Poetic works that depict or commemorate feasts in the early third century CE unsurprisingly typically mention food and drink. But different types of poetic works—different genres—do so in quite different ways. In what follows, I will present some examples of this and offer ideas on the reasons for the differences. To begin, here is a frequently anthologized poem by the famous princely poet Cao Zhi (192–232):

“Ming du pian” 名都篇 (Famous Capitals)¹

名都多妖女

In famous capitals are many bewitching women;³

京洛出少年

From metropolis Luo come dashing youths.

寶劍直千金

Their precious swords worth a thousand pieces of gold,

被服麗且鮮

The clothes they wear beautiful and bright.

劔雞東郊道

They fight cocks by the eastern outskirts road,

² 藝文四十二作麗。
³ The words “famous capital(s)” have been explained in two ways. The earliest explanation is that of the Wen xuan 文選 commentator Zhang Xian 張銑 (fl. ca. early eighth century): “‘Famous capitals’ means those in the category of Handan and Linze” 名都邯鄲臨淄之類也; Liu chen zhu Wen xuan 六臣注文選 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 27.27b. This is repeated in Guo Maoqian 郭茂倩 (twelfth century), ed., Yuefu shi ji 樂府詩集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), 63.912. The other interpretation is that “famous capital” is singular and, like “metropolis Luo” in line 2, a reference Luoyang, the capital city of the Later Han. See, for example, Zhao Youwen 趙幼文 (d. 1993), Cao Zhi ji jiao zhu 曹植集校注 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1984), 3.485.
⁴ 《文選》二十七作光。
Race horses between long rows of catalpas.

Before the sprint can be half run,

A brace of hares crosses in front of me.

I grasp my bow and nock a singing arrow,

Give a long chase up the southern hills.

I draw to the left then shoot to the right,

One shot impales both game.

With other tricks yet to be shown,

I lift my hands and hit head-on a kite in flight.

Spectators all praise my skill,

All the experts credit my art.

I return and feast at Pingle,

The excellent ale ten thousand a ladle.

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5 《藝文》四十二作長安。
6 《藝文》四十二作騾駞。《樂府》六十三· 宋刊本《曹子建文集》作騾駞。《六臣注文選》· 袁本作騾駞。
7 《御覽》七百四十六作挾。張本作挾。
8 宋刊本《曹子建文集》作騾上南山。
9 Although works like Huang Jie 黃節 (1874–1935), ed., Cao Zijian shi zhu 曹子建詩注, ed. Ye Jusheng 葉菊生 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1957), 2.72 and Zhao Youwen, Cao Zhi ji jiao zhu, 3.486 attempt to specify the physical feature here called nan shan (“southern hills”), it is doubtful that is either possible or greatly significant.
10 《御覽》七百四十六作挾。
11 《藝文》四十二作歸來。
12 San fu huang tu 三輔黃圖, a work perhaps initially compiled at the end of the Han or beginning of the Wei, says that Emperor Wu of the Han 漢武帝 (r. 140–87 BCE) had the Feilian Lodge 飛廉觀 constructed in the Shanglin Park 上林苑 in 109 BCE. Emperor Ming 明帝 (r. 58–75) took the bronze statues from there in 62 CE and had them installed outside the western gate of Luoyang, where he erected the Pingle Lodge 平樂觀; He Qinggu 何清谷, ed., San fu huang tu jiao shi 三輔黃圖校釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005), 5.328.
Thin sliced raw carp, braised roe shrimp,

Turtle baked in clay, grilled bear paws.

A fragment from Cao Pi’s Dian lun says:

At the end of [the reign] of Ling the Filial, the court administration was in shambles, and commandery officials and the various government functionaries were all drinking heavily—the imperial relatives were even worse. A ladle of ale was worth a thousand coins.” Yu Shinan, 虞世南 (558–638), comp., Beithang shuchao 北堂書鈔 (preface dated 1600), 148.7b.

See also Fu Yashu 傅亞庶, ed., San Cao shi wen quan ji yi zhu 三曹詩文全集譯注 (Changchun: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 1997), 505. A version of this fragment with variants is found in Wang Mao 王楙 (1151–1213), comp., Yeke congshu 野客叢書 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1939), 3.22.

There are two specific texts that may inform the variant. First, Mao shi 177 contains the line “Turtle baked in clay, thin sliced raw carp” 鳖[=炮]鱉[=鱉]鱉鯉. The other text is a line in Cao Zhi’s own “Qi qi” 七啟 (Seven Inducements): 寒芳蓮之巢龜, which can be rendered “Bouilloned turtle that nests on fragrant lotuses” and contains an allusion to lines in Shi ji 史記. See Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145–86 BCE), Shi ji (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), 128.3227.

The meaning of the first graph, han 寒, in this line from “Qi qi” is problematic. Hanyu da cidian 漢語大辭典, s.v. 寒, says there is no agreed upon identification of this method of food preparation and refers the reader to the discussion in the modern scholar Wang Liqi’s 王利器 critical edition of Yan tie lun 鹽鐵論 for evidence of that. The Shi ming 釋名 (ca. 200 CE), a lexicon attributed to Liu Xi 劉熙 and inclined to paronomastic glosses, mentions the three dishes han tu 韓兔 (han rabbit), han yang 韓羊 (han mutton), and han ji 韓雞 (han chicken) and says that they are thus named because they derive from a cooking method from Han 韓 (Korea). The commentary of Li Shan 李善 (d. 689) to “Qi qi” says that han “was like modern zheng rou 脔肉.” Zheng appears as a cooking method in Jia Sixie’s 賈思勰 (sixth century) Qimin yaoshu 齊民要術, where it refers to cooking meat, fish sauce or pickled fish, and other ingredients together; Shi Shenghan 石聲漢, ed. Qimin yaoshu jin shi 齊民要術今釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2009), 2:874. See also Xiao Tong 蕭統 (501–31), comp., Wen xuan 文選 (Taipei: Han jing wenhua shiyehouxian gongsi, 1983), 34.16a; Zhang Qichen 張啟成 et al., trans., Wen xuan quan yi 文選...
Calling companions, shouting to mates.
The seated group fills a long mat.
Endlessly playing at football and pegs,\textsuperscript{15}
Their skill and agility are of untold variety.
The white sun speeds southwest;

Note that the \textit{wu chen} text of \textit{Wen xuan} has \textit{bao} instead of \textit{han}. Yang Shen 楊慎 (1488–1559) strongly condemns this reading. He first takes the position that the old text (\textit{jiu ben} 舊本)—by which he must mean either the original text or the pre-\textit{wu chen} \textit{Wen xuan}—had the word \textit{han}. He then writes:

The \textit{wu chen} [edition] cavalierly changed it to \textit{bao bie}. Now \textit{bao bie kuai li} is an old line from the \textit{Mao shi}, so who among those of shallow learning would not consider \textit{han} an error and follow the reading \textit{bao}? They do not stop to think that the forms of the graphs \textit{han} and \textit{bao} are far apart and that the pronunciations, too, are different.

How can one make such an error; Yang Shen, \textit{Sheng’an shihua} 升菴詩話, quoted in \textit{San Cao ziliao huibian} 三曹操資料彙編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 127–8.

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ju} 鞠 was a type of football played with a leather ball filled with wool. On this ancient sport, which was sometimes a part of military physical training, see Zhonghua renmin gongheguo tiyu yundong weiyuanhui Yundong jishu weiyuanhui 中華人民共和國體育運動委員會運動技術委員會, ed., \textit{Zhongguo tiyu shi cankao ziliao} 中國體育史參考資料, vol. 1 (Beijing: Renmin tiyu chubanshe, 1957), 33–90. See also Yu Jiaxi 余嘉錫, ed., \textit{Shishuo xinyu jian shu} 世說新語箋疏 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1996 rpt.), 21.711; Richard B. Mather, trans., \textit{Shih-shuo Hsin-yü: A New Account of Tales of the World}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002), 390. What I am calling “pegs” refers to \textit{rang} 撃壤 or \textit{ji rang} 擊壤, an ancient game (\textit{gu xi} 古戲) using two pieces of wood. These were about nine inches long, a bit under three inches wide, and pointed on one end. One piece was stuck into the ground at a distance of thirty or forty paces, and the object was to hit it by throwing the other piece. See the excerpt from \textit{Handan Chun} 邯郸淳 (ca. 130–ca. 225), \textit{Yijing} 藝經, quoted in Li Fang 李昉 (925–996) et al., comps., \textit{Taiping yu lan} 太平御覽, 4 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), 755.4b.
And daylight cannot be stayed.
Scattering like clouds, we return to town;
In the morning we will come again.

The title of this poem comes from the first two words, with the word *pian* (or “piece”) added. *Pian* meant a bundle of the bamboo or wooden strips upon which texts were written and later came to refer to a section or piece of literature. In poetry, the word is often used in the titles of poems categorized as belonging to the *yuefu* 雲府 genre and may indicate that the piece so titled was a song. We do not know for certain that this is the original title of Cao Zhi’s poem or that he would have called it a *yuefu* poem, but “Ming du pian” is the title under which it appears in the “Yuefu” section of the key early medieval anthology *Wen xuan*. Furthermore, the poem has features that are not typical of Cao’s non-*yuefu* poetry. It seems clear that Cao Zhi was utilizing a distinct form—what he termed it, if not *yuefu*, we cannot know—that later editors and anthologists called *yuefu*. The poem’s inclusion in *Wen xuan* supports its authenticity. This is not a datable piece, but there is a conventional view that the earlier years of Cao Zhi’s life were happier than the later ones, with the result that this piece is often assumed to come from his earlier period. This is a weak and circular argument.

The numerous variants in the sources that preserve the poem are the norm for texts originating in a manuscript culture. “Famous Towns” could have been inscribed

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18 See, for example, Li Chendong 李辰冬, “Cao Zhi de zuopin fenqi” 曹植的作品分期, in *Li Chendong, Wenxue yanjiu xin tujing 文學研究新途徑* (Taipei: Qide chubanshe, 1972). This is a reprint of an article originally published in *Dalu zazhi 大陸雜誌* 15 (August 31, 1957): 9–14.
originally on paper, but it is equally possible that it was composed on wooden or bamboo strips, or perhaps silk.  

“Famous Capitals” differs from another group of poems that mention food and ale—the lord’s feast poems (gong yan shi 公宴詩 or 公謨詩) and comparable pieces—composed during the same period by a number of poets, including Cao Zhi. In those poems, the eating and drinking takes place in a more courtly setting. As occasional poems written for feasts hosted by a superior, the lord’s feast poems do not convey the sense of abandon and spontaneity of “Famous Capitals.” They are products of more formal circumstances and, as Stephen Owen observes, composed in a higher register of language. The writing of poetry for feasts has always been recognized as a significant element in Jian’an 建安 (196–220) period literary life. But not all of the occasional poems on feasts from that era mention food and drink—Cao Zhi’s own poem entitled “Gong yan” 公宴 does not. And some of them omit the sort of enumeration of specific dishes seen in “Famous Capitals,” opting instead for a more or less formulaic reference to the presence of ale (jiu 酒) and viands (yao 肴) or foods (shan 食), as in the following poem by Cao Zhi.

“Shi taizi zuo” 侍太子坐 (Seated in Attendance on the Heir Apparent)

白日曜青春[天] The white sun blazes in the azure sky,

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22 Cutter, “Cao Zhi’s Symposium Poems,” 3.

23 This is its title in Zhao, Cao Zhi ji jiao zhu, 1.48. In Xiao Tong, Wen xuan, 20.12a, the title is given as “Gong yan shi” 公謨詩.

24 Ding, Cao ji quan ping, 4.35.
A timely rain settles the flying dust.
Cold ice dispels the scorching sun,
A cool breeze blows against my body.
Clear sweet wine fills golden bowls,
Servings of viands are arrayed to and fro.
Players from Qi offer rare music,
The singers come from western Qin.
Elegant is our young lord,
His wisdom and wit as quick as a god’s.

In other poems of this kind, we find very similar references to food and drink. As Owen notes, “We don’t know who wrote the first ‘food and ale’ couplet for one of these Jian’an parties, but once in circulation, it became a template couplet for other poets.”

The following verses illustrate this tendency:

Fine viands lade round and square vessels,

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25 Huang, *Cao Zijian shi zhu*, 1.2 follows the reading *chun* (“spring”) instead of *tian* (“sky”), pointing out that the opening verse of “Da zhao” (The Great Summons) is 青春受謝白日昭只 “Green spring takes its turn, and the white sun shines.” See *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注, 10.1b (*Sibu beiyao* 四部備要 ed.). Huang says that although the poem is set in summer, when the sun emerges following a rain, it is as pleasant as spring. He also thinks that *qing chun* 青春 is a metonym for the heir apparent, since the heir apparent can be referred to metonymically as *chun gong* 春宮 (“spring palace”) and *qing gong* 青宮 (“verdant palace”).

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28 Some of these are mentioned by Owen, others not. See Owen, *The Making of Early Chinese Classical Poetry*, 208.
Delicious ale fills golden ewers.  

Wang Can 王粲 (177–217), “Gong yan shi” 公宴詩

Lavish foods stretch in star-like array,

Cao Pi 曹丕 (187–226), “Yu Qiao zuo” 於譞作

Delicious ale fills jade bowls.

Cao Pi, “Mengjin shi” 孟津詩

Winged jue goblets exceed ivory cups,

Dou and ou were containers for measuring volume. According to Du Yu’s 杜預 (222–285) commentary to Zuo zhuan 左傳, “four dou equaled one ou, and an ou was one dou six sheng [10.6 liters]” 四豆為區區一斗六升.

Although this piece begins as a feast poem, it becomes a poem urging Ding Yi to preserve his integrity.

In Cao Zhi’s “Yu bin fu” 娛賓賦 (Entertaining Guests Rhapsody), also an occasional piece and likely written for a banquet hosted by Cao Pi, and in his “Dang ‘Lai ri da nan’”

Cao Zhi, “Zeng Ding Yi” 贈丁廙


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31 Dou and ou were containers for measuring volume. According to Du Yu’s 杜預 (222–285) commentary to Zuo zhuan 左傳, “four dou equaled one ou, and an ou was one dou six sheng [10.6 liters]” 四豆為區區一斗六升.

32 Although this piece begins as a feast poem, it becomes a poem urging Ding Yi to preserve his integrity.
當來日大難 (To “In Coming Days Big Trouble”), the food and ale collapse into a single line, almost disappearing in the latter:

美酒清而肴干 The excellent ale is clear and the viands sweet.\textsuperscript{33}  
Cao Zhi, “Yu bin fu”

乃置玉樽辦東廚 So we set out jade cups, prepare [food] in the eastern kitchen.  
Cao Zhi, “Dang lai ri da nan”

It is curious that these occasional pieces lack specificity regarding the dishes on hand, since important elements in feast poems were praise for the host and a description of the pleasures of the event. Apparently the food and ale template was sufficient to satisfy the requirements of this type of poetry. As “Famous Capitals” shows, in Jian’an times we must look beyond the lord’s feast poems and similar occasional works to find the enumeration of different kinds of foods—to other poems classified as \textit{yuefu} and to \textit{fu} 賦, especially to the subgenre of \textit{fu} called “Sevens” (qi 七). An example of the former is the following poem by Cao Zhi. Although this looks at first like a poem of the lord’s feast type, it is differentiated by its tone, the fact that the speaker is the host, and its classification as a \textit{yuefu}.

“Kong hou yin” 竽篌引 (Harp Lay)\textsuperscript{34}

置酒高殿上 I hold a feast in a high hall,

親友\textsuperscript{35}從我遊 And good friends revel with me.

中廚辦豐膳\textsuperscript{36} The inner kitchen prepares bountiful foods—

\begin{itemize}
  \item Boils lamb, slays a fatted calf.
  \item How fervid the Qin zithers!
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{33} Ding, \textit{Cao ji quan ping}, 1.12.
\textsuperscript{34} Ding, \textit{Cao ji quan ping}, 5.55–6.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{《樂府》三十九作交}。
\textsuperscript{36} \textit{《白帖》十五作饌}。
\textsuperscript{37} \textit{《藝文》四十二作愖}。
Gentle and soft the Qi cithers.

Yang’e performs an exotic dance.

From capital Luo come famous songs.

Joyfully drinking, we exceed three goblets;

Loosening our belts, we consume the many delicacies.

The host makes a gift of a thousand in gold.

The guests offer a toast for long life.

Old friends may not be forgotten;

Neglecting them in the end is what loyalty condemns.

He seeks nothing by his deferential aspect.

Flying Swallow Zhao (Zhao Feiyan, d. 1 CE) was a beautiful singer and dancer who rose to be empress and empress dowager. Her biography says of that when Emperor Cheng (r. 33–7 BCE) first saw her, she was in the household of the princess of Yang’e, where she had studied voice and dance; Ban Gu, Ban Gu, Han shu (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), 97B.3988. Yang’e is also mentioned as the name of a famous chanteuse in Huainanzi; Huainanzi, 2.1b, in Sbby.

Cf. Zuo zhuan, Xuan 2: “When a subject attends his lord’s feast, to exceed three goblets is a violation of etiquette”.


Cf. Zhou yi, hexagram 15, 6/1.
A hard wind buffets the white sun,
And daylight speeds on its westerly course.
The prime of life does not come twice
Within a century we suddenly come to an end
When alive, we dwell in splendid homes
When we fall, we go to hilly graves
Who in the past did not die?
Knowing fate, why worry any longer?

Like “Famous Capitals,” “Harp Lay” is contained in Wen xuan, which enhances its likelihood of authenticity. The feast in the first half of the poem engenders in the speaker feelings of camaraderie and leads to the assertion in the second half that although life is brief, accepting the fact that all people eventually die is in liberating. Specific foods are mentioned as part of the feast (lamb and a calf), and the drinking is immoderate.

The Sevens genre appears to have begun with Mei Sheng’s Qi fa 七發 [Seven Stimuli], which in turn can be related to the Summons poems—“Zhao hun” 招魂 [Summoning the Soul] and “Da zhao” 大招 [Great Summons]—of Chu ci 楚辭. As David R. Knechtges notes, Sevens compositions are named for their division into seven parts, “most of which describe a particular sensual pleasure, one of which is eating.”

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45 《文選》作亦。
46 《文選》作欲何。
47 《文選》作可再。
48 《文選》作在。
49 《文選》作亦。
51 David R. Knechtges, “A Literary Feast: Food in Early Chinese Literature,” JAOS 106.1 (1986): 57. On the survival of pieces in the Sevens genre from Han through the Six Dynasties and a critical look at works and passages that have been proposed as precursors over time, see Hou
Whereas the Summons poems are literary pieces inspired by a ritual for calling back the souls of the dead or dying, “Qi fa” is an attempt to rouse a sick prince by means of seven enticements. The second of these is a meal to tempt the most exacting gourmand:

The fat underbelly of a young ox,
With bamboo shoots and bulrush sprouts;
A blended stew of plump dog,
Smothered in mountain rind.
Boiled rice from Miao Mountain in Ch’u,
Boiled cereal from wild rice—
Rolled into balls they do not crumble,
But once sucked into the mouth they dissolve.
And then, have
I Yin to fry and boil,
I-ya to season and blend:
Well-done servings of bear paws,
A sauce of savory seasoning;
A roast of thin tenderloin;
Autumn-yellowed perilla;
Legumes soaked in white dew;
Thoroughwort blossom wine,
Poured to rinse the mouth;
A course of hen pheasant;
The fetus of a tamed leopard.$^{52}$

Cao Zhi’s “Seven Inducements” is essentially a work in the beckoning the recluse (zhaoyin 招隱) tradition that is cast in the form of a hypothetical dialogue between two fictional figures—the recluse Master Profound Subtlety (Xuanwei zi 玄徵子) and one Master Mirrors the Minute (Jingji zi 鏡機子), whose goal is to lure the former into

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$^{52}$ Knechtges, “A Literary Feast,” 57.
The very first of the enticements Master Mirrors the Minute employs is a sumptuous feast:

- Fragrant water bamboo, polished rice,
- Frosty turnip rape, dewy mallow;
- The pale skin of a black bear,
- The grain-fed flesh of fat livestock,
- As thinly carved as cicada wings,
- Cut delicately, slivered finely,
- Piled up like layered gauze,
- Separate as scattered snow,
- Light enough to fly in a breeze,
- A blade cannot find a place to slice.

- Mountain grouse, quail,
- Dainties of mollusk meat,
- Bouilloned turtle that nests on fragrant lotuses,
- Thin sliced flying fish from the western seas,
- Stewed submerged alligator from the east of the Yangzi,
- Braised calling quail from south of the Han—
- Seasoned with herbs and vinegar,
- The flavors harmonious and mellow.
- Xuanming corrects the saltiness.

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54 The translation “mollusk meat” follows Li Shan’s commentary; Xiao, *Wen xuan*, 34.16a. See also Zhao, *Cao Zhi ji jiao zhu*, 1.15–6.
55 *Shan hai jing*
Rushou adjusts the spiciness.\(^{57}\)

Purple thoroughwort, cinnabar fagara,

To use and blend these in, one must be sparing.

The tastes all are unique,

And their lingering aroma extends afar.

Then there is

The clear pale green ale of spring,

Made by Du Kang and Yi Di.\(^ {58}\)

In reaction to fluctuations it changes,

Under influence of the seasons is done:

Pluck the \textit{zhi} note and bitterness comes forth,\(^ {59}\)

Strike the \textit{gong} note and sweetness is born.\(^ {60}\)

Thereupon, Halcyon cups are filled,

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\(^{56}\) Xuanming was the god of the North and director of waterways; see David R. Knechtges, trans., \textit{Wen xuan, or Selections of Refined Literature}, vol. 3, \textit{Rhapsodies on Natural Phenomena, Birds and Animals, Aspirations and Feelings, Sorrowful Laments, Literature, Music, and Passions} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 130n.

\(^{57}\) Rushou was the god of the West.


\(^{59}\) Cf. \textit{Li ji zhu shu} \textit{禮記注疏}, 15.16b–17a, in \textit{Shisan jing zhu shu} \textit{十三經注疏}: “The first month of summer: ... Its note is \textit{zhi} ... its flavor is bitter” 孟夏月 ... 其音徵 ... 其味苦. Li Shan’s commentary incorrectly has 季夏 for the month; Xiao, \textit{Wen xuan}, 34.16b.

\(^{60}\) Cf. \textit{Li ji zhu shu} \textit{禮記注疏}, 16.13a–15a: “The middle is earth ... Its note is \textit{gong} ... its flavor is sweet” 中央土 ... 其音宮 ... 其味甘.
Carved bowls are poured,

[Froth like] floating ants bubbling in a cauldron,

Powerful the heady bouquet.

This can harmonize the spirit,

Can gladden the heart.

Such are the marvels of dishes of viands. Will you join me in partaking of them?

Pieces like “Seven Inducements” and poems by Cao Zhi classified as yuefu typically treat or are in the voice of personae whose identity is less closely related to the man Cao Zhi than is the case with the speakers in his other poetry (shi 詩). In fact, they demand the construction of such speakers. This has been a challenge for centuries of readers, who have always preferred to read Chinese poetic works as an expression of what a poet was personally experiencing or feeling.

Since the lord’s feast poems and related compositions are occasional works related to actual events in which the poet was a participant, and since they had social functions to perform, they are more circumscribed, and there is less scope to depict and dwell on the details of food and drink. Those poems do not quite escape the powerful moral and ritual ideologies governing eating and drinking, in which overindulgence, exoticism, and too much fun are at best improper and at worst downright dangerous.61 This has not saved them for criticism for being uninteresting and mediocre.62 One modern literary scholar lumps all of the poems on feasting together and states:

In his early years, Cao Zhi also wrote some poems on the way of life of the nobility (like “Famous Capitals,” “Harp Lay,” “Seated in Attendance on the Heir Apparent,”

and “Lord’s Feast”). . . . Some of them reflect a decadent and listless interest in life, some were written on command and are deficient in honest emotion.⁶³

But this ignores the differences we see in the poems. If we can trace those difference at least in part to the influence of genre, it still remains to comment on some of the specifics of the depictions of food and drink. David Knechtges remarks that “there is in fact a certain bookishness to some of the food enumerations, especially in the ‘Sevens.’ The rare delicacies they mention were certainly seldom eaten, if ever.”⁶⁴

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⁶³ Li Baojun 李寶均, Cao shi fuzi he Jian’an wenxue 曹氏父子和建安文學 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1978), 52.