J1. THE ROMANCE OF THE WESTERN CHAMBER (*XI XIANG JI* 西廂記), RISD 37.044







1. "Listening to the Zither" (*ting qin* 聽琴)



2. "Climbing over the wall" (*tiao qiang* 跳牆)



3. "invitation to dinner" (*qing yan* 請宴)



4. "Bidding Farewell at Chang Pavillion (*Chang ting song bie* 長亭送別)



5. Yingying burns incense in the moonlit garden



6. "Madame Cui scolds Hongniang" (*kaohong* 拷紅)



7. "Suddenly awaking from the dream (*jing meng* 驚夢)



8. "Meeting the beauty" (*yu yan* 遇艷)

NOTES

Xixiang ji originated as a short story, "The Tale of Yingying" (*Yingying zhuan*) by Tang poet Yuan Zhen (779-831), which was rewritten as a form of prosimetric narrative (*shuochang wenxue*), *The Story of the Western Wing in All Keys and Modes* by Dong Jieyuan (around 1200); rewritten again as a five-*zaju* cycle by Wang Shifu 王實甫 (ca. 1250-1300) during the thirteenth century; and later in the late Ming, when *zaju* declined in popularity, adapted for *chuanqi* performance by Li Rihua 李日華(1565-1635).[1]

The plot tells of Scholar Zhang (Zhang Gong), a poor scholar, and Cui Yingying, the daughter of a Tang Chief minister, who meet at a Buddhist monastry, whilst Yingying and her mother rest on a journey to return her father's coffin to his home town. Aided by Yingying's maid, Hong niang, the pair fall in love and overcome local bandits, Yingying's strict mother who opposes their match, previous betrothals, and civil service exams, to eventually marry and Zhang achieves official success.

Under the influence of southern dramatic conventions, *Xi xiang ji* was commonly rendered in 20 acts, each with two or four character titles and illustrations.[2] As illustrations became increasingly standardized, audience familiarity with illustration

1 See the introduction by Stephen H West and Wilt L. Idema in Wang Shifu, *The Moon and the Zither: The Story of the Western Wing* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), pp.3-156

2 For example, *Xixiang ji tuce* 西廂記圖冊 by Qiu Ying 仇英, which contained twenty scenes, each picture matches a *quci* 曲詞: "fo dian qi feng" 佛殿奇逢; "seng fang jia yu"僧房假寓; "qiang jiao lian yin"牆角聯吟; "zhai tian nao hui"齋壇鬧會; "huiming jijian"惠明寄簡;"hongniang qingyan"紅娘請宴; "furen tinghun"夫人停婚; "Yingying tingqin"鶯鶯聽琴; "jinzi chuan qing" 錦字傳情; "zhuang tai kui jian" 妝台窺簡;"cheng ye yu qiang" 乘夜逾牆; "qian hong wen bing" 倩紅問病; "Zheng Heng qiu pei"鄭恆求配; "chi su jian chou"尺素

conventions meant the visualization became ever sparer and more referential, something observed in the jackets, which tend to emphasize the romantic moments where eyes first lock. The embroidered version also glosses the scenes, for example, compare the "kao hong" 拷紅 scene from *Zhui bai qiu* to the jackets, where Yingying's mother has been made much younger and more beautiful.[3]

SCENES

1. "Listening to the Zither" (*ting qin* 聽琴)
Cui Yingying listens to Scholar Zhang play the qin

2. "Climbing over the wall" (*tiao qiang* 跳牆)
Scholar Zhang climbs the wall to meet Yingying

3. "invitation to dinner" (*qing yan* 請宴)
Hong niang invites Scholar Zhang to dinner

4. "Bidding Farewell at Chang Pavillion" (*Chang ting song bie* 長亭送別)
Yingying and Scholar Zhang bid a sad farewell as he goes to the Capital to sit the exams

5. "Cui Yingying burns incence at night"
Yingying burns incense with Hong niang in the moonlit garden

6. "Beating Crimson" (*kao hong* 拷紅)
Madame Cui beats Hong niang for her role in the lovers' tryst

7. "Suddenly awaking from the dream" (*jing meng* 驚夢)
Zhang Sheng dreams of Yingying on his way to the capital exams

8. "Meeting the beauty" (*yu yan* 遇艷)
Yingying and Scholar Zhang first meet

COMPARE

As one of the most popular romantic comedies ever written, *Xi xiang ji* very quickly developed a vibrant visual existence, from the completely illustrated 1498 Hongzhi edition to Min Qiji's 1640 colour-printed album, and including porcelain vessels, wood-carvings, *kesi*-woven and embroidered textiles, and *nianhua* prints in inventive narrative presentations, for example a mid-Qing *nianhua* single print, conceptualized as a mansion and entitled *The Complete story of the West Chamber*, or the calligraphic teapot discussed in Chapter 6. [4]

It was evidently a fashionable decorative theme in dress, and there are a number of surviving *Xi xiang ji* jackets, for example, a jacket from a private collection illustrated in John Vollmer, *Five Colours of the Universe* p.8; a near identical jacket, also worked in *chousha* (cross stitch on gauze) is found in the Honolulu Academy of Arts; Minneapolis Institute of Art, no. 51.19.35, and no. 51.19.34. The narrative also features on clothing in the Field Museum collection (no. 653.33154, no. 4010.269179), and the Palace Museum collection.[5]

緘愁; "yue xia jia qi"月下佳期; "tang qian qiao bian"堂前巧辯; "Chang ting song bie"長亭送別; "cao qiao jing meng"草橋驚夢; "ni jin bao jie" 泥金報捷; "yi jin hui xiang"衣錦還鄉.

3 Popular illustrations were included in *Zhui baiq iu*: *ji* 2, *juan* 4, "hui ming"惠明, "jia qi" 佳期; *ji* 4, *juan* 1: "qing yan" 请宴, "kao hong" 拷紅; *ji* 7, *juan* 3: "you dian" 游殿, "ji jian" 寄柬; *ji* 9, *juan* 2: "tiao qiang" 跳墻, "zhao sai" 着基, "Chang ting" 长亭. See also for theatrically-tinged illustrations *Kunju zhezixi chu tan,* which includes 6 scenes: "you dian"游殿*,* "hui ming"惠明, "ji dong"寄東*,* "tiao qiang zhao qi"跳牆著棋, "jia qi"佳期, "kao Hong" 拷紅.

4 *Suzhou Taohuawu muban nianhua*, p.133, no.19. See Yao Dajuin, "The Pleasure of Reading Drama" in *The Moon and the Zither*, pp.437-468. Hsu Wen-chin, "Fictional Scenes on Chinese Transitional Porcelain and their Sources of Decoration"; Craig Clunas, "The West Chamber: A Literary Theme in Chinese Porcelain Decoration"; Ni Yibin, "The Shunzhi Emperor and the Popularity of Scenes from the Romance of the Western Wing on porcelain", in *Treasures from an Unknown Reign: Shunzhi Porcelain (1644-1661)* by Sir Michael Butler (Alexandria, VA: University of Washington Press, 2002), pp.68-81; For wood-carved examples, see *Ming Qing minjian mudiao*, *xiqu renwu juan*, pp.144; *Suzhou banhua*, no.12/13; for a set of *kesi* and painted banners combining *Xi xiang ji* scenes with other unidentified dramatic scenes, see Brown, *Weaving China's Past,* no.15; For a mid-Qing Suzhou Taohuawu single print of the entire story, apportioned out across the monastry setting, with each scene occupying one room and labels annotating the scenes, see Yamato Bunkakan, *Chūgoku no min-shin jidai no hanga*, no.38.

5 *Gugong xiqu wenwu*, no.181.

J2. THE ROMANCE OF THE WESTERN CHAMBER (*XI XIANG JI* 西廂記), MIA 51.19.34







1. "near the altar" (*fu zhao* 附齋)



2. "Hong niang invites (Scholar Zhang) to a banquet" (*qing yan* 請宴)



3. "Sad parting" (*shang li* 傷離)



4. "Suddenly awaking from the dream" (*jing meng* 驚夢)



5. "Returning home in brocade clothes" (*yi jin hui xiang* 衣錦還鄉)



6. Scholar Zhang repulses Flying Tiger Sun



7. Yingying asks Happy to take Clothes to Scholar Zhang



8. "Taking the room" (*jie xiang* 借廂)



9. Scholar Zhang and Yingying (*jiu huan* 就歡



10. "Climbing over the wall" (*tiao qiang* 跳牆)

See the notes in J1

SCENES

1. "Near the altar" (*fu zhao* 附齋)
Scholar Zhang is overwhelmed by Yingying's beauty during a portion of the mass.

2. "Invitation to dinner" (*qing yan* 請宴)
Hong niang invites Scholar Zhang to a banquet where he is dissappointed in his hopes of a betrothal.

3. "Bidding Farewell at Chang Pavillion" (*Chang ting song bie* 長亭送別)
Yingying and Scholar Zhang bid a sad farewell as he goes to the Capital to sit the exams.

4. "Suddenly awaking from the dream" (*jing meng* 驚夢)
Zhang Sheng dreams of Yingying on his way to the capital exams.

5. "Returning home in brocade clothes" (*yi jin hui xiang* 衣錦還鄉)
Zhang Sheng returns home the *zhuangyuan* and weds Yingying

6. Scholar Zhang repulses Flying Tiger Sun
Zhang promises to help Yingying and her mother repulse Flying Tiger Sun on the condition that she consider him a "relative".

7. Yingying asks Happy to take Clothes to Scholar Zhang
Scholar Zhang has gone to the capital to take the exams, Yingying asks Happy to take him clothes and a letter.

8. "Taking the room" (*jie xiang* 借廂)
Hong niang and Scholar Zhang first meet when he visits the monastry and is entranced by her beauty.

9. Scholar Zhang and Yingying (*jiu huan* 就歡)

10. "Climbing over the wall" (*tiao qiang* 跳牆)
Scholar Zhang climbs the wall to visit Yingying in her chamber, where he encounters a stern lecture.

J3. THE ROMANCE OF THE WESTERN CHAMBER (*XI XIANG JI* 西廂記), MIA 51.19.35







1. "Returning home in brocade clothes" (*yi jin hui xiang* 衣錦還鄉)



2. Hong niang takes Zhang's letter (*sheng jian* 省簡)



3. "Climbing over the wall" (*tiao qiang* 跳牆)



4. "Listening to the Zither" (*ting qin* 聽琴)



5. Yingying burns incense in the moonlit garden with Hongniang



6. "Suddenly awaking from the dream"(*jing meng* 驚夢)



7. "Madame Cui scolds Hongniang" (*kao hong* 拷紅)



8. "Sad farewell at Chang Pavillion" (*Chang ting song bie* 長亭送別)

For further notes see J1

SCENES

1. "Returning home in brocade clothes" (*yi jin hui xiang* 衣錦還鄉)
Zhang Sheng returns home the *zhuangyuan* and weds Yingying, here attended by Hong niang and Happy.

2. Hong niang takes Zhang's letter, together with Happy (*sheng jian* 省簡)
Scholar Zhang persuades Hong niang to deliver his note to Yingying.

3. "Climbing over the wall" (*tiao qiang* 跳牆)
Scholar Zhang climbs the wall to visit Yingying in her chamber, where he encounters a stern lecture.

4. "Listening to the Zither" (*ting qin* 聽琴)
Yingying listens to Scholar Zhang play the qin

5. "Yingying burns incence at night"
Yingying burns incense with Hong niang in the moonlit garden

6. "Suddenly awaking from the dream" (*jing meng* 驚夢)
Zhang Sheng dreams of Yingying on his way to the capital exams.

7. "Beating Hong niang" (*kao Hong* 拷紅)
Madame Cui beats Hong niang for her role in the lovers' tryst.

8. "Bidding Farewell at Chang Pavillion" (*Chang ting song bie* 長亭送別)
Yingying and Scholar Zhang bid a sad farewell as he goes to the Capital to sit the exams.

J4. "TWENTY-FOUR SCENES OF FILIAL PIETY" (*ERSHISI XIAO* 二十四孝), RISD 35.406







1. "He Obeyed His Mother in Simple Clothes"
Dan yi shun mu 單衣順母(4/24)



2. "A Bubbling Spring and a Leaping Carp"
Yong quan yue li 涌泉躍鯉 (20/24)



3. "He Fed His Parents Doe's Milk"
Lu ru feng qing 鹿乳奉親(7/24)



4. "He Buried His Son for His Mother"
Wei mu mai er 為母埋兒(13/24)



5. “He Concealed Oranges To Present To His Mother”
Huai ju wei qin 懷橘遺親(9/24)



6. “Her Son Tasted Soups and Medicine”
Qin chang tang yao 親嘗湯藥(2/24)



7. “He Amused His Parents With Play and Glad Clothes”
Xi cai yu qin 戲彩娛親(17/24)



8. “He Picked Mulberries for His Mother”
Shi shen gong mu 拾桑供母(8/24)



9. “He Shouldered Rice To Nourish His Parents”
Wei qin fu mi 为亲负米(5/24)



10. “She Bit Her Finger and Pained His Heart”
Nie zhi tong xin 嚙指心痛(3/24)

NOTES

The *Ershisi xiao* was written by Guo Jujing 郭居敬 during the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368), but the origins of the tales date back at least to the tenth century, and the twenty-four tales are a subset of the much larger original number of tales, selected because of their popularity and canonical status.[1] From the Wu Liang shrine to the twenty-first century, these scenes have remained in circulation - carved in tombs, published in almanacs and produced as prints by all the major printing centres to hang at home or bind in booklets, found in elite and folk renditions, in paper-cuts and carvings.[2]

The embroidered jacket scenes possess some similarities in scenic structure to the *Huitu ershisi xiao riji gushi* 繪圖二十四孝日記故事 published by the Shanghai Liude ji shuju 劉德記書局 some time early in the 20th century; or the *ershisi xiao tushuo* 二十四孝圖說 published in the first year of the Tongzhi period (Jinling: Shendu shanfang, 1862). There does not appear to be any obvious reason for choosing the ten scenes that are featured in the jacket, and they are certainly not particularly focused on the female characters of the *Ershisi xiao*.[3]

Here these filial roundels have been combined with a co-ordinating cloud collar and border set featuring the narrative "The Pearl Pagoda" reduced to its most salient scenes: Fang Qing bidding farewell to his mother (front overlap to cloud collar front lobe), Cui'E giving Fang Qing the pearl pagoda (She stands on the back left side border, he stands on the back right side border), Lady Fang in the nunnery, Fang Qing sitting Taoist sutras (front bottom border), and so on.[4]

SCENES

1. "He Obeyed His Mother in Simple Clothes" *Dan yi shun mu* 單衣順母 (4/24)
A student of Confucius, Ming Zijian, lost his mother when he was an infant. His stepmother favoured her own two sons, dressing them in warm padded clothes, while Ming wore unlined garments. When his father discovered this, he was angered and wished to throw his wife out of the house but Ming cried and persuaded his father not to do so. This was a common structure - the son readying to pull his father in the carriage, the stepmother standing to one side, an infant in her arms and other son at her side. In the jacket, Ming has a more scholarly appearance, he was more typically dressed as a labourer.

2. "The Spring Bubbled and the Carps Leapt" *Yong quan yue li* 涌泉躍鯉 (20/24)
Jiang Shi of the Han was a filial son. His wife Bong Shi was even more careful in serving his mother. His mother liked fish and so everyday the couple would search for fish. Finally a spring sprang up besides their house and two carp leapt from it each day, so that they could cook it for their mother.

3. "He Fed His Parents Doe's Milk" *Lu ru feng qing* 鹿乳奉親 (7/24)
Tanzi of the Spring and Autumn Period had elderly parents who suffered from eye disease and were told that it might be cured if they drank deer's milk. So he put on a deer skin to allow him to get near the deer and went into the forest where he found the flock and wandered with them, putting milk into his buckets when the does nursed their young. Some hunters saw him and thought he was a deer and prepared to shoot him, but Tanzi told his story and so escaped death. Instead of the more common pair of hunters, here there is just one rather scholarly-looking hunter.

4. "He Buried His Son for His Mother" *Wei mu mai er* 為母埋兒 (13/24)
Guo Chu of the Han dynasty had a three year-old son, and decided to bury him in order to save food for his mother. But whilst digging the ground he discovered a pot of gold. As common, the son and mother or wife are positioned either side of the dug ground with its eye-catching gold nuggets.

5. "He Concealed Oranges To Present To His Mother" *Huai ju wei qin* 懷橘遺親 (9/24)
Lu Chi of the Han dynasty was 6 years old when he met Yuan Shu at Jinjiang. Yuan Shu gave him oranges and Lu put 2 in his pocket. When he took leave of Yuan, he made obescience and bowed down, and the two oranges fell from his pocket. He justified himself to Yuan that his mother loved oranges and he wished to save it for his mother. Here Yuan appears turning to go, before being turned back by the oranges, which loom large between the pair. Lu is rising from his obescience and looks like a young scholar rather than a six year old boy.

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1 See Zhao Chao, "The formation period of the Twenty-Four Filial Classics" (*ershi si xiao de heshi xingcheng* 二十四孝的何時形成), *Zhongguo dianji yu wenhua*, no.1-2 (1988), for an investigation of the formation of the group. There is a translation on David K. Jordan's website: http://weber.ucsd.edu/~dkjordan/chin/shiaw/shiawcontents.html (accessed May 2013).
2 Deng Fei 邓菲 examines the depiction of filial piety scenes in a group of Song tombs, in "Guanyu Song Jin muzang zhong xiaoxing tu de sikao"關於松金墓葬中孝行圖的思考, *Zhong yuan wenwu,* no.4 (2000), pp.75-81; for some examples of *nianhua* versions, see Wang Shucun, *Xiqu nianhua*, pp.128-47.
3 Ronald Knapp notes that 11 are between son and mother, 5 are between son and parents, 4 are between son and father, 2 are between son and stepmother, 2 are between daughter and mother-in-law During the Tang, the Ladies' Classic of Filial Piety (*Nu Xiaojing*) was written and illustrated as counterpoint to the earlier classic (*China's Living Houses*, p.134, p.140).
4 The same cloud collar and border is seen in Wang Yaorong, *Chinese Folk Embroidery*, pp.68-9, but executed on gauze in the *chuosha* technique.

6. "He Tasted Soup and Medicine for his Mother" *Qin chang tang yao* 親嘗湯藥 (2/24)
Emperor Wendi of the Han attended to his mother, the Empress Dowager Bo for more than 3 years whilst she was ill, and would always taste the soup before giving it to her. The son holds the medicine out to his mother, increasing the drama – often a servant held it for him.

7. "He Amused His Parents With Play and Glad Clothes" *Xi cai yu qin* 戲彩娛親 (17/24)
Lao Laizi was a filial son who attended to his parents with great devotion. Even though he was nearly 70 years old, he would always dress in colourful clothes and play like a child so as to pretend to be young. One day he carried a bucket of water and pretended to fall down and cried like a baby so as to entertain his parents. This structure was quite standardized: the elderly couple sitting next to each other with their gnarled faces and sticks, their son lies on the floor holding his toy up. In the embroidery, the wife has been eliminated and the father stands with his walking stick looking vaguely amused as his son lies on the mat, his stick with two buckets spilt before him.

8. "He Picked Mulberries To Serve His Mother" *Shi shen gong mu* 拾桑供母 (18/24)
During the Han dynasty, Cai Shun was a filial son. A great famine occurred and whilst he gathered mulberry seeds for his mother, he encountered a group of thieves, who discovered he was a filial son and gave him meat and rice. We see the two baskets as common, the one containing the mulberry seeds, the other with the meat and rice. Here the scene focuses on the interaction between boy and robber, who has a distinctly romantic scholar-hero appearance! It was more common to show two robbers and the boy pleading on knee for his life.

9. "He Shouldered Rice To Nourish His Parents" *Wei qin fu mi* 为亲负米 (5/24)
Culu, a student of Confucius carried rice for his parents on his back on a path more than 30 miles away. Here we just see the mother bent over with stitck and the boy bent over with the load of rice on his back. More commonly the elderly parents were pictured together waiting for their son's return.

10. "She Bit Her Finger and Pained His Heart" *Nie zhi tong xin* 嚙指心痛 (3/24)
Ceng Song, a student of Confucius was a filial son to his mother. One day whilst he was gathering wood, he suddenly felt a pain in his heart and returning home, found that a guest had come and his mother had bitten her finger so as to notify him. He carries his wood on his back, rather than leaving the door as more commonly depicted and increasing the drama. His mother is a rather attractive young woman – more typically she was shown bent over with a cane and holding out her hand.

COMPARE

They were also a favoured theme for virtuous young brides to embroider onto trousseau furnishings as a demonstration of their filial intentions, and are found in numerous textile formats - embroidered on tablecloths, screens and clothing.[5] Gao Chunming includes an example of a pair of rectangular shaped embroideries, each containing six of the scenes and likely intended for sleeve bands.[6]

For examples of *nianhua* prints, see *Suzhou banhua*, no.6. A late Qing Shanxi woodblock print, quite sparsely drawn and crudely printed in black and white, would have potentially also served as embroidery pattern.[7]

5 *Zhongguo yangjia muban nianhua yanjiu*, p.136.
6 Gao Chunming, *Jinxiu wenzhang: Zhongguo chuantong zhixiu wenyang*, p.422.
7 Knapp, *China's Living Houses*, p.135.

J5. "The Tale of the Jade Hairpin" (*Yu zan ji* 玉簪記), Met 1982.466.1







1. "Secret poem" (*tou shi* 偷詩)



2. "Tea and hairpin" (*cha chai* 茶釵)



3. Mother and daughter are reunited (*Hejia zhong hui* 合家重會)



4. "Playing the Zither"(*qin tiao* 琴挑)



5. "Obstructed by the aunt, missing the appointment" (*Gu zu, shi yue* 姑阻,失約)



6. Unidentified



7. "Urging to sit the exam" (*cui shi* 催試)



8. "Asking after the patient" (*wen bing* 問病)

NOTES

The Tale of the Jade Hairpin was written by Gao Lian 高濂 (fl.1573-1581) around 1580. Set in the Song dynasty, it tells of the love affair between scholar Pan Bizheng 潘必正 and a young women Chen Miaochang 陳妙常. Born to a Henan family, Pan was bethrothed some sixteen years earlier, but the two families have not communicated since. The father of Chen Jiaolian 陳嬌蓮 dies, leaving his wife and daughter to depend on each other. They meet misfortune when troops from the State of Jin invade and the two women lose each other in the chaos of flight. Jiaolian goes to the *Nüzhen guan* Nunnery in Jinling (Nanjing) and becomes a nun, taking the name Miaochang. When local scholars and nobility see her beauty, they all seek to marry her but in vain for she refuses them all. Pan Bizheng goes to Lin'an to take the exams, but fails due to illness and returns home in shame. By coincidence, his aunt is the head of the nunnery, so he stays there on the way home. His aunt urges him to study diligently and then re-sit the exams. But when Pan and Chen meet, they fall passionately in love. After many meetings drinking tea, playing the *qin* zither and writing poetry, the two break Buddhist regulations and begin a relationship. When the aunt discovers this, the two face disaster: the aunt forces Pan to go to the capital to sit the exams and personally takes him to the river without letting him see Chen. However Chen rents a small boat herself and chases after Pan's boat. She gives him a jade hairpin as a symbol of their unbreakable bond of love and Pan gives her a fan pendant carved with mandarin ducks. The two sorrowfully part at Qiu river. Pan goes to the capital, passes the exam and receives an official position. He returns to Jinling to wed Chen properly and then returns to his hometown in glory. At Pan's house, Chen finally finds her long lost mother and the whole family are reunited.[1] The play was performed in Kunqu

1 Based on the summary in *Zhongguo kunqu dacidian*, pp.83-4. The play contains 33 acts. They cite the *Liushi zhong qu* 六十種曲 edition reprinted by Zhonghua shuju in 1959. See also Wang Ning, *Kunju zhezixi xu kao*, pp.113-9.

and Peking opera forms, and the scene "Flirting with A Zither" was particularly popular, when she listens to him play the zither.

The roundels are matched with a cloud collar and border set depicting the birthday party scene from *Manchuang hu*, in which General Guo Ziyi is sent presents and felicitations by all his relatives and friends (see J8).

SCENES

1. "Secret poem" (*tou shi* 偷詩)
Originally act no.19, *ci gou* 詞媾, when Chen dreams of Pan in her study, and Pan visits and finds the love poems she wrote that reveal her love for him. Chen suddenly awakes and although she tries to cover up the situation, the poem is evidence and the two are bonded.

2. "Tea and hairpin" (*cha chai* 茶釵)
Originally scene no. 14, *you qing* 幽情 when Chen burns incense at Baiyuntang 白雲堂 and invites Pan to taste tea, and gives the hairpin as a memory of their first meeting

3. Mother and daughter are reunited (*Hejia zhong hui* 合家重會)

4. "Playing the zither"(*qin tiao* 琴挑)
Originally scene no.16, *ji nong* 寄弄, when Pan stealthily goes below *Baiyun lou* and listens to Miaochang playing the *qin*. Here it is Miaochang who listens to Pan playing, perhaps a mistake caused by the overlap with the "tingqin" scene from *Xi xiang ji*.

5. *Gu zu, shi yue* 姑阻,失約
Originally act no.21, in *gu zu* 姑阻, sometimes commonly called 姑約, Pan's aunt causes him to miss his appointment with Chen.

6. Unidentified

7. "Urging to sit the exam" (*cui shi* 催試)
Having guessed that Pan and Miaochang are in love, his aunt urges him to leave to take the exams, and the two are forced to part without saying proper goodbyes.

8. "Asking after the patient" (*wen bing* 問病)
Originally act no. 17 *dan si* 耽思, when Pan's emotions for Chen cause him to fall ill, and Chen goes to his study at *Cuiyun lou* to ask after him.

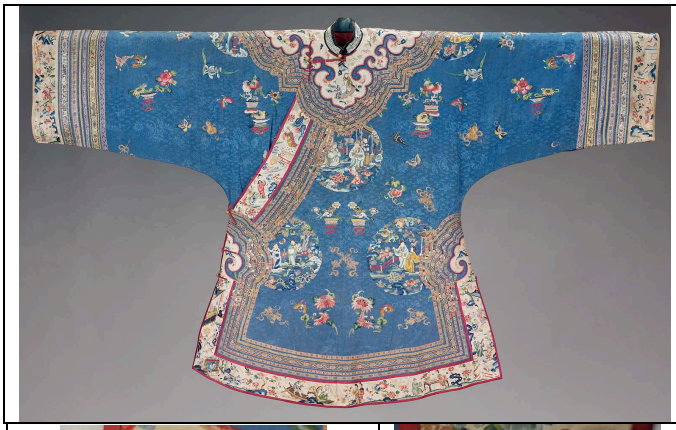
COMPARE

One of the most well-known images from this drama is the "Parting at the Autumn River" (*Qiu jiang son ghie* 秋江送別) scene, where, after forcing him to leave to take the exam, Chen's aunt sees him onto the boat. Miaochang follows in another boat and waits until the aunt leaves before pursuing his boat. The two exchange the jade hairpin and the mandarin ducks fan weight and bid farewell.[2]

Zhuibaiqiu reproduces the following scenes: *ji* 2, *juan* 1: "Urging to sit the exam" (*cui shi* 催試), "Parting at the Autumn River" (*Qiu jiang song bie* 秋江送別); *ji* 4, *juan* 4: "Playing the zither"(*qin tiao* 琴挑); *ji* 8, *juan* 3: "gu zu" 姑阻, "Missing the appointment" (*shi yue* 失約).

2 For an example, see Zhang Guobiao, ed. *Huai Pai Banhua yishu* (Anhui meishu chubanshe, 1995), p.98.

J6. The Legend of the White Snake (*Bai she zhuan* 白蛇傳), MFA 46.810







1. "Opening the pharmacy" (*kai dian* 開店)



2. Borrowing the umbrella unites the couple (*jie san cheng qin* 借傘成親)



3. *Zhuanyuan* Xu Shilin makes an offering to the pagoda (*zhuangyuan bai ta* 狀元拜搭)



4. Drinking the realgar liquor (*chi xiong huang jiu* 吃雄黃酒)



5. Madame Bai shows her original form (*xian yuan xing* 顯原形)



6. Touring the Lake (*you hu* 游湖)



7. Xu Xuan negotiates the marriage with Little Blue



8. Xu Xian bows to Fahai (*Xu Xian bai Fahai* 許仙拜法海)



9. Xu Sian hurls the bowl at Madame White (*Xu Sian ko bo* 許仙扣鉢)



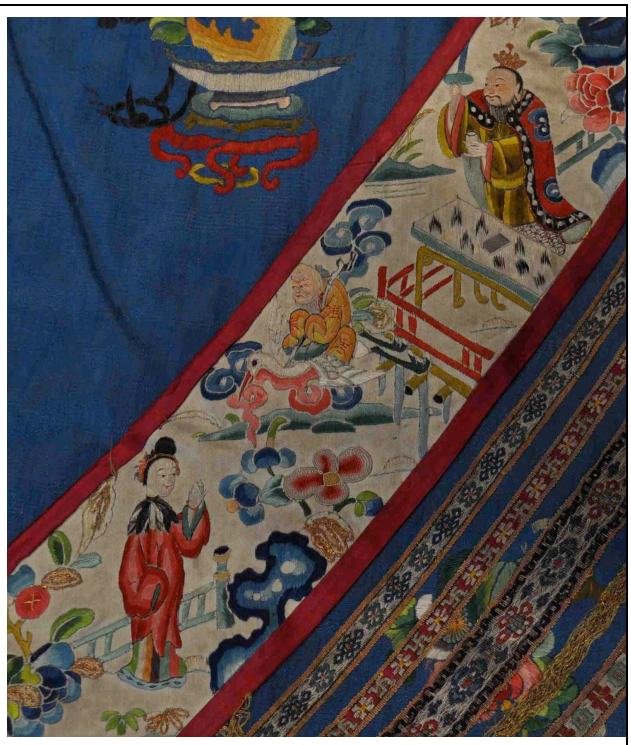
10. Meeting at the Broken Bridge (*Duan qiao xiang hui* 斷橋相會)



11. Robbing the treasury (*dao ku yin* 盜庫銀)



12. Robbing the magic herb (*dao xian cao* 盜仙草)



13. Bidding farewell to the master to leave the mountain (*bie shi xias han* 別飾下山)

14. Submerging Mount Jin (*shui man Jin shan* 水漫金山)



Xu Xian and servant



Fighting Water Spirits



Fighting Water Spirits



Madame White, Little Blue, Fa Hai

NOTES

The best known, earliest rendition of this tale is found in a short story written by Feng Menglong in 1624, entitled "Madame Bai is Imprisoned For Ever under the Thunder Peak Pagoda and published in his *Jing shi tong yan* 警世通言 (Stories to Caution the World). The plot relates the story of the marriage between young pharmacy assistant Xu Xian and the snake spirit beauty Madame Bai, who meet on the shores of West Lake in Hangzhou. Madame Bai claims to be a young widow but is actually a snake spirit, and gets Xu into various troubles by giving him gifts, which are actually stolen. Xu Xian finally seeks to free himself from her powers, and is aided by the monk Fa Hai of Golden Temple Monastery, who eventually captures Madame Bai under his alms bowl and imprisons her beneath Thunder Peak Pagoda.[1]

However Feng did not invent the tale – there is a rich tradition of snake or demon love stories in Chinese literature – and the story was well known on stage at the time Feng wrote. The tale continued to circulate in West Lake themed anthologies. The earliest play, a long *chuanqi* called *Leifeng ji* or *Thunder Peak Pagoda* by Chen Liulong is now lost. In 1738, Huang Tubi 黃圖玼(1700-1771) rewrote the tale as a 32 act *chuanqi* play, *Thunder Peak Pagoda* (*Leifeng ta*), that gave White Snake a much gentler temperament but maintained the orthodox view: their relationship was rejected, White Snake was confined to Leifeng Pagoda, and Xu Xian converted to Buddhism. In 1772, Fang Chengpei 方成培(act. ca. 18th century) rewrote this performed rendition of the Huang play as a *chuanqi* of 34 acts, also called Thunder Peak Pagoda (*Leifeng ta,* also known as *Yi yao ji*).[2]

1 For other *nianhua* renditions, see Wang Jushan and Wang Yonghai, *Zhongguo yangjiabu muban nianhua yanjiu*, p.92, *Qing mo nianhua*, no.74-5, no.77; Wang Shucun, *Zhongguo xichu nianhua*, pp.97-99.

2 See *Zhongguo kunqu dacidian*, p.136; *Kunju zhezixi chutan*, pp.261-264; on the evolution of the White Snake tale, see Peiyu Wu, *White Snake: the Evolution of a Myth in China* (Columbia University PhD Thesis, 1969).

In performance however, actors developed the plot to target audience popularity. A manuscript survives of the staged version based on the performances of the famous mid-eighteenth-century Yangzhou actor Chen Jiayan 陳嘉言 and his daughter (原梨園抄本), who added four more acts and three plot junctures: White Snake stealing the Magic herb from Kunlun mountain to save her husband's life (*dao cao*); Her flooding Jinshan mountain by exerting supernatural powers (*Shui dou*); Her giving birth to a son, who becomes a *jinshi*, and tries to save his mother. The actor's rendering of the story proved the most popular, the one reprised in *tanci, zidi* and other forms from the eighteenth-century onwards, and it is this telling that is presented in the jackets. Here White Snake's chastity and perseverance for love is emphasized through the scenes that are highlighted in the jacket: the flooding of Jinshan ingeniously apportioned over the entire surface of the cloud collar, and the stealing of the herb and silver placed on the two sleevebands.

Known as one of China's four great vernacular tales (*sida minjian chuanshuo* 四大民間傳說), the story was rendered in an astonishingly wide number and range of forms, including novels, storytelling scripts, modern novels, songs and plays in every regional repertoire.[3] Widely anthologized, the most popular acts included "Duan qiao" 斷橋 and "jie san"借傘.[4]

SCENES[5]

1. Bidding farewell to the master to get off the hill (*bie shi xia shan* 別師下山) (no.13)[6]
Madame White is given the opportunity to leave Mount Emei and bids farewell to her sworn sibling, the Black Carp Fish Demon. Also pictured here is the Immortal Greybeard of the Southern Peak, with his enlarged forehead and crane.

2. Touring the Lake (*you hu* 游湖)(no.6)[7]
Hangzhou pharmacist is visitng the West Lake when he meets Madame White and Little Blue. Madame White takes a fancy to him and creates a storm so as to engineer an excuse to take shelter on his boat. The two fall in love and Xu Xuan gives Madame White his umbrella to return home, promising to pick it up the next day.

3. Robbing the treasury (*dao ku yin* 盜庫銀)(no.11)[8]
Madame White knows that Xu Xuan's family was poor, so she ordered Little Blue to gather some demons from Emei mountain to go to Qiantang county to rob the official treasury of silver 40 ingots, Little Blue and her gang were defeated by the treasury spririt 守库神 and the spirit general 众神将, but return with some of the money.

4. Borrowing the umbrella unites the couple (*jie san cheng qin* 借傘成親)(no.2)
Xu Xian returns the umbrella to Madame White.

5. Xu Xuan negotiates the marriage with Little Blue (no.7)[9]
Little Blue arranges their marriage and presents Xu Xuan with two silver ingots from the stolen silver so he can afford to take Madame White as his wife. This later leads to trouble when Xu Xuan's brother-in-law, the police agent of Qiantang county, recognizes the stolen silver and reports him to the authorities. Xu Xuan is exiled to Suzhou.

6. "Opening the pharmacy" (*kaidian* 開店)(no.1)
Madame White and Little Blue follow Xu Xuan to Suzhou, and Madame White manages to explain the situation to his satisfaction. The two are married and they open a medicine shop called "Baohetang" 保和堂.[10]

7. Drinking the realgar liquor (*chi xiong huang jiu* 吃雄黃酒)(no.4)[11]
On the day of Ruiyang 瑞阳 festival, Xu Xuan arranged some realgar wine (traditionally drunk during Dragon Boat Festival (Duanwu, Double Fifth) to ward off dangerous spirits) and invited Madame White to drink with him, Madame White was afraid that after drinking the wine she would reveal her original form, and so she tried to avoid it, but Xu Xuan was bent on inviting her, and so Madame White was compelled against her will to drink, however she immediately felt unwell and returned home to rest.

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3 Fan Jiangdong, *Baishe gushi yanjiu* (Taibei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1981), pp.220-49 tabulates the many versions in different media; see also Fu Xihua 傅惜华, *Baishe zhuan ji* 白蛇传集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1958); for a translation of precious scroll (*baojuan*) and youth book (*zidishu*) versions see Wilt Idema, *The White Snake and her Son: a translation of the Precious Scroll of Thunder Peak with related texts* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co, 2009)

4 *Zhuibaiqiu* included the scenes "shui man" 水漫 and "Duan qiao"斷橋 (*ji* 7, *juan* 2); *Kunqu daquan* 崑曲大全 included the scenes "you hu" 遊湖, "jie san" 借傘, "dao ku" 盜庫, "zeng yin" 贈銀.

5 This ordering is based on Table 5.4's comparison of the scenes portrayed in J6, J7, and a contemporaneous *lianhua nianhua* print.

6 Originally act no.3. "chu shan"出山.

7 Touring the Lake and Borrowing the Umbrella comprise act no.6. "Zhou yu"舟遇.

8 Originally acts nos.7-10.

9 Originally act no.7, "Presenting the money" *zeng yin* 贈銀 or "An alliance" (*ding meng* 订盟)

10 Originally act no.11. "Getting Married" *cheng qin* 成親 (originally *yuan fang* 遠訪)

11 Originally act no.16.

8. Madame Bai shows her original form (*xian yuan xing* 顯原形)(no.5)
When Xu Xuan entered her chamber to bring her tea, and found a large white snake coiled up on the bed, he is shocked to death.

9. Robbing the magic herb (*dao xian cao* 盜仙草)(no.12)[12]
Despite being pregnant, Madame White - in order to save Xu Xuan's life - personally goes to Mount Song (Hebei) to plead with the Immortal Greybeard of the Southern Peak (嵩山南极仙翁) for the life-restoring magic herb. Here we see her fighting with one of his guardians, White Crane Boy, but just at that moment, the Immortal Greybeard returns, and after hearing her request, he takes pity on her and generously gives her the magic herb.

11. Xu Xian bows to Fahai (*Xu Xian bai Fahai* 許仙拜法海)(no.8)[13]
Xu Xuan goes to the temple on Mount Jin to burn incense. Fa Hai asks him to go to the back hall for a private talk, wishing to persuade him to become a monk and capture Madame White.

12. Submerging Mount Jin (*shui man Jin shan* 水漫金山)(no.14)[14]
Madame White and Little Blue go to Mount Jin to challenge Fa Hai. She gathers the Water spirits and a great battle commences at Jinshan temple. Fa Hai tries to use to the precious alms bowl to contain Madame White but because she is pregnant, the King of the Wenquxing 文曲星 constellation relents and lets her escape.

13. Meeting at the Broken Bridge (*Duan qiao xiang hui* 斷橋相會)(no.10)[15]
After the battle Madame White flees to Lin'an, and Fa Hai and Xu Xuan follow her. Madame White and Xu Xuan meet at the broken bridge, and though Madame White is angry and hurt at what Xu Xuan has done to her, when she thinks of the many years of love they spent as married couple, she cannot bear to bear a grudge against him and forgives him for his mistakes. She moves in with Xu Xuan's sister's husband's family since she is due to give birth.

14. Xu Xian hurls the bowl at Madame White (*Xu Xian ko bo* 許仙扣鉢)(no.9)[16]
After giving birth to a son, Madame White is resting at home and is unprepared for Fa Hai, who brings the precious alms bowl to capture her. Unwittingly Xu Xian enables him to capture her while she sits in front of her dressing mirror combing her hair. Fa Hai also captures Little Blue. Xu Xuan is deeply sorrowful and determines to become a monk. Madame White is placed below Leifeng pagoda.

15. *Zhuanyuan* Xu Shilin makes an offering to the pagoda (*zhuang yuan bai ta* 狀元拜搭)(no.3)[17]
The son of Xu Xuan and Madame White makes an offering to the pagoda, where his mother is entombed. Madame White watches over this filial act.

COMPARE

The Flooding of Jinshan scene where Miss Bai and Little Blue shares some characteristics with a later Republic *baojuan, Baishe leifengta baojuan* 白蛇雷峰塔寶卷 published by the *Shanghai wenyi shuju* 上海文益書局. The two women are shown on the boat, Madame White positioned at front, her faithful maid paddling away through the stormy waves. Similar costuming is found in both: the accessories of flag and sword, both wear the costume of the *hua dan* role – cloud collar, skirt, jacket, headwear – but with the tighter narrower sleeves current in the turn of the century.

12 Originally act no.17, "Qiu cao" 求草. In the following scene, act no.18. "liao liang" 療惊, Madame White rushes home and instructs Little Blue to make the herb medicine. Xu Xuan regains consciousness and the two are reconciled.
13 Originally act no.24, "Burning the Incense" (*rao xiang* 繞香, also "Visiting the Chan priest" *ye chan* 谒禅),
14 Also known as "shui dou"水斗, originally act no.25.
15 Originally act no. 26.
16 Originally act no.29, "Lian ta" 煉塔.
17 In many versions the son is called Xu Mengjian.

J7. The Legend of the White Snake (*Bai she zhuan* 白蛇传), ROM 910.65.23







1. *Zhuanyuan* Xu Shilin makes an offering to the pagoda (*zhuangyuan bai ta* 狀元拜搭)



2. Drinking the realgar liquor (*Chi xiong huang jiu* 吃雄黃酒)



3."Opening the pharmacy" (*kai dian* 開店)



4. Borrowing the umbrella unites the couple (*jie san cheng qin* 借傘成親)



5. Xu Xian bows to Fahai (*Xu Xian bai Fahai* 許仙拜法海)



6. Xuxian hurls the bowl at Madame White (*Xu Sian ko bo* 許仙扣鉢)



7. Meeting at the Broken Bridge (*Duan qiao xiang hui* 斷橋相會)



8. Madame Bai shows her original form (*xian yuan xing* 顯原形)



9. Touring the Lake (*you hu* 游湖)



10. Xu Xuan negotiates the marriage with Little Blue



11. Robbing the treasury
(*dao ku yin* 盜庫銀)



12. Robbing the magic herb
(*dao xian cao* 盜仙草)



13. Bidding farewell to the master to get off the hill.
(*bie shi xia shan* 別飾下山)



14. Collar: Xuxian with attendant sleeping on one side; Lady Bai and Xiao Qing on the other side

Notes
See J6.

J8. The Insignia-laden Bed (*Man chuang hu* 滿床笏), Royal Ontario Museum 910.65.21







1. "Removing the Armour" (*xie jia* 卸甲)



2. "The Offering Flag" (*ji qi* 祭旗)



3. "Military practice" (*jiao she* 郊射)



4. Guo Ziyi and Eunuch



5. "Enfeoffed as Prince" (*feng wang* 封王)



6. "The Insignia United" (*hu yuan* 笏圓)



7. Guo Ziyi goes to Fenyang



8. "After Taking in (the Concubine)" (*hou na* 後納)

NOTES

Once attributed to Li Yu 李漁, scholars today agree that *Man chuang hu* was likely written by Fan Xizhe 範希哲(fl. 1673).[1] *The Insignia-laden Bed* is the biographical tale of the famous Tang general Guo Ziyi 郭子儀, who concludes his career with his birthday, celebrated together with his seven sons and eight sons-in-laws, each of whom places their official insignia on the bed; the allusions to longevity and success made this a popular scene on objects celebrating birthdays.[2]

Guo was first singled out by the poet Li Bai for his military skill, and quickly rose in rank, to be appointed a regional military governor (*jie du shi* 節度使) in 755. In the following year, 756, he famously confronted rebel commander Shi Siming 史思明 during the Anshi Rebellion. Tang Commander Li Guangbi 李光弼 (708-764) recommended him to Emperor Xuanzong (685-762) for this brave act, and when Xuanzong's son, the Suzong Emperor (711-762) ascended to the throne in 756, Guo Ziyi was appointed Imperial Commander, the assistant-marshall of Hedong (east of the Yellow River, present-day South-west Shanxi), and eventually enfeoffed as the King of Fenyang (*Fenyang junwang* 汾陽郡王).

1 There are two extant versions of *Manchuang hu*: a 36 act play, also known as *Shi cu ji* 十醋記 in *Chuanqi ba zhong* 傳奇八種, see *Li Yu quanji* 李漁全集(Hangzhou: Zhejiang Guji Chubanshe, 1991), *juan* 6, *Li Weng yueding chuanqi ba zhong, shang*, 笠翁閱定傳奇八種; and the 12 act version compiled in Wang Jilie 王季烈, *Jic heng qu pu* 集成曲譜(A Collection of Kunqu opera scores) (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1931), *zhenji*, *juan* 8. My references are to the *Ji cheng qu pu* edition, but I have also indicated the equivalent act in *Shicu ji*.

2 *Zhongguo Kunju dacidian*, pp.127-128; *Kunju zhezixi quankao*, pp.243-4. The *hu* 笏 was a ritually correct instrument for officials to gesture with or record matters when they had an audience with the emperor. In *The History of the Ming*, The Records of Clothing and Carriage, part 3 *Ming shi, yu fu san*, 明史, 輿服三: "When (in audience with) the emperor should wear, the first to fifth rank civil and military officials should use a *hu* made from ivory… and the sixth to ninth rank should use a *hu* made from sophora wood". Northern Song poet Chen Renjie 陳人傑 (1218-1243) first used the phrase "The bed piled high with ivory censors" 象笏堆床 in *Qin yuan chun* 沁園春

However Fan Xizhe also included 4 acts concerning the fictional characters of provincial governor Gong Jing 龔敬 and his wife Madame Shi 師氏: act 4, "Getting the Concubine" *Na qie* 納妾,[3] act 5, "Kneeling at the door" *Gui men* 跪門,[4] act 6, "Pleading for a son" *qiu zi* 求子,[5] act 8, "After getting (the concubine)" *Hou na* 後納.[6]

SCENES

1. "Removing the Armour" (*xie jia* 卸甲)[7]
At the Tower of Watching Spring *(Wangchunlou* 望春樓), the Xiaozong Emperor honours Guo Ziyi by personally removing his armour and helmet, but Guo firmly resists and eventually a eunech performs the task.

2. "The Offering Flag" (*ji qi* 祭旗)[8]
Guo Ziyi quells the An Lushan uprising. Guo is seated on the chair, a eunech behind him, the wrong-dooers are being hanged by the noose.

3. "Military practice" (*jiao she* 郊射)[9]
Guo Ziyi goes to the capital for military exams and meets the Hanlin scholar Li Bai, who recognizes his talent and writes a letter of recommendation to the provincial governor Gong Jing.

4. Guo Ziyi and Eunuch
This seems to reference the eunuch Yu Chao'en 魚朝恩 (carrying an imperial shaft), who had planned to scheme against Guo (carrying his *hu* censor) but is so moved by his sincerity (in the "xiejia" scene) that he abandons this idea.

5. "Enfeoffed as Prince" (*feng wang* 封王)[10]
Following the Xiaozong Emperor's recognition of his contributions, Guo is enfeoffed as the Prince of Fenyang; here he receives his official seal (perhaps from the eunech who disliked him but was won over by Guo's noble behaviour)

6. "The Insignia United" (*hu yuan* 笏圓)[11]
Guo celebrates his 60th birthday surrounded by his family, his sons with their insignia.

7. Guo Ziyi goes to Fenyang
Here he returns to court with imperial lanterns and accompanied by his sons, who were also made lord.

8. "After Taking in (the Concubine)" (*hou na* 后纳)[12]
Gong Jing with his wife, concubine and child

COMPARE

Zhui bai qiu illustrated two of the most prestigious scenes: "Removing the Armour" (*xie jia* 卸甲) and the "Union of the Insignia" (*hu yuan* 笏圓).[13] *Kunqu daquan* compiled the combination of "jiaoshe", "jingshou", "xiejia" and "fengwang".[14] The Guo Ziyi "hu yuan" scene was widely popular in Qing material culture including porcelain, screens,[15] prints,[16] and architectural decoration, for example, an arched gate in The Garden of the Fisherman (*Wang shi yuan*), carved in brick relief with narrative scenes including "Guo Ziyi offers birthday presents".[17] The story was also widespread in other Asian countries, for example, a nineteenth-century Korean painting attributed to Kim Tŭksin (1754-1822) and mounted as a screen from the Philadelphia Museum of Art (2001-40-1).

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3 *Shi cu ji*, act 8, "cu yi" 醋義.
4 *Shi cu ji*, act 9, "cu cheng" 醋成.
5 *Shi cu ji*, act 14, "cu gan" 醋感.
6 *Shi cu ji*, act 17, "cu shou" 醋授. These acts relate how Gong Jing secretly brings a concubine into the house; his wife discovers the girl and scolds him harshly, but eventually decides to bring the girl back to the household so that her husband can bear a son.
7 *Shi cu ji*, act 27, "bi jian" 陛見 (Kunqu performers embellished the scene to make 2 scenes).
8 *Shi cu ji*, act 23, "qin wang" 勤王.
9 *Shi cu ji*, act 3, "ye biao" 野表.
10 *Shi cu ji*, act 27, "bi jian" 陛見(Kunqu performers embellished the scene to make 2 scenes).
11 In *Shi cu ji*, this is act 36, "hu yuan" 笏圓.
12 *Shi cu ji*, act 17, "cu shou" 醋授.
13 *Ji* 7, *juan* 2: "xie jia"; *ji* 3, *juan* 2: "hu yuan". These two are depicted in the jackets at a larger size than the other roundels.
14 *Kunqu da quan, ji 1*.
15 The Met has a Qianlong period carved red lacquer screen made in honour of the birthday of a General Zhen (1971.74).
16 For a lavish treatment of the story including the sub-plots of Guo Ziyi's sons' marriages to Tang princesses, see a *Yangliuqing* print by Li Chengxing 李盛興 in Zheng Zhenduo, *Zhongguo gudai muke hua xuanji*, no.8.
17 Zhong Junhua, *Sights and Scenes of Suzhou* (Beijing: Zhaohua Publishing House, 1983); also *Ming Qing minjian mudiao, xiqu renwu juan*, p.88; "Guo Ziyi baishou".

J9. *Peerless Figures* (*Wu shuang pu* 無雙譜) Figural Medley, MFA 50.2480







1. Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 and Zhuo Wenjun 卓文君



2. Sun Lang 孫郎



3. "Yan Guang catches fish" (*Yan Guang diao yu* 嚴光釣魚)



4. Li Bai 李白



5. Zhang Qian 張騫 and Weaving Maiden (*Zhinü* 織女)



6. Dong Xian 董賢



7. Unidentified



8. Liu Hou Zhang Zifang 留侯張子房



9. Su Wu bids farewell to Li Ling 蘇武別李陵



10. Fan Lihua 樊梨花 and Li shan lao mu 梨山老母

NOTES

This jacket is a fascinating example of the "narrative medley" style, a heterogeneous selection of historical and fictional characters, reliant on their companions for decorative and visual effect rather than meaning. Many of the figures appear to have been sourced from *Peerless Figures* (*Wu shuang pu* 無雙譜), an album of imagined portraits by Jin Guliang 金古良 (fl. 1661), which comprises forty male and female historical figures from the Han to the Song dynasty.[1] In the album, each figure was given three sections: the portrait (*renwu xiaoxiang* 人物肖像); the accompanying biographical or introductory prose passages (*wenzi jieshao*文字介紹); and the author's personal analysis or summary (*ping yu* 評語) in the format of the *yuefu shi ju* 樂府詩句, which were set into decorative and individualized cartouches themed according to the figure's most characteristic object or accompaniment. First printed in the thirty-third year of the Kangxi reign (1694), it was reprinted many times, and though closely associated with the political backdrop of the Ming-Qing transition, it remained relevant throughout the Qing period. During the Daoguang to Tongzhi periods (1820-1875) - the period when the jackets were produced - *Wu shuang pu* became a popular theme on vernacular porcelain, like brushpots, bowls, and vases, and this jacket was likely influenced by this trend.[2] Interestingly the porcelain sometimes reframed the characters, for example, drawing attention to the characters' historical commonalities, as in a cup featuring Liang Gong and Empress Wu Zetian. The former was chancellor under the Empress but though they are given separate treatment in *Wu shuang pu,* the porcelain designer has bought the two together.[3] The diversion between the material culture recreation and the original album points to the wider social meaning possessed by the characters, and audience familiarity created by performance, proverbs, and print. Here in the jacket, the *Wu shuang pu* characters are also reconstituted; commonly individualized figures are paired with companions, and external fictional or historical characters are also featured.

SCENES

1. Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 and Zhuo Wenjun 卓文君?

2. Sun Lang 孫郎

The famous general Sun Lang (175-200) was one of the warlord Sun Jian's sons. However a series of gaffes and accidents destroyed his military career and he was heavily punished by his brother Sun Quan, spending his life in prison. His depiction is similar to that of *Wu shuang pu*, but the other figure has not been identified.

3. "Yan Guang becomes a fisherman" (*Yan Guang diao yu* 嚴光釣魚)

Yan Guang (courtesy name Ziling 子陵), a famous hermit scholar from the Eastern Han period, as a youth, studied together with Liu Xiu 劉秀, who later established the Eastern Han Kingdom (25 CE). When Liu Xiu became Emperor Guangwu 光武帝(r.25-75), he asked Yan Ziling to advise him, but Yan feared the king's powerful and indisciminatory wrath, so he changed his name and retired to the mountains to live incognito as a fisherman. He lived to the age of 80 and is buried on *Fu chun shan* 富春山, which was called *Yanling shan* 嚴陵山 and eventually came to commemorate his life and ethos. He is associated with a melody called "Autumn River Evening Fishing" (*Qiu jiang wan diao* 秋江晚釣), and there is also a Yuan play by Gong Tianting 宮天挺 called "Yan Ziling Fishes at Qilitan" (*Yan Ziling chui diao qi li tan* 嚴子陵垂釣七里灘).[4] A Yangliuqing print follows the *Wu shuang pu* style of Yan Guang as a lone figure, but in the embroidered scene he is shown with the Emperor's envoy pleading for him to return to court.[5]

4. Li Bai 李白

Famous poet Li Bai, referred to by his *hao* pseudonym Li Qinglian 李青蓮 in *Wu shuang pu*, where like the embroidered jacket, he is shown sleeping drunk propped up by a pillow. The military figure has not been identified.

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1 A native of Shaoxing 紹興, Jin Shi金史, his style name was Guliang and Shetang 射堂, his alternative name was Nanling南陵 and so the work is also known as *Nanling Wu shuang pu* 南陵無雙譜. Jin was part of the Zhepai printing school and greatly influenced by Chen Hongshou's highly individualized style of figural depiction. The oft-used translation, *Peerless Paragons*, is actually inaccurate, since some of the figures are infamous rather than famous, known for their extreme vice rather than virtue. Therefore I have chosen the slightly less dramatic *Peerless Figures*, which conveys Jin's stated understanding of these historical figures possessing no equal. (Introduction dated 1690; reprinted Wujin, Kiangsu Province: She yuan, 1929)

2 Zhang Yongmei suggests that *Wu shuang pu* was first used as a decorative theme on porcelain during the Jiaqing period (1796-1820) ("Qing Wu shuang pu huachuan yu "wu shuang pu" ciqi", p. 68; also Bo Songnian, "yibu yi shi wei jian de huace: xianlun Jin Guliang Wu shuang pu".

3 *The Great Fortune*, p. 167.

4 As sage fisherman, the other possible identification is Jiang Tai Gong 姜太公 (Jiang Ziya姜子牙, dates unknown) and the Zhou King Wang 周文王 (r.1099 BCE-1050 BCE). Jiang wanted to gain King Wen's attention, so he went to the Weishui River, hung a straight hook without any bait above the water and said, "Fish, if you are desperate to live, come and gulp down the hook by yourself." King Wen sent soldiers to investigate this odd behaviour and eventually King Wen himself went to invite Jiang to work for him. Jiang agreed, assisting King Wen and his son in overthrowing the Shang dynasty and establishing the Zhou. He plays an important role in the novel *Creation of the Gods* (*Fengshen yan yi* 封神演义). However, given the *Wu shuang pu* connection, Yan Ziling seems more likely.

5 Wang Shucun and Li Fuqing, *Sulian cang Zhongguo minjian nianhua zhenpin ji*, no.148.

5. Zhang Qian 張搴 and Weaving Maiden (*Zhinü* 織女)

The famous Western Han explorer Zhang Qian (?- d.114BCE) was sent to the West in 139 by the Han Emperor Wudi (r. 140–88 BCE) to ally himself with the people of Yue against the northern barbarian Xiongnu. He did not return for 13 years. On his journey to the West he was captured by the Xiongnu, and imprisoned for 11 years. In 119 he started again a journey to the West. Unlike *Wu shuang pu*, in the jacket he is accompanied by the Weaving Maiden. In the *Bo wu zhi* 博物志 (Notes on Miscellaneous Things) by Zhang Hua 张华 (232–300), it is said that, according to Zong Lin, Zhang Qian also took a raft on the Milky Way, where he met the Weaving Maiden and was given the stone that supported her loom as a clue to her true identity. A legend developed around their meeting and the loom stone and the pair became popular amongst mid-late Qing Suzhou carvers who worked the figures in material like rhinocerous or nephrite.[6]

6. Dong Xian 董賢

Dong Xian (23-2 BCE) was a Western Han dynasty politician who rose from obscurity to become the most powerful official in the court of Emperor Ai (23-1 BCE). The pair are thought to have been lovers and the term for homosexuality "passion of the cut sleeve" (*duan xiu zhi pi* 斷袖之癖) is said to have originated when the pair were sleeping on the same bed and Emperor Ai woke early and rather than wake Dong who was lying on his cloak, cut off the cloak. This tale is recounted in *Wu shuang pu* but whilst the characteristic hat and sword clearly identify Dong Xian, the identity of the other two figures is not clear.

7. Unidentified

8. Liu Hou Zhang Zifang 留侯張子房

Zhang Liang 張良 (d. 186 BCE), whose courtesy name was Zhang Zifang 張子房, was a famous minister and a critical advisor to Liu Bang 劉邦 in challenging the Qin dynasty. When Liu overthrew the empire and founded the Han dynasty, Zhang was rewarded as the Marquis of Liu (Liu Hou留侯). The image here follows *Wu shuang pu* closely.

9. Su Wu bids farewell to Li Ling 蘇武別李陵

An envoy of the Han emperor Wudi (r.140-86 BCE), Suwu was sent to the Xiongnu who held him prisoner. Despite his constant suffering, he always held onto the imperial staff (*jie* 節) given to all imperial envoys, which he used as shepherd's rod until its decorative hairs fell off. Twice during exile, Li Ling, who had surrendered to Xiongnu after being defeated on the battlefield in 99 BC, was sent to visit Su. The first time, Li informed Su that his two brothers had both been accused of crimes and committed suicide; that his mother had died; and that his wife had remarried. He also tried to convince Su to surrender, but Su refused. On the second occasion, Li informed him of Emperor Wu's passing, and Su was so despondent in mourning that he vomited blood. When the Emperor of Han died, he faced south and wept in utter sadness. He was seen as the ultimate model of faithful service and courage, and the image of Suwu tending sheep was incredibly popular during the Ming and Qing period. Often depicted alone tending his sheep (as in *Wu shuang pu*, where his sheep are his accompanying motif) "Su Wu muyang"; the other common portrayal is the departure scene between him and Li Ling. One of the most well-known paintings is "*Su Li bie yi*" 蘇李別意 by Zhou Wenju 周文矩 (907-975), later reinterpreted by the Guxiu embroiderer Han Ximeng (see chap.4).

10. Fan Lihua 樊梨花 and Lishan laomu 梨山老母

"…wearing a crown of golden phoenix decorated with two pheasant feathers, her face resembled Xishi, her appearance, that of Zhaojun. Her beauty would put to shame the moon and all flowers; it even surpassed that of Chang O in the moon. Clad in golden armour of knotted chains, and covered with an embroidered dragon cloak, she wore a pair of tiny satin boots. She rode a cloud-ascending horse and wielded a pair of knives"[7]

Fan Lihua - daughter of a general from the fictional Western Liang Turkic kingdom - is one of the most popular military romance heroines. Her story is told in the novel *Zhengxi shuo Tang san zhuan* 徵西說唐三傳, and as a foreign warrior princess, she provides a device through which the author could portray a woman pursuing her man in an unconventionally determined manner. She was trained in martial arts by the female celestial master *Li shan lao mu* who appears here, apparently giving her the heavenly texts (*tian shu* 天書), possibly an allusion to Fan Lihua's *yuanfen* (predestined marital fate) with Xue Dingshan 荷丁山, fictional son of the historical figure, Xue Rengui 薛仁貴, one of the most successful early Tang generals. Fan suffered considerable trials before she and Xue were united, mostly, it has been argued, because of Xue's inability to accept her non-Han female behaviour.[8]

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6 For example, a nephrite Zhang Qian snuff bottle est. 1740-1850, "Snuff Bottles from the Mary and George Block Collection, Part II", Bonham's 23rd November 2010, no.151; Suzhou; 1740-1850; inscribed "On his return (Zhang Qian) brought back only the stone that supported the loom (of Zhinü, the Weaving Maid)".

7 *Shuo Tang san zhuan* (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1996), *juan* 45, p.257.

8 See C.T.Hsia, "Military Romance", pp. 373, 377. The quasi-historical roots of this are in *Zheng xi yan yi* 徵西演義 (chap. 43, 44). It has been suggested that Dingshan rejects her, because she is superior as a warrior and he cannot adjust his sense of male superiority. He promises to marry her three times but broke his promise three times: "Xue Dingshan thrice abandoned Fan Lihua" (*Xue Dingshan san qi Fan Lihua*" 薛丁山三棄樊梨花). Many regional versions of this story exist. See also Fan Pen Chen, "Female Warriors", p.96.