere,[101] or that both "Ai Ying" and "Jiu bian" draw on shared material but use it in different ways. Interesting in this context is Okamura's hypothesis that full-line parallels in the early layers of the *Chuci* were owed to the need for metric stability in recitation.[102] Okamura lists such parallels between "Jiu zhang," "Jiu bian," and "Li sao" (see below) but also fourteen lines (in twelve passages through all parts of the poem) that are fully or partially repeated within the "Li sao" itself.[103] Consider the following two stanzas:

Stanza 47

朝發軔於蒼梧兮	At dawn I unlocked the cartwheels by the Azure Parasol Tree,
夕余至乎縣圃	At dusk I arrived at the Hanging Gardens.
欲少留此靈瑣兮	I wanted to linger a bit by these spirits' door-locks,
日忽忽其將暮	Yet the sun moved swiftly, approaching nightfall.

Stanza 87

朝發軔於天津兮	At dawn I unlocked the cartwheels by the Celestial Ford,
夕余至乎西極	At dusk I arrived at the Western Extremity.
鳳皇翼其承旗兮	The phoenix opened its wings to sustain my banner,
高翔翱之翼翼	Soaring and flapping on high, with wings balanced.

Chuci buzhu, "Li sao," 1.26–27, 44

The paired place names Azure Parasol Tree/Hanging Gardens versus Celestial Ford/Western Extremity are perfectly interchangeable,[104] the first as metonymies and the second as abstractions denoting east and west. For the structure "at dawn … at dusk …" see also stanzas 4 and 17:

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100   E.g., Jin Kaicheng, Dong Hongli, and Gao Luming 1996: 504. Claims about the historically obscure Song Yu are a matter of belief, not evidence. I consider them irrelevant.

101   See Hawkes 1985: 163.

102   Okamura 1966: 94.

103   Okamura 1966: 97–98. The intra-"Li sao" correspondences listed by Okamura occur in the following stanzas: 10–35 (cf. also 67) 17–29, 31–54, 31–82, 39–58, 47–87 (two lines), 52–57, 53–63 (two lines), 55–84, 61–70, 68–76 (cf. also 9), 79–82 (cf. also 58).

104   See Huang Linggeng 2007: 1.330, 1.514.

Stanza 4

汩余若將不及兮	Swiftly I moved, as if I wouldn't be in time,
恐年歲之不吾與	I feared the years would not stay with me.
朝搴阰之木蘭兮	At dawn I plucked magnolias from the ridges,
夕攬洲之宿莽	At dusk I pulled sloughgrass from the islets.

Stanza 17

朝飲木蘭之墜露兮	At dawn I drank the dew dropped from magnolias,
夕餐秋菊之落英	At dusk I ate the flowers fallen from autumn chrysanthemums.
苟余情其信姱以練要兮	If only my feelings remain truly excellent and pure,
長顑頷亦何傷	Though deprived and starving for long, how could this cause pain?

Chuci buzhu, "Li sao," 1.6, 12

Here, the generic locations ridges/islets denote the cosmological opposition of mountain and water, while "magnolias" versus "sloughgrass"/"autumn chrysanthemums" once again signify east versus west.[105] All four stanzas create an opposition between the geographical ends of the world, yet without ever describing the journey between them. All action is frozen in place with neither direction nor progress. Stanzas 4 and 47 together lament the passing of time yet nothing is gained in the latter stanza over the former. Stanza 57 as well includes the "at dawn ... at dusk ..." formula, albeit in inverted sequence. This stanza shows the same combination of cosmological opposition and direction-less action, now presumably by an elusive goddess:[106]

Stanza 57

紛總總其離合兮	In tumultuous profusion, now separate, now in unison—
忽緯繣其難遷	Suddenly she turned obstinate and hard to sway.
夕歸次於窮石兮	At dusk she took refuge at Stone's End Mountain,
朝濯髮於洧盤	At dawn she washed her hair in Weiban Torrent.

Chuci buzhu, "Li sao," 1.31–32

Stanzas 4, 17, 47, and 87 could easily change places without any effect on the poem; stanza 57 is part of an abrupt and obscure pursuit of a female persona. Yet in addition to the repetitive pattern within the "Li sao," the pursuit of

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105   In Han dynasty *wuxing* 五行 (five phases) correlative cosmology, spring (the flowering season of the magnolia) is related to the east and autumn to the west.

106   For speculation about this persona, see the numerous opinions noted in You Guo'en 1982: 301–315.

the elusive goddess in conjunction with the "at dawn … at dusk …" formula appears also in both "Xiang jun" and "Xiang furen" in the "Jiu ge,"[107] as does the profusion of plant imagery. The "Jiu ge" poems are relatively consistent in their imagery and content and together form a single, self-contained unit of expression;[108] at certain passages in the "Li sao," by contrast, their language surfaces as abruptly and without narrative contextualization as it then fades again, just as other semantic elements do, creating an overwhelming sense of discontinuity.

Such specific semantic elements are highly concentrated in certain parts of the poem while being nearly absent elsewhere: The catalogs of ancient rulers, reminiscent of the "Tian wen," are clustered in stanzas 37–41 and 72–74;[109] mythological places appear in stanzas 47–49, 54–55, 57, 59, and 86–89; plant imagery, while occasionally scattered individually, is concentrated in 3–4, 13, 17–18, 68–70, and 76–81. When such elements recur in random intervals of repetition, they are clustered together, forming identifiable textual units within the "Li sao"; and even more tellingly, they do not overlap but seem mutually exclusive, thus revealing the composite nature of the "Li sao" as a whole.

Stanza 17, already discussed, is further relevant to the discussion of two separate structural features. First, consider the following four stanzas:

Stanza 14

冀枝葉之峻茂兮	I hoped that the branches and leaves would grow lofty and lush,
願竢時乎吾將刈	Looked back and awaited my time to cut them.
雖萎絕其亦何傷兮	Even if they wilted and broke, how could this cause pain?
哀眾芳之蕪穢	Yet I lament how the numerous fragrances are overgrown with weeds.

Stanza 17

朝飲木蘭之墜露兮	At dawn I drank the dew dropped from magnolias,
夕餐秋菊之落英	At dusk I ate the flowers fallen from autumn chrysanthemums.
苟余情其信姱以練要兮	If only my feelings remain truly excellent and pure,
長顑頷亦何傷	Though deprived and starving for long, how could this cause pain?

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107   *Chuci buzhu*, 2.63 (with *zhao* 朝 as *chao* 鼂) and 2.66.
108   See Hawkes 1974: 42–68.
109   Almost all rulers cataloged in stanzas 37–41 also appear in "Tian wen."

Stanza 21

既替余以蕙纕兮	Already cast off, I wore basil for my girdle,
又申之以攬茝	And further extended it to fasten angelica.
亦余心之所善兮	With what is cherished in my heart,
雖九死其猶未悔	Even in ninefold death there will never be regret.

Stanza 29

製芰荷以為衣兮	I fashioned caltrop and lotus for my garb,
集芙蓉以為裳	Collected hibiscus for my skirt.
不吾知其亦已兮	Not being known, this is indeed the end,
苟余情其信芳	If only my feelings remain truly fragrant.

Chuci buzhu, "Li sao," 1.11, 12, 14, 17

What makes these four stanzas identical in structure, and hence freely inter-changeable? In each of them, the first two lines offer a description of plants, or some directionless action dedicated to them. And in each stanza, this is then followed by a couplet that has no description at all but is purely a state-ment of emotional conflict, each time with either *sui* 雖 (even if) or *gou* 苟 (if only).[110] In addition, note the verbatim parallels between stanzas 14 and 17, "how could this cause pain," and those between stanzas 17 ("if only my feelings remain truly excellent") and 29 ("if only my feelings remain truly fragrant"), the latter also with a loose parallel in the "Jiu zhang" poem "She jiang" ("if only my heart remains principled and upright" 苟余心其端直兮). If the descriptive plant imagery recalls the "Jiu ge,"[111] the expression of emotion—dramatized by rhetorical questions, words like "pain," "truly," "heart," and "feelings," and the intense use of first-person personal pronouns, in particular the emotive *yu* 余—evokes the voice of the "Jiu zhang." In each stanza, the sequence is identical, and each time it is the plaintive "Jiu zhang" persona of the second couplet that drives the interpretation of the foregoing plant imagery. While the descriptive couplet may be put in past tense, the emotive one belongs to the present.

With this composite structure, no progress is seen between stanzas 14 and 29; all we have are variations on the exact same theme—variations that could

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110   Neither *gou* 苟 nor *sui* 雖 appear in the "Jiu ge."

111   It should be noted that the plant imagery does not evenly appear across all the "Jiu ge." According to the table in Kurosu (1991: 190), there are eighteen instances of plant names in "Xiang furen," eleven in "Xiang jun," ten in "Shan gui" 山鬼 (The Mountain Specter), and eight in "Shao siming" 少司命 (The Lesser Master of Fate); all other poems contain plant names in the small single digits. There are in total fifty-six appearances of plant names in the "Li sao" (and only one in "Tian wen").

further multiply without consequence. However, the structure just identified is unique for only the first third of the text (it reappears only in reversal in stanzas 77 and 81); later in the poem, other repetitive structures dominate. In other words, it appears that for certain parts of the "Li sao," there existed a repertoire of such modular expressions that was readily available and could be activated in various forms, but that was in itself, in both vocabulary and structure, highly stable.

Stanzas 14 and 17 are further connected by way of their neighboring stanzas:

Stanza 13
余既滋蘭之九畹兮   I watered the nine fields of eupatory,
又樹蕙之百畝   And further planted the hundred acres of basil.
畦留夷與揭車兮   I arranged the flowering peony and cart-halting flowers,
雜杜衡與芳芷   Mixed them with asarum and fragrant angelica.

Stanza 18
攬木根以結茞兮   I fastened tree tendrils to tie the angelica,
貫薜荔之落蕊   Threaded fallen pistils of creeping fig.
矯菌桂以紉蕙兮   I bent down cinnamon to string with basil,
索胡繩之纚纚   Corded the winding vines of rope-creepers.
        Chuci buzhu, "Li sao," 1.10, 12–13

Whatever these two stanzas are meant to signify, they both differ from the ones just discussed in being entirely focused on the directionless action devoted to plants. There are no other stanzas of this kind in the entire "Li sao," and nothing prepares the reader for their sudden and isolated appearance. Note, however, how they connect to stanzas 14 and 17: stanza 13 precedes stanza 14 which therefore continues the plant imagery for another couplet, but that logic does not apply to the sequence of stanzas 17 and 18. Either way, the protagonist keeps doing whatever he has done at some point before.

There are other details to illustrate the composite, repetitive, formulaic, non-linear nature of the "Li sao" as a rich collage of distinct elements derived from distinct discourses that became separately arranged elsewhere in the *Chuci* anthology, sometime in the Han, in by and large coherent, self-contained textual series. What makes the "Li sao" polysemous and polyvocal is their combination within a single text. Ironically, the fact that in twelve cases, the principal parts of entire lines or even couplets are repeated within the "Li sao" itself does not suggest the unity of the poem but its very opposite: if the same lines occur at different points in the poem, they cannot reflect a linear development of the text but, instead, serve as an indicator of the poem's modular compilation

from a repertoire of available phrases. Note, for example, that a partial line from stanza 31 can recur in stanza 54, while another one from stanza 31 is found again in stanza 82 (which in turn also shares another partial line with stanza 79); or that a partial line from stanza 10 reappears first in stanza 35 and then again in stanza 67. There is no discernible pattern or direction to these intratextual repetitions. They do not move the poem forward. Instead, they stall it, again and again.

One might be tempted to consider these textual characteristics—the composite, the formulaic, the repetitive, the nonlinear—as evidence of oral-formulaic poetry in the sense of the theory first formulated by Milman Parry and Albert Lord. But this would put narrow limitations on our reading of the "Li sao" that do not fully capture its complexities. We know from the manuscript evidence that in late Warring States times, literary texts existed in both oral and written ways. In whatever form it first developed, the linguistically elaborate "Li sao" known to us was ultimately a text of the literary elite, and the entire Qu Yuan lore related to it spoke to the aspirations, beliefs, and anxieties of that elite. Yet as discussed more fully in the introduction to this volume, oral and written modes of textual composition and performance must have frequently flowed into each other to create the rich—but often enough also ruptured—tapestry of text we read today.[112] It is impossible to reduce the multiple layers of the "Li sao" to a singular mode of composition. However, what is truly remarkable about the poem is not that some of its parts are variations of formulas that also appear elsewhere—formulas that would have emerged in either writing or oral performance, or both—but that with its own internal repetitions, the text appears like a somewhat disorderly storehouse of such formulas.

Among the most noteworthy features of the "Li sao" is its large number of first-person pronouns and their distinctly different uses in passages of emotive lament (mostly as *yu* 余) versus those of a commanding sovereignty (mostly of *wu* 吾).[113] The latter appears prominently in the formula *wu ling* 吾令 ("I command"), which is exclusively concentrated in stanzas 48, 51, 52, 56, and 60, there invariably with either mythical animals or spirit beings as their object during the protagonist sovereign's celestial flight. The following Table 1.1 lists

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112   Perhaps one may consider the large number of *Chuci* textual variants in a wide range of received texts as remnants of such early practices; for a collection of these variants, see Huang Linggeng 2000.

113   This semantic distinction between *yu* 余 and 吾 in the "Li sao" also seems observed, at least to some extent, in the "Jiu ge"; see Stephen Owen's analysis of "Da siming" in his "Reading 'Jiu ge'" essay in the present volume.

the stanzas in which first-person pronouns appear across the entire poem, arranged by clusters:

TABLE 1.1   First-person pronouns in the "Li sao" 離騷

1	9	16	27	44	64	71	79	83
2	10	17	28	45	65			84
3	11	19	29	46	67			85
4	12	20	30	47				86
6	13	21	32	48				88
	14	22	33	49				90
		24	35	50				92
				51				93
				52				
				54				
				55				
				56				
				59				
				60				

The table shows clusters of stanzas with first-person pronouns but not fully the density (or lack thereof) in which these pronouns are used. For this compare the following Table 1.2:

TABLE 1.2   Density of first-person pronouns in clusters of stanzas

Stanzas	Density first-person pronouns
1–6	10
9–14	7
16–24	11
27–35	12
36–43	0
44–60	25
64–67	3
68–82	2
83–93	11

Throughout the poem there are various cases without a first-person pronoun in a single stanza or two. Yet it is clear that in some places, there is a veritable torrent of such pronouns, namely in stanzas 1–6, 16–24, 27–35, and 44–60. On the other hand there are long stretches within the poem without any, or with barely any, use of them, in particular in stanzas 36–43 and 64–82. Through these long stretches one may still "hear" the protagonist's personal voice. But this does not change the fact that the intense presence or extended absence of first-person pronouns reflects two different modes, or registers, of speech, and it is not unreasonable to speculate that these different registers may reflect the use of different sources that were incorporated *en bloc*.

Such a conclusion is to some extent suggested by the clusters already discussed: the catalogs of ancient rulers in stanzas 37–41 and 72–74 are all without a single first-person pronoun; the concentration of plant imagery that appears in the second half of the poem (stanzas 68–70 and 76–81) is likewise without such a pronoun; and stanzas 13 and 18, just discussed, together include just a single one. The density of phrases referring to mythological places in stanzas 47–49, 54–55, 57, 59, and 86–89 is likewise indicative: while stanzas 47, 49, and 59 employ the pronoun *yu* 余, stanzas 48, 54–55, 86, and 88 employ *wu* 吾, showing a disproportional use of *wu* in this specific semantic context. (The poem contains altogether 49 *yu* 余, 26 *wu* 吾, 3 *yu* 予, 2 *zhen* 朕, and 1 *wo* 我.) In yet another correlation, stanzas without a first-person pronoun only rarely use strongly emotional terms that otherwise occur with considerable frequency, such as "I fear" (*kong* 恐), "pain" (*shang* 傷), "heart" (*xin* 心), "lament" (*ai* 哀), or "feelings" (*qing* 情)—terms that in turn tend to appear in stanzas with parallels to the "Jiu zhang" poems. In four of the only nine instances where these terms appear in stanzas without first-person pronouns, these stanzas have a parallel "Jiu zhang" line, while in the two long stretches with barely any *yu* 余 pronouns, parallels with the "Jiu zhang" are exceedingly rare; the altogether 39 stanzas that show parallels with the "Jiu zhang"[114] contain no fewer than 25 *yu* 余, plus an additional 14 吾 (with many stanzas having more than one of these).

Such correlations are never absolute, nor would one expect them to be so. As shown above, stanzas can even be systematically compiled from two different registers and lexicons ("Jiu zhang" and "Jiu ge"), or they can be freely composed, given that the different styles of poetry associated with Qu Yuan were all available and that, furthermore, different elements could be recombined

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114   These are stanzas 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 16, 19, 24, 25, 28, 0, 31, 32, 35, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 53, 56, 60, 61, 63, 64, 68, 70, 77, 79, 82, 84, 86, 89, 91, 93.

on various occasions and in various ways. What matters is the suggestive preponderance of usage: some specific parts of the poem do seem to differ in their origin from some specific other parts.

The intratextual parallels and clusters of the "Li sao" are one thing; the intertextual connections with other parts of the anthology—as just mentioned with regard to the "Jiu zhang"—are another. In the following sections I will broadly outline the extensive parallels between "Li sao," "Jiu zhang," and "Jiu bian," as well as the much fewer correlations between "Jiu ge" and "Li sao," to show the specific and striking ways in which the "Li sao" is related to some of the presumably early parts of the anthology but not to others. As soon as one leaves behind the habitual assumptions that by definition posit the "Li sao" as the source and inspiration for all the other poems, these relationships become ambiguous. The fact that the "Li sao" itself is so full of complexities and uncertainties with its own intratextual patterns already asks us not to assume simple, straight lines that lead from the pristine, original "Li sao" to all the "later" writings: there is no such thing as a "pristine, original 'Li sao'" to begin with. The example of stanzas 10–12 may illustrate the problem:

Stanza 10

忽奔走以先後兮	I rushed forward in haste, front and behind,
及前王之踵武	Reaching the footprints of the former kings.
荃不察余之中情兮	Calamus did not probe my loyal affection,[115]
反信讒而齌怒	Instead trusting slander and exploding in rage.

Stanza 11

余固知謇謇之為患兮	I surely understood how being frank and forthright would bring disaster,
忍而不能舍也	Yet I endured it and could not let go.
指九天以為正兮	I pointed at Ninefold Heaven to be my witness,
夫唯靈脩之故也	It was only for the cause of Spirit Perfected.
曰黃昏以為期兮	He said: When night falls, we shall meet—
羌中道而改路	Alas! He was halfway and then changed his path!

Stanza 12

| 初既與余成言兮 | Earlier he had given me trustworthy words,[116] |
| 後悔遁而有他 | Later he regretted and fled, having some other. |

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115   Reading *zhong* 中 as 忠.
116   Reading *cheng* 成 as 誠.

| 余既不難夫離別兮 | I did not make trouble for being left and separated, |
| 傷靈脩之數化 | Yet was pained that Spirit Perfected so often changed. |

Chuci buzhu, "Li sao," 1.9–10

Leaving aside questions of interpretation (Who is "Spirit Perfected"?), I focus on intertextuality. "Probe my loyal affection" (察余之中情兮; stanza 10, line 3) is repeated in stanza 35 but also in the "Jiu zhang" poem "Xi song" 惜誦 (Grieving Recitation; where it is paired with another parallel from "Li sao," stanza 24).[117] "I pointed at Ninefold Heaven to be my witness" (指九天以為正; stanza 11, line 3) repeats in "Xi song" as "I pointed at Azure Heaven to be my witness" (指蒼天以為正).[118] Lines 5 and 6 of stanza 11 present a problem: They uniquely add to the four-line stanza structure but have no commentary by Wang Yi; thus, Hong Xingzu suspects that this couplet entered the text only later.[119] But how and why? Compare the following passage from the "Jiu zhang" poem "Chou si" 抽思 (Unravelling Wistful Thoughts):

昔君與我誠言兮	In the past, the lord had given me trustworthy words,
曰黃昏以為期	He said: When night falls, we shall meet.
羌中道而回畔兮	Alas! He was halfway and then turned sideward,
反既有此他志	Instead, he now had this other intent.

Chuci buzhu, "Jiu zhang," "Chou si," 4.137

Obviously, we are reading two versions of the same passage, even with some minor changes and the lines in different order. Nothing makes us privilege the version of the "Li sao"; if anything, we should doubt the original presence of the two additional lines there. We cannot say when these lines entered the text; perhaps they even already existed in a Han version Wang Yi had not seen. Instead of engaging in futile efforts to determine a hierarchy of "copy" and "original" between these passages, I suggest we first of all acknowledge how easily lines from "Li sao" and "Jiu zhang" could converge and switch places—and may well have done so from the very beginning, when both were drawing on the same repertoire of the Qu Yuan Epic.

In short, the internal complexities of the "Li sao" itself and its relation to other early texts related to Qu Yuan are staggering and—as proven by the numerous different interpretations—not resolvable. This gives us several options. The worst possible choice would be to consider one particular discursive layer of

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117   *Chuci buzhu,* 4.124.
118   *Chuci buzhu,* 4.121.
119   *Chuci buzhu,* 1.10.

the "Li sao" as dominant and subjugate all others to it, reducing the text to a single meaning and purpose and sacrificing precisely the polysemous richness of its multiple, mutually incompatible, but individually fascinating dimensions that distinguish the "Li sao" from all other early Chinese poetry. This choice, unfortunately, is that of the traditional interpretation where the "Li sao" ends up simply as a longer, more disjointed, and more chaotic "Jiu zhang." A better choice would be to recognize and cherish the multiple ways in which the Qu Yuan story was imagined and told, perhaps starting in the late Warring States and then flourishing in the early Han when it answered to a considerable range of different ideological and cultural needs.

5   Reversing the Trajectory: From Han Writings to Qu Yuan

The analysis so far has been centered on the "Li sao"; let us now turn to the larger anthology in which the Qu Yuan Epic is developed: first with the anonymous texts that may be counted as the early layer, and second with those that clearly postdate that layer and thus engage in different forms of intertextual reference. Let us now focus on what I consider the most consequential cycle of poems for the final definition of the Qu Yuan Epic, namely, Liu Xiang's "Jiu tan."

In the view commonly shared over two millennia of scholarship, the "Jiu tan" are merely yet another cycle of poems written in imitation of Qu Yuan's earlier work, in this case by an author who, following Liu An's initial compilation of the *Chuci* collection a century earlier, may have created the anthology's next iteration that included additional Han dynasty works before capping it with his own poems. Yet this does not do justice to Liu Xiang's contribution. The traditional view sees the sequence of *Chuci* poetry as one that starts with the "Li sao" and deteriorates from there at the hands and withering imagination of mere epigones. In its stead I suggest to reverse this trajectory, or indeed teleology, and think of the earlier poetry as shaped or reshaped by later concerns and textual practices. Just as it is the later commentary that constitutes an earlier work as canonical, we may think of Liu Xiang's "Jiu tan" as a set of poems that—apparently in imitation, but very much also as a form of commentary and interpretation—constructs the earlier poetry in a particular meaning. Far from merely "responding" to some fixed, preexisting persona and text, Han authors and compilers contributed to the formation of the Qu Yuan persona and the poetry they attributed to it in their own image as Han imperial intellectuals. From this perspective, in the Qu Yuan–Jia Yi joint *Shiji* biography, it is not Jia Yi who is modelled on Qu Yuan but, instead, Qu Yuan on Jia Yi; and in Liu Xiang's "Jiu tan," Liu does not follow the model of Qu Yuan's poetry but

firmly defines its nature and meaning in a particular way. Han intellectuals wove dense webs of intertextuality in both prose and poetry by which they imagined a pre-imperial poet-hero according to their own imperial circumstances. In this sense, and regardless of how far back individual parts of the Qu Yuan Epic may date well into preimperial times, its final appearance—which is the only version we have—is a thoroughly Western Han imperial text.

The story of Qu Yuan in the Han is thus not a story of literary reception, response, or quotation, but one of literary creation informed and driven by ideological perspectives and debates that had not existed before the empire. Whatever the elusive Qu Yuan of the late Warring States may have been, done, or written cannot have been how Han authors imagined it. At stake was not the knowledge of an ancient hero; at stake was the definition and identity of Han intellectuals who were living and writing under the circumstances of the new imperial system, to which they skillfully adapted the figure of Qu Yuan. In consequence, this figure became the primordial ancestor of early China's foundational poetic lineage—a lineage of disciples and followers rhetorically developed both in historiography and through an entire series of poetic additions by Han authors. Some of their works were added to the Qu Yuan anthology, others—such as Jia Yi's "Diao Qu Yuan" or Yang Xiong's "Fan Sao" and related compositions—remained outside of it, possibly because of their author's own prominence. Either way, whether within or outside of what was to become the *Chuci* anthology, all these writings were not merely epigonal or derivative; instead, they contributed to the shaping of the Qu Yuan persona as both authorial subject and poetic protagonist, and made this dual persona speak *in their own voice*. Collectively, this is the voice of Western Han intellectuals, and of Western Han cultural memory.

In all this, the story of China's foundational poetic lineage dovetails with the lineages of the pre-imperial philosophical "masters" (*zhuzi* 諸子). In Mark Edward Lewis's words,

> Thus the text, the master, and the disciples were inextricably bound together. Without the text there was no master and no disciples (beyond the lives of the individuals involved); without the master there was no authoritative text or transmitters of the text; and without the disciples the text was not written or transmitted, and the master vanished together with his teaching.[120]

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120 Lewis 1999: 58.

The final point Lewis is making here captures exactly how Wang Yi, as noted above, describes the transmission of Qu Yuan's original poetry through subsequent generations: the "people of Chu" (*Chu ren* 楚人) "selected" (*lun* 論), "transmitted" (both *chuan* 傳 and *shu* 述), and "arranged" (*xu* 敘) his texts to have them—and with them the Qu Yuan persona as authorial subject and poetic protagonist—survive through generations. As noted in my review of Lewis's book, his account of textual production and transmission

> generates the authority of the master as well as the position of its disciples, [and hence] matches exactly the oldest, most enduring, and most effective production of authority in traditional China, namely, ancestor worship. Without explicitly pointing to these correlations, Lewis has convincingly established the structural identity between ancestral and philosophical lineages, sacrificial worship, and exegetical transmission. The master and his legacy are invented and perpetuated in precisely the way ancestors are; the authority of his disciples in transmitting his words corresponds to the continuation of an ancestor's virtuous power through his descendants; and the act of making oneself a name (*ming* 名) by praising an ancestor in an inscription (*ming* 銘), as described in the famous *Li ji* 禮記 passage on the inscription of tripods, tallies with the disciples' teaching of the master's thought.[121]

The construction of the Qu Yuan persona and of the "Li sao" follows the model Lewis described for the "masters" in every aspect. There is the initial "master" and his text, eponymous or not. There are the names of his immediate "disciples" and later followers. There is profound uncertainty about which parts of the text, if any, can possibly be attributed to him, as the text appears to be more an anthology of diverse voices, perspectives, and ideas than an internally coherent whole. What changes with the case of Qu Yuan, however, are two things, compared to the pre-Qin "masters": first, his text is a poem, or set of poems, that through generation after generation can be continued and responded to; and second, the entire text becomes first visible under the conditions of the empire, and so are the disciple narratives and poetic responses.

As suggested already above, the poetic text that defines the Qu Yuan story and Qu Yuan persona most clearly is not the "Li sao" but the poetic series of the "Jiu zhang," of which Sima Qian includes "Huai sha" and in addition mentions "Ai Ying"—in the Han and later imagination Qu Yuan's two final compositions and hence "last words." Within the "Li sao," the "Jiu zhang" diction stands side

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121   Kern 2000: 347.

by side with that of the "Jiu ge," but always in the superior position: not the "Jiu ge" imagery interprets or defines the "Jiu zhang," but the "Jiu zhang" lament gives meaning to the "Jiu ge." While it therefore appears that "Jiu zhang"-style poetry (or "Jiu ge"-style poetry) preceded the actual composition of the "Li sao" (or was at least contemporaneous with it),[122] we do not know when the "Jiu zhang" were first arranged as a series; Sima Qian (or whoever compiled the *Shiji* biography of Qu Yuan) clearly did not understand the poems in that way but took "Huai sha" and "Ai Ying" as separate works.

Yet even with the way "Huai sha" alone is contextualized in the *Shiji* biography, the Qu Yuan persona and the "Li sao" are defined in their core meaning for Han intellectuals: the frustrated and banished noble minister who ends in desperation and suicide, and who composes his poetry as the most profound expression of his aspirations and failures. Later tradition added "Ai Ying" to this narrative, namely, as Qu Yuan's response to the fall of Ying. Given that "Huai sha" in the *Shiji* bibliography is followed by the single line "Thereupon [Qu Yuan] embraced a stone and drowned himself in the Miluo River" 於是懷石遂自投汨羅以死, it follows that in the traditional imagination, "Ai Ying" must have been composed before "Huai sha" but also after the fall of Ying in 278 BCE, which was then reconstructed as Qu Yuan's death year. In short, without the "Jiu zhang," there would be no such narrative.

We do not know when this definition of Qu Yuan and the "Li sao" began to take shape. The story of Qu Yuan's being slandered and driven into suicide is alluded to by Jia Yi whose second half of "Mourning Qu Yuan" is composed in the meter of the "Li sao" while the first half is kept in the same rhythm as his philosophical "Xiao fu" 鵩賦 (Poetic Exposition on the Owl).[123] The fact that the first line of the second half of "Mourning Qu Yuan" has a near-direct parallel in the envoi of the "Li sao" has always been interpreted as evidence for Jia Yi's copying from the "Li sao," and hence for Jia Yi's knowledge of Qu Yuan's poetic lament.[124] Then there is the Qu Yuan biography in the *Shiji* where Qu Yuan appears as both hero and poet, yet as we know, that biography is a patchwork of mutually contradictory sources poorly stitched together and

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122 To clarify this once again: the argument is not that the "Jiu zhang" or "Jiu ge" texts preceded the "Li sao." It is that the "Li sao" includes the poetic registers of both. While traditional scholarship privileges the "Li sao" as the "original text" and all others in the *Chuci* anthology as derivative, I suggest that the "Li sao" itself is composed of preexisting elements that otherwise can *also* be found in the "Jiu zhang" and "Jiu ge." Thus, I see no compelling way to chronologically stratify these texts—the texts we have in the received anthology—relative to one another.

123 *Shiji*, 84.2493–2494 and 2497–2500.

124 "Li sao": 已矣哉！國無人莫我知兮; "Diao Qu Yuan": 已矣！國其莫我知.

of altogether unknown provenance. Furthermore, it is impossible to date the poems from the "Jiu bian" and "Qi jian,"[125] both of them found in the *Chuci* anthology, and both composed in versatile meters related to that of the "Li sao." While both are elaborations on political suffering and an unjust fate, the latter even appears like a direct impersonation of the "Li sao's" (and Qu Yuan's) voice. It is well possible that already Jia Yi, when speaking in the same words as Qu Yuan and then continuing in the meter of the "Li sao," was alluding to Qu Yuan as a poet, and the same may be true for the—presumably later—poets of "Jiu bian" and "Qi jian"; but it is equally possible that the meter and language of the "Li sao" were markers of the Qu Yuan Epic, that is, the story of Qu Yuan as it was told and written in various versions, and for the longest time perhaps with Qu Yuan as the story's subject, not as its autobiographical author. In sum, between the *Chuci* anthology and the *Shiji*, let alone later sources, there is abundant evidence of poetry about Qu Yuan, not by him, whether narrated in the third person or impersonating the hero in the first; and there is extensive further evidence for poetry that appropriates the diction of the "Li sao" for another poet's own lament.[126] How to best interpret these texts is often uncertain.

It is only with Liu Xiang that we are finally on firm ground, with his "Jiu tan" as a set of poems that name Qu Yuan, impersonate him as a poetic speaker, speak about him and his poetry, and in this latter context mention both the "Li sao" and the "Jiu zhang." Before examining more closely the relationship between Liu Xiang's "Jiu tan," the "Li sao," the "Jiu zhang," and the Qu Yuan persona, it is necessary to look at the relevant intertextual relations in the *Chuci* anthology more broadly.

6   Intertextual Relations within the *Chuci Anthology*

Staying within the general genre of "lament"—the genre most relevant to the Qu Yuan persona—I searched strings of graphs between "Li sao," "Jiu zhang," "Jiu ge," "Jiu bian," "Qi jian," "Ai shi ming," "Jiu huai," and "Jiu tan."[127] Using the

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125   Impossible, for lack not of (varying) traditional attributions or opinions, but of any robust evidence.

126   Examples within the *Chuci* anthology, predating Liu Xiang's poetry or contemporary with it, are "Ai shi ming," attributed to Yan [i.e., Zhuang] Ji 忌, and Wang Bao's poetic cycle of the "Jiu huai."

127   Because of their different nature and vocabulary, I have left aside "Tian wen," "Yuan you," "Bu ju," "Yufu," "Zhao hun," and "Da zhao," and of course the late addition by Wang Yi, "Jiu si." I also exclude "Xi shi" for its brevity; even though traditionally attributed to Jia Yi in the early Western Han, it is of uncertain origin and date and in its imagery and

authoritatively edited Scripta Serica (Academia Sinica, Taiwan) text of *Chuci buzhu* in the Zhonghua shuju edition and the "Similarity" tool on Ctext.org, I have compared all of these texts against one another by setting a minimum threshold of strings of three or more shared graphs, and further—to avoid unnecessary clutter in the visual presentation—by setting a minimal overlap of 0.3 percent between texts.[128] In addition, I applied Ctext's "normalize by length" function to adjust the statistical results according to the different word counts of the individual texts or sections.[129] The results of the comparison are remarkably clear and also hold some surprises. As a caveat, when examining the following illustrations it is important to keep in mind that they do not visualize all relations between individual texts—not even all of those of three graphs or more—because the 0.3 percent threshold renders some of them invisible. That said, the illustrations represent reliably the relative weight of the different textual relations above that minimum threshold.

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expression closer to "Yuan you" than to the "lament" poems that are the main concern of the present essay.

128   By using Ctext.org>Tools>Plugins>Text tools>Similarity and then uploading the individual Scripta Serica texts into the text window there. Ctext.org provides extremely useful tools for textual analysis, even though its own text base is not always entirely reliable; hence the additional step of first uploading an authoritative edition into Ctext.org and then conducting the analysis strictly on this text. When creating graphs from the data (still within Ctext.org), I set "Skip edges with weight less than: 0.003," which defines the minimum threshold of a 0.3% overlap between texts. In the illustrations below, thicker lines represent stronger textual overlap; and individual poems that fall below the 0.3% threshold are not included in the illustrations at all. A pioneering earlier comparison of shared phrases within the *Chuci* is found in Walker 1982, though Walker—without the benefit of today's digital resources—focused more on shared full lines. To see shared phrases at a glance, Takeji 1979 is still highly useful. Jiang Liangfu 1999, now typeset but originally reproduced from a handwritten copy and published as such in 1985, is still the best guide to the *Chuci* vocabulary.

129   For a control of my results, I conducted two additional searches. First, I searched for strings of two or more graphs, which yielded many additional results due to the large number of binomes and two-graph compounds (e.g., plant names, personal names, etc.) across the *Chuci*. Yet the mere repetition of a binome or compound is not a reliable measure for intertextuality, while the comparison of strings of three or more consecutive graphs catches phrases, not words. However, when searching for these strings, one must also control for a possible overcounting in cases of four consecutive matching graphs: in a matching sequence 1-2-3-4, one would get one count for 1-2-3 and a second one for 2-3-4. Thus, for each of my comparisons, I conducted an additional search for four consecutive graphs while lowering the threshold to 0.2 percent (lest too many texts drop off because of the small number of matches). The result: what is visualized in my illustrations became without expection even more pronounced. Marginal texts became more marginal, central ones more central; strong relations with matches of three graphs remained relatively stable with matches of four, only somewhat less so; and weak ones mostly disappeared.
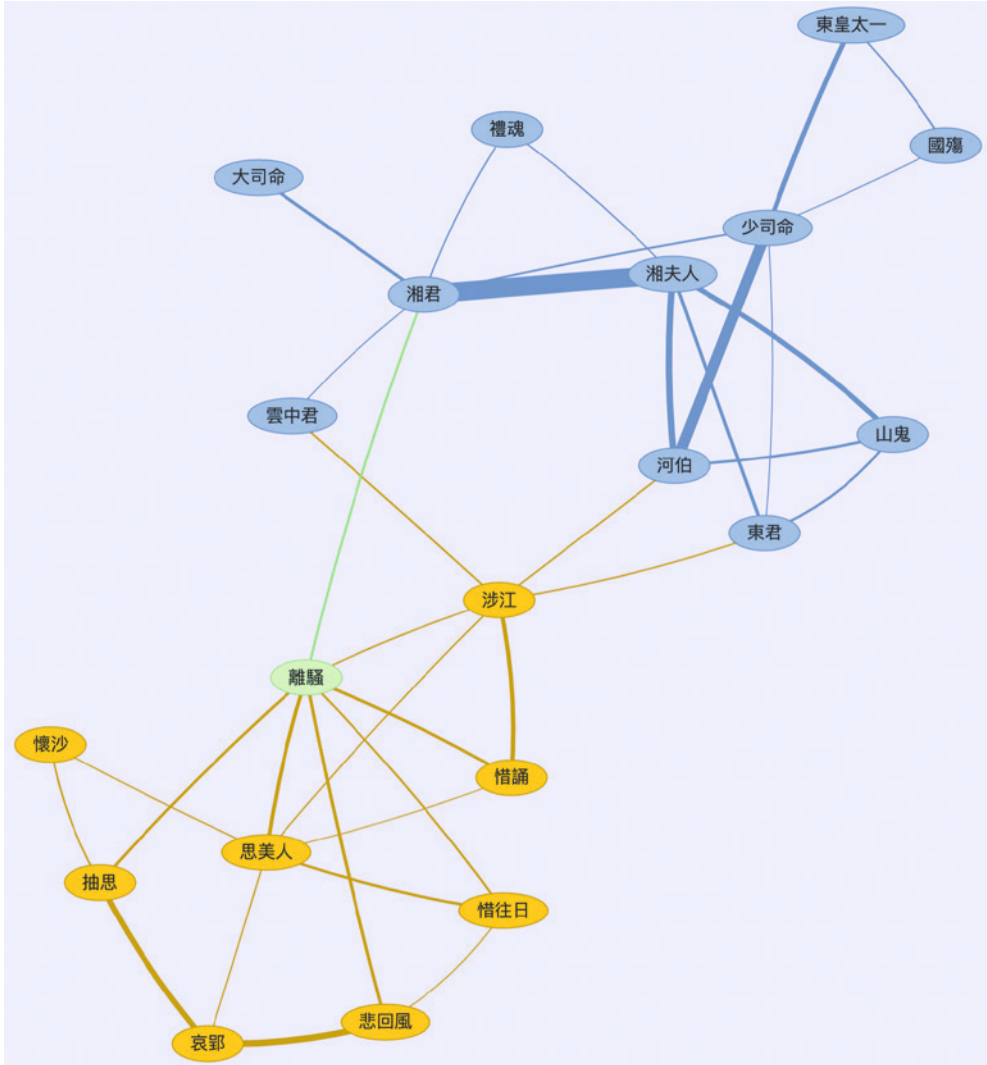
FIGURE 1.1   Intertextual relations between "Li sao" (light green), "Jiu zhang" (orange), and "Jiu ge" (blue)
(n3; skip edges with weight less than 0.003)

Let us begin with a comparison of how "Li sao," "Jiu ge," and "Jiu zhang" are
related through their shared textual material. From Figure 1.1, we can observe
the following particularities:

1.   "Li sao" ↔ "Jiu zhang"
        There is strong overlap of the "Li sao" with the "Jiu zhang" pieces (in this
        order) "Xi song," "Si meiren" 思美人 (Longing for the Beautiful One),
        "Chou si," "Bei huifeng" 悲回風 (Desolate Amidst the Whirling Wind),

"She jiang," and "Xi wangri" 惜往日 (Grieving Over Days Past), surprisingly little overlap with "Ai Ying" and "Huai sha" (given the 0.3% overlap threshold between texts, the minimal overlap between "Li sao" and these two poems is not even visible in Figure 1.1), and no overlap (as expected) with "Ju song." Sima Qian identifies both "Huai sha" and "Ai Ying" as key writings by Qu Yuan; yet among all the "Jiu zhang" (leaving "Ju song" aside), they are the only pieces that show almost no textual relation with the "Li sao" at all.[130]

2. "Li sao" ↔ "Jiu ge"
    Beyond binomes and two-graph compounds especially of plant imagery, there is almost no overlap between the "Li sao" and the "Jiu ge"; the only meaningful yet still weak relationships is with "Xiang jun." In their lexicons, "Li sao" and "Jiu ge" are surprisingly distinct.[131]

3. "Jiu ge" ↔ "Jiu zhang"
    Given how (a) the "Li sao" is correlated with the "Jiu zhang" but not the "Jiu ge," and how (b) the "Jiu ge" and "Jiu zhang" each show a dense web of textual overlap within their respective series of poems, it is not surprising that the overlap between the two series is very limited. The only "Jiu zhang" text that weakly connects to altogether three "Jiu ge" songs—"He bo" 河伯 (River Earl), "Dong jun" 東君 (Lord of the East), and "Yun zhong jun" 雲中君 (Lord of Yunzhong)—is "She jiang."[132]

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130 As noted by Okamura (1966: 96–100), "Li sao" and "Ai Ying" are closest in their metrical structure but do not share lines. The two poems also differ fundamentally in their description of the protagonist's journey: where the geography of "Ai Ying" is realistic and strictly within the historical human realm, the one in "Li sao" is dreamlike and extends into the spheres of the spirits.

131 For a list of the relatively few sentences that the "Jiu ge" share with other sections of the anthology, see Walker 1982: 224–227.

132 There is the traditional idea that the "Jiu ge" poems and the "Li sao" are somehow most closely related within the *Chuci* anthology. This idea is based on the use of plant imagery in both, on the (always frustrating) encounters with spirits, and above all on the theme of the celestial journey; see Hawkes 1974. Yet as the present analysis shows, in terms of their phrasing above the level of just individual names and terms, the two bodies of poetry are not at all closely related to each other; nor does the "Jiu ge" diction dominate the competing one from the "Jiu zhang" whenever the two appear together in the "Li sao"—the opposite is the case. Spirit encounters and cosmic journeys are known also from other early Chinese texts from the same period, such as *Mu tianzi zhuan* 穆天子傳; and even the "Jiu zhang" poems repeatedly and extensive invoke journeys through realms both earthly and celestial. In short, while the "Li sao" to some extent draws on the repertoire of ideas that has more fully sedimented in the "Jiu ge" poems, there is nothing exclusive to their relationship, nor is the "Li sao" defined by that repertoire.

There are various individual correspondences to observe and examine by delving more deeply into the data. For example, within the "Jiu ge," the centrally connected text is not "Xiang jun" but its close relative, "Xiang furen"; and while "Xiang jun" is the only text that shares textual material with the "Li sao" at some significant rate, it shares only very little with the various pieces of the "Jiu zhang" (so little that a 0.3% overlap threshold renders these connection invisible). Within the "Jiu zhang," on the other hand, the piece with the strongest connections to other poems is "Ai Ying," which however, is largely unrelated to the "Li sao."

Before moving forward, let me present—only once, to demonstrate the principles at work—the actual data of textual correspondences that underlie the above Figure 1.1. These data both clarify the visualization and illustrate what such textual comparisons can and cannot do.

TABLE 1.3   Shared phrases of three or more consecutive graphs between "Li sao," "Jiu zhang," and "Jiu ge"

	Li sao	Jiu zhang		Jiu ge	
1		蔚羅張**而在下**	惜誦	雲容容兮**而在下**	山鬼
2	遭吾道夫**崑崙兮**	**登崑崙兮**食玉英	涉江	**登崑崙兮**四望	河伯
3		**與日月兮**同光	涉江	**與日月兮**齊光	雲中君
4	**步余馬**於蘭**皋**兮	**步余馬兮**山皋	涉江	朝馳**余馬兮**江皋	湘夫人
5		**步余馬兮**山皋	涉江	撫**余馬兮**安驅	東君
6		深林**杳以冥冥兮**	涉江	**杳冥冥兮以**東行	東君
7				**杳冥冥兮**羌晝晦	山鬼
8		山峻高以**蔽日兮**	涉江	旌**蔽日兮**敵若雲	國殤
9	**長太息**以掩涕兮	望**長**楸而**太息兮**	哀郢	**長太息兮**將上	東君
10		忽若去**不信兮**	哀郢	期**不信兮**告余以不閒	湘君
11		與**余**言而**不信兮**	抽思	期**不信兮**告**余**以不閒	湘君
12		恐情質之**不信兮**	惜誦	期**不信兮**告余以不閒	湘君
13	忽反顧以**流涕兮**	望北山而**流涕兮**	抽思	橫**流涕兮**潺湲	湘君
14		思**美人兮**	思美人	望**美人兮**未來	少司命
15				送**美人兮**南浦	河伯
16	**聊逍遙以**相羊	**聊逍遙以**自恃	悲回風	**聊逍遙**兮容與	湘君
17				**聊逍遙**兮容與	湘夫人
1	望瑤臺之**偃蹇兮**			靈**偃蹇兮**姣服	東皇太一
2	何瓊佩之**偃蹇兮**				
3	**芳菲菲**其彌章			**芳菲菲**兮滿堂	東皇太一

TABLE 1.3   Shared phrases of three or more consecutive graphs (*cont.*)

	Li sao	Jiu zhang		Jiu ge	
4				芳菲菲兮襲予	少司命
5	為余駕飛龍兮			駕飛龍兮北征	湘君
6				飛龍兮翩翩	湘君
7	邅吾道夫崑崙兮			邅吾道兮洞庭	湘君
8	皇剡剡其揚靈兮			揚靈兮未極	湘君
9	女嬃之嬋媛兮			女嬋媛兮為余太息	湘君
10	民好惡其不同兮			心不同兮媒勞	湘君
11	雷師告余以未具			期不信兮告余以不閒	湘君
12	鳩告余以不好				
13	告余以吉故				
14	靈氛既告余以吉占兮				
15	吾令羲和弭節兮			夕弭節兮北渚	湘君
16	抑志而弭節兮				
17	老冉冉其將至兮			老冉冉兮既極	大司命
18	紛總總其離合兮			孰離合兮可為	大司命
19	載雲旗之委蛇			乘回風兮載雲旗	少司命
20				載雲旗兮委蛇	東君
1	指九天以為正兮	指蒼天以為正	惜誦		
2	非余心之所急	亦非余心之所志	惜誦		
3	忳鬱邑余侘傺兮	心鬱邑余侘傺兮	惜誦		
4	荃不察余之中情兮	又莫察余之中情	惜誦		
5	孰云察余之中情	申旦以舒中情兮	思美人		
6	孰云察余之善惡				
7	*羌中道而改路 (interpolation?)	魂中道而無杭	惜誦		
8		羌中道而回畔兮	抽思		
9	欲自適而不可	君可思而不可恃	惜誦		
10		邈而不可慕	懷沙		
11		氣於邑而不可止	悲回風		
12		聞省想而不可得	悲回風		
13		居戚戚而不可解	悲回風		
14		物有純而不可為	悲回風		
15	反信讒而齌怒	父信讒而不好	惜誦		
16		吳信讒而弗味兮	昔往日		

TABLE 1.3   Shared phrases of three or more consecutive graphs (*cont.*)

	Li sao	Jiu zhang	Jiu ge
17	殷宗**用而不**長	鯀功**用而不**就	惜誦
18	武丁**用而不**疑		
19	欲遠集**而無所**止兮	願側身**而無所**	惜誦
20	縱欲**而不忍**	堅志**而不忍**	惜誦
21	扈**江離與**辟芷兮	播**江離與**滋菊兮	惜誦
22	**長**余佩**之陸離**	帶**長**鋏**之陸離**兮	涉江
23	**世溷濁而**不分兮	**世溷濁而**莫余知兮	涉江
24	**世溷濁而**嫉賢兮	**世溷濁**莫吾知	懷沙
25	吾將從**彭咸之所居**	猨狄**之所居**	涉江
26		去終古**之所居**兮	哀郢
27		託**彭咸之所居**	悲回風
28		夫何**彭咸之**造思兮	悲回風
29		照**彭咸之所**聞	悲回風
30		思**彭咸之**故也	思美人
31	委厥美**以從俗兮**	吾不能變心而**從俗兮**	涉江
32		欲變節**以從俗兮**	思美人
33	**自前世而**固**然**	與**前世而**皆**然**兮	涉江
34		**自前世**之嫉賢兮	昔往日
35	雖不周於**今之人**兮	吾又何怨乎**今之人**	涉江
36	歷吉日**乎吾將行**	忽**乎吾將行**兮	涉江
37	**寧溘死以流亡兮**	遵江夏**以流亡**	哀郢
38		**寧溘死**而**流亡兮**	昔往日
39		**寧**逝**死**而**流亡兮**	悲回風
40	高**翱翔之**翼翼	忽**翱翔之**焉薄	哀郢
41	彼**堯舜之**耿介**兮**	**堯舜之**抗行**兮**	哀郢
42	亦**余心之**所善兮	傷**余心之**憂憂	抽思
43	豈**余心之**可懲		
44	*曰黃昏**以為期**兮 (interpolation?)	**曰黃昏以為期**	抽思
45		與繡黃**以為期**	思美人
46	紛吾**既有此**內美兮	反**既有此**他志	抽思
47	跪敷衽**以陳辭兮**	結微情**以陳詞兮**	抽思
48		茲歷情**以陳辭兮**	抽思
49	惟此黨**人之不**諒**兮**	固切**人之不**媚**兮**	抽思

TABLE 1.3　Shared phrases of three or more consecutive graphs (*cont.*)

	Li sao	Jiu zhang	Jiu ge
50	芳菲菲**而難虧**兮	故遠聞**而難虧**	抽思
51	鷙鳥之**不群兮**	既悍**獨而不群兮**	抽思
52	夫何煢**獨而不**予聽		
53	覽察草木其猶**未得兮**	願徑逝而**未得兮**	抽思
54	**理弱而媒**拙兮	**理弱而媒**不通兮	抽思
55	**日**忽忽**其將暮**	**日**昧昧**其將暮**	懷沙
56	民生**各有所**樂**兮**	**各有所**錯**兮**	懷沙
57	懷朕情**而不發**兮	陷滯**而不發**	思美人
58	恐**高辛之**先我	**高辛之**靈盛兮	思美人
59	何不**改此度**	未**改此度**	思美人
60		未**改此度**也	思美人
61	**聊假日以**媮樂	**聊假日以**須時	思美人
62	夕攬**洲之宿莽**	搴長**洲之宿莽**	思美人
63	**佩繽紛**其繁飾**兮**	**佩繽紛**以繚轉**兮**	思美人
64	**芳與澤其雜糅兮**	**芳與澤其雜糅兮**	思美人
65		**芳與澤其雜糅兮**	昔往日
66	吾**令**蹇脩**以為理**	**令**薜荔**以為理**兮	思美人
67	吾令鴆**為媒兮**	因芙蓉而**為媒兮**	思美人
68	心猶豫**而狐疑**兮	然容與**而狐疑**	思美人
69	心猶豫**而狐疑**		
70	時曖曖其**將罷兮**	吾**將罷兮**	思美人
71	武丁用**而不疑**	或訑謾**而不疑**	昔往日
72	世溷濁而**嫉賢兮**	自前世之**嫉賢兮**	昔往日
73	**謂**幽蘭**其不可佩**	**謂**蕙若**其不可佩**	昔往日
74	**乘騏驥**以**馳騁兮**	**乘騏驥**而**馳騁兮**	昔往日
75	蘭芷變**而不芳**兮	草苴比**而不芳**	悲回風
76	**曾歔欷**余鬱邑**兮**	**曾歔欷**之嗟嗟**兮**	悲回風
77	路脩遠**以周流**	寤從容**以周流**兮	悲回風
78	**折若木以**拂日**兮**	**折若木以**蔽光**兮**	悲回風
79	恐導**言之不**固	證此**言之不**可聊	悲回風
80	余**不忍為此**態也	**不忍為此**之常愁	悲回風
81	斑陸離**其上下**	漂翻翻**其上下兮**	悲回風
82	勉陞降以**上下兮**		

How to interpret this list relative to the graph in Figure 1.1? To begin with, the table shows a few instances of textual overlap that are not visualized in the graph because they are below the 0.3% overlap threshold; examples are those between "Li sao" and "Ai Ying" and between "Li sao" and "Huai sha." Setting a threshold helps to keep the visual image clear and uncluttered, but it also slightly underreports textual correspondences. These correspondences can still be individually interesting, but statistically, they are irrelevant.

A shared limitation in both the illustration and the table is that they do not take into account graphic variants, that is, homophonous or near-homophonous words; for example, *Zhong* 中 ("inner") and *zhong* 忠 ("loyal") are exactly homophonous in Old Chinese and can be interpreted for each other (as I have done repeatedly in this essay), but since the computerized comparison is based on graphs, not on words (sounds), their overlap or identity remains unrecognized.

Another limitation is that both the illustration and the table do not account for lexical variants that are, however, semantically extremely close. Consider the example of the line in "Li sao," 寧溘死以流亡兮, which has obvious parallels in both "Xi wangri" (寧溘死而流亡兮) and "Bei huifeng" (寧逝死而流亡兮). The three phrases express almost exactly the same idea, though the comparison tool would not recognize *ning ke si* 寧溘死 and *ning shi si* 寧逝死 as textual overlap, nor would it do so for *yi liu wang* 以流亡 and *er liu wang* 而流亡, even though the difference is merely in the rhythmical particle in the middle of the line that carries virtually no semantic weight. The fact that these lines are nevertheless represented above is almost accidental, namely, as overlap of *liu wang xi* 流亡兮.

A third limitation is that the comparison tool looks only for sequences of three or more *consecutive* graphs—the moment such a sequence is interrupted by just one additional graph, it becomes invisible. This limitation extends further: sometimes, there are clear correspondences not merely between single lines but—not as verbatim overlap but as echoes—between couplets; once again, these will not be caught by the present method. In sum, with all these limitations both the graph and the table underreport a small number of textual correspondences.[133]

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133   All three limitations can be overcome by "regular expression," or GREP (Global Regular Expression Print), searches that may include known variants and are not defined to consecutive graphs but to graphs within a defined length of text (e.g., a full line, a couplet, or an entire poem). Moreover, Gian Duri Rominger (University of Washington) and Nick Budak (Stanford) are close to completing a new tool that will revolutionize all digital searches in ancient Chinese texts: their *Digital Intertextual Resonances in Early Chinese Texts* (DIRECT) searches texts not for graphs but for the sounds (words) represented by

Yet despite these limitations, it is obvious how the table supports the representation of the illustration. Texts that show very limited correspondences are spaced farther apart and are sometimes not even connected by a thin line; texts with strong correspondences are spatially close and have their relationship expressed in thick lines. Most importantly, the table shows beyond doubt that the illustration is correct in visualizing (a) a close relationship between "Li sao" and "Jiu zhang," (b) a weak one between "Li sao" and "Jiu ge," and (c) an even weaker one between "Jiu zhang" and "Jiu ge":

(a)   Eighty-one individual lines of "Jiu zhang" (or seventy-nine, if one takes two "Li sao" lines as interpolations) correspond to sixty-six (or sixty-four) lines in the "Li sao."
(b)   Twenty individual lines of "Jiu ge" correspond to twenty-one lines of "Li sao."
(c)   Fourteen individual lines of "Jiu zhang" correspond to seventeen lines of "Jiu ge" (five of which are also shared with the "Li sao").

Finally, the list reveals something that the graph does not, namely, the *quality* of textual correspondences. Look closely at the lines between "Li sao" and "Jiu ge" that share three or more graphs: in almost all cases, the shared graphs are in the first hemistich of the "Jiu ge" line—while in the corresponding "Li sao" lines, about half of these graphs appear in the second hemistich. In other words, these overlaps in words are not overlaps in either syntax or rhythm. By contrast, the correspondences between "Li sao" and "Jiu zhang" are *qualitatively stronger* by far: there are exactly *two out of eighty-one* "Jiu zhang" lines where "Li sao" and "Jiu zhang" share their graphs in different hemistiches. This cannot be coincidental. As Stephen Owen compellingly shows in his essays in the present volume, what matters are not merely semantic modules but—undoubtedly as a vestige of oral performances—both the sequence of such modules within the text and their rhythmic position within the line. Modular poetry, and above all poetry for performance, needs a sense of order.

It is abundantly clear which poetic idiom underlies the "Li sao": the one that has otherwise sedimented in the "Jiu zhang." On further reflection, one might then also ask the following: how likely is it that the "Jiu zhang" are merely some sort of derivative imitation of the "Li sao"? If the "Jiu zhang" were indeed derived from the "Li sao," they would have been derived in a manner much more selective and consistent in their authors'

those graphs and hence is able to reveal textual parallels that are otherwise obscured by the Chinese writing system. However, the purposes of the present essay are more modest; I wish to show larger patterns of textual correspondence, without the need to catch every individual case.

(or, less likely, author's) deliberate choices of what to accept and—even more important—what to exclude. By contrast, the "Li sao" authors could draw eclectically on the various poetic idioms, registers, and lexicons familiar from different strands of tradition. They had preferences, but no need for rigid principles—which is the more likely scenario suggested by the data.

Moving on now to the next set of textual correspondences, further complication arises when adding the nine sections of the "Jiu bian" into the analysis, that is, the other "lament" text from presumably the earliest stratum of the *Chuci*.

Figure 1.2 shows the "Jiu bian" as being only marginally—and separately—related to the "Jiu ge" and "Li sao": to "Jiu ge" in sections 2 and 7, and to "Li sao" in sections 6, 5, and 9. On the other hand, various "Jiu zhang" poems share phrases with "Jiu bian" sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9. (Section 1 of "Jiu bian" shows no meaningful overlap with any of the poems of "Jiu zhang," "Jiu ge," or "Li sao.") Of interest, however, is one exceptionally strong connection: "Jiu bian" sections 8 and 9 are closely related to "Ai Ying," with which they share, in addition to shorter phrases, fourteen similar or even identical lines.

Figure 1.3, adapted from Okamura Shigeru's classic 1966 article,[134] shows the strikingly different textual relationships between "Jiu zhang," "Jiu bian," and "Li sao" from a different perspective: the "Jiu bian" poems share sentences mostly with "Li sao" and "Ai Ying" but only occasionally with "Bei hui feng," "Si meiren," "She jiang," and "Xi song." On the other hand, the "Li sao," as noted above, is strongly connected with "Xi song," "Si meiren," "Chou si," "Bei huifeng," "She jiang," and "Xi wangri," but not at all with "Ai Ying."

In sum, within the early layer of the *Chuci*—not considering "Tian wen" or "Zhao hun"—the "Jiu ge" are the least connected to the "Li sao," apparently because they are the least connected to the theme of lament and frustration that is heavily shared among "Li sao," "Jiu zhang," and "Jiu bian." While offering some of the more sensual binomes and compounds (especially plant names) also found in the "Li sao," the "Jiu ge" seem of little relevance for the construction or perception of the Qu Yuan persona. This should caution us against a prominent strand of *Chuci* scholarship that views the "Jiu ge," with their apparent background in religious incantation and "shamanistic" practices of spirit journeys and mediation, as the core of the early *Chuci* and from there defines the "Li sao" as strongly, or even primarily, religious in nature. There are, of course, the various references to spirit beings; there is the astrological notation and the protagonist's claim of semi-divine birth right at the outset; there are the two celestial journeys and the failure to enter Heaven's doors;

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134   Okamura 1966: 86–101, esp. 92–95. Republished in Chinese in Gang Cunfan 岡村繁 [Okamura Shigeru] 2002: 50–81.
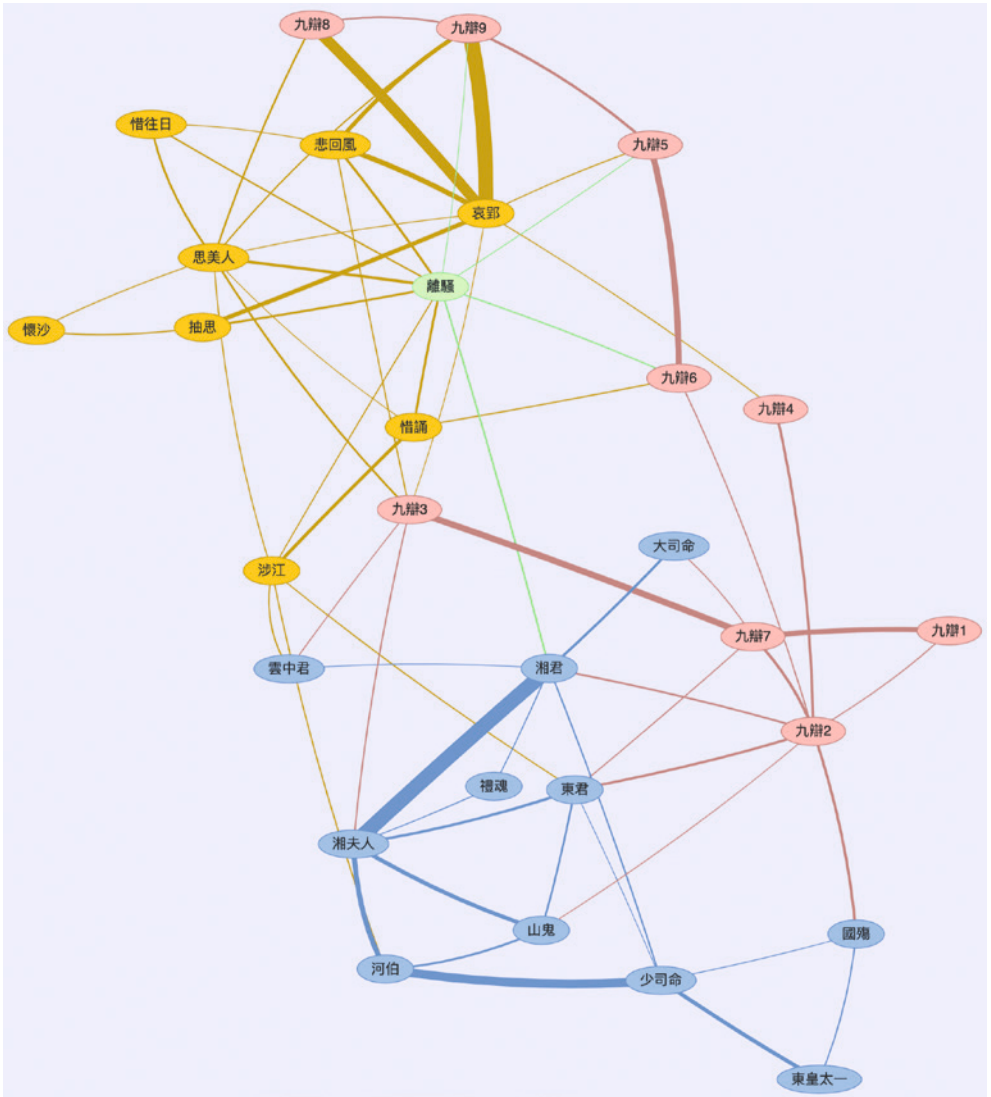
FIGURE 1.2   Intertextual relations between "Li sao" (light green), "Jiu zhang" (orange) "Jiu ge" (blue), and
            "Jiu bian" (pink) (n3; skip edges with weight less than 0.003)

there is the final envoi of looking down on the world. But very little of this is
expressed through the language of the "Jiu ge," references to religious practices
mentioned there, or a commitment to the kind of spirit mediation often iden-
tified as "shamanism."[135] Instead of reading these various "religious" elements
as literal, we should probably read them as rhetorical: this is the language with
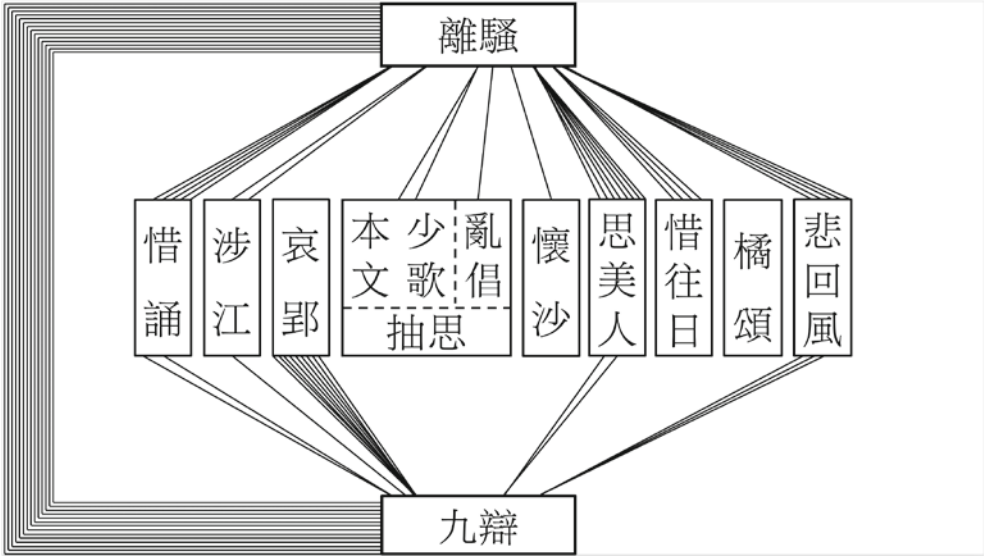
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135   E.g., Waley 1955.

FIGURE 1.3   Textual relations between "Jiu zhang," "Li sao," and "Jiu bian." Here adopted and rearranged
from Gang Cunfan [Okamura Shigeru] 2002: 67. Each connecting line in this graph represents
a textual parallel of a single poetic verse. The number of these is somewhat higher than the
number of parallels listed by Okamura: fourteen instead of twelve between "Li sao" and "Jiu
bian," twenty-eight instead of twenty-six between "Li sao" and "Jiu zhang," and seventeen
instead of thirteen between "Jiu bian" and "Jiu zhang." This is because in several cases,
Okamura's numbered list contains couplets and other instances of more than one poetic verse
under a single number.

which to describe and embellish an exceptional persona and its quasi-mystical
experiences in third- or second-century BCE Chu.[136]

Moreover, as shown in the above analysis of the "Li sao," whenever couplets
in the diction of the "Jiu ge" are combined with those in the diction of the "Jiu
zhang," the latter provide the interpretation of the former, and never the other
way around. And finally, there is not merely the general absence of textual
overlap between "Li sao" and "Jiu ge"; there also is, inversely, the strong pres-
ence of overlap between "Li sao" and the majority of the "Jiu zhang" poems.

Looking now further to subsequent layers of the *Chuci* anthology in order
to identify intertextual relations with the "Li sao" and also the "Jiu zhang," one
may consider the poetic series of "Qi jian," "Jiu huai," and "Jiu tan," as well as the
poem "Ai shi ming." In a first comparison, we may look at "Jiu zhang" versus "Ai
shi ming," "Jiu huai," and "Jiu tan" (Figure 1.4):

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136   For my earlier argument along the same lines regarding the rhetorical nature of the
Western Han *fu*, see Kern 2003; see also note 165 below.
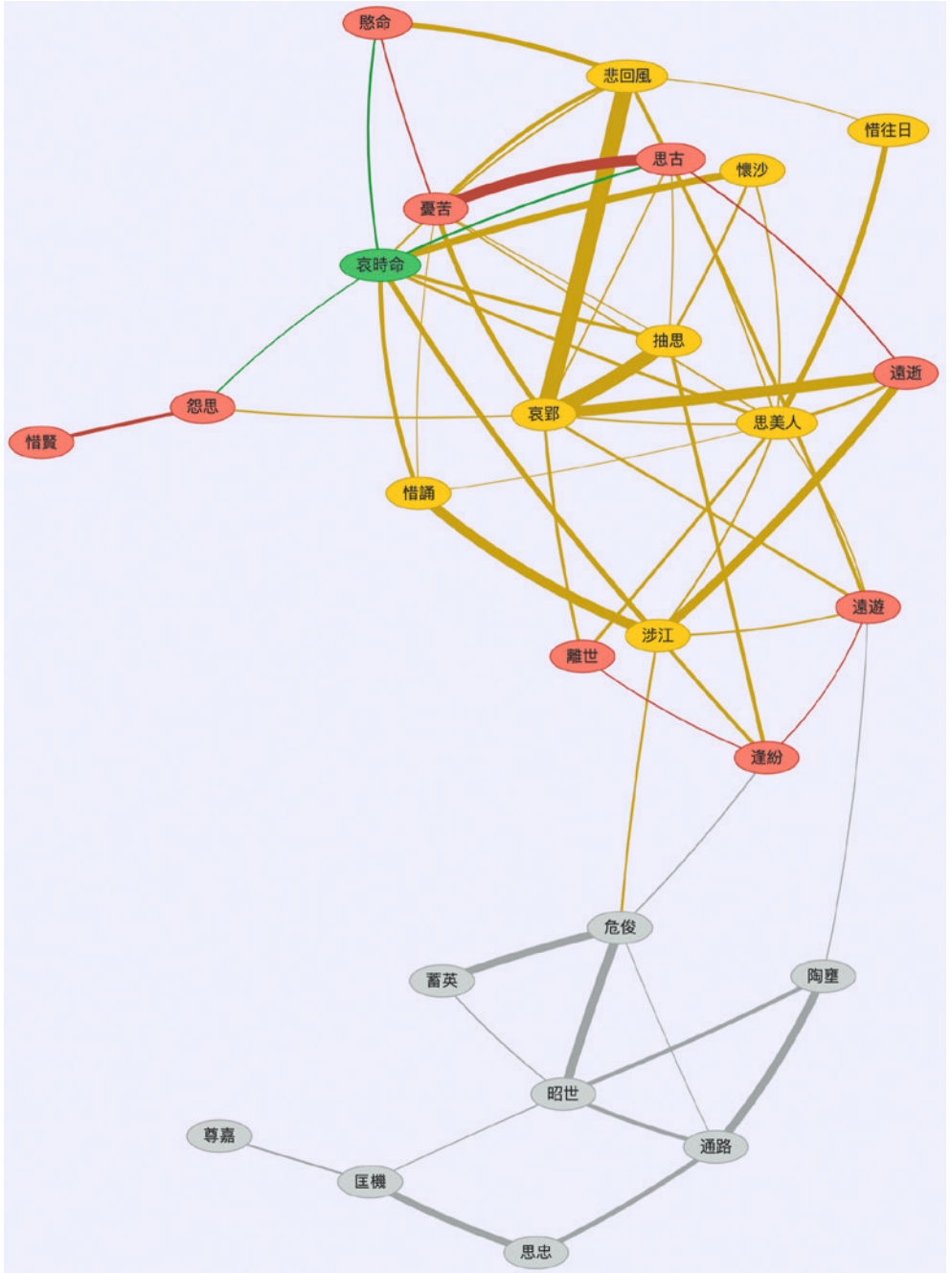
FIGURE 1.4 Intertextual relations between "Jiu zhang" (orange), "Ai shi ming" (green), "Jiu tan" (red), and "Jiu huai" (gray) (n3; skip edges with weight less than 0.003). Just like "Ju song" from the "Jiu zhang," the last poem "Zhu zhao" 株昭 (Clearing for Brightness) and the concluding envoi are not visualized for falling below the 3% overlap threshold.

It is immediately obvious that the pieces of "Jiu huai" are the outlier here (just like the "Jiu ge" were the outlier earlier): while well connected among themselves, they have little in common with "Jiu zhang," "Ai shi ming," or the directly contemporary poems of "Jiu tan." By contrast, both "Ai shi ming" and "Jiu tan" show a rich pattern of connections with the various "Jiu zhang" poems, though "Ai shi ming" shares little with "Jiu tan." Note, moreover, one fundamental difference between "Jiu tan" and "Ai shi ming": in its extended lament, the latter does not appropriate Qu Yuan's voice but refers to him in the third person as just one earlier example of a virtuous but unrecognized person; as such, it does not contribute much to the Qu Yuan Epic altogether, and its tedious and derivative language,[137] apparently drawn from "Jiu zhang," is largely ignored in "Jiu tan."

The graph including "Jiu zhang," "Jiu tan," and "Qi jian" yields a more intricate result (Figure 1.5): altogether, the three cycles of poems are more evenly connected to one another, though "Qi jian" has fewer relations with both "Jiu zhang" and especially "Jiu tan" than those have with each other. According to traditional commentaries, the "Qi jian" poems are an attempt to impersonate Qu Yuan's voice; yet as they do not contain a single concrete reference to the earlier hero, they may be viewed as just another text in the Western Han lamentation genre, possibly inspired by the Qu Yuan lore but not further contributing to it. While in their expressions, the "Qi jian" follow more directly the "Li sao" itself than the "Jiu tan" (Figure 1.6), they have nothing to say about Qu Yuan.

The result of this digital humanities exercise in distant reading[138] is that of all the pieces in the *Chuci* anthology, none are more closely related to the "Li sao" than the "Jiu zhang," and that subsequently, none are closer to the "Jiu zhang" than the "Jiu tan," including in their structure, lexicon, and overall scope. While, for example, Wang Bao's "Jiu huai" are contemporary with the "Jiu tan," their merely 1,411 characters do not compare to the "Jiu zhang," which contain 4,108 characters. The "Jiu tan," meanwhile, contain 3,799. What is more, structural devices found in the "Jiu zhang," such as proems and especially envois, are repeatedly deployed in the "Jiu tan," once again more so than in any other post-"Jiu zhang" poems in the *Chuci* anthology. Before looking into further details about this relationship, and about the ways in which the "Jiu

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137   As noted by Hawkes 1985: 263: "Image is piled upon image in illustration of the same theme: virtue and talent are not recognized; I am virtuous and talented; therefore I am not recognized; therefore I am miserable. The effect of having this said in 160 lines of verse is monotonous and oppressive."
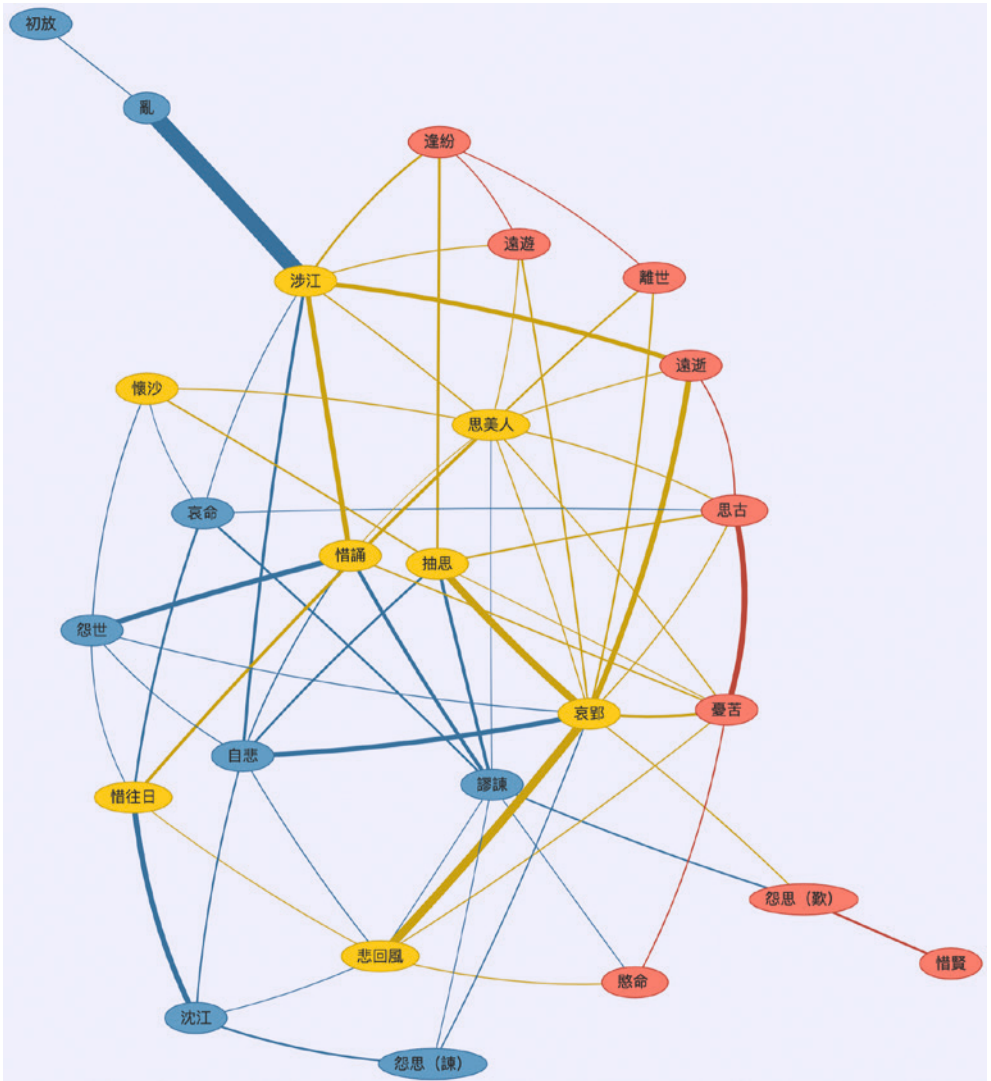
138   Moretti 2013.

FIGURE 1.5 Intertextual relations between "Jiu zhang" (orange), "Jiu tan" (red), and "Qi jian" (blue) (n3; skip edges with weight less than 0.003)

tan" helped shape the perception of the "Jiu zhang," and with it that of Qu Yuan, some of the surprising absences of intertextual dialogue especially in the "Jiu zhang" deserve some attention.

Nobody would be surprised to see "Ju song," the eighth of the nine "Jiu zhang" pieces, completely isolated from all other *Chuci* poetry. It is entirely unclear why this poem is included here—or in the anthology altogether. But
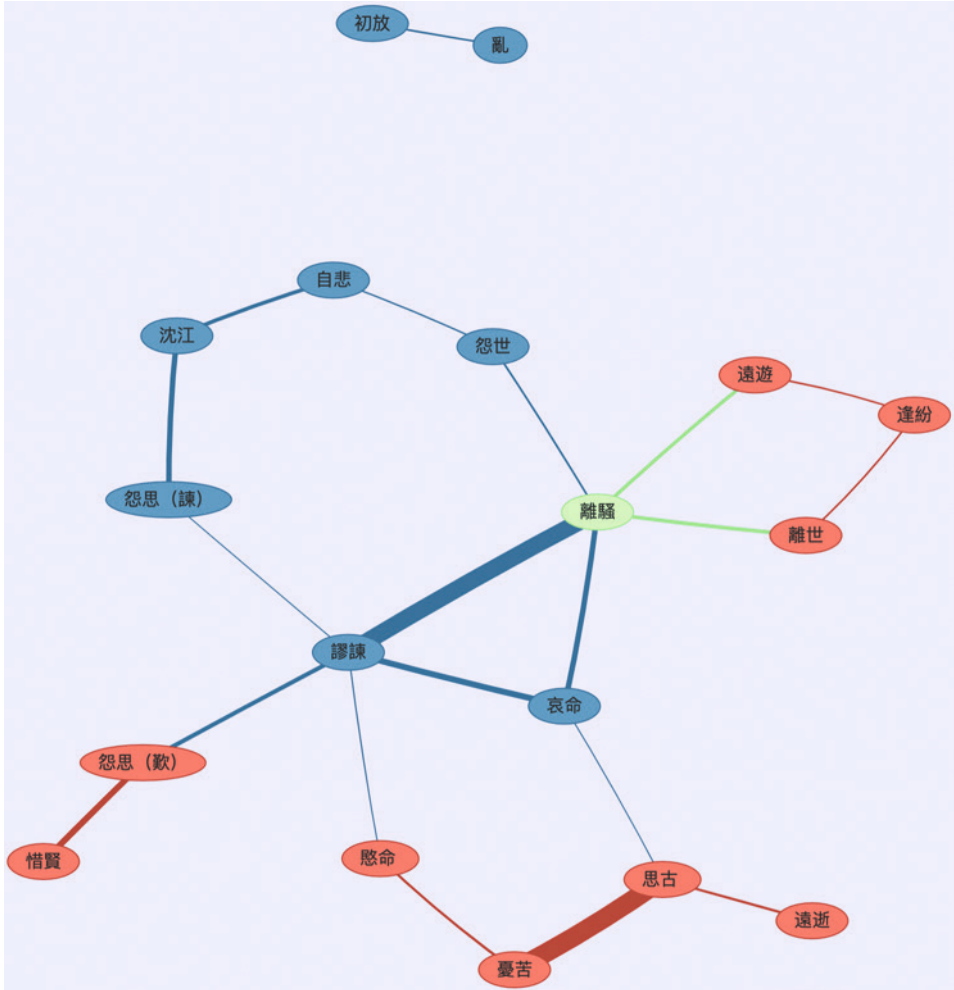
FIGURE 1.6   Intertextual relations between "Li sao" (light green), "Jiu tan" (red), and "Qi jian" (blue)
                    (n3; skip edges with weight less than 0.003)

surprising indeed are two other cases. Recall the *taishigong yue* 太史公曰 com-
ment on Qu Yuan's biography in the *Shiji* already noted above:

> 余讀離騷、天問、招魂、哀郢，悲其志。適長沙，觀屈原所自沈淵，
> 未嘗不垂涕，想見其為人。

When reading "Encountering Sorrow," "Heavenly Questions," "Calling
Back the Soul," and "Lament about Ying," I grieve over his resolve. Ever
since I traveled to Changsha and saw where Qu Yuan drowned himself in

the abyss, I never can help shedding tears, and I see him before me as the person he was.

Neither "Zhao hun" nor "Tian wen" are in any way related to the Qu Yuan persona and its principal theme of lament (except for Wang Yi's strenuous introductions to the two poems), but "Ai Ying," the third of the "Jiu zhang," is indeed, and so is "Huai sha," the fifth poem of the cycle and the only one whose full text is included in the Qu Yuan biography. Yet "Ai Ying" is curiously distant from the "Li sao" and, while being well-connected within the "Jiu zhang" especially to "Chou si" and "Bei huifeng," and to a lesser extent to "Si meiren," "Xi song," and "She jiang," it is strikingly separate from "Huai sha." At the same time, "Huai sha" is equally marginal with regard to the "Li sao" and further with regard to all the other "Jiu zhang" (Figure 1.7). In other words, the three "lament" poems mentioned or quoted in the *Shiji*—"Li sao," "Ai Ying," and "Huai sha"—are exactly the ones that are the most distant from one another. Thus, here as with other early texts,[139] the *Shiji* may not be our most reliable guide.

There is no obvious explanation for this unusual situation; it only reminds us of how little we know of the composition and circulation of early texts. Neither "Huai sha" nor—especially—"Ai Ying" contribute to the Qu Yuan narrative in the way some of the other "Jiu zhang" poems do, or help with grounding the flights of fancy and frustration throughout the "Li sao." Perhaps this *is* the explanation—albeit a somewhat tautological one: as neither "Huai sha" nor "Ai Ying" indulge at length in the lament about the slander and expulsion of the virtuous in the way some of the other poems do, they also do not share language with one another, nor with the "Li sao." They make no reference to the specifics of Qu Yuan's fate, nor mention his name; instead they are generic variations on the themes of leaving behind one's former place, of lamenting solitude and thwarted ambition, and—in "Huai sha" more so than in "Ai Ying"—of complaining about an unjust world. As such, "Huai sha" and "Ai Ying" may not have had any connection to the Qu Yuan story in the first place, except for belonging to the larger genre of lament poetry associated with the court culture of Chu. Leaving the dubious *Shiji* biography aside, it is only their integration into the "Jiu zhang" that strengthens their ties to each other as well as to the "Li sao."

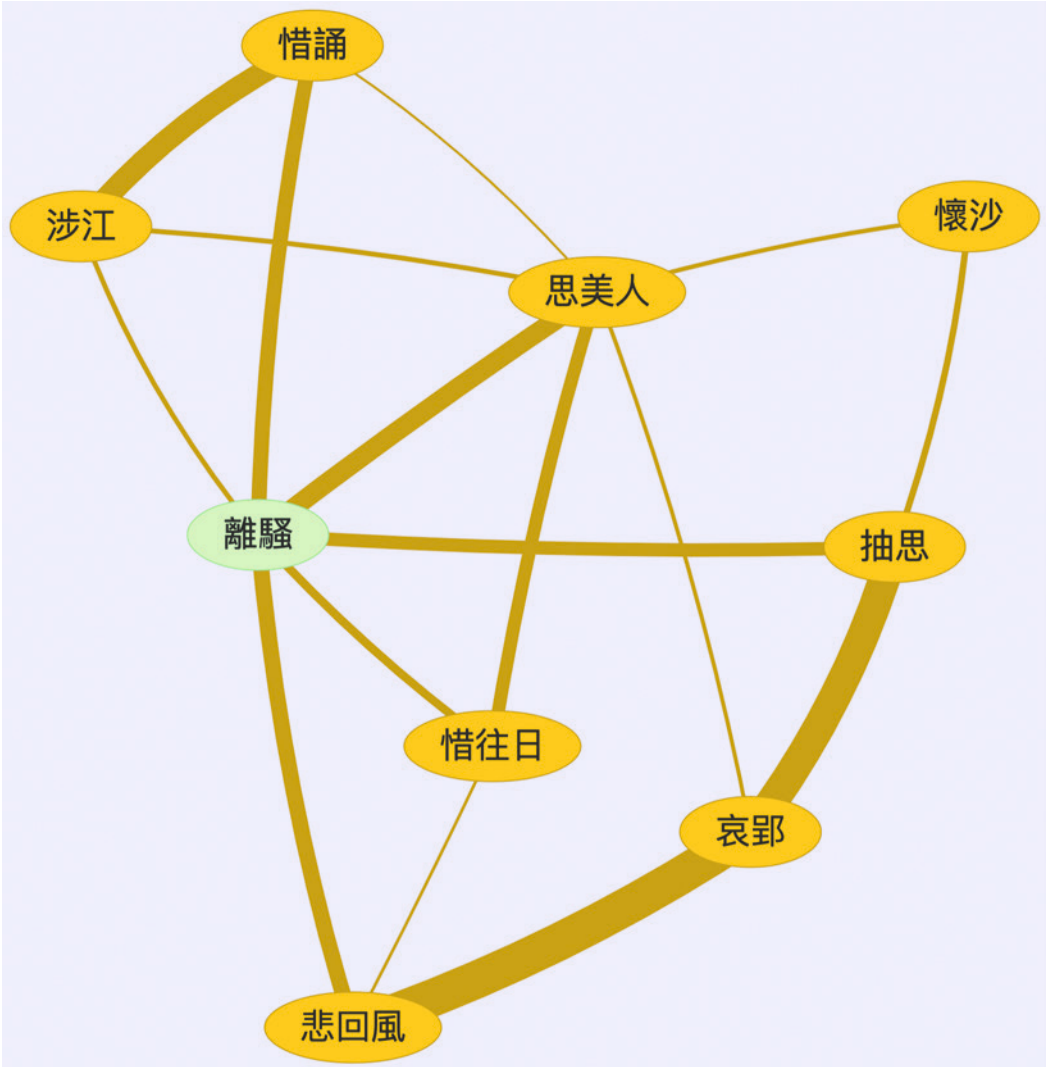139   Compare Klein 2011; Kern 2015.

FIGURE 1.7   Intertextual relations between "Li sao" (light green) and "Jiu zhang" (orange) (n3; skip edges with
weight less than 0.003). Once again, "Ju song" is not represented here

7   Liu Xiang's "Jiu tan," the "Jiu zhang," and the Poetic Definition of
the Qu Yuan Persona

No details are known about Liu Xiang's possible role as compiler and editor
of the *Chuci* anthology, who first calls our attention to the title "Jiu zhang."
Was there a need to have nine pieces in "Jiu zhang," to be then followed by the
nine pieces in the "Jiu tan"? May the composition of "Jiu tan" have guided the

compilation of "Jiu zhang"? We do not have evidence for the shape of the various poetic series—"Jiu ge," "Jiu zhang," "Jiu bian," "Qi jian"—before Liu Xiang, and they may not have existed in the shape that is first firmly documented with Wang Yi's anthology and commentary. As scholars have long noted, there are all kinds of inconsistencies within these individual series, from obvious lacunae and textual disorder to entire poems that seem profoundly incomplete or oddly placed.

Thus, we do not know to what extent Liu Xiang—known as an otherwise highly active and interventionist compiler and editor of the texts he prepared for the imperial library[140]—shaped the earlier *Chuci* pieces when incorporating them in his anthology. If his interventions were nearly as drastic as with the works of the philosophical "masters" traditions for which he prepared authoritative court editions, he did not merely collect what he found of a scattered *Chuci* poetic corpus but actively reorganized that corpus for all future times. Clearly, in his own composition of the "Jiu tan" he would draw on and respond to the "Li sao" and other existing *Chuci* poems; but this engagement with the tradition was more than one of merely passive reception. As his "Jiu tan" were composed against the background of the earlier poems, the latter may themselves have been shaped through Liu Xiang's own interpretative and compilatory moves as an activist editor. In this easily overlooked phenomenon of intertextual dialogue, the emphasis shifts away from the earlier author toward the later editor and compiler, and from canon to commentary.

Unlike any of the earlier parts of the *Chuci* anthology, the "Jiu tan" capture not only the "Jiu zhang" poetic register of "lament," but also repeat structural devices such as proems and epilogues found in various "Jiu zhang" poems, and further move freely between speaking about Qu Yuan in the third person and impersonating him in the first.[141] In their learned bookishness, they reflect Liu Xiang's stature at the imperial court where he organized the books in the imperial library and created a new system of inherited knowledge and intellectual and literary history.[142] If Liu Xiang's voice in the "Jiu tan," more than any earlier one, is an imitation of Qu Yuan's, then such imitation is at the same time also an interpretation and commentary that reflects his particular understanding of Qu Yuan. By explicitly emulating the earlier model, he specifically defined it in one particular way, and not in another one. To return to the discussion of

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140   See Xu Jianwei 2017; Van der Loon 1952; Goldin 2020: 1–12.

141   Walker (1982: 294–300) shows that Liu Xiang's rhymes deviate noticeably from those of the "Jiu zhang," reflecting Western Han changes in phonology. Meanwhile, Wang Bao's "Jiu huai," contemporaneous to the "Jiu tan," show no awareness of the "Jiu zhang" but do rhyme according to their earlier phonology (Walker 1982: 205–207, 290–292), possibly reflecting an archaizing mode of composition.

142   See Xu Jianwei 2017.

possible "shamanistic" dimensions in the Qu Yuan persona: had Liu Xiang seen Qu Yuan as defined in religious terms, he could have assumed Qu Yuan's voice in the diction and lexicon of the "Jiu ge." Yet he did not; instead, he imagined the Qu Yuan persona exclusively as that of the "Jiu zhang," and of the "Li sao" only under the "Jiu zhang" paradigm.[143] Liu Xiang's Qu Yuan is the "Jiu zhang" Qu Yuan, now recreated in Liu Xiang's own image; Liu Xiang's own voice is developed by way of defining Qu Yuan's.

Let us once again consider the beginning three stanzas of the "Li sao," the first half of its proem:

Stanza 1

帝高陽之苗裔兮	Distant descendant of the God Gao Yang am I,
朕皇考曰伯庸	My august father's name was Bo Yong.
攝提貞于孟陬兮	The *sheti* constellation pointed to the first month of the year,
惟庚寅吾以降	It was the cyclical day *gengyin* when I descended.

Stanza 2

皇覽揆余初度兮	The august one surveyed me and took my original measure,
肇錫余以嘉名	Rising to bestow on me auspicious names:
名余曰正則兮	He named me "Correct Standard,"
字余曰靈均	Styled me "Numinous Balance."

Stanza 3

紛吾既有此內美兮	Lush am I, possessed of this inner beauty,
又重之以脩能	Further doubled in fine appearance:
扈江離與辟芷兮	Shrouded in lovage and angelica,
紉秋蘭以為佩	Weaving the autumn eupatory as my girdle.

Chuci buzhu, "Li sao," 1.3–5

As noted above, the "I" in this opening proem is not the author of the poem but the poem's protagonist. The audience is introduced to a persona *mis-en-scène*, to the lyrical I of the poem that is about to unfold. He is a persona of divine ancestry who on an auspicious day "descends" into the world, ready to roam between and across the realms of the mortals and their gods. The cosmic flights that take place within the "Li sao," the motions that span the world in an instant and yet never progress, the exquisite representation of inner beauty through outward—especially botanical—adornment, and the encounters

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143   On Liu Xiang's role in the construction of Qu Yuan, see further Chan 1998.

with transcendent beings are all prefigured right here, in the very creation of the protagonist's voice.

Now consider how the first lines of the first poem in the "Jiu tan" dovetail with the opening of the "Li sao." The poem "Feng fen" 逢紛 (Running into Tumult)—the title itself an apparent paraphrase of "Li sao"—sets out as follows:

伊伯庸之末冑兮	That latter offspring of Bo Yong,
諒皇直之屈原	Is truly the august and upright Qu Yuan.
云余肇祖于高陽兮	He speaks: I trace my original ancestry to Gao Yang,
惟楚懷之嬋連	Indeed as a clan relative of King Huai.
原生受命于貞節兮	From birth I, Yuan, received my call for loyalty and integrity,
鴻永路有嘉名	Exalted my eternal path under auspicious names.
齊名字於天地兮	I balanced my name and style to Heaven and Earth,
竝光明於列星	Leveled my brilliant brightness with the arrayed stars.
吸精粹而吐氛濁兮	I inhaled the essential and pure and spat out miasma and filth,
橫邪世而不取容	In a world of perverse evil I did not seek to arrange myself.
行叩誠而不阿兮	I acted with stern sincerity and did not bend myself,
遂見排而逢讒	And thus was cast out and ran into slander.

Chuci buzhu, "Jiu tan," "Feng fen," 16.282

In all of the versions that speak about Qu Yuan, impersonate Qu Yuan, or borrow the voice of the "Li sao" to lament one's own fate, this opening of the "Nine Laments" is unique. It is modelled on the opening of the "Li sao" but takes the decisive step from the act of performance to that of the textual representation of performance. The opening of the "Li sao" stages its protagonist without mediation toward its audience and as such is a genuine performance script. This staging is an illocutionary speech act that becomes operative only when actualized in performance, that is, in front of an informed audience familiar with the conventions of such performance. This audience is an early Western Han court—imperial or royal, in Chang'an or in Shouchun—accustomed to the literary protocols of *fu* recitation, in particular the widely used technique of impersonation.[144] Yet Liu Xiang's text is not made for performance; it is made to be read. It is a commentary on the earlier model by transposing that model from performance to writing, and from listening to reading. Liu Xiang, the learned reader and librarian, is not the Qu Yuan figure imagined at Liu An's

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144   Kern 2003.

court; instead, he lives in a time where texts as written artifacts to be read begin to gain the upper hand over texts as spectacle to be observed.[145] Thus, in the opening of Liu Xiang's Qu Yuan impersonation, the staging of the protagonist's voice is no longer the unmediated feature of the performance but becomes part of the written representation of that performance: lines 1 and 2 present "that" (*yi* 伊) Qu Yuan—offspring of Bo Yong, as in the "Li sao"—with an emphatic "truly" (*liang* 諒, used here as a copula), before line 3 makes him the one who "speaks" (*yun* 云), and whose very first word is the emotive "I" (*yu* 余). Of all the personal pronouns found in the "Li sao" and the "Jiu tan," *yu* 余 is not only the most-used but also the one charged with personal emotion.[146] Yet unlike the "I" of "Li sao," that of "Feng fen" is not the first-person speaker of the poem; it is the "I" of a narrated—and hence mediated—protagonist who is introduced to the reader as "Qu Yuan." This is something the "Li sao" never does; there is no "Qu Yuan" in the entire poem because there is no external narrator to call the protagonist "Qu Yuan."

Without doubt, Liu Xiang knew of a "Li sao" similar to the one we know today, and he placed it—almost certainly following the earlier anthology by Liu An—as the first item of his *Chuci* anthology. As noted above, Liu's "Jiu tan" does more than just adding another cycle of poems to the Western Han *Chuci* tradition and inscribing its author into the emerging *Chuci* tradition;[147] it retrospectively defines the earlier Qu Yuan voice. Yet the cycle of the "Jiu tan" is not without its own textual problems, including the fact that several of its poems are known under different titles.[148] Thus, not only the early layers of the *Chuci* anthology are uncertain in their textual boundaries; so are also various later layers before Wang Yi's final contribution of the "Jiu si." For at least some of the "Jiu tan," it is not clear at all whether the textual voice, or "lyric I," represents Liu Xiang or the impersonated Qu Yuan, or even mixes both.[149] That said, Liu Xiang's poems display one distinctive feature that sets them apart from all earlier ones: they explicitly present Qu Yuan as an author and singer and mention several texts attributed to him.

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145   Kern 2001.

146   For the use of *yu* 余 in the "Li sao," see above. In the "Jiu tan," *yu* 余 appears twenty-two times, *wo* 我 three times, and *wu* 吾 seven times; in the "Li sao," the numbers are fifty-one, two, and twenty-six, respectively.

147   See note 19 above for the few passages in *Shiji* and *Hanshu* that mention "phrases from Chu" (*Chu ci* 楚辭/詞).

148   By either having a title not otherwise known or having titles mixed up within the cycle; see Huang Linggeng 2007: 13.2391–2392.

149   Heng Du in her essay in the present volume notes that poems 1–4 and 9 of the "Jiu tan" are written in the persona of Qu Yuan, while poems 5–8 are in the voice of Liu Xiang. Compare also Lucas Bender's comments in his contribution to the present volume who notes the fluidity and sometimes uncertainty of the two voices in the "Jiu tan."

8   Self-Reference in "Jiu zhang" and "Jiu tan"

Before the "Jiu tan," one already finds occasional references within the *Chuci* to "phrases" (*ci* 詞/辭) or "lyrics" (*shi* 詩) as well as to acts of "singing" (*ge* 歌) or "chanting" (*chang* 倡 [唱]). In the songs "Donghuang taiyi" 東皇太一 (Grand Unity, Thearch of the East) and "Dong jun," one finds the following couplets:

疏緩節兮安歌   We space the slow rhythms for singing calmly,
陳竽瑟兮浩倡   Set out the mouth organs and zithers for chanting wildly.
　　　Chuci buzhu, "Jiu ge," "Donghuang taiyi," 2.56

翾飛兮翠曾   Fluttering upwards in flight, they whirl and swirl,
展詩兮會舞   Spreading their lyrics to conform with the dances.
　　　Chuci buzhu, "Jiu ge," "Dong jun" 2.75

Here, the poetry sung and chanted is part of the ritual performance of the ritual community and the spirit mediums in its service. It is only in a couplet in "Shao siming" 少司命 (The Lesser Master of Fate) that we hear the voice of the speaker, in this case in a failed pursuit of the capricious and powerful god:

望美人兮未來   I gaze afar for the beautiful one, yet he will not come,
臨風悅兮浩歌   Turning against the wind in frustration, wildly I sing.
　　　Chuci buzhu, "Jiu ge," "Shao siming," 2.73

This is the language of disappointment that in the "Jiu ge" describes the failed pursuit of the god or goddess, and which in the "Li sao" appears associated with the protagonist's futile quest for approval from his lord ("the beautiful one")[150]—yet neither here nor in the "Li sao" is that protagonist identified as Qu Yuan. Twice in the "Li sao" the speaker rises to "lay out his phrases" (*chen ci* 敶詞/陳辭), or make his case, to a power above:

Stanza 36
依前聖以節中兮   I had leaned on the former sages for my inner balance,
喟憑心而歷茲   Alas, relying on my heart I had come to this.
濟沅湘以南征兮   Having crossed the Yuan and the Xiang to journey south,
就重華而敶詞   I approached Chonghua to lay out my phrases.
　　　Chuci buzhu, "Li sao," 1.20

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150   In what Hawkes (1974: 44) calls "the cannibalization by a new secular, literary tradition of an earlier religious, oral one."

The final statement here launches a long speech that contains the catalog of ancient rulers as historical exemplars, most of them immoral. It is not certain where the address to Chonghua (i.e., the ancient sage-king Shun 舜) ends, but with stanza 44, the protagonist returns to expressing himself in the first-person pronoun (intensely used in stanzas 44–46, after their complete absence in stanzas 36–43). With stanza 46, he repeats once again the phrase "lays out his phrases":

Stanza 46

跪敷衽以陳辭兮　　I knelt, with robes spread, while laying out my phrases,
耿吾既得此中正　　Now that I had brilliantly attained this rectitude within.
駟玉虯以乘鷖兮　　I yoked a quadriga of jade dragons and mounted the phoenix,
溘埃風余上征　　　Obscured in dusty winds, I journeyed upward.
　　Chuci buzhu, "Li sao," 1.25

From here, a new section begins: a celestial journey during which the protagonist, now as a cosmic sovereign, "commands" (*ling* 令) the various spirits. The protagonist who in stanzas 36 and 46 "lays out his phrases" speaks in a voice not of lament but of assertion, in each case proudly declaring his moral rectitude. Despite the possible reference to his "inner" virtue—which may well carry additional overtones—[151] this is not the voice of the "Jiu zhang."

　　Compare, however, the following lines from the latter, where the self-referential voice recurs across multiple poems:

情沈抑而不達兮　　My feelings sunken and oppressed, they cannot be conveyed,
又蔽而莫之白　　　Obscured, they can be revealed to no one.
心鬱邑余侘傺兮　　My heart depressed, I am frustrated and disappointed,[152]
又莫察余之中情　　And there is none who examines my inner feelings.[153]
固煩言不可結詒兮　Indeed, my disorderly words I cannot convey with coherence
願陳志而無路　　　I wish to lay out my purpose but there is no path.
　　Chuci buzhu, "Jiu zhang," "Xi song," 4.123–124

Remarkably, only the middle couplet has two direct parallels in the "Li sao," while the first and third couplets that speak about the impossibility to convey

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151　The use of *zhong* 中 in both stanzas is ambiguous: it may refer to one's "inner" perfection or to virtue being "right" or "well-balanced"; and it may further be taken, as elsewhere in the poem, as *zhong* 忠 ("loyal"). Given the vicissitudes of textual transmission, none of these readings may be excluded.

152　Nearly verbatim in "Li sao," stanza 24.

153　Nearly verbatim in "Li sao," stanza 10.

one's message do not. In the "Jiu zhang," the opening poem "Xi song" in its very first couplet already sets the tone for the entire cycle:

惜誦以致愍兮   In grieving recitation I present my sorrows,
發憤以抒情   Venting my wrath, I tell my feelings.
    Chuci buzhu, "Jiu zhang," "Xi song," 4.121

Thrice in "Chou si," the protagonist "lays out his phrases," and thrice he does so in vain:

結微情以陳詞兮   I string together my subtle feelings to lay out in phrases,
矯以遺夫美人   Offer them up to the beautiful one.
    Chuci buzhu, "Jiu zhang," "Chou si," 4.137

茲歷情以陳辭兮   These feelings I have endured I lay out in phrases
蓀詳聾而不聞   Yet Calamus feigns deafness and would not hear them.
    Chuci buzhu, "Jiu zhang," "Chou si," 4.138

憍吾以其美好兮   Arrogantly he flaunted to me his fine beauty
敖朕辭而不聽   Haughtily he would not listen to my words.
    Chuci buzhu, "Jiu zhang," "Chou si," 4.139

Likewise in "Xi wangri" where the protagonist tries to "lay out his feelings" (*chen qing* 陳情) only to find himself faulted for it; as a result,

不畢辭而赴淵兮   Not having finished my phrases, I plunge myself into the abyss
惜雍君之不識   Regretful that my obstructed lord would not understand.
    Chuci buzhu, "Jiu zhang," "Xi wangri," 4.153

Finally, the most direct reference to the protagonist's poetry may be found in "Bei huifeng":

介眇志之所惑兮   Perturbed in my far-reaching purpose,
竊賦詩之所明   In private I recite my poem to make myself clear.
    Chuci buzhu, "Jiu zhang," "Bei huifeng," 4.157

In sum, there is a persistent self-referential pattern of speech across the "Jiu zhang" where the protagonist declares himself offering words, phrases, or even poetry—only not to be heard, listened to, or understood. This theme, while not entirely absent in the "Li sao," remains undeveloped there; it is particularly

telling that the "Xi song" passage noted above shares near-verbatim lines with the "Li sao," yet precisely not those where the protagonist refers to his own speech. This self-reference, which in conjunction with the Qu Yuan narrative lore turns the poetry autobiographical, is nevertheless extended from the "Jiu zhang" into the interpretation of the "Li sao."

That said, there is no Qu Yuan persona to be found anywhere in the "Jiu zhang." Instead, it is with Liu Xiang's "Jiu tan" where the connection between "Li sao," "Jiu zhang," and Qu Yuan attains a fuller expression. Qu Yuan is named in "Bu ju" and "Yufu,"[154] though these biographical accounts, mostly in prose, stand outside the "lament" poetry. In both "Ai shi ming" and "Jiu huai" ("Zun jia" 尊嘉 [Honoring the Excellent One]), Qu Yuan is mentioned as having drowned himself in the Miluo River (and in both cases is mentioned in conjunction with Wu Zixu's death),[155] but not as a speaker of his own words. No other *Chuci* text prior to the "Jiu tan" speaks of Qu Yuan.

With the "Jiu tan," finally, we find the Qu Yuan persona together with his poetry. Qu Yuan is mentioned by name in the very first couplet of the opening poem "Feng fen" as well as in the first line of "Xi xian" 惜賢 (Grieving for the Worthy), while the "Li sao" is named in "Xi xian," "You ku" 憂苦 (Worrying in Bitterness), and "Si gu" 思古 (Longing for Ancient Times), and the "Jiu zhang" appear by title in "You ku." In relation with this, the Qu Yuan persona, whom Liu Xiang occasionally impersonates, is also furnished with a new vocabulary. Repeatedly, the protagonist "chants" (*yin* 吟)—a word absent in both "Li sao" and "Jiu zhang"—or otherwise refers to his own voice. Most of the nine "Jiu tan" poems include such expressions:

辭靈脩而隕志兮   After bidding farewell to Spirit Perfected, my purpose thwarted,
吟澤畔之江濱   I chant on the borders of marshes and banks of the rivers.
> *Chuci buzhu*, "Jiu tan," "Feng fen," 16.283

垂文揚采   I hand down my patterned writings, exalt my splendor,
遺將來兮   Bequeath them to those who are yet to come.
> *Chuci buzhu*, "Jiu tan," "Feng fen," 16.285

"I chant on the borders of marshes" 吟澤畔 has a verbatim parallel in "Yufu,"[156] a passage identified with Qu Yuan that Liu Xiang would have known. Likewise there is "I chant for long and sigh forever" 長吟永欷 and "release my

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154   *Chuci buzhu*, 6.176–7.181.
155   *Chuci buzhu*, 14.265, 15.274.
156   *Chuci buzhu*, 7.179.

feelings and lay out poetry" 舒情敶詩 in the envoi of "Yuan shi" 遠逝 (Leaving for Afar);[157] and finally "I stand on the Jiang river's margin, chanting for long" 立江界而長吟兮[158] in "Li shi" 離世 (Leaving the World) that through numerous allusions impersonates the "Li sao" persona, including by claiming "Correct Standard" (*zhengze* 正則) and "Numinous Balance" (*lingjun* 靈均) as the protagonist's name and style obtained through divination after his birth.[159] Just this example of the use of *yin*, intricately connecting "Feng fen," "Yuan shi," "Li shi," "Li sao," and "Yufu," shows how the Qu Yuan repertoire manifests itself across the *Chuci* anthology, that is, as a network of shared ideas and phrases that runs through different texts in different constellations.[160]

Furthermore, when three different poems recall the "Li sao," they all do so in similar terms. At the outset of "Xi xian," the protagonist[161] declares that he has "read Mister Qu's 'Encountering Sorrow'" 覽屈氏之《離騷》兮 with a heart of "sorrowful mourning" 聲哀哀;[162] in "You ku" there is the couplet "I intone 'Encountering Sorrow' to display my intent,/ without yet exhausting the 'Nine Manifestations'" 歎《離騷》以揚意兮，猶未殫於《九章》;[163] and in "Si gu," the protagonist's "mouth is tightly sealed and cannot speak" 口噤閉而不言, though he is "inspired by the subtle verbal patterns of 'Encountering Sorrow'" 興《離騷》之微文兮.[164] Qu Yuan's poetic lament now becomes the lament over Qu Yuan and his poetry.

The protagonist of the "Li sao" is never shown "chanting" (*yin* 吟), nor is the persona of the "Jiu zhang." The speakers in both "lay out their phrases," and in the "Jiu zhang," we find a series of further references to the act of speaking. It is perhaps significant that the term of choice for what is spoken is not "words" (*yan* 言) but *ci* 辭/詞. *Yan* in "Jiu zhang" and "Li sao" mostly refers to the semantic level of expression, prominently in the phrase "trustworthy words" (*cheng yan* 成/誠言) in stanza 12 of the "Li sao" and its parallel in "Chou si," both cited above. *Ci*, by contrast, is often used synonymously and interchangeably with *fu* 賦 ("poetic exposition"). As genre designations, the terms *ci*, *fu*, and their combination as *cifu* 辭賦 are all amply attested in Han

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157   *Chuci buzhu*, 16.295.

158   *Chuci buzhu*, 16.288.

159   *Chuci buzhu*, 16.286.

160   For further examples, see the appendix below on textual parallels of "Jiu tan" with "Jiu zhang" and "Li sao."

161   The tradition, of course, would call this voice "Liu Xiang," but I would rather not confuse the voice in the text with the author of the text. The "Liu Xiang" in the text is a poetic persona; this persona is created by the historical Liu Xiang, but it is not identical with him.

162   *Chuci buzhu*, 16.295.

163   *Chuci buzhu*, 16.300.

164   *Chuci buzhu*, 16.307.

sources; even Sima Qian refers to Qu Yuan's works as both *fu* and *ci*.[165] Unlike *yan*, *ci* refers to the *performative* aspect of expression; *ci* are not just "words" but rhetorically—often poetically—marked expressions, such as in the term *wenci* 文辭 (lit. "patterned phrases"), used, for example, in the above-cited passage from the *Hanshu* "Monograph on Geography" in relation to the "phrases" or "verses" from Chu.[166] Thus, "to lay out phrases" (*chen ci* 陳辭/詞) refers not merely to rhetorical/poetic phrases but to their presentation, just as the verb *fu* with its multiple cognates *fu* 敷, *pu* 鋪, or *bu* 布,[167] all of which mean "to lay out," to extend," "to spread out," "to present," and so forth. It is therefore remarkable that Liu Xiang's "Jiu tan"—itself clearly a work of writing meant to be read—repeatedly emphasizes "chanting" when impersonating Qu Yuan's earlier voice. Not only does Liu Xiang identify the protagonist of "Li sao" and "Jiu zhang" as Qu Yuan—something these poems themselves never do—but he also presents that protagonist much more intensely as a *performer* of poems. There is in my view no question that the early layers of the *Chuci* poetry—including the "Li sao," starting right with its first stanzas that dramatically stage its speaker—were *originally* texts to be performed, not read, in versions earlier than those known to us;[168] recall also how Okamura relates the very structure of shared phrases and formulae both within the "Li sao" and then also between "Li sao," "Jiu zhang," and "Jiu bian" to their origins in performance.[169] By the time of Liu Xiang's "Jiu tan," this earlier world of *Chuci* performances was almost entirely lost;[170] now it could only be imagined, and newly represented, in writing as impersonation. The particular density of self-referential expressions to "chanting" in the "Jiu tan" gives voice to the late Western Han cultural memory of Qu Yuan as the performer of his own verses.

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165 *Shiji*, 84.2490 (*fu*) and 130.3314 (*ci*). For a fuller discussion of the interchangable use of both terms in the Western Han see Kern (2003: 394–395 and 399–402), with further references.

166 *Hanshu*, 28B.1668.

167 Knechtges 1976: 12; Kern 2003: 394.

168 Consider, for example, the highly imaginative analysis of the "Jiu ge" as polyvocal performance texts by both Wen Yiduo (1982: 262–334) and Aoki Masaru (Aoki 1933). For the same approach to the "Li sao" see Akatsuka 1977. For the "Jiu ge," Koike (1982: 1–12) has further added an analysis of the rhyme patterns to Wen Yiduo's and Aoki's argument. Invariably, these studies take the respective poems as originally religious in nature. While I agree on the point of their performative nature, I read them as rhetorical representations of religious rituals, in line with what I have suggested for the Western Han *fu*; see Kern 2003.

169 Okamura 1966: 94 *et passim*.

170 As indicated by the fact that Wang Bao's and Liu Xiang's contemporary Beigong from Jiujiang is singled out for being "able to do phrases from Chu" 能為楚辭 in *Hanshu*, 64B.2821; clearly, this ability was considered highly exceptional and related to the fact that Beigong hailed from the area of Liu An's former kingdom of Huainan.

9   Conclusions and Further Questions

With the "Jiu tan," the persona of "Li sao" and "Jiu zhang"—now identified by the name Qu Yuan—finally chants as a poet; and so does the textual persona who reads and chants Qu Yuan's verses. The relationship of the "Jiu tan" with the "Jiu zhang," and through the "Jiu zhang" further with the "Li sao," is thus unique in the anthology. It is not just that only the "Jiu tan" poems mention both "Li sao" and the "Jiu zhang"—they mention *only* these two from the earlier *Chuci* tradition and do so in a single breath.[171] Finally, the "Jiu tan" poetic persona appropriates, impersonates, and thereby defines the Qu Yuan persona through a long series of lines and phrases shared in particular with the "Jiu zhang" and further, to no insignificant extent, also with the "Li sao" itself. These lines and phrases are not merely "quoted" in the "Jiu tan" poems, nor do these poems simply "imitate" the "Jiu zhang." Instead, the earlier language is recontextualized within the explicit impersonation of Qu Yuan, a historical persona now speaking within a late Western Han perspective.

Lineages and traditions are retrospectively created by the latter-born. What changed from the early Han to Liu Xiang were the needs of the respective present for imagining a meaningful, identity-generating past. Liu An's Qu Yuan spoke to the nostalgic *imaginaire* at Shouchun, envisioning the old aristocratic order of Chu now lost, with Qu Yuan as its principal embodiment. By contrast, Liu Xiang's Qu Yuan spoke to the identity of imperial scholar-officials as they looked back to Qu Yuan the suffering author and royal advisor. What once had begun as the dramatic verbal spectacle of Qu Yuan's failure, enchanting its audience with wistful images and exquisite sounds, was now, with the "Jiu tan," restated as the learned scholar's written—even bookish—lament. From the available sources, it appears that our text of the poetry attributed to Qu Yuan—especially including the "Jiu zhang"—may to some extent have been shaped by Liu Xiang, and under Liu Xiang's own agenda: as noted above, when Liu Xiang in the "Jiu tan" impersonates the Qu Yuan persona, he makes Qu Yuan speak according to Liu Xiang's own vision of him, and of himself. Liu himself was imprisoned for political reasons at the imperial court and from that experience, like Sima Qian before him, may have related to the Qu Yuan figure as someone who suffered for being upright and outspoken.

Prior to Liu Xiang, we do not know the shape of Liu An's "Li sao"; we do not even know whether "Li sao" for Liu An referred to a single long poem or

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171   In addition, "You ku" also mentions an otherwise unknown poem with the title "Ji Chu" 激楚 (Stirring Chu; *Chuci buzhu*, 16.301), but clearly in a pejorative way, namely as opposed to the ancient "Shao" 韶 music associated with the sage-king Shun 舜.

to an entire poetic discourse headlined by its lead title (in the same way as Han authors routinely referred to both *Zuozhuan* 左傳 and *Gongyang zhuan* 公羊傳 as *Chunqiu* 春秋),[172] let alone the poem we now have. As shown above, that transmitted text of ours today is not a unified poem but a collection of fragments, some of them related to the Qu Yuan story, others clearly not. Its sources reflect different lexical systems and mutually exclusive poetic registers otherwise sedimented in other early *Chuci* texts such as "Tian wen," "Jiu ge," "Jiu zhang," "Jiu bian," and possibly others more. As the composite sum total of these poetic registers, it is discontinuous, fragmentary, repetitive, non-linear, and highly polyvalent. It is in this function that it is the master text of the Qu Yuan Epic, a story distributed across multiple texts and genres.

The Qu Yuan persona of this epic should not be confused with the historical person from the ancient state of Chu, nor should that historical person be taken as the voice within "his" texts. Instead, we may better conceive of the Han dynasty Qu Yuan as a quasi-mythological configuration of cultural memory into which was inscribed the foundational early Western Han *imaginaire* that represented the nostalgic ideals and shifting aspirations of Han imperial literati. Before becoming cosmopolitan during the Western Han, this *imaginaire* would have emerged over time locally at Shouchun, which first, since 241 BCE, served as the last capital of preimperial Chu and second, from 202 to 122 BCE, as the seat of the Han kingdom of Huainan 淮南. Throughout this time, Shouchun was a site fraught with memories of loss: first of the former Chu capital of Ying in 278 BCE; then of the ancient state of Chu altogether in 223 BCE. In the figure of Qu Yuan and the poetry ascribed to him, the Han *imaginaire* thus recollected a series of paradigms from the past: the noble exemplar of the old Chu aristocracy; the prophecy of the fall of Chu to Qin; the religious, historical, mythological, and literary traditions of Chu; the embodied paradigm of the ruler-minister relationship; the suffering courtier; and the figure of the heroic poet, developed from that of poetic hero. As the cultural memory of Chu changed in response to the historical circumstances over the course of the Han dynasty, and with it also the identity and consciousness of Han scholar officials and their practices of literary production and communication, different aspects of this composite Qu Yuan mattered differently to writers of successive generations.

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172   For *Zuozhuan*, see Lin Zhen'ai 1981; for *Gongyang zhuan*, Goldin 2012: 19–27. Similarly, early Chinese texts are often mentioned as having contained fantastically large numbers of graphs that far exceed the size of the book in question known to us; see e.g., *Hanshu*, 65.2841; also Kern (2015: 340–342) for further examples. In all these cases, the respective title may not have referred only to the principal text under that title but also to surrounding exegetical or otherwise related material. The same might be true for the "Li sao" when it was considered the principal piece at the head of the anthology; see Chan 1998: 316.

These are some of the conclusions of the present study, an inquiry into the origins of the "Li sao" and other poems in the *Chuci* anthology, and of the Qu Yuan persona. That being said, thinking about the place of these poems in Chinese literary history, that is, in later reception history, different perspectives will arise; and they have indeed arisen in traditional (including contemporary traditional) scholarship. These perspectives are highly valuable for thinking about the later role of Qu Yuan and "his" poetry for the Chinese poetic tradition, even as they tell us little about how this poetry may have originated in the first place.

Moreover, we cannot say that Liu Xiang with his "Jiu tan" alone defined the Qu Yuan persona henceforth, nor do the perspectives advanced here on both "Jiu zhang" and "Jiu tan" exhaust the meaning of these poetic cycles. Much more can be said about these cycles,[173] as well as about the other poems in the anthology and their place in the literary, political, and religious practices over the course of the third, second, and first centuries BCE. Unfortunately, we know only fragments of the early Qu Yuan tradition (as indicated, for example, by the poetic fragment of unknown origin in Sima Qian's Qu Yuan biography). Most of that tradition, whether oral or in manuscripts, is lost forever. We also have only a marginal understanding of how the literary communication in Warring States and early imperial times was actually conducted: how did texts circulate, whether orally or in manuscript (and if in manuscript, then in which regional script, and how was that script legible to those of other regional script traditions)? What did the poets of the *Chuci* tradition actually know about their predecessors and their poems? How did they understand their own literary compositions in relation to these earlier poems—as responses, imitations, continuations, commentaries, or something else altogether? Why would scholar-officials at court write poetry impersonating the imagined author of earlier poetry? What was their idea of individual authorship, let alone individual interiority in such a literary continuum?

And furthermore: how should we begin to approach questions of textual stability or instability beyond our own, almost certainly anachronistic ideas about discrete, stable writings that from other genres—e.g., the philosophical masters[174]—we know to be inadequate and probably grossly misleading? What did it mean in Western Han times to "be able to do *Chuci*," as we read in Wang Bao's biography?[175] What did it mean to "lay out one's phrases" (*chen ci* 陳辭/詞)? And what did editors like Liu An and Liu Xiang *really* do when compiling some wildly diverse textual materials into an anthology surrounding

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173   For two recent studies on the "Jiu zhang" and the "Jiu tan," see Williams 2018a and 2018b.
174   Kern 2015 and Goldin 2020.
175   *Hanshu*, 64B.2821.

the figure of Qu Yuan? What exactly was driving them? What did they choose to exclude?

We probably also should keep our hopes low for new discoveries of Han dynasty manuscripts (let alone those from preimperial times): to the extent we know them, the men and women of the first and second centuries BCE who were buried with manuscripts during these centuries belonged to the highest echelons of Han imperial society, including regional kings, their wives, and other aristocrats. They may have had use for a cosmological treatise such as the *Fan wu liu xing*, but perhaps not for the lament of a frustrated courtier. Following the initial compilation of a *Chuci* collection at Liu An's court at Shouchun, which was perhaps still mostly motivated by the desire to preserve the old aristocratic heritage of preimperial Chu, the literature that was subsequently assembled and perpetuated in the *Chuci* tradition was cherished and transmitted by those who maintained an interest in the persona of the frustrated, maligned, banished, punished, or marginalized courtier: other courtiers—think Sima Qian or Liu Xiang—to whom Qu Yuan became their foundational hero and exemplar. In other words, it just so happens that those scholar-officials at the imperial court to whom Qu Yuan held such meaning were also the ones who were centrally able and responsible for the definition, preservation, and perpetuation of the literary tradition.

10   Appendix: "Jiu tan" Expressions Shared with "Jiu zhang" and "Li sao"

There are numerous phrases that the "Jiu tan" share especially with the "Jiu zhang." In the following Table 1.4, I do not include all the shared phrases of three or more graphs, unless there are other elements in the respective line that further emphasize the parallelism. On the other hand, I include lines that may not have a single overlap of three or more consecutive graphs, but where the full phrase is nevertheless clearly parallel. The decision what to include in the table is as much an art as a science; what resonates with me as "shared" expressions may not resonate in the same way with others who might either add many more lines or eliminate some of the ones included here. The same holds also true for the recognition and counting of shared phrases in Walker (1982) and Okamura (1966) who both count phrases—often of merely three graphs—that I do not include here.

TABLE 1.4   "Jiu tan" expressions shared with "Jiu zhang" and "Li sao"

Jiu zhang 九章	Jiu tan 九歎
涉江：步余馬兮山皋，邸余車兮方林。	逢紛：馳余車兮玄石，步余馬兮洞庭。
抽思：願承閒而自察兮，心震悼而不敢。	逢紛：願承閒而自恃兮，徑淫曀而道壅。
悲回風：憚涌湍之礚礚兮，聽波聲之洶洶。	逢紛：徐徘徊於山阿兮，飄風來之洶洶。
抽思：惟郢路之遼遠兮，魂一夕而九逝。	逢紛：思南郢之舊俗兮，腸一夕而九運。
惜誦：俾山川以備御兮，命咎繇使聽直。	離世：立師曠俾端詞兮，命咎繇使竝聽。
抽思：羌中道而回畔兮，反既有此他志。	離世：輿中塗以回畔兮，駟馬驚而橫犇。
哀郢：出國門而軫懷兮，甲之鼂吾以行。	離世：出國門而端指兮，冀壹寤而錫還。
思美人：獨煢煢而南行兮，思彭咸之故也。	離世：九年之中不吾反兮，思彭咸之水遊。
惜誦：退靜默而莫余知兮，進號呼又莫吾聞。	離世：靈懷其不吾知兮，靈懷其不吾聞。
涉江：余幼好此奇服兮，年既老而不衰。	離世：余幼既有此鴻節兮，長愈固而彌純。
抽思：心鬱鬱之憂思兮，獨永歎乎增傷。	怨思：惟鬱鬱之憂毒兮，志坎壈而不違。
涉江：與天地兮同壽，與日月兮同光。	怨思：光明齊於日月兮，文采燿於玉石。
惜誦：情沈抑而不達兮，又蔽而莫之白。	怨思：傷壓次而不發兮，思沈抑而不揚。
哀郢：順風波以從流兮，焉洋洋而為客。	怨思：顧屈節以從流兮，心輂輂而不夷。
涉江：深林杳以冥冥兮，猨狖之所居。	怨思：經營原野，杳冥冥兮。
思美人：佩繽紛以繚轉兮，遂萎絕而離異。	遠逝：腸紛紜以繚轉兮，涕漸漸其若屑。
涉江：山峻高昌蔽日兮，下幽晦目多雨。	遠逝：山峻高以無垠兮，遂曾閎而迫身。
霰雪紛其無垠兮，雲霏霏而承宇。	雪雰雰而薄木兮，雲霏霏而隕集。
哀郢：登大墳以遠望兮，聊以舒吾憂心。	遠逝：背龍門而入河兮，登大墳而望夏首。
哀郢：淩陽侯之氾濫兮，忽翱翔之焉薄。	遠逝：赴陽侯之潢洋兮，下石瀨而登洲。
悲回風：紛容容之無經兮，罔芒芒之無紀。	遠逝：路曼曼其無端兮，周容容而無識。
哀郢：順風波以從流兮，焉洋洋而為客。	遠逝：順風波以南北兮，霧宵晦以紛紛。
悲回風：登石巒以遠望兮，路眇眇之默默。	惜賢：登長陵而四望兮，覽芷圃之蠡蠡。
懷沙：進路北次兮，日昧昧其將暮。	惜賢：欲竢時於須臾兮，日陰曀其將暮。
懷沙：亂曰：浩浩沅湘，分流汩兮。	惜賢：歎曰：江湘油油，長流汩兮。
哀郢：背夏浦而西思兮，哀故都之日遠。	憂苦：悲余心之悁悁兮，哀故邦之逢殃
哀郢：忽若不信兮，至今九年而不復。	憂苦：辭九年而不復兮，獨煢煢而南行。
思美人：獨煢煢而南行兮，思彭咸之故也。	憂苦：辭九年而不復兮，獨煢煢而南行。
抽思：有鳥自南兮，來集漢北。	憂苦：三鳥飛以自南兮，覽其志而欲北。
思美人：願寄言於浮雲兮，遇豐隆而不將。	憂苦：願寄言於三鳥兮，去飄疾而不可得。
惜誦：壹心而不豫兮，羌不可保也。	憂苦：且人心之持舊兮，而不可保長。
哀郢：羌靈魂之欲歸兮，何須臾而忘反。	憂苦：聊須臾以時忘兮，心漸漸其煩錯。
抽思：傷吾心之憂憂。	思古：悲余心之悁悁兮，
涉江：哀吾生之無樂兮，幽獨處乎山中。	思古：悲余生之無歡兮，愁倥傯於山陸。
思美人：獨煢煢而南行兮，	思古：魂俇俇而南行兮，

TABLE 1.4   "Jiu tan" expressions shared with "Jiu zhang" and "Li sao" (*cont.*)

Jiu zhang 九章	Jiu tan 九歎
抽思：傷余心之慅慅。	**思古**：傷余心之不能已。
涉江：深林杳以冥冥兮，	**思古**：冥冥深林兮，
哀郢：發郢都而去閭兮，	**思古**：違郢都之舊閭兮，
悲回風：憐思心之不可懲兮，	**遠遊**：悲余性之不可改兮，
涉江：登崑崙兮食玉英，與天地兮同壽，與日月兮同光。	**遠遊**：欲與天地參壽兮，與日月而比榮。登崑崙而北首兮，
哀郢：妬被離而鄣之。	**遠遊**：妬被離而折之。
思美人：聊假日以須旹。	**遠遊**：聊假日以須臾兮，

Li sao 離騷	Jiu tan 九歎
離騷：步余馬於蘭皋兮，	**逢紛**：步余馬兮洞庭。
離騷：名余曰正則兮，字余曰靈均。紛吾既有此內美兮，	**離世**：兆出名曰正則兮，卦發字曰靈均。余幼既有此鴻節兮，
離騷：背繩墨以追曲兮，	**離世**：不枉繩以追曲兮，
離騷：及年歲之未晏兮，	**怨思**：懼年歲之既晏。
離騷：哀朕時之不當。	**愍命**：哀余生之不當兮，
離騷：路曼曼其脩遠兮，	**遠逝**：路曼曼其無端兮，
離騷：折瓊枝以繼佩。	**遠遊**：結瓊枝以雜佩兮，
離騷：就重華而敶詞	**遠遊**：就顓頊而敶詞兮，
離騷：聊假日以媮樂。	**遠遊**：聊假日以須臾兮，
離騷：乘騏驥以馳騁兮，	**怨思**：乘騏驥騳驣，
離騷：朝發軔於蒼梧兮，	**逢紛**：平明發兮蒼梧，
離騷：時亦猶其未央。	**遠遊**：時溷濁其猶未央。
離騷：路脩遠以多艱兮，	**思古**：道脩遠其難遷兮，
離騷：抑志而弭節兮，神高馳之邈邈。	**遠遊**：志升降以高馳。

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