



How was Du Yu Perceived in Northern Wei?

Which of his accomplishments garnered attention, and how were they appraised?

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Introduction

Du Yu (杜預 222–284), courtesy name Yuankai, was a man of the Du Ling line in Jingzhao. He is best known for composing Commentary to the Spring and Autumn Annals (春秋經傳集解 Chunqiu jingzhuan jijie). The scholar famously described himself to Emperor Wu of Jin as “a humble servant with a penchant for the exegetical tradition of Master Zuo [左傳 Zuozhuan: the ‘Zuo Tradition’]” (Book of Jin 晉書, Vol. 34: Du Yu). However, the Book of Wei (魏書 Wei Shu) indicates that few in Northern Wei associated Du Yu with his annotation of said annals in the Zuo Tradition; rather, the people of Northern Wei associated him with other accomplishments. While the Book of Wei records these accomplishments, they are not mentioned in other dynastic Authorized Histories (正史 zhengshi). This paper outlines the Book of Wei’s accounts of Du Yu. It also explores the significance of this discrepancy as part of a modest attempt to unravel how Northern Wei upheld its dynastic traditions.

1. Du Yu and the Zuo Tradition in the Northern Dynasties

As noted in the introduction to this paper, Du Yu is most celebrated for his detailed commentary in the Zuo Tradition. However, Du Yu’s authority in this regard had limited weight in the Northern Dynasties (北朝 Beichao). The introduction to Volume 84 of the Book of Wei, titled Confucian Scholars (儒林傳 Rulinzhuan), lists a number of commentaries for major texts composed in Hebei. In this introduction, the person credited for composing the Commentary to the Spring and Autumn Annals in the Zuo Tradition is Fu Qian (服虔), not Du Yu. Similarly, the introduction to Volume 81 (Confucian Scholars) of the History of the Northern Dynasties (北史 Beishi) summarizes the commentaries on the Spring and Autumn Annals in the Northern dynasties as follows:

河北諸儒、能通春秋者、並服子慎所注，亦出徐生之門。

Of the Confucian scholars of Hebei, those versed in the Spring and Autumn Annals [in the Zuo Tradition] relied upon the commentary of Fu Zishen [Fu Qian’s courtesy name]. They were the students of Xu Zunming.

Xu Zunming (徐遵明) was among the greatest Confucian scholars of Northern Wei, and he had many students. According to the above introduction, Xu Zunming’s school produced a number of commentaries; in addition to those for the Spring and Autumn Annals, they produced commentaries for the Book of Changes (周易 Zhouyi), the Esteemed Documents (尚書 Shangshu), and the Three Ritual Classics (三禮 Sanli).¹ The Book of Wei’s volume on Confucian Scholars gives the following account of how Xu Zunming related to Fu Qian’s Zuo Tradition-commentary:

知陽平館陶趙世業家、有服氏春秋、是晉世永嘉舊寫、遵明乃往讀之。

Zhou Shiye, of Guantao County in Yangping Commandery, had Fu Qian's [commentary on the] Spring and Autumn Annals [in the Zuo Tradition]. Xu Zunming, on learning that the tome was an ancient work produced during the Yongjia era [307–313] of Jin, went forth to read it.

Some years later, the Xu Zunming school's study of the annals culminated in the 30-volume Study of the Spring and Autumn Annals (春秋義章 Chunqiu Yizhang). Thus, Xu Zunming's students inherited the Zuo Tradition from Fu Qian. This explains why the introduction to the Confucian Scholars volume in the Book of Wei differentiated between the scholarship of the Northern and Southern dynasties, associating Du Yuankai (Du Yu) with the Zuo Tradition in Jiangzuo (江左 in the south) and associating Fu Zishen (Fu Qian) with the tradition in Heluo (河洛 the north).² Thus, in the north, Du Yu's standing as an exegete in the Zuo Tradition was far from impregnable; Fu Qian was in fact the predominant exegete in said tradition.

Du Yu was famous in the north nonetheless, so his fame there must have derived from accomplishments other than his Zuo Tradition-exegesis. Although he was overlooked as an author in the Zuo Tradition, he was famous in the north for other deeds. The rest of this paper examines these accomplishments.

2. The worthy house of Du and Du Yu's status within it

The first notable reference to Du Yu in the Book of Wei concerns an account about Emperor Taiwu of Northern Wei. The account records a conversation between Emperor Taiwu and his chief minister, Cui Hao, which took place after the death of the Emperor's maternal grandfather, Du Bao:

杜銓、字士衡、京兆人。晉征南將軍預五世孫也。[...] 初、密太后父豹喪在濮陽、世祖欲命迎葬於鄴、謂司徒崔浩曰：「天下諸杜、何處望高？」浩對京兆為美。世祖曰：「朕今方改葬外祖、意欲取京兆中長老一人、以為宗正、命營護凶事。」浩曰：「中書博士杜銓、其家今在趙郡、是杜預之後、於今為諸杜之最、即可取之。」詔召見。銓器貌瓌雅、世祖感悅、謂浩曰：「此真吾所欲也。」以為宗正、令與杜超子道生迎豹喪柩、致葬鄴南。

Du Quan, courtesy name Shiheng, was a man of Jingzhao. He was the fifth grandson of Du Yu, who had served the Jin Dynasty as Senior General Who Pacifies the South. [...] To begin: the corpse of the Empress Dowager's father, Du Bao, was in Puyang. Shizu [Emperor Taiwu] bade the body be interred in Ye, saying to his minister, Cui Hao, "Whither dwell the most worthy of the men of Du?" Cui replied that they dwell in Jingzhao. Said the Emperor, "Then let Us appoint one of the elders of [the house of Du in] Jingzhao as Minister of the Imperial Clan [宗正 Zongzheng] that he may preside over the burial." Said Cui, "There is an erudite gentleman, one Du Quan, who now dwells in the county of Zhao. This man, being a descendent of Du Yu, is surely the most suitable choice among the house of Du." On hearing this, the Emperor issued a summons. Quan's refined appearance and features so delighted the Emperor that he said unto Cui, "This is just the man I wanted."

Once appointed Minister of the Imperial Clan, Yan, along with Du Daosheng, who was the son of Du Chao [son of Du Bao and elder brother of the Empress Dowager], received the coffin containing the corpse and interred it south of Ye.

Book of Wei, Vol. 45 (Biography of Du Quan)

Since its foundation, Northern Wei had sought to integrate the eminent Han families (士族 Shizu) into its system of government. Emperor Taiwu took particular pains to establish an aristocracy.³ The Empress Dowager's biography states that the Empress was admitted to the harem (后宮 Hougong) because she came from a good house,⁴ which provides evidence for the eminent status the house of Du enjoyed at the time. Given these circumstances, we can understand why Emperor Taiwu insisted on appointing someone from the house of Du. Cui Hao nominated Du Quan because he was a descendent of Du Yu. This reasoning implies that Du Yu was recognized as the figurehead of the house of Du and the source of the house's honorable status.

3. Du Yu as statesman and problem solver

We learned in the previous section that the Du were an eminent house and that Du Yu in particular legitimized the house's honorable status. Du Yu's reputation was multifaceted. Below, we explore Du Yu's reputation in the political sphere.

During the reign of Emperor Mingyuan of Northern Wei, the Regional Inspector (刺史 Cishi) of Yu Province, Yu Lidi, revived the capital Luoyang, which had fallen into decline after long years serving as a frontier. Following this revival, Emperor Mingyuan visited Mengjin County (directly northeast of Yu Province, on the south bank of the Yellow River). During the visit, the following occurred:

太宗南幸盟津、謂栗磾曰：「河可橋乎？」栗磾曰：「杜預造橋、遺事可想。」乃編次大船、構橋於冶坂。六軍既濟、太宗深歎美之。

Taizong [the temple name of Emperor Mingyuan] went south unto Mengjin. Said the Emperor to Yu Lidi, "Will it be possible to ford the Yellow River?" Said Yu Lidi, "I recall that Du Yu once built a bridge." The men then formed a line of large pontoons stretching across to Yeban [a little north of Luoyang, on the north bank of the Yellow River]. The Emperor's troops then crossed the river, and the Emperor admired the handiwork.

Book of Wei, Vol. 31 (Biography of Yu Lidi)

In the above passage, Yu Lidi recalled a legendary episode in which Du Yu had built a bridge. This episode was recorded in Du Yu's biography in the Book of Jin.

預又以孟津渡險、有覆沒之患、請建河橋于富平津。議者以為殷周所都、曆聖賢而不作者、必不可立故也。預曰：「『造舟為梁』、則河橋之謂也。」及橋成、帝從百僚臨會、舉觴屬預曰：「非君、此橋不立也。」對曰：「非陛下之明、臣亦不得施其微巧。」

The crossing at Mengjin was more treacherous still, and the people feared that the ferry

might capsize. A plea went forth that a bridge be built across the Yellow River at Fupingjin. The advisers noted that the area had served as the capital during the Shang and Zhou dynasties, and they reasoned that since past generations of sages and holy men had never seen it fit to build a bridge in that place, there would be no good reason for doing so now. Said Yu, "The 'pontoon bridge construction' [as mentioned in the Major Court Hymns volume of the Book of Odes] referred to a bridge constructed across the Yellow River." A bridge was then constructed. When the bridge was complete, the Emperor and his ministers held a banquet and raised a toast to Yu, saying, "If not for you, the bridge would never have been built." Said Yu, "If not for Your Grace's sagacity, then your humble servant could never have accomplished this modest work."

Du Yu's eagerness to build the pontoon bridge probably reflected the fact that his grandfather, Du Ji, had drowned in Mengjin after a ferry capsized.⁵ At any rate, Du Yu has gone down in legend for his bridge construction. Mengqiu Dairy, for example, hails "Du Yu's bridge construction." However, accounts like the Yu Lidi anecdote above, in which Lidi praised Du Yu and built a similar bridge himself, are notably absent in the historical texts of other periods. The paucity of such accounts is not in itself grounds for arguing that the acclaim of Du Yu's accomplishment at Yellow River was confined to the Northern Wei dynasty. Notably, however, Cui Liang built a bridge inspired by the one Du Yu built. The event is recorded in Cui Liang's biography in Volume 66 of the Book of Wei.

除安西將軍・雍州刺史。城北渭水、淺不通船、行人艱阻。亮謂寮佐曰：「昔杜預乃造河梁、況此有異長河。且魏晉之日、亦自有橋、吾今決欲營之。」咸曰：「水淺、不可為浮橋、汎長無恒、又不可施柱。恐難成立。」亮曰：「昔秦居咸陽、橫橋渡渭、以像閣道、此即以柱為橋。今唯慮長柱不可得耳。」會天大雨、山水暴至、浮出長木數百根。藉此為用、橋遂成立。百姓利之、至今猶名崔公橋。

Cui Liang was driven out by General Anxi, Regional Inspector of Yong Province. The section of the Wei River north of the town in Yong Province was shallow, making passage by ferry impossible and imperiling those who attempted the crossing. Said Liang to his officers, "Did not Du Yu once build a bridge across the Yellow River? The Wei is narrower than the Yellow River, so shall we not accomplish the task all the easier? And did not a bridge span the river during the Wei and Jin dynasties? I am determined to build the bridge now." Said his advisers, "The task may be all but impossible. The river is too shallow to float pontoons. And a permanent bridge would be impossible too, for we would be unable to drive the piles." Said Liang, "When Qin established its capital in Xianyang, did the dynasty not construct over the shallows a bridge resembling a road passing through castle towers? Might they not have driven piles into the shallows? All that we lack is timber long enough to make the piles." It just so happened that a great rainstorm then came. The rain washed trees down the hillside, providing hundreds of beams. Seizing this lucky opportunity, the men gathered the timber and built the bridge. The bridge proved a great blessing to the people, and it is known to this day as Duke Cui Bridge.

The fact that there are multiple accounts like this in the Book of Wei but not in other Authorized Histories may imply that Du Yu's engineering feat had some special significance in Northern Wei. Indeed, in Northern Wei, the references to the feat are not confined to historical texts. Take, for example, the Stone Gate Inscription (Shimen Ming), an ode engraved on a stone gate in 509 during the reign of Emperor Xuanwu of Northern Wei. The inscription states that the person who built the gate was “賈三德 Jia Sande, the 左校令 Zuoxiaoling.” It then goes on to say the following:

雖元凱之梁河、德衡之損躡、未足偶其奇。

While Du Yuankai [Du Yu] may have built a bridge across the Yellow River, and while Ma Deheng may have devised a way to use fewer loom treadles, neither of these efforts can match this project [the construction of the stone gate] in originality.⁶

Although the purpose of this inscription was purely to commemorate Jia Sande, its allusion to Du Yu's bridge construction proves that said construction was a celebrated achievement at the time. Hence, according to the inscription, the greatness of the stone gate derives from the fact that it surpassed even so great a work as Du Yu's undertaking. Moreover, the bridge itself garnered praise across Northern Wei.

The Cui Liang episode mentioned that Liang had been inspired by Du Yu's example to build his own bridge across the Yellow River. The biography goes on to heap praise on Du Yu:

亮在雍州、讀杜預傳、見為八磨、嘉其有濟時用、遂教民為碾。及為僕射、奏於張方橋東堰穀水、造水碾磨數十區、其利十倍、國用便之。

While Cui Liang was in Yong Province, he read Du Yu's biography and noticed that Yu had created an eight-part milling mechanism. Impressed by the usefulness of the mechanism, Liang directed the people to create watermills. When he had become Supervisor of the Masters of Writing [Shangshu pushe], Liang made an address to the Throne and created a dam on the east side of Zhangfang Bridge and dozens of watermills. The undertaking yielded profits tenfold and contributed further to the country's coffers.

Unfortunately, no accounts of the watermill construction appear in the Book of Jin or in any of the sources that were used as the history of Jin before the Book of Jin was published.⁷ Still, the above passage suggests that Du Yu was a problem-solver who accomplished great works for the people, the bridge construction being but one example. Below, I discuss some examples from the Book of Jin that portray Du Yu in this way, and relate them to the circumstances in Northern Wei at the time.

The biography mentions that during the Xianning era (275–280), Du Yu frequently advised Emperor Wu of Jin on the matter of a locust plague. One such case is also mentioned in Volume 26 of the Book of Jin (食貨志 Food and Commodities).⁸ Du Yu was praised for his prudent approach to policy in all aspects; he is described as having “weighed the costs and benefits,” earning the name Du Wuku (杜武庫 “Du the Arsenal”)⁹; this phrasing appears in a text praising Du Yu's political expertise. The text is from an engraving on the Chengyang Wanghui (城陽王

徽) tomb dated the 11th month and 19th day of 532, which was toward the very end of the Northern Wei dynasty. The engraving credits four individuals as gifted political operators: Chen Qun (陳群), Du Yu, Mao Jie (毛玠), and Shan Tao (山濤). The descriptions of the three men beside Du Yu focus on their skilled use of human resources, while the description of Du Yu himself focuses on the man's prudent approach in "weighing the costs and benefits."¹⁰ This description evidently intended to illustrate the statesmanship of the tomb's owner. For this purpose, Du Yu was cited as an example of one who rose to prominence for his policymaking.

Du Yu also restored the vestiges of Shao Xincheng's administration. The governor-general of Nanyang Province, Shao Xincheng (邵信臣), had undertaken the irrigation of the surrounding land during the Western Han period (Book of Han, Vol. 89: Upright Officials 循吏傳). Around the time of the military campaign against Wu, Du Yu established a farming colony (屯田 tuntian) in Jing Province. In doing so, he restored the vestiges of Shao's rule by utilizing the irrigation channels and spring water to fertilize the land, for which he earned the name Du Fu (杜父 Father Du).¹¹ The Book of Wei alludes admiringly to this work in the following passage. The account concerned a report to Emperor Xiaowen by the Regional Inspector of Xu Province, Xue Huzi (薛虎子). Xue had identified the rampant embezzlement of food stocks and silk among the province's soldiery. In his report, he advised that the soldiers be given the work of cultivating the fertile land.

昔杜預田宛葉以平吳、充國耕西零以強漢。臣雖識謝古人、任當邊守、庶竭塵露、有增山海。

Du Yu of old pacified Wu by introducing farming colonies in Wan and Ye. Zhao Chongguo reclaimed the virgin lands, thereby strengthening the Han soldiery. Though falling far short of those men of old in wisdom, I beg leave to take on the task of guarding the frontier. I pledge that, in such capacity, I shall contribute to the nation in some modest way.

Wan and Ye formed part of Nanyang, on Jing Province's frontier. A biography of Zhao Chongguo is presented in Volume 69 of the Book of Han. Inspired by the way in which Du Yu and Zhao Chongguo had spearheaded efforts to fortify the frontier, Xue Huzi followed in their footsteps by establishing a farming colony himself.

Thus, in Northern Wei, Du Yu was celebrated for a range of achievements as a statesman and problem solver. Examples include building the pontoon bridge, building watermills, tackling a locust plague, and pacifying Wu by means of a farming colony.

4. Du Yu's tomb and the sentiments it evoked: Emperor Xiaowen and Li Chong

Among the Book of Wei's content on Du Yu, there are three references to his tomb. Before discussing these, we should clarify the status of this tomb by examining the descriptions of it in his biography in the Book of Jin.

Du Yu died at the age of 63 in 285, the fifth year (with an intercalary month added) of the Taikang era during the reign of Emperor Wu of Jin. In Du Yu's deathbed testament (遺令 yiling), he recounted that during a visit to Mount Xing (邢山) in Mi County as part of his official duties, he discovered and paid tribute at a mausoleum thought to entomb either Jizhong or Zichan, both

of whom were men of Zheng from the Spring and Autumn periods. Du Yu then explained the manner of the funeral and why he desired such a simple funeral. In other words, Du Yu was giving instructions for his own funeral. The following passage from the biography describes where Du Yu wanted to be buried.

因郭氏喪亡、緣陪陵舊義、自表營洛陽城東、首陽之南、為將來兆域。而所得地、中有小山、上無舊塚。其高顯雖未足比邢山、然東奉二陵、西瞻宮闕、南觀伊洛、北望夷叔。曠然遠覽、情之所安也。

Since his wife, Guo Shi, had died, the bodies were to be buried together in accordance with ancient custom. Du Yu made an address to the Emperor himself: “I wish a plot be prepared for my burial on eastern outskirts of Luoyang and on the south side of Mount Shouyang. In the land acquired, there is a moderately sized hill with no old graves. The altitude is not to be compared with Mount Xing. However, there are two imperial tombs¹² to the east. These offer a commanding view of an imperial palace to the west. To the south may be seen the Yi-Luo rivers. To the north, there is a view of the place where Boyi and Shuqi fell [Mount Shouyang]. The site has a commanding view for many leagues around. This is indeed a place where my spirit may find repose.

In summary, Du Yu specified his burial location: he wanted to be buried on the outskirts of the Luoyang citadel.¹³ The Book of Wei’s first reference to Du Yu’s tomb comes in the biography of Li Chong (李冲 Volume 53). According to this biography, when Li Chong died at the age of 49, Emperor Xiaowen of Northern Wei tearfully decreed that Li’s memory be immortalized and conferred on him the posthumous title of Wenmu. The account continues:

葬於覆舟山、近杜預冢、高祖之意也。後車駕自鄴還洛、路經冲墓、左右以聞、高祖臥疾望墳、掩泣久之。詔曰：「司空文穆公、德為時宗、勳簡朕心。不幸徂逝、託墳邱嶺。旋鑾覆舟、躬睇塋域。悲仁惻舊、有慟朕衷。可遣太牢之祭、以申吾懷。」及與留京百官相見、皆敘冲亡沒之故、言及流淚。

It was Gaozu [Emperor Xiaowen] who wanted the body buried in Mount Fuzhou, near the tomb of Du Yu. On his return to Luoyang from Ye, the Emperor passed by the grave where Li Chong was buried. When his ministers informed him of the tomb, the Emperor fell down and gazed back toward the tomb, weeping long and hard. Said he, “The Minister of Works, Duke Wenmu [Li Chong], lived a life of the utmost virtue. Let his life’s work be honored. His death is lamentable. We saw to it that he be buried on Beimang ridge. Our chariot drove to Mount Fuzhou, and We beheld his grave. How We mourn his compassion and mercies, which have touched Our heart most deeply. Let a greater lot [太牢 tai lao; a bull, sheep, and pig used in higher ritual occasions] be sacrificed to convey Our sentiments.” The Emperor then met with his ministers whom he had left in the capital during his absence, and discussed the circumstances of Li Chong’s death. Everyone wept with each word.

“Beimang ridge” refers to Mount Beimang, situated on the northeastern outskirts of the Luoyang citadel. The area was known for being riddled with ancient tombs. Emperor Xiaowen

was likely referring to the mountain range as a whole, of which Mount Beimang was the center. Mount Fuzhou, on the other hand, referred to a mountain in the area, and it was there that Li Chong's tomb was made. Emperor Xiaowen had left Li Chong in charge of the capital while he was overseeing a military campaign to pacify the south. The biography states that Li Chong became ill and mentally unstable, and that his ailment advanced during the Emperor's campaign. His final moments were said to have been heart-wrenching. Emperor Xiaowen was not around to witness Li Chong's death, but he made a point of specifying Mount Fuzhou as the burial place, and his reasoning was that it was close to where Du Yu was buried.

A related account appears in Volume 142 of the Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance (資治通鑑 Zizhi Tongjian) in the section on Southern Qi in the year 499, or year 1 of the Yongyuan era ("month 1, year of the dog, fifth heavenly stem"). The account describes Emperor Xiaowen passing by Li Chong's grave as follows: "When the Lord of Northern Wei [Emperor Xiaowen] came unto Luoyang, he visited the grave of Li Chong" (魏主至洛陽、過李冲冢。). Regarding this statement, Hu Sanxing (胡三省) added the following annotation:

魏主令葬冲於洛陽覆舟山，近杜預冢，今自鄴還過其冢。按魏主詔代人遷洛者葬洛，餘州從便。冲，隴西人也。以其貴寵、亦令葬洛。

The Lord of Northern Wei [Emperor Xiaowen] had instructed that Li Chong be buried in Mount Fuzhou, near the grave of Du Yu. [At this point in the text], the Lord is visiting Li Chong's grave during his homeward voyage from Ye. My research suggests that the Lord of Northern Wei issued an edict stating that ministers who moved to Luoyang in his stead should be buried in Luoyang and that ministers in other provinces should be buried wherever it was convenient. Li Chong was a distinguished man of Longxi. As such, he received grace and favor. Hence, the Lord ordained that he be buried in Luoyang.

The edict to which Hu Sanxing refers was issued in the sixth month of 495 (year 10 of Taihe by the Northern Wei era names).¹⁴ Hu Sanxing asserted that Li Chong had been buried in Luoyang, on Emperor Xiaowen's orders, on the basis that he had received grace and favor from the latter. This may seem like a reasonable conjecture. The site may have also been selected because the Beimang mountain area housed imperial tombs as well as neatly ordered tombs for eminent families. In Hu's estimation, Li Chong's eminent standing, as a man of Li of Longxi, would have been taken into account. In other words, Hu believed that Li was entombed in part of Emperor Xiaowen's tomb cluster because he was of high standing.¹⁵

Are these reasons really sufficient to explain why Li Chong was buried in Mount Fuzhou, and, moreover, next to Du Yu's tomb? Emperor Xiaowen never explained his reasons directly, but we can find some clues in two of the roles Li Chong performed for the Emperor.

The first of these roles was that of a policymaker, like Du Yu. Li Chong's biography in the Book of Wei credits him with creating system of local government called the "three-heads system" (三長制 sanzhang zhi), which operated in tandem with the equal field (均田 juntian) system.¹⁶ Li Chong and Emperor Xiaowen paved the way for the arrival of a fundamental policy on household registration and land allotment. Given that (as stated in the previous section) Du Yu was acclaimed

in Northern Wei as a sagacious statesman, Emperor Xiaowen's praise for Li Chong overlapped with the acclaim that Du Yu garnered.

Li Chong also played a key role in helping Emperor Xiaowen relocate the capital to Luoyang. In this role, too, Li Chong's work came to be equated with Du Yu's pacification of Wu.

高祖初謀南遷、恐衆心戀舊、乃示為大舉、因以脅定羣情、外名南伐、其實遷也。舊人懷土、多所不願、內憚南征、無敢言者、於是定都洛陽。

When Gaozu [Emperor Xiaowen] first made known his plans to move the capital south to Luoyang, the people expressed misgivings, for they wished to remain in the land to which they were accustomed. Therefore, the Emperor mustered a large army to quell the disquiet, and he named the enterprise the "Campaign to Pacify the South." But the real purpose was to relocate the capital. The people, having sentimental ties with the land going back countless generations, desired against the capital's relocation; but no man dared object to a military expedition. It was in this way that the relocation of the capital to Luoyang was accomplished.

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Thus, faced with a populace opposed to the relocation, Emperor Xiaowen used the ruse of a southward military expedition to persuade them to change their minds, if rather coercively. As the General Who Pacifies the South (鎮南將軍 Zhennan jiangjun), Li Chong discharged his duty of mustering the troops, ostensibly for the purpose of "pacifying the South."¹⁷ Du Yu, in his time, had contributed significantly to the pacification of Wu as the Senior General Who Pacifies the South (鎮南大將軍 Zhennan da jiangjun). Thus, Li Chong's actions once again overlapped with those of Du Yu.

We should of course remember that these overlaps between Du Yu and Li Chong are speculative; Emperor Xiaowen never explicitly mentioned them. Still, Hu Sanxing's assertion—that the "grace and favor" Li Chong received explains why he was buried in Luoyang—seems too simplistic. Surely, there must have been a particular reason why Emperor Xiaowen expressly ordered that the burial be near to Du Yu, and the circumstances I outlined above seem to fit.

5. Du Yu's tomb and the sentiments it evoked: Emperor Xuanwu, Wang Su, and Fu Yong

In the previous section, we learned that Du Yu's tomb featured in the relationship between Emperor Xiaowen and Li Chong. In later years, it similarly played a role in the relationship between Emperor Xuanwu of Northern Wei and Wang Su (王肅), as revealed by the latter's biography in Volume 63 of the Book of Wei. Dated 502 (Jingming 2), the passage below quotes the second edict the Emperor Xuanwu made on the matter of Wang Su's death at the age of 38.

「死生動靜、卑高有域、勝達所居、存亡崇顯。故杜預之歿、窆於首陽、司空李沖、覆舟是託。顧瞻斯所、誠亦二代之九原也。故揚州刺史肅、誠義結於二世、英惠符於李杜。平生本意、願終京陵、既有宿心、宜遂先志。其令葬於沖預兩墳之間、使之神遊相得也。」

“When it comes to the circumstances of life and death, there are burial plots with tombs organized by rank. Men of achievement lie in distinguished tombs, such that these cherished personages never truly die.¹⁸ It was on this wisdom that Du Yu was buried in Mount Shouyang, and Minister of Works (Sikong) Li Chong was buried in Mount Fuzhou. Beholding those burial sites today, We have no doubt that Wang Su, who served two Emperors [Emperor Xuanwu himself and his predecessor, Emperor Xiaowen], is worthy of being entombed there. During his life, Wang Su served as Regional Inspector of Yang Province, displaying sincerity (誠義 chengyi) to two Emperors. His sagacity (英惠 yinghui) equaled that of Li and Du. He desired that his body should be included among the imperial tombs of Our capital, Luoyang. Let Us grant his request. He shall be buried between the tombs of Li Chong and Du Yu so that his spirit shall be in communion with the two personages.”

Where Emperor Xiaowen had positioned Li Chong at equal status with Du Yu in terms of burial, this time round, Emperor Xuanwu included Wang Su in this relationship. We also learn from this quotation that Wang had himself desired to be buried in an imperial burial plot. This desire was related to the standardization of imperial burials, which, as alluded to earlier, had begun in Emperor Xiaowen’s time. Most importantly, Emperor Xuanwu stated his desire to see Wang’s corpse placed between Du Yu and Li Chong so that his spirit could be in communion with them. This desire indicates the symbolic weight of Du Yu and Li Chong’s tombs. We can get an insight into this symbolic significance in the writings of Zhao Yi (趙翼), a writer living during the Qing Dynasty. In the 39th volume of *Gaiyu Congkao* (陔餘叢考), titled “六李杜二袁劉二鮑謝四蘇李三李郭兩元白,” Zhao highlighted six examples across a period spanning the Eastern Han to the Song Dynasty, where the name of Li appeared alongside the name of Du. Among the six examples Zhao cited, famous Li Bai (李白) and Du Fu (杜甫) can be scanned and the examples also include the edict of Emperor Xuanwu shown above. The five other examples were all references made when the persons concerned were still alive. The above example is unlike these five examples in that the reference to Li Chong and Du Yu came during the time of Northern Wei, many years after the time of Western Jin. In other words, it was by no means common to link the two men together. Hence, when Emperor Xiaowen and Emperor Xuanwu linked the two, they were not simply reflecting a broad trend; they were actively and purposively making the connection.

So what did Emperor Xuanwu see in Wang Su that made him think of Li Chong and Du Yu? The part of the edict in which Li and Du are linked is as follows: “故揚州刺史肅誠義結於二世、英惠符於李杜 As Regional Inspector of Yang Province, Wang Su displayed **sincerity** to two Emperors. His **sagacity** equaled that of Li and Du.” The biography of Wang Su that appears in the History of the Northern Dynasties used “忠義 zhongyi” (“loyalty”) in place of “誠義 chengyi,” suggesting that the two terms were held as synonymous. The reference to Wang Su’s “sincerity” can therefore be read as praise for his “loyalty.” As for “英惠 yinghui,” we can interpret this as “sagacity,” but we are still left with the question: In what sense was Wang Su considered sagacious? It is hard to tell from the statement alone, but Wang Su’s biography in the Book of

Wei suggests that Xuanwu may have considered Wang sagacious for the role he played in Northern Wei's pacification of the south. To give some context, Wang was originally a man of the South Dynasty, but after his father and brother were slain by Emperor Wu of Southern Qi, he fled to the North in 494 (Taihe 17). He then had an audience with Emperor Xiaowen. Wang informed the emperor that Southern Qi was showing signs of demise and advised military intervention. Emperor Xiaowen then grew increasingly keen on a campaign to pacify the South. The two men sometimes held meetings through the night. Wang declared that he would serve the Emperor as Zhuge Kongming (諸葛孔明) served Liu Bei (劉備), declaring that he would display unswervingly loyalty, advise sincerely, and conceal nothing. As part of his service, Wang commanded a successful campaign in Southern Qi, for which he was granted the title the General Who Pacifies the South,¹⁹ just as Du Yu and Li Chong had been. Thus, when we consider how Wang was tied in with Du and Li in their service as generals who pacified the South, it should become clear that the Emperor used the term “英惠 yinghui” in order to juxtapose or couple praise for Wang's loyalty to Northern Wei with praise for his military genius in pacifying the South (“he was, on the one hand, loyal; on the other hand, he was also a military genius”).

This series of privileged burials—first Du Yu, then Li Chong, and then Wang Su—came to an end with the reign of Emperor Xiaoming. The person in this case was Fu Yong, who died aged 83 in 516 (Xiping 1). Fu's biography in the Book of Wei (Volume 70), after describing his death, gives the following account.

永嘗登北邙、於平坦處、奮稍躍馬、盤旋瞻望、有終焉之志。遠慕杜預、近好李冲・王肅、欲葬附其墓、遂買左右地數頃、遺敕子叔偉曰：「此吾之永宅也。」

Fu Yong once ascended Mount Beimang and rode a horse around a flat area, admiring the scenery. Aware of his impending death, Fu pined after Du Yu, from the distant past, and paid his respects to Li Chong and Wang Su, from the more recent past. He then fancied that he should like to be buried alongside them. Accordingly, he purchased a plot of land nearby and said to his son, Shuwei, “Let this be my eternal resting place.”

As it turned out, Fu Yong's wish was never granted. Shuwei, the son mentioned in the account, was a bastard son, and a dispute over Fu's burial arose between him and Fu's lawful wife, Jia.²⁰ At any rate, the salient point is that Fu Yong pined after Du Yu, paid respects to the more recently deceased Li Chong and Wang Su, and sought to be buried alongside them. Thus, Wang Su became the final man in the series of burials associated with Du Yu. However, although Fu Yong's dying wish never came to pass, the example was nonetheless notable for an important reason: The desire for burial near Du Yu came from Fu himself; it was not the Emperor who designated that burial spot. Fu Yong must have fetishized the status of Li Chong and Wang Su—how they were granted leave by the Emperor to be buried in a cluster of imperial tombs. The primary motivation for Fu's desire to be buried there, however, was his pining sentiments toward Du Yu, which was also the primary reason Li and Wang chose to be buried there.

Did Fu Yong and the people of his time hold Du Yu in esteem only because his name was associated with Li Chong and Wang Su? Apparently not, at least not according to a passage from

the Book of Wei concerning the period in question. The passage in question is from biography of Yuan Fan (Volume 69):

肅宗・靈太后、曾醺於華林園、舉觴謂羣臣曰：「袁尚書朕之杜預、欲以此杯敬屬元凱、今為盡之。」侍座者莫不羨仰。

Suzong [Emperor Xiaoming] and the Empress Dowager once held a banquet in Hualin Garden. The Emperor raised his glass, saying to his ministers, “Yuan Fan, Chief Steward for Writing [Shanghsu], is like my Du Yu. Let us raise a toast to Du Yuankai [Du Yu].” All those in attendance envied him.

On reading this passage, readers may recall the banquet that was held to celebrate the completion of Du Yu’s pontoon bridge. On that occasion, the Emperor toasted Du Yu. This time round, Emperor Xiaoming was toasting Yuan Fan, whom he equated to Du Yu. Thus, the toast was a throwback to the past. Invoking this past event, the Emperor toasted both the historic Du Yu and his own version of Du Yu, Yuan Fan.

But why Du Yu? In other words, what was it about Yuan Fan that made the Emperor Xiaoming regard him as his own Du Yu? A glance through Yuan Fan’s career, as outlined in the above biography, reveals that Yuan was a noted scholar; he undertook archival duties and engaged in discussions for making laws. He also proposed plans for repairing the Hall of Light (明堂 Mingtang) and the Circular Moat (辟雍 Biyong). Toward the end of the Shengui era (518–520), Yuan served as Regional Inspector of Liang Province, which bordered the Rouran Khaganate to the north. In that office, he was asked by the court to advise on how Northern Wei should respond to the demise of the Khaganate, which had come after a civil war among the Rouran, which resulted in the surrender to Northern Wei of the Rouran chieftain Anagui and “Last Ruler” (後主 Houzhu) Poluomen. Yuan’s advice was accepted as policy. The man was adept at currying favor in the court, and he ingratiated himself with the Empress Dowager. While ostensibly disinterested in position and rank, he was inwardly politically ambitious. This quality attracted criticism among the intellectuals.

Thus, it was Yuan Fan’s ability to ingratiate himself with the Empress Dowager and her son, Emperor Xiaoming, that culminated in the toast. That would explain why Yuan Fan himself was appraised, but it still does not account for why the Emperor, in praising Yuan Fan, invoked Du Yu. For this, we should consider the relevance of Yuan Fan’s service as Regional Inspector of Liang Province. In this role, far from being a mere sycophant, Yuan took the initiative and proffered his own policies for protecting the border with the Rouran. Here, we see the parallel with Du Yu, Li Chong, and Wang Su: While Yuan Fan may not have engaged in a southward military expedition, he followed in the three men’s footsteps in that he played a key role in shoring up the frontier.

The fact that the Emperor likened Yuan Fan to Du Yu convincingly demonstrates that Du had a special place in the Emperor’s mind and in the society of the time. Given this, it seems unlikely that Fu Yong, whose death came in the time of Emperor Xiaoming, only held Du Yu in esteem because his name was associated with Li Chong and Wang Su; it is more likely that Du Yu was, by the time of Emperor Xiaoming, still being celebrated and pined after in Northern Wei.

Conclusion

This paper explored the reputation of Du Yu in Northern Wei from various angles. In their accounts of Du Yu, the compilers of the Authorized Histories tended only to cite his Zuo Tradition-commentary as evidence to support their own narrative on formalities. This tells us that his commentary profoundly influenced later generations. However, it gives us precious little information about what kind of person Du Yu was.

It is notable, then, that by the time of the Song Dynasty, Du Yu was being compared with Yang Hu (羊祜). For example, Volume 11 of the Xian Ping Collection (咸平集 Xian Ping Ji) contains a treatise by Tian Xi titled Comparison of Yan Hu and Du Yu (羊祜杜預優劣論 Yan Hu Du Yu Youlie Lun). In this treatise, Tian Xi (田錫) argued that in pacifying Wu, Du Yu was following in the footsteps of Yang Hu. However, while Tian credits both men with pacifying Wu in their respective times, he argues that Yang Hu was the better man: Yang, he claimed, had a good eye for people, while Du failed to choose men who could contribute to the nation.

In the Record of Mount Xian Pavilion (硯山亭集 Xianshan Ting Ji) in Volume 40 of the Collection of the Hermit (居士集 Jushi Ji), Ouyang Xiu (歐陽脩) criticized Du Yu for creating two steles in his own honor, erecting one of them on Mount Xian and casting the other into a pool.²¹ More notable, however, is a passage preceding this criticism, in which Ouyang discussed the vestiges of Yan Hu and Du Yu that remained in the Han River valley: “Du Yuankai [Du Yu] and Yang Hu both achieved honor in their own different ways, the former for his military exploits, and the latter for his benevolence. While they did different things, they are both worthy of eternal fame” (蓋元凱以其功、而叔子以其仁、二子所為雖不同、皆足以垂于不朽). In other words, military success was the source of Du Yu’s fame, and acclaim for such success continued to resound in the Song Dynasty. If Du Yu’s name was still being associated with military success as late as the time of Song, then it would have been all the more celebrated for such back in the time of Northern Wei. That is, against a backdrop in which Northern Wei was relocating its capital to Luoyang and increasingly asserting itself over its southern neighbor, Du Yu’s pacification of Wu would have resonated powerfully, making him a popular hero and leaving an indelible mark in the collective memory.²²

Moreover, in the collective memory of Northern Wei, Du Yu did more than pacify the south and fortify the frontier. This paper presented some examples of Du Yu’s accomplishments as a statesman and problem solver. These accomplishments became legendary and lived on vividly in the hearts and minds of the people of Northern Wei, such that Du Yu became a popular role model; when faced with a given situation, people would recall Du Yu’s actions in that situation and emulate his example. There are plentiful references to Du Yu in the Book of Wei and in various inscriptions from that time.

All too often, we have regarded Du Yu only in terms of the Zuo Tradition, in some cases reducing him to an exegetical model. Admittedly, the commentary Du Yu produced was so significant that it has now become the go-to commentary for anyone who reads the Zuo Tradition today. But what of Du Yu the man? This paper presented accounts from the Book of Wei and other historical sources from Northern Wei revealing a more rounded portrait of the man, and it

behooves us to examine this further.

Note

¹ 自魏末、大儒徐遵明門下、講鄭玄所注周易。遵明以傳盧景裕及清河崔瑾。[...] 齊時、儒士罕傳尚書之業、徐遵明兼通之。遵明受業于屯留王聰、傳授浮陽李周仁及勃海張文敬・李鉉・河間權會、並鄭康成所注、非古文也。[...] 三禮並出遵明之門。

² However, this distinction was by no means absolute. Du Yu's Zuo Tradition-exegesis prevailed, for example, in the region of Qi (齊 in Shandong), due to the fact that Du Yu's great-grandsons, Du Tan and Du Ji, successively served as the Regional Inspector (刺史 Cishi) of Qin Province during the reign of Emperor Wen (424–453).

Book of Wei, Vol. 84: Confucian Scholars, Introduction.

Moreover, in time, Du Yu's exegesis would rise to prominence in some parts of the North.

History of the Northern Dynasties, Vol. 81: Confucian Scholars, Introduction.

Guimei, J. (2009). *Nan Bei chao jing xue shi* [History of the Confucian classics of the Northern and Southern Dynasties.]. Shanghai: Shanghai Classics Publishing House.

³ Miyagawa, H. (1956). Hokuchō ni okeru kizoku seido [Noble family system in the Northern Dynasties]. In H. Miyagawa (Ed.). *Rikuchō shi kenkyū: Seiji shakai hen* [History of the Six Dynasties: Politics and society]. Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

See chapters 3 and 4 in the following:

Tanigawa, M. (1977). *Sekai teikoku no keisei* [Formation of a world empire]. Kodansha.

⁴ 初以良家子選入太子宮、有寵、生世祖。

Book of Wei, Volume 13 (Biographies of Empresses).

⁵ 帝征吳、以畿為尚書僕射、統留事。其後帝幸許昌、畿復居守。受詔作御樓船、於陶河試船、遇風沒。帝為之流涕。詔曰 [...] 故尚書僕射杜畿、於孟津試船、遂至覆沒、忠之至也。朕甚潛焉。

Book of Wei (in Records of the Three Kingdoms), Vol. 16 (Biographies of Duji).

⁶ For more on the Stone Gate Inscription and on the work of Ma Deheng, which the inscription related to Du Yu's bridge construction, refer to the Japanese kundoku transcription and exegesis in the following:

Hokuchō Sekkoku Shiryō Han [Northern Dynasties Stone Inscriptions Research Team] (2011). Hokuchō sekkoku shiryō senshū: 1 [Selection from stone inscriptions in Northern dynasties: General remarks and annotations: 1]. *Journal of Oriental Studies*, 86, 465–477.

⁷ See the following source for more on how the dams were constructed and the role they played in the history of Chinese science:

Hashimoto, K. (1974). Kandai no kikai [Han dynasty machinery]. *Journal of Oriental Studies*, 46.

⁸ The account in the biography of Du Yu cites the fourth year of Xianning as the date, while the account in the Food and Commodities volume cites the date as the third year of that reign.

⁹ 咸寧四年秋、大霖雨、蝗蟲起。預上疏多陳農要、事在食貨志。預在內七年、損益萬機、不可勝數、朝野稱美、號曰杜武庫、言其無所不有也。

¹⁰ 魏故使持節侍中太保大司馬錄尚書事司州牧城陽王墓誌銘

Zhao, C. (1996). *Han Wei Nanbei chao muzhi huibian* [Tomb engravings from the Han, Wei, and the Northern and Southern dynasties]. Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe.

¹¹ 又修邵信臣遺跡、激用滄・涓諸水、以浸原田萬餘頃、分疆刊石、使有定分、公私同利。衆庶賴之、號曰杜父。

¹² According to Fukuhara (2012), the two tombs Junping and Chongyang entomb, respectively, Sima Yi and Sima Zhao. See Note 37 on page 414 of the following:

Fukuhara, A. (2012). *Gi shin seiji shakai shi kenkyū* [History of politics and society in the Wei and Jin dynasties]. Kyoto: Kyoto University Press.

¹³ See the following for more on Du Yu's burial:

Matsubara, A. (1994). Toho Doyo haka tanbōki [Investigation of the graves of Du Fu and Du Yu]. *Studies in classical Chinese literature*, 13.

¹⁴ 魏有司奏、廣川王妃葬於代都、未審以新尊從舊卑、以舊卑就就新尊。魏主曰、代人遷洛者、宜悉葬邙山。其先有夫死於代者、聽妻還葬。夫死於洛者、不得還代就妻。其餘州之人、自聽從便。丙辰、詔、遷洛之民、死葬河南、不得還北。於是代人南遷洛者、悉爲河南洛陽人。

Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance, Vol. 142, Qi part 6, Jianwu (Emperor Ming of Southern Qi) 2.

See also the following two sections from the Book of Wei:

Book of Wei, Vol. 20: Emperor Wencheng's Five Princes, Duke of Guangchuan; Vol. 7b Annals: Gaozu 2 (Emperor Xiaowen), Taaihe 19, six month, year of the dragon of the third heavenly stem

¹⁵ See the following sources for more information:

Su, B. (1978). Bei Wei Luoyangcheng he Beimang lingmu: Xianbei yi ji jilu zhi san [Remains of the Northern Wei city and tombs: Part 3]. *Wenwu*, 7.

Mukai, Y. (2009). Hokugi no kōko shiryō to senpi no kanka [Archaeological evidence from the Northern Wei and the sinification of the Xianbei]. *Journal of Oriental Studies*, 68(3).

According to Chen (1999), after Li Chong's time, Mount Fuzhou became the burial place for members of the Li of Longxi, as suggested by a number of grave inscriptions.

Chen, R. (1999). Cong <Tang Xuan> kan Tang dai shizu shenghuo yu xin taide ji ge fangmian [Aspects of Tang aristocratic life and mentality as seen in Tang Hsuan]. *Xin shixue*, 10(2). Footnote 27.

The examples Chen cites are as follows: Inscription on the Tomb of Li Jianzi; Inscription on the Tomb of Princess Wuxuan of Pengcheng, Wei, and of the House of Li; and Inscription on the Tomb of Gu Huai of Wei. They are taken from the following source:

Zhao, C. (1996). *Han Wei Nanbei chao muzhi huibian* [Tomb engravings from the Han, Wei, and the Northern and Southern dynasties]. Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe. Pp. 48, 148–150, 293, 160.

¹⁶ There is plenty of literature on both systems. I have primarily relied on the following source:

Hou, X. (2010). Beichao: Sanzhang zhi [Northern Dynasties: The three-heads system]. In

Beichao cunmin de shenghuo shijie: Chaoting, zhouxian yu cunli [Life of the Northern Dynasties villager: Court, state, county, and village]. Beijing: The Commercial Press.

¹⁷ Matsushita, K. (2007). *Hokugi no Rakuyō sento* [Northern Wei's relocation of the capital to Luoyang]. In *Hokugi kozoku taisei ron* [Formation of the Northern Wei nomadic state]. Hokkaido: Hokkaido University Press.

¹⁸ The phrase “存亡崇顯” is hard to decipher. In translating the phrase, I referred to the entry for “存亡” in the Comprehensive Chinese Word Dictionary (漢語大詞典 *Hanyu Da Cidian*). The entry defines the phrase as “使瀕臨滅亡或已亡者得以繼續存在或延續,” citing as evidence two passages from the classics. The first is from Volume 30 (Duke Zhao [昭公 Zhao gong], Year 18) of the Commentary to the Spring and Autumn Annals in the Zuo Tradition. It reads: “諸侯脩盟、存小國也。貢獻無極、亡可待也。存亡之制、將在今矣。” The second is from the “Further Remarks on the State” volume in the Discourses in the Balance (論衡 *Lunheng*). It reads: “世有死而復生之人、人必謂之神、漢統絕而復屬、光武存亡、可謂優矣。”

¹⁹ 父奐及兄弟、並為蕭蹟所殺。肅自建業來奔。是歲、太和十七年也。高祖幸鄴、聞肅至、虛襟待之、引見問故。肅辭義敏切、辯而有禮、高祖甚哀惻之。遂語及為國之道、肅陳說治亂、音韻雅暢、深會帝旨。高祖嗟納之、促席移景、不覺坐之疲淹也。因言蕭氏危滅之兆、可乘之機、勸高祖大舉。於是圖南之規轉銳、器重禮遇、日有加焉、親貴舊臣、莫能間也。或屏左右相對談說、至夜分不罷。肅亦盡忠輸誠、無所隱避、自謂君臣之際、猶劉玄德之遇孔明也。[...] 以破蕭鸞將裴叔業功、進號鎮南將軍。

Book of Wei, Biography of Wang su.

²⁰ The situation was rather convoluted, as the following passage suggests:

永妻賈氏、留於本鄉、永至代都、娶妾馮氏、生叔偉及數女。賈後歸平城、無男、唯一女。馮侍子事賈無禮、叔偉亦奉賈不順、賈常忿之。馮先永亡、及永之卒、叔偉稱父命欲葬北邙。賈疑叔偉將以馮合葬、賈遂求歸葬永於所封貝丘縣。事經司徒、司徒胡國珍、本與永同經征役、感其所慕、許叔偉葬焉。賈乃邀訴靈太后、靈太后遂從賈意。事經朝堂、國珍理不能得、乃葬於東清河。

²¹ 預好為後世名、常言高岸為谷、深谷為陵、刻石為二碑、紀其勳績、一沈萬山之下、一立峴山之上、曰、焉知此後不為陵谷乎。

Book of Jin, Biography of Du Yu.

²² See the following source for more on the perceptions of Yang Hu and what influenced them:

Kawai, K. (2003). *Kenzan no namida: Yōko “daruihi” no keishō* [Tears of Mount Xian: The legacy of the “stele for shedding tears”]. In K. Kawai (Ed.), *Chūgoku no aruba: keifu no shigaku* [China's alba: Poetic lineages]. Kyuko Shoin.