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For Paul Demiéville

M'ingegnavate come l'uom s'eterna:
e quant'io l'abbia in grado, mentr'io vivo
convien che nella mia lingua si scerna.

Infemo XV, 85–7.
PREFACE

I began work on Juan Chi many years ago and submitted a thesis containing the translation of his pentameter poetry to Yale University as part of the requirement for a Ph.D. degree in 1953. I realize now how bold such an attempt was and how inaccurate my translation was bound to be. For Juan Chi is one of the most difficult of the great Chinese poets to understand in any depth. His vocabulary is relatively small, his grammar deceptively simple, but his meaning is frustratingly difficult to grasp. 'We hear his words with our ears and see them with our eyes, but his emotions reach out beyond the confines of the universe', as Chung Jung said in his famous appreciation of Juan Chi. This 'reaching out' is as exhilarating as the obscurity of much of the verse is frustrating, and, once intrigued, the reader is naturally stimulated to try to deepen his understanding of the poet and to dissipate his frustrations. This book is my attempt to do just that, to study Juan Chi in all his complexity, ignoring none of the contradictions or difficulties he presents.

But if he is so obscure, if even the Chinese reader finds much of his poetry needs extended commentary, why attempt to present him to a Western audience? There are many reasons. In the first place, his poetry is, by any estimation, among the best ever written in China. He is, in the second place, at the head of the great tradition of classical poetry, immediately after Ts'ao Chih, who died when Juan Chi was twenty-two years old; he is thus an essential figure for the understanding of the poetry that follows him, poetry that is, as is well known, a mosaic of traditional allusions inspired by new individual talents. But, most important, he is a poet of a very special quality: he expresses with unsurpassed passion and intensity an aspect of the Chinese ethos that is inherent, to a greater or lesser degree, in all Chinese poets and which they instinctively associate with him. Juan Chi yearned to participate in the political life of his country, and it is his inability to do so honorably, without betraying his legitimate ruler, that forced him to lament in verse, to proclaim his attachment to higher moral values and his disgust with the vile opportunism he saw about him. The purity of his yearning, the gigantic, cosmic sweep of his dreams of heroic grandeur, awaken a sympathetic reaction in the poets
Preface

who follow him. Anyone truly interested in Chinese poetry must spend some

time with Juan Chi, must be initiated into this kind of passionate political
commitment which was of prime importance for the great majority of Chinese
men of letters and which remains so to the present day.

In spite of the beauty and interest of his verse, Juan Chi, probably because

of his obscurity, has remained somewhat of a poet’s poet, or at least an ac-
quired taste. I sometimes wonder if the extremely warm response I have
always received from Chinese (and Japanese) scholars when I told them I was
studying Juan Chi was not due, in part at least, to the special quality of his
verse, destined only for the happy few. Whatever the reason, I have benefited
greatly from conversations about Juan Chi and from readings of his poetry
and prose with a great number of specialists. All of them have given un
stintingly of their time and knowledge and I should like to mention them here, in
rough chronological order, by way of thanking them: Li T’ien-yi, Yoshikawa
Kōjirō, Honda Wataru, Ogawa Tamaki, Yeh Chia-ying, Shen Hung-i, Fukunaga
Mitsuji, Jao Tsung-i, Paul Demiéville, J. R. Hightower, and A. R. Davis. At an
early stage in my work, and again towards the end of it, I was enabled by the
Ford Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies — Social
Science Research Council to spend two years in the Far East.

The Chinese foreword by Professor Jao Tsung-i 軍儀 was written after

I received the first proofs and it has been impossible for me to include a trans
lation of it here. Professor Jao, whose knowledge and appreciation of Juan
Chi’s life and works are, I believe, unrivalled today, presents a wealth of new
material in the two short pages covered with his elegant calligraphy. He draws
attention to remarks on Juan Chi by Li Chih 李 (1527—1602) in his
Ts’ang shu 進書 and by Tu-ku Chi 叔公 (725—777) in a eulogy con
tained in Ch’uan T’ang-wen 384, pp. 7a—8a; emphasizes the importance of
Juan Chi’s I ching studies, insisting that in his understanding of the I ching as
an aid to actual living Juan Chi should be placed above Wang Pi and Chung
Hui; sees a familial affiliation in the thought of Juan Wu, Juan Yu and Juan
Chi, but stresses the fact that Juan Chi’s thought and the thought of his
period in general is much more abstract and metaphysical than that of the
older generation; suggests that perhaps ‘Liu-tzu’ mentioned in the ‘Essay on
music’ (below, p. 88) refers to Liu Shao 劉邵, an older contemporary
philosopher; and notes that Tu-ku Chi, in his eulogy, refers to an essay by
Juan Chi that is no longer extant and is mentioned nowhere else, which
suggests that many more of Juan Chi’s works were available in T’ang times
than are today. Professor Jao’s final praise, counting me as a latter-day inte
mate of Juan Chi, is the kindest that he, of all people, could make.

13 March 1976

D.H.
题目

为序曰：侯君温史家月且嗣宗殊不多顷，余既得李首领书则有征高，其果于道也。

易论知侯公因之于易其说大人之义以为宗宗者德之主明夫天道者不敬

考平人德者不履夫是之谓全德故曰作智造巧者害于物明是方非者危

其身者则曰曰言理延用道之充以诸道之字其言之加者群士至信至体其出议语致

不识物情数之发若之天也至信其推陈子之天而语以口之条者志备事至信于至

言也至明其之泰则宗之其时前之信人而未与之矣，及玄而未与之也，安得将人位

于之义必受其宗者言者人亦集宗之故尔也，而宗者此之。
部人時稱為名篇。今覽閰宗之言若吳業稱是，非獨賢並文首著之於事信，亦累人所不
又絕口不藏否人物，無意於主功五事，抗老七懸之問寄情於末之表，於名教有所不
可者。而入天獨於神理百轉，終於玄學之轉接其在言乎？己公革論，大觀
子之問。向者方今為誰？此考其傳之著革論十四篇，殆可與之獨成願云。其
可者，所謂與之，可者止於何人。若文之不
存者，先多也。凡此論：老書未及於此，用墨闕其制義者，書疏，理迹初定。於
轉之，務盡其見有以，之，必於其心屯，又於其心，之，下難之，以情，而
解之，已，此於千有，已
The Wei emperors and the
Ssu-ma usurpers

Ts'ao Ts'ao 曹操, 155–220
Ts'ao Pi 曹丕, Emperor Wen 文, 186–226
Ts'ao Jui 曹叡, Emperor Ming 明, 204–239
Ts'ao Fang 曹芳, Emperor Fei 福,
Prince of Ch'i 齊王, 231–274
Ts'ao Mao 曹髦, Emperor Shao 少,
Duke of Kao-kuei hsiang 高貴鄉公, 241–260
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Ssu-ma I 司馬懿, 179–251
Ssu-ma Shih 司馬師, 208–255
Ssu-ma Chao 司馬昭, 211–265
Ssu-ma Yen 司馬炎, Emperor Wu 武, first emperor of the Chin 晉, 236–290