

The Structure of Liu Yung's Tz'u

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The greater length of man-tz'u (慢詞) tune-patterns allows a tz'u (詞) poet to include more content in one poem. In doing so, the poet is confronted with the problem of how to arrange the poetic content. He cannot merely juxtapose images as with the hsiao-ling (小令) poets and let the reader fill in the gaps. But, rather, he has to present his poetic content in a sequence which best reveals his emotions and, at the same time, generates the movement of the poem. Thus, in the writing of man-tz'u, the crucial technique is how to organize the thematic elements or, in other words, how to start and end a poem.¹

Liu Yung (柳永, 985-1053), alias Liu Ch'i-ch'ing (柳耆卿), was the first tz'u poet to write a great number of man-tz'u. His main structural principle is the expansive technique (*p'u-hsü*, 鋪敘; *p'u* means to lay out or spread out and *hsü* means to narrate) which emphasizes sequential presentation and the elaboration of images. His skillful use of the expansive technique was first recognized by Li chih-yi (李之儀), also of the Sung dynasty.

It was not until Liu Ch'i-ch'ing that tz'u became expansive and extensive, sufficient and exhaustive.²

Later Cheng Wen-cho (鄭文焯, 1856-1918) remarked more precisely,

When I examine carefully the subject matter of each of Liu's tz'u I find that each poem indeed has a sequence.³

Examining Liu's poems, I conclude that he indeed presents his poetic content in a sequential manner. His technique of presentation can be broadly divided into two main categories according to differences in language and "plot." The first is the direct narration of events and emotions without the help of nature images, and the second is the fusion

of emotion and scene (mainly of nature). These two techniques of presentation are closely related to the themes of his poems. The first is largely used in poems on women and erotic love whereas the second appears in his most celebrated works—poems on separation and rootless wandering.

In this paper I will focus on Liu's use of various kinds of sequences in presenting his poetic content. Since the arrangement of the thematic elements is inseparable from his language, I will at the same time examine how Liu manipulates his poetic devices, i.e., diction and imagery, repetition and rhythm with his expansive technique.

A. Poems Presented in Direct Narration

Liu's poems written in direct narration (about fifty) can be subdivided into two groups according to differences in plot and diction. The first group of poems (about thirty) is mostly about erotic love. The plot of these poems is very stereotyped. He usually starts the poem with a description of a visit to the brothel. He then proceeds to depict the beauty and abilities of the courtesan. Almost without exception in the second stanza he describes his love-making in detail. Along with these activities the spatial setting moves from the street to the entertainment hall and finally to the inner chamber. The temporal setting is usually at night.⁴

In these poems Liu frequently employs human images to elaborate the beauty and abilities of the courtesan. He also uses many indoor images to set an intimate and romantic atmosphere for love-making. The fact that these poems merely record Liu's spontaneous romantic behavior but not his profound inner feelings make them rather superficial and, thus, not worth detailed analysis here.

Far more worthy of attention is Liu's other group of poems written in the plain narration, the so-called *pai-miao* (白描, plain sketch). In these poems Liu does not rely on images to reveal his emotions but rather exploits plain and colloquial language. Since this technique is used in poems on greatly varying themes including boudoir feelings (in *man-tz'u* form), love and the agony of separation, it is unnecessary to delineate their plots here. The following poem written to the tune-pattern *p'o-lo-men-ling* (婆羅門令)⁵ demonstrates his skill in plain narration.

婆羅門令
p'o-lo-men-ling

First stanza

line

- 昨宵裡恁和衣睡
1. tso-hsiao-li jen ho-yi shui (z'wię) tpttppt(r)⁶
last night in thus with clothes sleep
- 今宵裡又恁和衣睡
2. chin-hsiao-li yu-jen ho-yi shui (z'wię) ppttppt(r)
tonight in again thus with clothes sleep
- 小飲歸來
3. hsiao-yin kuei-lai tpp
small drink come back
- 初更過醺醺醉
4. ch'u-keng kuo hsün-hsün tsui (tswi) pptppt(r)
beginning watch pass drunk drunk
- 中夜後何事還驚起
5. chung-yeh hou ho-shih huan ching-ch'i (k'ji) ptppt(r)
middle night after what matter still startle up
- 霜天冷
6. shuang-t'ien leng ppt
frosty sky cold
- 風細細
7. feng hsi-hsi (siei) ptt(r)
wind small small
- 觸疏窗閃閃燈搖曳
8. chu shu-ch'uang shan-shan teng yao-yi (iäi) tpttppt(r)
touch sparse window twinkling twinkling lamplight wavering

Second stanza

- 空牀展轉重追想
9. k'ung-ch'uang chan-chuan ch'ung chui-hsiang ppttppt
empty bed toss turn again chase think
- 雲雨夢任倚枕難繼
10. yün-yü-meng jen yi-chen nan-chi (kiei) ptttptpt(r)
cloud rain dream let lean pillow difficult continue
- 寸心萬緒
11. ts'un-hsin wan-hsü tptt
inch heart ten thousand feelings

- 咫尺千里
12. *chih-ch'ih ch'ien li (lji)* ttpt(r)
a few feet thousand li
- 好景良天
13. *hao-ching liang-t'ien* tppp
fine scene beautiful sky
- 彼此空有相憐意
14. *pi-tz'u k'ung-yü hsiang-lien yi (i)* ttptpt(r)
both empty have mutual love intention
- 未有相憐計
15. *wei-yu hsiang-lien chi (kiei)* ttppt(r)
not yet have mutual love means

Last night
I slept with my clothes on in this way.
Tonight
I again slept with my clothes on in this way.
I came back from a small drink.
After the first watch I was dead drunk.
After midnight, I did not know why I awoke,
The frosty sky was cold.
The wind blew gently through the window, making
the lamplight flicker..

In my empty bed,
Toss and turn, I try again to recall my cloud-
rain dream.
Yet, leaning on my pillow, I cannot recapture it.
My heart is filled with thoughts.
She is so close and yet so far.
In fine days with beautiful scenery,
Even though we have the intention to love
each other,
We do not have the means to realize it.

This poem opens strikingly. By repeating the first two lines the poet immediately shows his boredom and listlessness: this night is a repetition of the previous night, and further he is sleeping with his clothes on tonight just as he did last night. He proceeds to say that he has come home from drinking (line 3) and is dead drunk (line 4). For some reason, he wakes up after midnight (line 5). Hence, from "last night" to "tonight" to "the first watch" and to "after midnight" the poet presents in succession several details of his experience, each reinforcing his unpleasant state. Lines 6 - 8

describe what the poet sees after he wakes up. The images—frosty sky, wind, window and lamplight—though commonplace, are carefully selected to uncover the poet's state of mind. The window which has not been tightly shut and the lamplight which has not been put out (line 8) further reflect his neglect of himself and his surroundings. Apparently, it is the cold wind that wakes him up.

The emotion flows naturally into the second stanza. Lines 9 and 10 unfold another level of the poet's psychological state. The cloud-rain dream symbolizes his desire for love. It also contrasts sharply with his present lonely state. This makes his solitude in his bed more unbearable. *Chan-chuan* (展轉, *tiān tiwǎn*, toss and turn), an alliteration, conveys his restless state. *Yi-chen* (倚枕, to lean on the pillow), another restless gesture, further signifies his eagerness to recapture his romantic dream. But, he fails. The first line of the parallelism (line 11) expresses the poet's confusion and sorrow. The second line of the parallelism (line 12) explicitly explains the reason: his lover is so close to him in his dream and yet so far from him in reality.

The emotional climax occurs in the final two lines. They disclose to us the basic reason for his sorrow. The phrase *pi-tz'u* (彼此, both of us) which introduces the parallelism tells us that their love is mutual. In the parallelism, the repetition of *hsiang-lien* (相憐, mutual love) emphasizes the strong passion between the poet and his lover. However, the strong passion expressed is negated by the use of *k'ung-yu* (空有, vainly have) and *wei-yu* (未有, not yet have). The poet's frustration is also deepened because he cannot enjoy beautiful moments together with his lover.

This final parallelism plays an important role in the entire poem. It echoes the beginning two lines and further explains the entire poetic situation. Now, we know the reason for the poet's low spirits, for his drinking in order to forget, and for his neglect of himself and his surroundings. We also know that his sexual dream is the result of his lingering lovesickness. This parallelism also hints that his present unresolved situation will last for a much longer time since he still has not found a means to realize his love. In this way, the emotion moves in a circular manner, making the poem a tightly organized entity.

Repetition contributes greatly to the effect of the poem. Besides the repetition of the first two and the last two lines, we also have the *tieh-tzu* (疊字) *hsün-hsün* (醺醺, *Xūn Xūn*, dead drunk), *hsi-hsi* (細細,

siei siei, gently) and *shan-shan* (閃閃, *śiām śiām*, twinkling) all of which strengthen the meaning and auditory effect of the poem. The rhyme scheme of this poem (7r-8r-4-6r-8r-3-3r-8r; 7-8r-4-4r-4-7r-5r) is not at all sparse in comparison to Liu's other *man-tz'u*. The repetition of the rhyme word *shui* (睡, *zwei*; to sleep) in two consecutive lines calls attention both to the night setting and to the listless state of the poet. Likewise, the repetition of the rhymes *yi* (意, *i*; intention) and *chi* (計, *kiei*; means) emphasizes the passion and anxiety of the poet. They also strengthen the closural force of the poem. The repetition of the other closely-spaced rhymes throughout the poem in strategic positions echo and re-echo each other, thereby reinforcing the theme as the poem progresses.

Despite the closely-spaced rhyme scheme, the forward movement is strong throughout the poem. By skillfully avoiding the coincidence between the rhyme position and syntax, Liu maintains the reader's expectation of continuation. For instance, line 1 "Last night I slept with my clothes on in this way" will arouse a reader to ask "what about tonight?" Line 5 "after midnight I did not know why I awoke" naturally arouses the anticipation of an answer. In line 14, *k'ung-yu* (vainly have) is only a part of a syntactic formula and the expectation of the occurrence of the other part *wei-yu* (not yet have) enhances continuity.

Inseparable from the syntactic sequence is the coherent development of the plot as we have already discussed. What equally contributes to the flow of the poem is the simplicity of the language. Throughout the entire poem the only figurative phrase is the images of the cloud-and-rain which together symbolize sexual intercourse (Liu's favorite symbol for sex). Allusions are not used. The images employed are commonplace and direct. Colloquialism such as *tso-hsiao* (昨宵, last night), *chin-hsiao* (今宵, tonight), *jen* (恁, in this way), *yu* (又, again) and *wei-yu* (not yet have) are replete throughout the poem. But the danger of formlessness is prevented by the repetition of lines 1 & 2 and the parallelisms in lines 11 & 12 and 13 & 14.

The simplicity of the language also adds to the immediacy of the poem. Furthermore, the fact that this poem is written from the first person point of view gives us the impression that the poet is telling his love story in person. This unique plain narrative technique endows Liu's poems with an intimacy and informality.

B. Poems Which Fuse Emotion and Scene

In praising Liu's expansive technique Hsia Ching-kuan (夏敬觀) says,

Liu adopts the way of writing the *wen-fu* (文賦, rhyme prose) of the Six Dynasties to write his *ya-tz'u* (雅詞, elegant tz'u). He lays out [his content] sequentially. He fuses emotion and scene. His brushstroke runs to the end [of the poem] and [thus the organization is] tight from the beginning to the end.⁷

Indeed, over half of Liu's poems involve the fusion of emotion and scene (mainly of nature). An examination of these poems indicates that this technique is mostly used in poems of separation and rootless wandering. Liu's use of it varies: in some poems he presents a detailed description of a scene of nature in the first stanza but shifts to personal feelings in the second stanza. However, the majority of these poems blend the two components throughout. The following are Liu's different methods of fusing emotion and scene.

1. Poems Presented in Dramatic Sequence

In one group of poems Liu in the first stanza creates a happy lively scene (usually a spring scene) through colorful and vivid images of nature. But, in the second stanza, he pours out his sorrow—the recollection of his past happy life in the capital, the yearning for his distant lover, the lamenting for past youth, and bewailing of his drifting life.⁸

This group of poems progresses in several sequences, each creating a contrast. On an emotional level, the first stanza presents a happy scene whereas the second one reveals sorrow. Temporally and spatially, the scene created in the first is that of “now” and “here” whereas in the second it is that of “past” and “there.” The first focuses on the external scene whereas the second emphasizes internal feelings. The turning points of these sequences coincide with the stanzaic division. This makes the sudden shift from happiness to sorrow a surprise. Hence, the happier the atmosphere created in the first stanza the greater the dramatic effect and, hence, the stronger the emotional impact. The following poem written to the tune-pattern *yeh-pan-le* (夜半樂)⁹ is a typical example of the above technique.

夜半樂
yeh-pan-le

First stanza
line

- | | | |
|-----|--|------------|
| | 艷陽天氣 | |
| 1. | yen-yang t'ien-ch'i
beautiful sun weather | tppt |
| | 煙細風暖 | |
| 2. | yen-hsi feng-nuan
mist small wind warm | ptpt |
| | 芳郊澄朗閒凝竚 | |
| 3. | fang-chiao ch'eng-lang hsien ning-chu (d'iwō)
fragrant countryside clear high leisure still stand | ppptppt(r) |
| | 漸妝點亭台 | |
| 4. | chien chuang-tien t'ing-t'ai
gradually decorate pavillion terrace | tptpp |
| | 參差佳樹 | |
| 5. | ts'an-tz'u chia-shu (ziu)
uneven beautiful trees | pppt(r) |
| | 舞腰困力 | |
| 6. | wu-yao kun-li
dancing waist weary strength | tppt |
| | 垂陽綠映 | |
| 7. | ch'ui-yang lü-ying
drooping willow green dazzling | pptt |
| | 淺桃穠李夭夭 | |
| 8. | ch'ien-t'ao nung-li yao-yao
light peach dark plum young young | tpptpp |
| | 嫩紅無數 | |
| 9. | nen-hung wu-shu (siu)
young red numerous | tppt(r) |
| | 度綺燕流鶯斗雙語 | |
| 10. | tu yi-yen liu-ying tou shuang-yü (ngiwō)
pass elegant swallow flow oriole compete pair talk | tttpppt(r) |

Second stanza

- | | | |
|-----|--|--------|
| | 翠娥南陌簇簇 | |
| 11. | ts'ui-o nan-mo ts'u-ts'u
green eyebrow south path cluster cluster | tppttt |

- 攝影紅陰
 12. *nieh-ying hung-yin* tread shadow red shade ttppt
 緩移嬌步
 13. *huan-yi chiao-pu (b'uo)* leisurely move elegant steps tppt(r)
 抬粉面
 14. *t'ai fen-mien* raise powder face pttpppppt(r)
 韶容花光相妒
 shao-jung hua-kuang hsiang-tu (tuo)
 beautiful face flower light mutually envy
 絳綃袖舉
 15. *chiang-hsiao hsiu-chü* red silk sleeves raise tppt
 雲鬢風顛
 16. *yün-huan feng-ch'an* cloud hair wind shake pppt
 半遮檀口含羞
 17. *pan-che t'an-k'ou han-hsiu* half cover sandalwood mouth with shyness tpptpp
 背人偷顧
 18. *pei-jen t'ou-ku (kuo)* back people steal look tppt(r)
 競斗草
 19. *ching tou-ts'ao*¹⁰ compete contest grass ttpptpt(r)
 金釵笑爭賭
 chin-ch'ai hsiao cheng-tu (tuo)
 golden pin laugh fight bet

Third stanza

- 對此嘉景
 20. *tui-tz'u chia-ching* face this fine scene tppt
 頓覺消凝
 21. *tun-chüeh hsiao-ning* sudden feel disappear freeze ttppt
 惹成愁緒
 22. *je-ch'eng ch'ou-hsü* arouse become sad feeling tppt

- 念解佩輕盈在何處 ¹¹
23. *nien chieh-p'ei ch'ing-ying tsai ho-ch'u (ts'iwō)* ttpptpt(r)
think undo jade elegant at where place
- 忍良時
24. *jen liang-shih* tpppttptpt(r)
how to bear fine moment
- 孤負少年等閒度
ku-fu shao-nien teng-hsien tu (d'uo)
betray youth leisurely pass
- 空望極
25. *k'ung wang-chi* ppttptpt(r)
empty gaze end
- 回首斜陽暮
hui-shou hsieh-yang mu (muo)
turn head slanting sun evening
- 歎浪萍風梗知何去
26. *t'an lang-p'ing feng-keng chih ho-ch'ü (k'iwō)* ttpptptpt(r)
sigh wave duckweed wind stem know where go

On this bright sunny day
The mist is light and the wind is warm.
I stand leisurely in the clear fragrant countryside.
Gradually, beautiful trees of varied sizes are
decorating the pavillions and terraces:
There are willows weary of dancing,
There are dropping willows dazzling in green,
There are abundant light peaches and dark plums,
There are numerous budding red blossoms.
The flying delicate swallows and orioles are contesting
their songs.

Along the south path
Beautiful girls are in groups.
Leisurely they move their elegant steps under the
the shade of flowers.
When they raise their powdered faces
Even the flowers will envy them.
They raise their red silk sleeves.
Their cloud-like hair moves gently in the breeze.
Half-covering their red lips with their sleeves
they shyly turn their head and steal a look at
the passers-by.
Laughingly, they are playing the "grass game"
and betting their golden pins.

Facing this beautiful scene
I suddenly feel stunned.
My sorrow is gradually aroused.
I recall—where is the beautiful one who undid her jade?
How can I bear to waste my youth in this fine moment?
In vain, I look back, gazing at the setting sun as dusk falls.
I sigh, like a drifting duckweed and a stem in the wind,
where shall I go?

This poem, which is one of Liu's longest (145 words), best demonstrates his expansive technique. It is divided into three stanzas. The first stanza depicts the spring scene, the second focuses on the beauty and activities of the young girls, and the third reveals the poet's sorrow.

In the first stanza Liu expansively presents the spring scene through a series of tetrasyllables which are largely made up of nature images. These nature images are paired with appropriate modifiers to bring out a colorful and vivid spring scene. Moving through images of decreasing magnitude we first see the "*charming bright weather*" (line 1), we then feel the "*thin mist and warm breeze*" (line 2), and, finally, see the "*clear and high countryside*" (line 3). The lead-word *chien* (漸, gradually) further directs our attention to another spring scene. We see the many "*beautiful trees*" which decorate the pavillions and terraces (lines 4 & 5), we see the "*dancing*" and "*dropping*" willows (lines 6 & 7), the "*light peaches*" and the "*dark plums*" (line 8), the "*budding red blossoms*" (line 9), and, finally, the "*elegant swallows*" and the "*eloquent orioles*" (line 10).

In the second stanza Liu presents sequentially another spring scene which is of human beings. Human images and man-made images are skillfully paired with appropriate modifiers to show the beauty and delicate temperament of the girls. From a distance, we can see "*groups*" of young ladies strolling "*leisurely*" with "*elegant steps*" under the shade of flowers along the south path (lines 11, 12 & 13). As they come closer, we can see their "*powdered face*" (line 14), their "*red silk sleeves*" (line 15) and their "*cloud-like hair*" (line 16). We can also see their shy movements, for, when they see the passers-by, they "*half-cover*" their lips (lines 17 & 18). We can see them playing the grass game and we can even hear their laughter (line 19). Their laughter and the songs of the swallows and orioles echo each other, both reinforcing the liveliness of the spring scene.

What adds to the liveliness of the scene is the use of personification and repetition. The personification in the metaphor "*dancing waist*" and

the adjective "weary" in line 6 conveys a sense of movement in the willows. The personification of the verb *tou* (斗, to compete) in line 10 brings out the singing of the birds. The personification of the verb *tu* (妒, to envy) emphasizes the beauty of the girls. The alliteration *yen-yang* (艷陽, *ïäm iäng*; beautiful sunshine) calls attention to the bright weather. The alliteration *ts'an-tz'u* (參差, *ts'an ts'ie*; jagged) conjures up the image of the trees of different sizes. The *tieh-tzu yao-yao* (夭夭, *ïäu iäu*; young) emphasizes the image of abundant young plants and *ts'u-ts'u* (簇簇, *tsiwok tsiwok*; cluster) the image of the many beautiful girls.

Up to now, the whole spring scene is cheerful. However, this elaborately built up pleasant atmosphere in the third stanza is abruptly broken by the poet's negative emotional response, in the process providing a sharp contrast and startling the reader. Hence, the poet's yearning for his absent lover (as suggested by the allusion to Cheng Chiao-fu) (line 23) and his bewailing the passage of his youth (line 24) become more intense. As dusk comes, the spring scene becomes blurred and the girls depart. He is left in solitude in the setting sun (line 25). The last line is striking because it suddenly gives a new psychological dimension to the poem—his worries for his future. The poem ends with a question and the poet's sense of exile lingers even after the poem is finished.

There are several contrasts between the first two stanzas and the third. The former focuses on describing the happy external scene whereas the latter on revealing the poet's sorrowful subjective feelings. The images in the former are tightly packed in order to elaborate the various aspects of spring whereas those in the latter are sparse so as to express spontaneously the emotions of the poet. The images in the former convey beauty, youth and happiness but those in the latter convey the sense of hollowness, sadness and wandering. In the third stanza, the image of the setting sun not only signifies the end of the day but also indicates that the time has come to return home. The images of a drifting duckweed and a stem in the wind together reinforce the poet's sense of aimless wandering and exile.

The rhyme scheme also brings out the contrast between the first two stanzas and the third. The rhyme scheme is sparse in the first and second stanzas: 4-4-7r-5-4r-4-4-6-4r-8r; 6-4-4r-9r-4-4-6-4r-8r. Since the lines within one rhyme interval are conventionally to be read in one breath, the cheerful scene of spring is presented in a light and quick rhythm.

By contrast, the rhyme scheme of the third stanza is dense: 4-4-4r-

8r-10r-8r-8r. Since almost all the lines (except the first three) end with a rhyme, each line stands out as an independent unit. As a result, each thematic element is emphasized. The heavy falling tone and meaning of the rhyme words *hsü* (緒, *z'wo*), *ch'u* (處, *ts'wo*), *tu* (度, *d'uo*), *mu* (暮, *muo*) and *ch'ü* (去, *k'wo*) used in succession throughout the third stanza makes the mood of the poem increasingly depressing.

In short, the success of this poem lies in the fact that it is developed through a series of concrete physical details and, yet, the reader is not aware of the dramatic situation. Liu achieves this purpose by deliberately directing the reader's attention to the various aspects of spring through his expansive technique. This makes his turn to subjective feelings more sudden and striking, greatly strengthening the emotional impact of the poem.

2. Poems Presented by Gradual Intensification of Emotion

In one group of poems in the first stanza Liu emphasizes the description of scenes of nature rather than personal feelings. But, as the poem advances, the situation is reversed. The last few lines of the first stanza usually serve as a transition to the second stanza. Thus, the emotion progresses smoothly into the second stanza.¹²

This group of poems is presented in a regular sequence. It usually starts with a parallelism which describes expansively the natural setting. The temporal setting is often an autumn evening or after a rainfall. The spatial setting is frequently on a river with mountain, clouds and mist as distant background. The persona is frequently in a boat on a journey, and, if not in a boat, he is leaning against the railing in a tower, gazing at the autumn scene. Stimulated by the scenery his sorrow increases towards the end of the first stanza. The emotion thus glides smoothly into the second stanza in which he continues to reveal his feelings in a more detailed and intense manner. He recollects his past happy life and his romantic affairs in the capital, Pien-ching. He longs for messages from his lover and bewails his endless journey. The following poem *Ch'ing-pei* (傾杯)¹³ serves as a typical example of this sequence.

傾杯
ch'ing-pei

First stanza

line

1. 鶺鴒落霜洲
wu-lo shuang-chou ttp
duck fall frost isle
2. 雁橫煙渚
yen-heng yen-chu tppt
wildgoose cross mist sand-bank
3. 分明畫出秋色
fen-ming hua-ch'u ch'iu-se (si'ak)
clearly paint out autumn color ppttpt(r)
4. 暮雨乍歇
mu-yü cha-hsieh ttt
evening rain just stop
5. 小檝夜泊
hsiao-chi yeh-po ttt
small oar night berth
6. 宿葦村山驛
su wei-ts'un shan-yi (iäk)
lodge reed village hill post house ttppt(r)
7. 何人月下臨風處
ho-jen yüeh-hsia lin-feng ch'u ppttpt
what person moon under face wind place
8. 起一聲羌笛
ch'i yi-sheng ch'iang-ti (d'iek)
start one sound Ch'iang flute ttppt(r)
9. 離愁萬緒
li-ch'ou wan-hsü pptt
parting sorrow ten thousand feelings
10. 聞岸草切切
wen an-ts'ao ch'ieh-ch'ieh pptttpppt(r)
hear shore grass, chirp chirp
- 蛩吟如織
ch'üung-yin ju-chih (ts'iek)
cricket chant like weaving

Second stanza

- 爲憶
11. wei-yi (¹iək) tt(r)
recall
- 芳容別後
12. fang-jung pieh-hou pptt
beautiful face part after
- 水遙山遠
13. shui-yao shan-yüan tppt
water far mountain distant
- 何計憑鱗翼
14. ho-chi p'ing lin-yi (iə k) ptppt(r)
what method depend scale wing
- 想繡閣深沉
15. hsiang hsiu-ko shen-ch'en tttpp
think embroidered chamber deep sink
- 爭知憔悴損
16. cheng-chih ch'iao-ts'ui sun ppptt
how know distress wound
- 天涯行客
17. t'ien-ya hsing-k'e (k'ɿk) pppt(r)
sky end travelling guest
- 楚峽雲歸
18. ch'u-hsia yün-kuei¹⁴ ttp
Ch'u Gorge cloud return
- 高陽人散
19. kao-yang jen-san¹⁵ pptt
Kao-yang person disperse
- 寂寞狂蹤迹
20. chi-mo k'uang tsung-chi (tsiäk) ttppt(r)
solitude crazy trace
- 望京國
21. wang ching-kuo (kwə k) tpt(r)
gaze capital country
- 空目斷遠峯凝碧
22. k'ung mu-tuan, yüan-feng ning-pi (pjäk) ptttpt(r)
in vain eye broken, distant peak frozen green

The ducks are landing on the frosty isles.
The wild-geese are flying across the mist
 enshrouded sand bank.
They are clearly painting an autumn scene.
The evening rain has just stopped.
When night falls, I berth my small boat by the
 riverside.
I lodge in a post-house up the hill in this
 reeded village
Facing the wind in the moonlight
Who is there playing the Ch'iang flute?
Hearing the chirping crickets in the shore grass
I am filled with parting sorrow.

I recall that
Since I left her
Separated by rivers and mountains
I have had no means to send her messages.
I think
In her secluded chamber
How would she know how distressed a traveller could be?
The clouds have disappeared in the Ch'u Gorge.
The Kao-yang persons have dispersed.
What is left is the wild trace of my lonely wandering.
I gaze at the capital, but in vain.
What I can see are the distant peaks enshrouded in
 the frozen clouds.

By beginning with a parallelism the poet immediately presents to us in an expansive manner an autumn scene, one in which the ducks are landing on the isles and the wild-geese are flying across the river bank. The images of the ducks and the wild-geese on their migration to the south indicate the time of the year, and also hint at the poet's homesickness. The third line, which ends with a rhyme reasserts the situation. Lines 4 - 6 have two levels of meaning. They tell the progression of time from "evening" to "night" and then to "stay over night." They reveal the changes in the activities of the poet as he moves from the riverbank to the village and finally to the post-house up the hill. It is not until lines 7 & 8 that the poet's subjective feelings are disclosed. He is awakened by the sound of the Ch'iang flute (or perhaps he has not fallen asleep yet), which is traditionally associated with homesickness and journey. His sorrow

over separating is explicitly revealed in line 9 and is further echoed by the incessant chirping of the crickets (line 10).

The emotion built up towards the end of the first stanza flows smoothly into the second stanza. Now he unfolds his emotion in a more detailed, direct and intense manner. Lines 11 - 14 tell the reason for his sorrow: it is because ever since he parted from his lover he has had no means to reach her. Lines 15 - 17 reveal the poet's other psychological level. He imagines his lover secluded in her chamber not knowing about his distressed wandering life. In this way, he juxtaposes two locations—one being the imaginary scene of his lover's secluded chamber (there) and one being the reality of his journey (here). By assuming that she is not aware of his present situation he naturally shifts the focus from her to himself, thus, blurring the distance between the two places. His lonely wandering is further elaborated in the following parallelism. Now, since he is on a journey, his romances are no more and his friends are far away from him (lines 18 - 19). What is left is his lonely and endless travelling and uncertain future. To console himself he gazes at the distant capital where his lover dwells, where he had his romantic affairs, and where he used to drink with his friends. But what he sees are the distant peaks enshrouded in the cold blue clouds. The poem thus ends with a lingering emotion.

The language of the poem is refined though it occasionally incorporates a few colloquialisms and common allusions. The images are presented in a coherent manner. The "frosty isles," the "mist-enshrouded sand bank," the "evening rain," the "reeded village," the "post-house up the hill," the "moonlight," the "crickets," and the "shore grass" all contribute to a desolate autumn scene. They also reflect the sad feelings and the activities of the poet. The colloquialisms *fen-ming* (分明, clearly), *cha* (乍, just), *yi-sheng* (一聲, one sound) and *cheng-chih* (爭知, how does one know) all add an informal touch and personal tone to the poem. The allusion to the clouds of the Ch'u Gorge suggests the past romantic affairs of the poet. The other allusion to the Kao-yang guest implies the loss of friends, and it may further imply the passage of his youth (line 19). These two allusions when used in a parallelism reinforce the contrast between the poet's past happiness and present loneliness. The synecdoche "scale" and "wings" (in line 14) are also allusions, but they only serve as substitutes for messages and add little to the poetic effect. The simile "the crickets chirp like weaving" (in line 10) conveys two

meanings. First, the sound of the crickets is like that of the weaving machine. Secondly, it suggests that the poet's sorrow is gradually building up like a piece of material being woven. The onomatopoeia *ch'ieh-ch'ieh* (切切, *ts'iet ts'iet*) with its resemblance to the sobbing sound of human beings intensifies the emotion. Also, the alliterations *ch'iao-ts'ui* (憔悴, *dz'äü dz'wi*, distress), *tsung-chi* (蹤迹, *tsjwong tsjäk*, trace), the rhyming disyllables *chi-mo* (寂寞, *dziék mâk*, lonely) and *shen-ch'en* (深沈, *ši ə m d'ï ə m*, secluded) reinforce the meaning and auditory effect of the poem.

Furthermore, the depressing atmosphere is gradually strengthened by the use of the entering tone rhyme words: *se* (色, *sjək*), *yi* (驛, *jäk*), *ti* (笛, *d'iek*), *chih* (織, *tsjək*), *yi* (憶, *jək*; a hidden rhyme), *yi* (翼, *jək*), *k'e* (客, *k'vk*), *chi* (迹, *tsjäk*), *kuo* (國, *kwək*) and *pi* (碧, *piäk*). The use of the entering tone words *hsieh* (歇, *Xiət*) and *po* (泊, *b'äk*) in lines 3, 4 & 5 is striking. This makes the rhythm of the lines 3, 4, 5 & 6 (all of which end in the entering tone) more arresting. Each line increasingly emphasizes the focal image—the wandering life of the poet.

The sparse rhyme scheme of the poem (4-4-6r-4-4-5r-7-5r-4-9r; 2r-4-4-5r-5-5-4r-4-4-5r-3r-7r) greatly enhances enjambment. In particular, lines 1-3, 7-8, 11-14 and 15-17 can be treated as complete sentences. The sparse rhyme scheme also divides the thematic elements into groups. Hence, the coherent presentation of these thematic elements makes the sequential development more clear-cut. Consequently, the rhythm and meaning flow freely from line to line throughout the entire poem.

3. Poems Presented in Dynamic Sequence

In one group of poems Liu skillfully fuses emotion and the natural scene in a more dynamic manner. These poems usually begin with a description of a parting scene or a scene on a journey—either in a boat or on horseback. As the poet carries on his journey he describes what he sees. Moved by the external scene his thoughts gradually turn towards himself. He recalls his past happy life and romances, he longs for home, and, finally, he worries about his future journey. The general impression these poems leave is that of a journey in progress. At the same time, we follow the poet's stream of thought from present to past and then back to

the present and even to the future. Thus, the whole poem is full of the sense of motion.¹⁶

Along with the frequently cited *yeh-pan-le* (夜半樂)¹⁷ the following poem *yin-chia-hsing* (引駕行)¹⁸ serves as a typical example illustrating Liu's dynamic mode of presentation.

引駕行
yin-chia-hsing

First stanza
line

- | | | |
|----|---|------------|
| 1. | 虹收殘雨
<i>hung-shou ts'an-yü</i>
rainbow gather remnant rain | pppt |
| 2. | 蟬嘶敗柳長堤暮
<i>ch'an-ssu pai-liu ch'ang-t'i mu (muo)</i>
cicada chirp failed willow long dyke evening | ppptppt(r) |
| 3. | 背都門動消黯
<i>pei tu-men tung hsiao-an</i>
back capital gate move disappear sadness | tpptpt |
| 4. | 西風片帆輕舉
<i>hsi-feng p'ien-fan ch'ing-chü (kiwo)</i>
west wind single sail light hoist | ppptpt(r) |
| 5. | 愁睹
<i>ch'ou-tu (tuo)</i>
sadly see | pt(r) |
| 6. | 泛畫鷁翩翩
<i>fan hua-yi p'ien-p'ien</i>
float painted fishhawk flutter flutter | tttpp |
| 7. | 靈輦隱隱下前浦
<i>ling-t'o yin-yin hsia ch'ien-p'u (p'uo)</i>
spirit iguana vague vague down front shore | pptttpt(r) |
| 8. | 忍回首佳人漸遠
<i>yin hui-shou chia-jen chien-yüan</i>
bear look back beautiful one gradually far | tpptptt |
| 9. | 想高城隔煙樹
<i>hsiang kao-ch'eng ke yen-shu (ziu)</i>
think high city separate mist tree | tpptpt(r) |

Second stanza

- 幾許
10. *chi-hsü (Xiwo)* tt(r)
how many
- 秦樓永晝
11. *ch'in-lou yung-chou* pptt
Ch'in tower long day
- 謝閣連宵奇遇
12. *hsieh-ko lien-hsiao ch'i-yü (ngü)* tpppt(r)
Hsieh attic join night strange encounter
- 算贈笑千金
13. *suan tseng-hsiao ch'ien-chin* tttp
even though give laughter thousand gold
- 酬歌百琲
14. *ch'ou-ko pai-p'ei* pptt
pay song hundred pearls
- 盡成輕負
15. *chin-ch'eng ch'ing-fu (b'äu)* tppt(r)
all become slight betray
- 南顧
16. *nan-ku (kuo)* pt(r)
south gaze
- 念吳邦越國
17. *nien wu-pang yüeh-kuo* tpptt
think Wu state Yüeh country
- 風煙蕭索在何處
18. *feng-yen hsiao-so tsai ho-ch'u (tš'üwo)* pppttpt(r)
wind mist desolate at what place
- 獨自箇千山萬水
19. *tu-tzu-ko ch'ien-shan wan-shui* tttpptt
alone self thousand mountains ten thousand water
- 指天涯去
20. *chih t'ien-ya-ch'ü (k'üwo)* tppt(r)
point sky end go

The rainbow has gathered up the rain.
As evening falls
The cicadas are chirping in the withered willows

along the long dyke.
Depressed, I turn my back on the capital and
start my journey,
My light sail is hoisted in the west wind.
Sadly I see that
The "painted fish hawks" are "fluttering" and
The "spiritual iguaras" are heading towards the
front shore.
I cannot bear to look back
Because my lover is getting farther and farther from me.
I think of the capital
But it is blocked by the misty trees.

How many times
Have I spent all day long in the Ch'in tower?
How many nights
Have I had romantic encounters in the Hsieh attic?
Even though
I used to give away a thousand pieces of gold to
buy her smile.
Even though
I used to pay a hundred strings of pearls for her
singing.
Now, all these have gone.
I look to the south:
Amidst the desolate wind and mist
Where are the States of the Wu and Yüeh?
Alone, facing the thousands of mountains and
rivers
I head towards the end of the sky.

The organization of this poem is clear-cut. The first stanza (lines 1-9) focuses on a description of the beginning part of the poet's journey on a river, the second stanza begins with the poet's recollection of his past (lines 10 - 15), and then in the latter part of the poem shifts back to the journey (lines 16 - 20).

With the personified verb *shou* (收, to gather) and the nature images "rainbow" and "rain," the first line immediately presents a vivid natural setting. It also reveals that the temporal setting is after a rain. Line 2 specifies that the time of the day is dusk. Line 3 by the west wind image suggests that the season is autumn. The action the poet is engaged in is hinted at by the "long dyke" image which is associated with the riverbank

and, thus, with parting (line 2). Line 3 also states explicitly the main theme of the poem. In the following lines Liu presents a dynamic picture through the progressive use of nature images which are carefully interlocked with the dominant sense of constant action and movement. The nature images which convey a sense of action are the "west wind," the "single sail," the "painted fish hawk" (a metaphor for a boat), and the "spiritual iguana" (also a metaphor for boat). What equally contributes to the sense of motion are verbs and modifiers: *pei* (背, with back facing), *tung* (動, move), *ch'ing-chü* (輕舉, lightly hoist), *p'ien-p'ien* (翩翩, flutter), *fan* (泛, float), *hsia* (下, down stream), *hui-shou* (回首, to look back), *chien-yüan* (漸遠, gradually far), and *ke* (隔, separated). Each line further unfolds the action and implies that the poet is going farther and farther from shore. The nature images, the verbs and the modifiers are fittingly blended together and presented in such a manner that we have the feeling we are alongside the poet viewing the river scene as he sees it.

The parting sorrow of the poet gradually intensifies as the poem progresses. In fact, the negative modifiers *ts'an* (殘, faded, line 1) and *pai* (敗, withered, line 2) have already hinted at the unpleasant mood of the poet. The chirping of the cicadas at dusk echoes the "inner weeping" of the poet and his lover during the parting moment. His sorrow is explicitly revealed when he sees other boats returning swiftly to shore, whereas his is floating swiftly in the west wind in the opposite direction (lines 4 - 7). The swift motion of the other boats is conveyed by the quick rhythm of enjambment. He turns back, trying in vain to catch a last glimpse of his lover, who is still standing on the long dyke. But, he is so far from shore that everything is beyond his sight. What he can console himself with is his memories.

The phrase "to think of the high city" in the last line of the first stanza serves as a transition to the second stanza because it naturally carries the poet's thought back to his happy earlier days in the capital. Lines 10 - 15 create a world of recollections. His happy past is presented in an expansive manner through the use of parallelism. His many romantic affairs are expressed through the juxtaposition of the euphemistic images "Ch'in-tower" (秦樓, line 11) and "Hsieh-attic" (謝閣, line 12) (which stand for brothels) and intensified by the quantitative modifiers *chi-hsü* (幾許, how many), *yung* (永, long, all) and *lien* (連, many in a row).

The lead-word *suan* (算, even though) in line 13 unfolds another

psychological level of the poet. In the parallelism it introduces, the pairing of the verbs "to give away" with "to buy"; the pairing of the human images "song" with "smile" and the pairing of the exaggerated man-made images "thousand pieces of gold" with "a hundred strings of pearls" all effectively convey a whimsical, luxurious and unrestrained atmosphere. But the word *suan* totally destroys the happy atmosphere elaborately created by the parallelism. Line 15 sums up the situation created not only by lines 13 & 14 but also lines 10, 11 & 12. The word *chin* (盡, all) further emphasizes the sense of hollowness and nothingness in the poems.

Line 16 immediately brings us back to reality—the journey. Line 17 tells us that the poet's destination is the Wu and Yüeh area in the far away Yangtze region. *Nien* (念, to think, to consider) highlights the shifting of the poet's attention: that is, to his worries for the future. Followed by a major pause, the word *nien* emphasizes the object "the States of Wu and Yüeh." Hence, the question "Where are the States of the Wu and Yüeh?" becomes more forceful. The nature images wind and mist and the alliteration *hsiao-so* (蕭索, *sieu sâk*; desolate) paint a blurred distant scene hinting at the poet's unpromising future.

Lines 16 - 20 direct our attention back to the vast river scene. This creates a contrast between the image of the vastness of nature and the smallness of the poet. This contrast conveys the hardship of the journey and intensifies the poet's sense of exile and loneliness. Thus, even though the poem ends, the journey is still in progress.

This poem is replete with elegant diction and occasionally has a few colloquialisms such as *chi-hsü* (幾許, how many) and *tu-tzu-ko* (獨自箇, alone). The forward movement of the poem is enhanced by enjambment: lines 5 - 7, 10 - 12, 13 - 15, 17 - 18 and 19 - 20. Some of these enjambed lines such as lines 5, 10 & 16 even "cross" the "stop" caused by the rhymes. What adds to the rhythmic flexibility of the poem is the "abnormal" caesural pattern of the lines. For instance, lines 6 & 7 which are introduced by the lead-word *fan* (to float) are to be read in one breath in the 1/4 - 4/3 rhythm. Lines 13 & 15 which are introduced by the lead-word *suan* are to be read in the 1/4-4-4 rhythm. Still, there are lines divided in the 3/4 rhythm (lines 8 & 19) and 1/13 rhythm (line 20).

More importantly the poem integrates the poet's various feelings: parting sorrow, happy recollections, loneliness and homesickness with the scene of nature in a dynamic manner so that several sequences—spatial,

temporal and psychological—are moving simultaneously.

In conclusion, the above examples represent the typical structure of Liu's tz'u. His unique generating principle—the sequential structure—is the successful combination of the form of man-tz'u and his poetic technique.

The longer tune-pattern of man-tz'u provides a poem with a widespread rhyme scheme. Since each rhyme interval tends to include a self-contained semantic unit, the progression from idea to idea becomes more distinct. The other formal element—parallelism—contributes to Liu's sequential structure in two ways. First, with regard to position, when a parallelism is placed in the beginning of a poem it serves as a strong generating point; when placed in the middle part of the poem it serves as an effective transitional agent; and when placed at the end of a poem it becomes a strong closural element. Secondly, with regard to meaning, by juxtaposing images from similar semantic categories, a parallelism elaborates details. Its arrangement in two (or three) consecutive lines lays out the details in a sequential manner.

Furthermore, Liu's unique use of lead-words also contributes to his sequential structure in two ways. First is the making of the larger semantic units by enjambment which provides a poem with larger and more clearcut sequential units. Second is the function of lead-words to highlight the changes of the poet's psychological levels and overt actions. Thus, the transition from one poetic experience to another furthers the forward movement of the poem.

Of course, the sole determining factor of the sequential structure is the thematic development itself. This has been shown in the above analysis. In his direct narration of events, Liu exploits spatial sequence and the activity sequence. In his plain narration he emphasizes the development of psychological sequence. Despite the colloquial language and eroticism in these poems, Liu's narrative technique was praised by Wang Cho (王灼) (who attacks Liu's vulgar language) as "narrating in an easy manner and having a head and a tail"¹⁹ (meaning having a beginning and an end) and also praised by Liu Hsi-tsai (劉熙載) (who criticizes Liu's eroticism) as "surpassing other tz'u poets."²⁰

In Liu's poems which fuse emotion and scene he effectively uses nature images. In these poems nature images are distributed differently.

Sometimes they are concentrated in the first stanza, sometimes they appear in the beginning part of the poem and sometimes they are distributed throughout the poem. Regardless of their distribution they contribute much to the sequential development by explicitly and implicitly indicating the temporal and spatial changes as well as reflecting the emotional changes in the poem.

Liu's more significant use of nature images is his viewing nature with pathetic fallacy rather than a source of philosophical contemplation. By endowing nature with his subjective emotion, nature becomes an integral part of his poetic world. This increases the power of the moving force in his poems.

As mentioned earlier, the crucial technique of writing man-tz'u is how to generate the movement of the poem. In this regard, Liu's expansive technique became the basic model for the writing of man-tz'u.

Notes

1. Chang Yen (張炎, 1248-?), *Tz'u-yüan* (詞源), in T'ang Kuei-chang (唐圭璋, 1899-) comp. *Tz'u-hua ts'ung-pien* (詞話叢編, here-after THTP) (Taipei: Kuang-wen shu-chü [廣文書局], 1967), vol. 1, p. 205.
2. Li Chih-yi (李之儀, "A Postscript to Wu Ssu-tao's small tz'u") (跋吳思道小詞), *Ku-hsi chü-shih wen-chi* (姑溪居士文集), chüan 40, p. 2b, in *Yüeh-ya-t'ang ts'ung-shu* (粵雅堂叢書), ts'e 392.
3. Cheng Wen-cho (鄭文焯, 1856-1918), *Ta-ho-shan-jen tz'u-lun* (大鶴山人詞論), quoted in T'ang Kuei-chang's *Sung-tz'u san-pai shou chien-chu* (宋詞三百首箋註) (Hongkong: Chung-hua shu-chü [中華書局], 1974), p. 29.
4. Throughout this paper each of Liu's 213 poems is assigned a particular number. The poem numbers follow the sequence found in Liu Yung's *Yüeh-chang chi* (樂章集) collected in T'ang Kuei-chang's *Ch'üan-sung tz'u* (全宋詞) (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1968), pp. 13-55. For examples of erotic poems, see poems 2/6.3/9.2/24.1/32/73/77/78.3/89/106.3/106.4/129.1/138.
5. Peom no. 42. According to Wang Yi-ch'ing (王奕清, 1644?- 1736?) et al., ed. *Yü-chih tz'u-p'u* (御製詞譜, Preface dated 1715, n.p.), chüan 21, p. 14b, the tune-pattern "po-lo-men-ling" (婆羅門令) was used only once by Liu Yung. This poem is also translated by Yuh Liou-yi in "Liu Yung, Su Shih, and Some Aspects of the Development of Early Tz'u Poetry" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Washington, 1972), p. 158.
6. I use "t" to represent the oblique tone and "p" the level tone.
7. Hsia Ching-kuan (夏敬觀), *Shou-p'ing Yüeh-chang-chi* (手評樂章集),

- quoted in Han Sui-hsüan's (韓穗軒) *Hsin-yüan-lou tz'u-hua* (心遠樓詞話) (Hongkong: n.p. 1972), p. 16.
8. For example, see poems 17/44/56/61/67.2/68/108/152.
 9. Poem 152. According to *Yü-chih tz'u-p'u*, chüan 38, p. 13a, Liu improvised this tune-pattern from the old one.
 10. A game played during the May 5th festival. See Chung Lin (宗懷, *Ching-ch'u sui-shih-chi* (荆楚歲時記), in Wu Tseng-ch'i (吳曾祺, *Ch'ing*) comp. *Chiu Hsiao-shuo* (舊小說) (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1933), vol. 1, p. 44.
 11. For the story of Cheng Chiao-fu (鄭交甫), see *Lieh-hsien-chüan* (列仙傳), in Wu, comp. *Chiu hsiao-shuo*, vol. 1, pp. 63-64.
 12. For example, see poems 3/13/16/24.2/31/38/50/54/88/95/98/106.1/107.1/113/118/132.1/146/154.
 13. Poem 143. This tune-pattern is also named "ch'ing-pei-le" (傾杯樂) and "ku-ch'ing-pei" (古傾杯). See Wen Ju-hsien (聞汝賢), comp. *Tz'u-p'ai hui-shih* (詞牌彙釋) (Taipei: Wen Ju-hsien, 1963), pp. 549-551.
 14. This allusion refers to the romance between the King of Ch'u with the fairy in the Wu Mountain. See Sung Yü (宋玉), *Kao-t'ang-fu* (高唐賦), in Hsiao T'ung (蕭統, 501-531) comp. *Wen Hsüan* (文選) (Hupei: Ch'ung-wen shu-chü [崇文書局], 1869), chüan 19, pp. 1b-6a.
 15. "Kao-yang" (高陽) refers to the Kao-yang pond, a place for drinking. See *Shan Chien Chuan* (山間傳), *Chin-shu* (晉書) (Hongkong: Wen-hsüeh yen-chiu she [文學研究社], 1959), 43.1200bc.
 16. For example, see poems 39/51/60/85/92/107.4/109/133.2/136.
 17. Poem 92.
 18. Poem 86.
 19. Wang Cho (王灼, d. 1160), *Pi-chi man-chih* (碧雞漫志), in *THTP*, vol. 1, p. 34.
 20. Liu Hsi-tsai (劉熙載, 1813-1881), *Tz'u-kai* (詞概), in *THTP*, vol 11, p. 3771.