Dwelling on Place in Du Fu’s Late Poems (draft: for conference Sinologists only)

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In the well-worked mine of Du Fu studies, any "new approach" promising to open up an easily accessible, productive new shaft sounds too good to work out. Supposing we touted a “valuable new approach to 杜甫’s verse,” you’d likely raise an eyebrow and ask: "how?" Still, we assert "place"地方 as a worthwhile new adit into Du Fu’s verse, which can enrich our readings with a fresh payload of ore.

Naturally, “place” analysis does not simply map Du Fu’s whereabouts; nor do we mean the somewhat more interesting “linguistic map” you can obtain from a concordance. To mine high-grade ore, we must expand and enrich our understanding of place in at least three directions. First, place studies usually insist that place, beyond location and locale, demands a robust sense of place.1 Second, we need to recall literary (metaphorical and symbolic) applications of space, particularly the topoi or "commonplaces" that since classical times have helped organize texts.2 Finally, place in traditional Chinese literature demands a dynamic, relational understanding. You can't effectively consider it independent of time, momentum, and other processual factors.3

When researching traditional China, we must contemplate not only "地方”—itself available to a range of metaphorical applications—but also a wider range of 所, such as psychological states, strategically placed lore, and framing/pivoting signs. Thus, we’ll examine how Du Fu mobilizes "場合/情況”—a broad complex of settings and situated predicaments that not only address

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1 Agnew, 1987; see esp. Tuan 1977 on psychological aspects of place-formation; Casey 2000, especially strong on the roles played by memory; Heidegger, “Building Dwelling Thinking” 1971.
2 Curtius 1953:80.
3 On place in Warring States texts, see david McCraw, “Metaphors of Place in Four Warring States Texts: Carole in Wanderland” 2016.
"where does he stand?" but also "how does he proceed? (a life course perspective)" Rather than a static "where do we find Du Fu located in this poem?" his poems often begin by answering "whence?" has Du Fu come—commonly in a symbolic or social sense. After a series of complex maneuvers that customarily involve a pivotal move from "before-the-eyes" sites to more visionary or imaginary ones (實虛), they usually end by answering the question "whither?" In his later poems, Du Fu probes at least 13 times the issue: where does my way 吾道 lead? In a sense, almost all his late poems—certainly the vital ones we have come to treasure—ask the question Du Fu posed specifically in wondering about the way to far-off Qizhou (14.13):安在哉!?4 We shall show (in a few minutes!) that amplifying conceptions of place and examining how Du Fu poems take place can provide more articulation than traditional 景/情, 虛/實, or 起承轉合 analytic models. Since a short paper cannot accommodate an extensive proof, we probe narrowly, intensively, and explore a few salient, vigorous recurring patterns. Let’s bore into famous regulated verses from Kuizhou, because if we can mine high-grade new ore from old shafts, they provide a suggestive test-case.

First, 白帝城最高樓: 城尖徑昃旌旆愁.獨立縹緲之飛樓.峽坼雲霾龍虎臥.江清日抱黿鼉遊.扶桑西枝對斷石.弱水東影隨長流.杖藜歎世者誰子.泣血迸空迴白頭 (translations: whose? Old/new? 待考)

4 See, for example: 吾道付滄洲[10.19], 吾道竟如何[12.70]? 吾道竟何之[7.34(秦州雜詩#4/20)? 吾道長悠悠[8.27], 旅泊吾道窮[8.36], 江清日抱黿鼉遊[15.56], 吾道竟何之[8.7]; as well as similar concluding questions raised with slightly different words, e.g.: 24.8 路迷何處是三秦, 草堂 13.39:何地置老夫?歸來知路難 9.2:對此欲何適,9.47 蕭條欲何適?
5 Owen/Qiu 15.11 (henceforth just in brackets or quotes), 蕭條非 6.3564.
This displays a classic cluster from Kuizhou *sites of instruction*: myths, critters, allusions, toponyms, broadened views, homesickness… It also sounds the psychological leitmotif of Du Fu's later years—displacement, alienation, uprooting, defamiliarization.6

Whence has 杜甫 come? Narrowly, up the tortuous path past the steeply looming citadel, and now to its very parapet. Broadly, he has endured more than 10 years of violence, uprooting, flight, dislocation, displacement, and progressive disorientation, to arrive, marooned, on this fragile island of momentary security.7 As so often, Du Fu structures his verse along an axis of *ever-widening vision*, along sites that help answer: "[Can't Help But] Wonder Where I'm Bound?" As his view expands, Du gazes at the equally steep and sinuous forms of gorge and Yangzi, imagining *creatures* in motion there.8 As so often, his third (轉) couplet shifts to an imagined view stretching from the dawn sun's *mythical* root (扶桑) to the dusky River where the sun Founders (弱水); he fancies them illuminating his present path. And where's 杜甫 bound?

He retraces the *mythic* path of legendary southwestern "thearch"(望帝) 杜宇.9 Cut off from his homeland (bedeviled by flood problems like those that inspired Yu to carve out Cloven Rock—

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6 Among other classic examples of defamiliarization, alienation, and displacement, consider (e.g.,) 15.57:南方實有未招魂,The “Summons to the Soul” addressed a departing spirit (Qu Yuan’s, so the tradition had it) and urged it to remain at the center. It repeatedly urged: O Soul! You may not stay…” This conclusion could make sense only from a 中原 central perspective, and so it displaces Du Fu to the very dismal margins that make him disconsolate. See also 23.11:江漢思歸客,乾坤一腐儒(classic); 10.81:海內風塵諸弟隔,天涯涕淚一身遙; 16.18:哀彼遠征人,去家死路旁.不及祖父塋,纍纍冢相當.

7 A world neatly captured shortly before Kuizhou in the ending from 14.5: 已忍伶俜十年事,強移栖息一枝安.

8 Compare 17.11 鶴鶴追飛靜,豺狼得食喧; 10.19 魚鱉為人得,蛟龍不自謀. In both these pivotal couplets (ll.5-6), too, critters serve as triggering topos, setting up the closing response almost in the manner of an "evocative arousal" 興. We might conceive these 物 as catalysts between the ‘given’ 興 scenes/topoi conveying ‘whence’ and the 應 response with which he concludes. 物 play pivotal roles, but do not themselves usually bear the burden of transformation obtaining between *whence* and *whither*.

9 For an exemplary myth that sets a "scene of instruction," see 15.57/蕭 7.3940:楚王宮北正黃昏,白帝城西過雨痕.

For other paradigmatic concluding deployments of myth, see—inter alia—22.28; 23.45 直欲泛仙槎. Often enough, classical myths serve to explore and explain special places (consider tales about Delphi, Thebes, and the like). Chinese literati helped themselves find their way by using salutary and cautionary myths and legends as signposts. Compare allusions, below (note 13), since myths form a subset from that wider body of lore.
see line 5), Du Yu wept tears of blood for his beloved land. But Du Yu purportedly
metamorphosized into a cuckoo, whose melancholy cry (Chinese 不如歸) supposedly calls
"better to go home!" Du Fu, though he turns his head homeward and yearns for the home implied
in line 7 (誰子), cannot find a stable footing that might lead him there. The verse ends in despair,
unable to answer adequately that plaintive “whither.”

白帝: 白帝城中雲出門,白帝城下雨翻盆.高江急峽雷霆鬥,古木蒼藤日月昏.戎馬不如歸馬逸,
千家今有百家存.哀哀寡婦誦求盡,慟哭秋原何處村

15.66 explores similar sites. The places in several salient Kuizhou verses depict a mundus
inversus, a world turned topsy-turvy 顛倒 by chaotic forces; they convey the collapse of order
with counterchange; and they delineate, with expanding scope, the wreck of a civilization. Thus,
1-2 invert the proper places of human dwellings and meteorological phenomena. In 3-4 the
racing river and towering gorges have counterchanged modifiers. The fortress seems besieged;

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10 It will surprise almost no one to hear that you can read Du Fu’s late verses as tales of psychological devastation,
as therapeutic exercises, or as symptomatic of extreme distress. For example, his catalogue of maladies rather
resembles the classic profile of displaced persons. Among the myriad studies on refugees detailing their stresses,
uprooting, maladjustments, cultural conflicts, and other psychologic scars, see:
Medical Care of Refugees (96-103). Oxford University Press.
Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 23, 382-389.
inventory for measuring war-related events in refugees. Comprehensive Psychiatry, 46(1), 67-80.
Miller, K. E. (1999). Rethinking a familiar model: Psychotherapy and the mental health of refugees. Journal of
Contemporary Psychotherapy, 29(4), 283-304.
Miller, K. E., & Rasco, L. M. (Eds.). (2004). The Mental Health of Refugees: Ecological Approaches to Healing and
Ogenga Otunnu, The Displaced: The Psychological and Cultural Effects of Forced Migration; Mental Health Issues
migration/
Kagawa-Singer, 1993).
the surroundings have gotten destabilized. Pivotaly (5-6), we move beyond sight to an imagined political survey inspecting the wretched region; terminally (7-8), lamentations by women "squeezed to death" provoke the foreboding that people can't find any safe "hamlet" to sustain life. 5-6 move centripetally; 7-8 counterchange by reverting to centrifugal dispersion. Du Fu’s conclusion eerily recalls the close from "Song of the Warwains 兵車行," another poem threatened by numerous yin-yang reversals, that ends: 新鬼煩冤舊鬼哭,天陰雨濕聲啾啾. Grieved protests do not so much answer "whither" as lament: 何處？

閣夜(18.13/Xiao 8.4256) 歲暮陰陽催短景,天涯霜雪霽寒宵.五更鼓角聲悲壯.三峽星河影動搖.野哭幾家聞戰伐.夷歌數處起漁樵.臥龍躍馬終黃土.人事音書漫寂寥

End of the Road-We have watched Du Fu's verse get progressively scarred by alienation, defamiliarization, and displacement to 天涯. A stable sense of place steadily erodes from his verse, increasingly a factor more missed than celebrated. Here you’ll find only two minimal places in Du Fu's setting: "heaven's shore/sky's margin" and "Three Gorges." 天涯, of course, resounds ironically as a way to emplace oneself in a poem. As Tsuzaka Kōshaku 津阪孝綽 observed (8.4258):心在此處[feels at home here]則以別處為天涯;心在別處[alienated elsewhere]則以此處[this waystop somewhere]為天涯. A subtle counterchange of qualities enhances this sense: 1 and 4 depict dying or foundering light (陽); 2-3 present countermovements with “clearing” 霽 and “dawn” 五更.
Scanning the night sky, Du Fu, our political weatherman, discerns "quivering" stars reflected in the Yangzi, omens of battle and strife. His pivot turns explicitly to human disasters: home/family might have figured hopefully in a different poetic realm. But these families only wail in grief, while alien songs evoke dire tidings, as in the adage 四面楚歌. Where can this lead? Du Fu's imagination tries reaching out, but neither present nor past offers an escape.

Among available local luminaries, the loyalists lie just as dead as the rebels. Farther away, no one dear or (once) near can relieve his isolation. Displaced and despairing, Du Fu's own song falls silent. Skillfully wielding 典故 becomes a kind of allography, inscribing another site of instruction by making close parallels with historical or, at least, textual events:借古人以自解．

Poets borrow ancient topoi to help find their way, the way that Xie Lingyun helped find his way in landscape poems by deploying allusions as “triggering” transformations. Of course, allusions may emerge faithful to ancient models or overturn them.

Here denying ancient heroism enhances the final mood of dispirited depression. As he does so often, Du Fu has ended with ironic deflation.
4: 秋興:

4a) One of the mythical sites Du Fu envisions in his fantasy-journey to Chang’an 長安 offers us an Ariadne’s thread, a way into this labyrinthine poetic sequence (vii.4):織女機絲虛夜月. You can almost envision Du Fu at his loom, with 秋興 as his tapestry woven along the longitudinal warp of his 夔州 mooring, vs the horizontal weft of deep excursions [神遊憶宮] into a 長安 past. Recall that, although this “Weaver-maid” statue purportedly stood in Chang’an, the raft-explorer who beheld her did so after travelling far up the Yangzi. 15 Whence Du Fu? Anchored (夔) but also marooned upriver; uprooted from the solid, substantial path his northern upbringing would have expected; now adrift on trackless depths in the riparian, ravaged South. Pivot? In weaving textiles, we would call this the “twist” —a 長安 woven of memory and imagination. Whither lies redemption/fulfillment? Whither lies 吾道? For the historical Du Fu, as this sequence’s end suggests, no satisfactory answer existed. As we’ll argue below, students of poetry must look to the weave.

4b) The obvious point—that 秋興 begins in 夔州 and (from the end of iii) proceeds to recall 長安—does not take us nearly far enough. The exuberant inventions in Du Fu’s weave provide most of 秋興’s fascination. For example, he uses different structural organizing patterns for successive topoi. i/iii offer almost paradigmatic “A-type” octets, but he intersperses a radically

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14 For more late examples, see—inter alia—22.1年過半百不稱意,明日看雲還杖藜; 13.1:應結茅齋看青壁。
15 Zhang Hua, Bowuzhi 張華,博物志,10.##: 舊說天河與海通,近世有人居海渚者,每年八月有浮槎去來,不失期,人有奇志,立飛閣於槎上,多齎糧,乘槎而去,十餘日中猶觀星月日辰,自後茫茫忽忽亦不覺盡夜,去十餘月,奄至一處,有城郭狀,屋舍甚嚴,遙望宮中有織婦,見一丈夫牵牛渚次飲之...
When Du Fu’s structural center moves to 長安, iv/v and vii/viii all feature a slightly modified orthodox weave, but one in which the major pivot (or twist) occurs only in the closing couplet. Yet again, in the middle we find a twist—the convoluted vi, with its multiple reversions to a 長安 “Pax Eterne” gone by. Du Fu had always excelled at poetically manipulating toponyms; in i-iii he mostly refers to the high (塞城樓) and low (江) features of his Kuizhou billet (13 times in 8 stanzas). But not all toponyms have unproblematically substantial geographical roles; for example, his opening references to 楓樹林 and 巫山巫峽(i.1-2) introduce myths and traditional lore that will permeate 秋興, because these 楓 reference “Qu Yuan’s”招䰟 lament for virtuous literati out-of-luck, while 巫山 inevitably recalls the 神女 from 宋玉, 高唐賦. When Du Fu turns to Chang’an (with no less than 41 discrete references to toponyms and landscape features!), he sometimes accesses the “Pax Eterne” of his distant, antebellum past (花萼夾城通御氣); elsewhere, he evokes either post-rebellion Chang’an (芙蓉小苑入邊愁), or else a complexly impastoed texture of remotely past glory palimpsestically overlaid by recent grief (錦纜牙檣起白鷗); yet elsewhere, his wanderings in the memory-palace of mingled fantasy, nostalgia, and reverie conjure up a series of now mythic, now envisioned topoi, as in v (蓬萊宮闕對南山, 承露金莖霄漢間…雲移雉尾開宮扇, 日繞龍鱗識聖顏).

16 In an orthodox, “A-type” octet, the major pivotal shift occurs in the third couplet. We noticed at least 50 late examples of this type. In “B-type” octets, the major pivotal shift occurs only at closure—we noticed more than 20 late examples of this type. In a “C-type” octet, no major shift in focus occurs at all—we noticed 6 examples of this type, all from the Sichuan years (760-765). For our purposes, deviant-style structures 句體 include all the numerous octets that depart from these 3 types.

17 Toponyms 地名-subtlety and power derive sometimes from the manipulation of different connotations for 1 地名 and, on the other hand, the multifarious effects that come from alternating different 地名. For a famous, similarly complex, play with toponyms, see 月夜 4.18:遙憐小兒女, 未解憶長安: 1) our capital; 2) our capital before the 革命; 3) era of 太平. Compare 22.36:expansion by nameplay-驖邊沙舊白, 湖外草新青; 23.45-toponyms begin mythic play; 17.21 杭州定越州 (irony); 17.9 斥簫倚杖看牛斗, 銀漢遙應接鳳城; 11.68:劍外忽傳收薊北; 18.23-渭水流關內, 終南在日邊[where Du's heart lies].

18 See the end of 招䰟: 湛湛江水兮, 上有楓, 目極千里兮, 傷春心, 魂兮歸來! 哀江南.
whose climax—if at all “realistic”—must recall an event from 757; elsewhere, we find toponyms who owe most of their impact to allusions, as in (昆明池水漢時功,武帝旌旗在眼中). Kao/Mei 1968 noted the complex binary dialectic between Kuizhou and Chang’an 地名, but actually we find a much richer and more multifarious interweaving among manifold, diverse strands. 41 toponyms afford a wealth of varying modes, associations, and connotations…

4c) This leads us to reconsider how 秋興 deploys the positional power of mythic and allusive toposi: we have already mentioned how the maples and Witch Alps in i.1-2 help saturate his opening with Chu lore. ii.4’s 八月槎 cannot escape the confines of Du Fu’s Yangzi, but iii.5-6’s wry contrast with 匡衡 and 劉向 finally achieves the flight. This pivotal allography requires us to reconsider the assertion in Kao/Mei 1978:331 that 秋興 iii.5-6 典故 achieve “only local,” “not global,” scope. We beg to disagree, and invoke in support an insight by 津阪孝綽: 秋 iii.5-6 form the great dividing watershed of this sequence, and have tremendous “global” significance for the sequence’s structure. 20

Myths about Chang’an and imperial tales then energize the climactic visions in v.1-4 and vii.1-4, before the beautiful sylphs bow out in viii.5-6. Even then, Du Fu views his past through the prism of Jiang Yan 江淹 (444-505), divinely inspired poet. It’s worthwhile dwelling on why Jiang Yan proves a particularly provocative figure for a closing allusion. At least by clan registration a northerner, Jiang meandered over a good bit of the Yangzi region, meeting with difficulties in his official career path (including imprisonment). When the colored brush dream “transpired,” he purportedly had gotten cashiered in relatively old age and sent to Xuancheng,
along the Yangzi. Finally, although the Yan 淹 in Jiang Yan should mean “broadly/deeply erudite” (consider his cognomen, 文通), still, hard to ignore that his name means literally “Jiang engulfs/drowns.” This cannot help but register, given the closing topoi that menace 秋興.

4d) 神遊憶宮- We shall conceive our quick stroll through 秋興 as visit to a “memory palace” constructed by a “method of loci”: "elaborative encoding (i.e., adding visual, auditory, or other details) to strengthen memory.”

玉露凋傷楓樹林，巫山巫峽氣蕭森。江間波浪兼天湧，寒上風雲接地陰。叢菊兩開他日淚，孤舟一繫故園心。寒衣處處催刀尺，白帝城高急暮砧

Stanza i establishes a default structure (modified ‘A’-type) and a geographical and modal setting 場合- 陰秋衰亂江陰… The places in 1-4 leave an impression of almost claustrophobic constriction: dews impair the woods, gloomy vapors shroud the height, waves engulf up to the sky, and clouds flatten, compress everything down to the ground. Du Fu’s pivot employs his first non-white/gray color-word-他日之菊。孤舟 so often signifies an unreliable escape vehicle from present predicament into 故園 fantasies, but i’s end imprisons 杜 in that initial somber 陰 realm of war-torn 捷州. This stanza sounds a leitmotif paramount in late Du Fu—the interplay between homesickness and longing for a “lonely boat” or some similar vessel that might carry him home. This motif occurs dozens of times in late Du Fu.22 And, as usual, his attempts to lift the depressing barriers around Kuizhou (see i.1-4) fail.

21 Either through the simple mental placement of objects in real or imagined locations, or by the more complex creative deployment of imaginary locations (houses, palaces, roads, and cities). See the discussion of Rhetorica ad Herennium in https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Method_of_loci.
22 For now, we just list a few examples (mostly from poetic closures) to illustrate the point:
14.48 天邊老人歸未得，日暮東臨大江哭
15.14 春城見松雪，始擬進歸舟。
16.11[蘇源明]end: 戰伐何當解，歸帆阻清沔。尚纏漳水疾，永負蒿里餞
夔府孤城落日斜，每依北斗望京华。听猿实下三声泪，奉使虚随八月槎。画省香炉违伏枕，山楼粉堞隐悲笳。请看石上藤萝月，已映洲前芦荻花。

In stanza ii (變體), if anything, the constriction felt in i intensifies to oppression. Our poet repeatedly tries to escape/swerve to 長安, in lines 2, 4-5. Every time (as his steadfast “gaze,” “vainly” following, and “elude/tum awry” suggest), he fails. His close emphatically imprisons 杜 in 嵖州’s desolate monotony. This stanza highlights the leitmotif already implicit in i—the interplay between substantial scene (a place of one hue) and fantasized/nostalgically recalled places. This 實虛 interaction will propel Du Fu (and readers) on a 神遊憶宮 lasting until sequence’s close.

千家山郭静朝晖，日日江楼坐翠微。信宿渔人还泛泛，清秋燕子故飞飞。匡衡抗疏功名薄，刘向传经心事违。同学少年多不贱，五陵裘马自轻肥。

In iii.1-4 the frustrations from 嵖州’s stockadelike constriction reach unendurable intensity; Kao/Mei observe how repeated soundplays amplify monotony to high pitch.23 They compel Du Fu to find a pivotal escape, here energized by the power of 典故 topoi. Ironically, Du Fu’s negative application 反用 of Han-dynasty Chang’an heroes transports him there (神遊)。

Protestant/transmitter paragons from antiquity get introduced inverted, as failed self-images, before successful young blades from thirty years ago conversely appear, making a scene that historical Du Fu could not! This contrary deployment of allusive topoi inweaves another dimension of 虛景 into Du Fu’s tapestry; he finds his way (吾道) by going where others did not go.

聞道長安似弈棋,百年世事不勝悲.王侯第宅皆新主,文武衣冠異昔時.直北關山金鼓振,征西車馬羽書遲.魚龍寂寞秋江冷,故國平居有所思.

iv(～變正 ‘B-type’) introduces up a new structure and offers a bird's-eye expansive view of Chang’an. The capital and environs become a chessboard. This topos enables Du Fu to enact an imperial chessgame, which proceeds centrifugally along the avenues and contested sectors of Tang campaigns, fading-out through an increasingly 亂 domain to→7-8. We have reached a forlorn 寂寞 endgame; most of the participants have symbolically perished (see the hibernating 魚龍); and though no result gets indicated, our poet, alone with the wintry Yangzi and his thoughts, appears to have lost a great deal—the center could not hold. Stalemated, at least, he inclines, retrospectively, toward 長安 and his homeland. Du Fu’s poetic progress, like Laozi’s 道, moves by inversion.24 His conclusion merits more consideration: 故國平居有所思. This line (iv.8) involves no less than 3 sites (故國/平居 (preverbal)所＝“locus”). 故國 unambiguously references 長安; 所思 unquestionably yearns for 長安, but the subject of 思 remains moored to 鎮州. Yet 平居, the pivotal term, could refer to either pole of the 長安-夔州 axis. Most

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24 老子 40:反者道之動.
commentators assume it refers to Chang’an; however, 長安 throughout this poem has become a battlefield (or chessboard)! Only those 魚龍 do not obviously suffer from effects of war. Thus, you can hardly go wrong associating 平居 with 氾州/魚龍寂寞. If so, our pivotal term has one foot in past Chang’an and one foot in the present; it situates itself as ambivalently and uneasily as Du Fu, our would-be amphibious poet. Placed midway through the sequence, this line beautifully (and pivotally) manipulates place to epitomize Du Fu’s precarious situation.

蓬萊宮闕對南山,承露金莖霄漢間.西望瑤池降王母,東來紫氣滿函關.雲移雉尾開宮扇,日繞龍鱗識聖顏.一臥滄江驚歲晚,幾迴青瑣點朝班

v (like iv, a ‘B-type’~變正) assembles a series of mythic 長安 tableaux. Uniquely among iv-viii, v proceeds from the far/peripheral to the central/climactic; all other stanzas fragment or disintegrate. But wielding an almost incantatory, spellbinding syntactic monotony and sonic play, v zooms-in to a climactic vision of the Sun-king. Just as in iv, v.7 abruptly turns to another forlorn 寂寞 endgame. Here, however, Du Fu’s persistent effort effects a retrospective, nostalgic troping. This seems to achieve a high-water mark of creative memory in 秋興.

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25 Owen 2015 17.29, Graham, most Chinese commentators (Gu Chen, Wang Fuzhi, etc.,)…“思念舊日長安平居生活.”
26 As 錢謙益 does, in Qiu Zhao’ao 17.29/p.1450.
27 Compare the analysis in Kao/Mei 1968:49-50. By my count, the stanza features no fewer than 30 syllables ending in nasals—certainly a sonorous crescendo!
28 No student of literature needs me to rehearse great writers on imagination and memory. Instead, let’s mention recent developments in neuroscience stressing the cognitive links between dreams and memory-formation. For example, see Case Western Reserve University Ford Distinguished Lecture Series: Karl Deisseroth, October 17, 2013: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5vpQeYT6zQ8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5vpQeYT6zQ8) Deisseroth observes that when mice dream and create memories, formation of neural pathways in the hippocampus proceeds symmetrically. Complex, episodic memories get replayed/"rehearsed" in the hippocampus during sleep, perhaps representing a process by which memory is gradually consolidated and passed to other parts of the brain, a model championed by several researchers, e.g., Paul W. Frankland and Bruno Bontempi, The organization of recent and remote memories, Nature Reviews Neuroscience 6, 119-130 (February 2005).
Understanding the complementary relationship between dreams and memory helps illuminate how Du Fu structures his imaginative stroll through the memory palace to achieve a climactic emplacement.

瞿唐峡口曲江头，万里风烟接素秋。花萼夹城通御气，芙蓉小苑入边愁。朱帘绣柱围黄鹤，锦缆牙樯起白鸥。迥首可怜歌舞地，秦中自古帝王州

vi(法變)-swerves to 長安 4 times (lines 1/3/5/7); vi doesn't exactly pivot, but swivels so violently, you fear he'll develop whiplash. Fleeing Dreadloch Gorge's mouth, he seeks Winding Jiang (vi. 1-2). Repelled toward 夔州 by windblown mist, he tenaciously reenvisions 長安, only to find it infected by frontier woes (vi.3-4). Wrenched back, he insistently returns to the pleasure park in 長安 but, when that gets infected by gulls that belong more to 夔 (vi.5-6), Du Fu reaches a crisis. Relentlessly, he closes (7-8) with yet another retrospective trope回首. This turn of the head simultaneously places 杜甫 in time and place, yet also nostalgically displaces him to 長安.

Structurally, Du Fu has also displaced his vision of the Yangzi to vi.1-2, while his nostalgic turn comes only at closure—truly a 法變! Likely ambivalence toward his beloved capital captures another inwoven strand—places in 秋興 rarely suffer from single vision; what structurally integrates via his shifting style psychologically reflects distintegration—以常為變.29

cognition recruits brain regions that are critical for daydreaming, imagining the future, remembering deeply personal memories, constructive internal reflection, meaning making, and social cognition.
29 See 蕭 7/13.3822, for comments on probable satiric intent in these lines. After all, Du Fu’s memories about “home for emperor and king” keep swerving to the “land of dance & song.”
vii The sequence's tensions reach a peak in vii, which features another sonic crescendo.  
Returning to the default ('B-style') structure for iv-viii, vii finds Du Fu doggedly toiling to recapture v's mythic 長安 tableaux. But he can't find solid ground; his visions keep deliquescing—into the vivid flotillas of Han's Martial Emperor; into the legendary lakeside statues of Weaving Maiden and Stone Leviathan. Water threatens to engulf everything; the last living spots of color—black and pink—sink beneath the waves. vii’s pivotal couplet has a piquant ambiguity; perhaps situated in a Chang’an of plenty (where no one needed to gather darnel seeds…), it somehow evokes present desolation (where no one remains to gather darnel seeds…). In his closing couplet, dissolution rules; he fades-out to a lone, surviving Fisher who, paradoxically, has nowhere to go. Again we meet the simultaneous claustrophobia/agoraphobia and the watercraft anomaly/singularity from stanza i; again it reminds us of 正月 192.6: 謂天蓋高, 不敢不局. They speak of High Heaven, Yet we dare not but stoop.  
Once again, Du Fu seems to give us an “Oz”-like vision, then at close whips back the curtain to reveal, Prospero-like, that “all my charms are o’erthrown.”

viii.1-2

Imperial Stream past Kun Wu Kiosk wends its winding way; The summit shadow of Purple Pavilion enters Lovely Lake.

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30 See Kao/Mei 1968:51-2 for details.
In viii, Du Fu's creatively nostalgic vision finally dissolves. He can visualize only the Imperial Stream; only the shadow of Purple Pavilion sinks into Lovely Lake. We have a rice-paddy but no parrots; we have "bare ruined choirs," but no propitious birds. Du Fu stubbornly struggles to regain paradise, but the sylphlike Potamides elude him. The barque these pivotal creatures ply proves as futile as the “lone boat” from i.6; that vessel failed to spring him from Kuizhou, and this barque turns him dejectedly back toward Kuizhou. At closure, all light and technicolor fade-out into darkness and black-white. Almost as if the Yangzi rose up to submerge our disconsolate, latter-day "Jiang engulfed 江淹." At day's end, 手 finding a route 'whither' only in the technicolor realm of nostalgic fancy. But let’s not get overly pessimistic; we need to distinguish the poetic “places” in 秋興 from mundane sites—Du Fu’s true place/path in 秋興 lies at the nexus of mingled fantasy-memory, of interwoven 虛實; just as longitude and latitude can pinpoint a space, his warp and weft give distinctive place to a homeless poet. Let’s conceive symplece as his master-trope and our poet as weaver bird, spinning a home from a thousand strands. It proves oversimplified merely to view 秋興 as beginning from the woeful "whence" of 無家, pivotally shifting to 故國, and at 結 asking ‘whither lies 吾道’?? with no way out; to reduce 秋興 to the frantic shuttling of a soul caught between two realms, one dead, one

32 This feature of 秋興 always reminds me of the finale from “Prufrock” and its anticlimactic failure to commune with imaginative vision:

a) I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.
I do not think that they will sing to me. []
I have seen them riding seaward on the waves
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
When the wind blows the water white and black.[]
We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.
powerless to give refuge.\textsuperscript{33} That might capture the historical poet’s plight, but not the composer.

Du Fu, finally, succeeds in poetic pathfinding/waymaking, in a way recalling Eliot: These fragments I have shored against my ruins.\textsuperscript{34} In a way, 秋興 ends by antithesizing life/art, 成/毀, 千秋萬歲/寂寞身後, recalling Prospero:

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,

As I foretold you, were all spirits and ...

Are melted into air, into thin air:

We are such stuff. As dreams are made on

and our little life Is rounded with a sleep.

You could easily expand the scope of this narrow probe; but would that prove measurably more productive? For example, you could look beyond famous Kuizhou octaves. If you examined octaves from the Sichuan years (760–65), you would find more contentedly situated verses;\textsuperscript{35} if you examined poems from the chaotic period in Langzhou or from Du Fu’s 765 passage down the Yangzi, you would find poems sited as precariously as our Kuizhou selections.\textsuperscript{36} You could also look beyond octaves to longer compositions. Consider, for example, a ballad (古詩) like 古柏行 (15.70:孔明廟前有老柏), which begins more-or-less before the eyes, then amplifies symbolically by envisioning another, even more impressive “cedar” in Chengdu (先主武侯…) — a 實虛 structure. Conversely, in 觀公孫大娘…(20.102), Du Fu begins with a

\textsuperscript{33} Tsuzaka seems to have understood this, when he wrote: 前三首專敍身之所處而慨心之所思; 後五首專寫心之所思而傷身之所處: 信八詩中縷縷也(津阪孝綽 7.3805). Consider the 41 長安 sites mentioned in 秋興: They appear with varying modes/ associations/ connotations. Some evoke an era of 亂, some the more distant past of 太平. Some seem more solid, some mythical, some ominous, and some drenched in nostalgia (秋興 features no less than 32 aqueous images, by the way). Nothing reduces easily to some fundamentally dualist dichotomy.

\textsuperscript{34} Compare Owen’81:221-4, on art 並 as stay against destructive chaos.

\textsuperscript{35} For two that scarcely budge from sites and scenes before the eyes, see 9.30, 10.1…

\textsuperscript{36} For exemplary selections, see 13.1, 13.6, 14.5…
spectacularly imagined “sword dance” from another era and place, then casually transposes to present time-and-place—an inverted 虛實 structure. We hardly hope to cover such transformations in one small paper; if our probe has captured something valuable, miners in Tang poetry can easily adapt these resources for further “topographical” excursions.

[So far, this leaves something to be desired. Not just filling in footnotes or choosing translations. Somehow, it leaves me feeling 暨乎篇成,半折心始. More work needed! For this reason, i’ll particularly look forward to the learned comments and criticisms from conference participants! david McCraw 8-27-16]