

“Drama Sustains the Spirit”:

Art, Ritual, and Theater in Jin and Yuan Period Pingyang, 1150-1350

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VITA

Fan Zhang was born in Wuhan, China in 1978 and completed his B.A. with a concentration in Archaeology at Jilin University. During his archaeological training, he conducted field research at the site of Xanadu in Inner Mongolia and participated in salvage excavations in the Three Gorges region. After a short curatorial internship at Hubei Provincial Museum, China, he began his graduate studies of Chinese Art and Archaeology in the US and received his M.A. from the Department of History of Art at Vanderbilt University in 2003. He then worked as a curatorial assistant in the Asian Art Department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and provided research support for the special exhibition, “China: Dawn of A Golden Age (2004).” During his Ph.D. study at Brown University, he further developed his interests in Chinese mortuary art and the visual culture of China’s Conquest Dynasties. In the past few years he regularly conducted field research, made museum visits, gave conference talks, and published scholarly articles. He also received financial support from the Department of History of Art and Architecture, Brown University in the form of research grants, proctorships, and teaching assistantships. His dissertation research and writing was funded through the American Council of Learned Societies and the Henry Luce Foundation (2008-2009), as well as the Graduate School of Brown University (2009-2010). Fan will begin his academic career as a lecturer at Smith College after his graduation in August, 2010.

To My Parents,
Xinmin Zhang and Liangrong Cui

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Introduction

If the Russian explorer Pyotr Kuzmich Kozlov's (1863-1935) discovery of Karakhoto (Heicheng 黑城, modern Inner Mongolia), a lost desert town on the Silk Road, revealed to the world the highly accomplished Buddhist art of the mysterious Tangut Xixia Kingdom (1032-1227), this world-famous discovery also allowed scholars to learn more about the art and culture of its neighboring states founded by the Chinese, Jurchen, and Tibetans during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In particular, Kozlov's find in 1909 of a sutra hoard in a Buddhist stupa surprised the world with its some two thousand paintings, manuscripts, prints, textiles, and sculpture, either locally made or imported from elsewhere.¹ Among these Buddhist visual and textual documents were some secular prints unlike any ever before seen, including *Four Beauties*, a popular print meant solely for entertainment purposes, and the *Medley Play of Liu Zhiyuan's Story* (*Liu Zhiyuan zhugongdiao* 劉知遠諸宮調), the earliest printed script of the all-keys-and-modes play (*zhugongdiao* 諸宮調). Notably, they were both printed in Pingyang 平陽 (the modern Linfen 臨汾 and Yuancheng 運城 areas, Shanxi province), an important regional center of the Central Plains in Jin (1115-1234) and Yuan (1271-1379) China (Plate 1).²

¹ Kira F. Samosyuk, "The Discovery of the Khara Khoto," in *Lost Empire of the Silk Road: Buddhist Art from Khara Khoto, X-XIIIth Century*, ed. Mikhail Piotrovsky (Italy: Electa, 1993, and reprinted in 1996), 42-46.

² Aside from the prefecture itself and its counties, "Pingyang" can also be understood as the town of Linfen county 臨汾縣 (also called Yaodu 堯都), where Pingyang's prefectural government was located; or the Yuan-dynasty Circuit of Pingyang 平陽路 (roughly equals to southern Shanxi). Since my research deals with cultural geography rather than political geography, "Pingyang" in this text refers to, if not particularly noted, this prefecture along with its sub-prefectures and counties that are historically known as the He-Fen 河汾 region (the region between the Yellow and Fen Rivers). For a record of this region, see Tuo Tuo 脫脫 (1314-1355), *Standard History of the Song* (*Songshi* 宋史, 1355, reprinted in 1976), chapter 86: 908; and *Standard History of the Jin* (1344, reprinted in 1976), chapter 26: 209.

It is no coincidence that these and other similar prints in this treasure-trove were made in or associated with Pingyang. They remind us of the need to re-examine the arts of this regional center, which have been neglected by traditional scholarship. As recorded in the *Standard History of the Jin* (Jinshi 金史), Pingyang was famous for its production of both books and fresh salt (有書籍, 產鮮鹽).³ Yet, this flourishing printing industry alone cannot account for the concurrence of printed scripts and theatrical illustrations. One should not ignore the thriving theatrical activities, in both secular and religious realms, that also contributed to the distinctive visual culture of Pingyang. Unlike direct representations of theater, *Four Beauties* does not show an obvious influence of performing arts at first glance. But the viewer will soon realize that the four ladies in the same garden came from different historical periods and that they gathered under a banner advertising their characters as if they were actresses on stage in different roles. This fantastic display that denies the passage of time is actually an antecedent of theatrical popular prints.

In fact, a secular preference for theatrical imagery is closely related to the popularity of theater among Pingyang people, who invested great sums of money and labor in building temple stages and sponsoring dramatic performances. In order to cater to the increasing public demand in this region, playwrights and actors converted traditional stories into dramas for performance, while artists and artisans illustrated theatrical stories in pictures and other mediums. Local craftsmen also used representations of drama to decorate temples, dwellings, and tombs. To some extent, theater infiltrated, via performance and image, every aspect of local life and culture in

³ *Jinshi* 26: 209a.

Pingyang. Its imagery offers us a useful perspective from which to discuss the complex interactions among art, theater, and ritual in Jin and Yuan North China.

Based on these rich visual and textual records, this dissertation aims to investigate the visual dimensions of theater in Pingyang and this region's significance in the development of the visual culture of Jin and Yuan China. My study specifically examines a variety of visual documents of theater, including illustrations of dramatic stories, inscriptions of lyrics and arias, and pictorial representations of performances, as well as other kinds of pictures relating to Song and Yuan theater. An abundance of material records and stage remains that were made in or associated with Pingyang's theater survive in various museum collections or are still on-site. Archaeological excavations also show that, to date, Pingyang is the only place in North China that has preserved such rich theatrical representations in its tombs. Still, insufficient attention has been paid to collecting these visual documents as an assemblage and to demonstrating the vital contribution of this region to the formation of Jin and Yuan visual culture.

My study, therefore, examines this wealth of visual and material records in their original cultural, artistic, and ritual contexts in regard to a specific set of questions: How did local people use and receive theatrical images and how did these practices relate to the distinctive culture of the region? Why were theatrical activities so popular within local religious and secular affairs and what significance did theatrical images and representations have for common folk? Answers to these questions will not only enrich our understanding of the visual culture of the Jin and Yuan Pingyang, but will also shed light on the vibrant artistic and cultural development of North China during a transitional period under foreign rule.

Discovering Pingyang and its Visual Culture

The fall of Kaifeng 開封 marked the end of the Northern Song period (960-1127), during which a splendid visual culture developed throughout vast urban and rural areas of China. For the next quarter-millennium, the Central Plains were constantly occupied by non-Chinese invaders, first the Jurchen and then the Mongols. Yet their rule did not interrupt the continuous development of regional cultures in the North. Rather, newly established centers, such as Pingyang, continued to thrive and boosted the development of northern cultures, preparing for the heyday of Yuan art. As the capital of the Jin-dynasty Southern Circuit of Hedong 河東南路 (roughly equal to southeast and southern Shanxi and part of northern Henan), Pingyang survived the ravages of war and culturally blossomed after the Jurchen regime transferred its power base from northeast China to Beijing in the 1150s (Plate 2). During the Mongol and early Yuan periods, Pingyang exercised strong regional influence through its flourishing print and ritual cultures.⁴ Thus, this dissertation focuses on this period, between the mid-twelfth and mid-thirteenth centuries, when Pingyang played a uniquely important role in the artistic and cultural production of North China.

⁴ In order to better control the occupied Central Plains and access Chinese culture, Prince Hailing 海陵王 (r. 1149-1160) moved the Jin capital from Shangjing (modern Mudanjiang 牡丹江, Heilongjiang 黑龍江 province) to Beijing. His successors, Emperor Shizong 金世宗 (r. 1161-1189) and Zhangzong 金章宗 (r. 1189-1208), also respected Chinese art and culture. Their cultural policy guaranteed the fast development of regional cultures in the Jin territory. In 1213, the Jurchen moved their capital from Beijing further south to Kaifeng because of increasing threats from the Mongols. This move facilitated Pingyang's contact with the Jin capital and thus strengthened its cultural role in Jin territory.

The Mongol army invaded Pingyang several times after 1218 and finally occupied it in 1223. After the Mongol Empire conquered the Southern Song in 1279, the influence of South China gradually surpassed that of the North in the realm of popular culture. For more information, see related records in Song Lian 宋濂 (1310-1381), *Standard History of the Yuan* (*Yuanshi* 元史, 1370, reprinted in 1966), such as "Biography of Li Shouxian 李守賢", 150: 1602-4, "Biography of Muhuali 木華黎", 119: 1274-5.

Traditionally, scholars have noted that Pingyang was a flourishing printing center, but ignored its position as a regional center for pictorial arts and ritual theater. Among some twenty surviving Jin paintings, Pingyang artists created at least two scrolls to which they signed their names. One is Li Shan's *Snow and Wind in the Fir Pines* (Fengxue shanshan tu 風雪松杉圖), which showcases the essence of Jin literati landscape painting.⁵ The other is *Sima Yu's Dream of Su Xiaoxiao* (Sima Yu meng Su Xiaoxiao 司馬遷夢蘇小小), created by the court painter, Liu Yuan 劉元, which features a ghost love story, a popular theme in the dramatic and fictional genres of the time.⁶ Southern Shanxi is also renowned for murals of exceptional artistic quality at several of its surviving Yuan temples, including the iconic, hagiographical, and everyday scenes at the Buddhist Lower Monastery of Universal Triumph (Guangsheng xiasi 廣勝下寺) in Hongdong 洪洞, the Monastery of Blue Dragon (Qinglong si 青龍寺) in Jishan 稷山, the Daoist Temple of Eternal Joy (Yongle gong 永樂宮) in Ruicheng 芮城, and the popular temple of the Water God (Shuishen miao 水神廟) in Hongdong.⁷ In addition, decorative arts in the form of objects used in everyday life and architectural components, such as ceramic decorations, stele engravings, and brick tiles, represent the distinctive visual culture of

⁵ Li Tsung-chin 李宗謹, "Du Jin Li Shan fengxue shanshan tu zaji 讀金李山風雪松杉圖繫記," *Ku-kung Chi-k'an* 故宮季刊 14.4 (1980): 19-40. For a detailed introduction to Jin landscape painting, see Susan Bush, "Chin Literati Painting and Landscape Traditions," *National Palace Museum Bulletin* 21.4/5 (1986): 1-24; Stephen Little, "Travelers Among Valleys and Peaks: A Reconsideration of Chin Landscape Painting," *Artibus Asiae* vol. 41 (1978): 285-308; and Janet L. Carpenter, "'Traveling Among Streams and Mountains' and Chin Period (1115-1234) Landscape Painting," (Ph.D. Diss., University of Kansas), 1994.

⁶ Ellen B. Avril, *Chinese Art in the Cincinnati Art Museum* (Cleveland: Cincinnati Art Museum, 1997), 59-60.

⁷ Chai Zejun 柴澤俊, *Shanxi shiguan bihua* 山西寺觀壁畫 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1997), 41-42; also see Nancy S. Steinhardt, "Zhu Haogu Reconsidered: A New Date for the ROM Painting and the Southern Shanxi Buddhist-Daoist Style," *Artibus Asiae* 48.1/2 (1987): 5-33.

this region. Yet these visual documents were traditionally studied independently by scholars in different fields, and thus Pingyang has attracted less scholarly attention as the place where these abundant artworks were produced and used.⁸

Aside from its role as a printing center, Pingyang was also a theater center in Jin and Yuan China. It is recorded that Kong Sanzhuan 孔三傳 (fl. 11th cen.), a native of Song-dynasty Zezhou 澤州, a sub-prefecture in southeastern Shanxi, created the *zhugongdiao* medleys.⁹ Consisting of vernacular ballads in sets, this theatrical performing art enjoyed extensive popularity in the secular world and made a considerable contribution to the birth of Jin and Yuan drama. From surviving historical and literary texts we also know that many scholars, actors, playwrights, and publishers who lived or sojourned in Pingyang contributed to the spread of *zaju* 雜劇 (variety plays) drama and actively participated in the creation of various plays. For instance, the *Registrar of the Ghosts* (*Luguibu* 錄鬼簿), a book that documents famous playwrights of the Yuan period, introduces six Pingyang playwrights and their works in its early-Yuan section.¹⁰ More

⁸ A tremendous amount of Jin and Yuan visual documents survive in modern Pingyang. It is not only because the scale and scope of art production there was remarkable, but also because of the geographical and historical environment of southern Shanxi. On the one hand, this region is surrounded by mountains and rivers, which made this territory geographically isolated from the outside world. This situation greatly contributed to the preservation of numerous cultural and historical relics. On the other hand, Pingyang was also located at the intersection of major traffic routes connecting the inner land of Shanxi with large capital cities such as Xi'an 西安, Luoyang 洛陽, and Kaifeng. This convenient location meant that new social fashions and cultural practices could spread there quickly and were eventually preserved.

⁹ Nai Deweng 耐得翁, *Records of the Splendors of the Capital* (*Ducheng jisheng* 都城紀勝, preface dated 1235, hereafter DCJS), in *Dongjing menghua lu waisizhong* 東京夢華錄外四種 (Shanghai: Shanghai gudian wenxue chubanshe, 1956), 96.

¹⁰ Zhong Sicheng 鍾嗣成 (c. 1277-1345), *Lugui bu* (preface dated 1330, hereafter LGB) (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1960), *juan* 1; Shanxi shizhi yanjiu yuan 山西史志研究院, *Shanxi tongshi: Song Liao Jin Yuan juan* 山西通史/宋遼金元卷 (Hereafter SXTS) (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 2001), vol. 4,

importantly, Pingyang's theatrical performances were neither confined to urban entertainment districts nor were they exclusively accessible by the elite. Ordinary urban dwellers could enjoy plays on the street or at home, while country folk could watch dramas at local temple fairs without having to travel to town.¹¹ In addition to ephemeral performances on stage, theater existed in a variety of forms in the secular world such as printed books and wall inscriptions of theatrical texts, as well as illustrations of drama and fiction in woodblock prints, paintings, and the decorative arts.

With more and more discoveries of Jin and Yuan tombs in this region, Pingyang has gradually revealed its treasures to modern scholars over the past half-century. In Houma 候馬, Jishan, and Xinjiang 新絳 counties, archaeologists have excavated dozens of tombs with vivid decorations relating to the theater. Local people expressed the influence of theater differently in their tombs: some used brick models to represent miniature stages; some employed reliefs and engravings to show performing actors; others chose theatrical texts as symbolic representations; still others showed wall paintings of theatrical scenes. Given that the early development of Jin and Yuan drama had been obscured due to lack of visual and textual documentation, these new discoveries greatly improve our knowledge of Song-Yuan theater, including its performance forms, stage settings, and role types. They have now convinced scholars of theater history of the importance of Pingyang as a major theater center during the Jin and Yuan.¹² The Duan

328-333 ; Wilt L. Idema and Stephen H. West, *Chinese Theater 1100-1450: A Source Book* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1982), 88-89.

¹¹ Liao Ben 廖奔, *Xiqu wenwu fafu* 戲曲文物發覆 (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2003), 143 and 146-150. For more information about *zhugongdiao* and *zaju* performance, see the introduction of Song and Yuan theater in the Appendix.

family and the Dong family cemeteries are of particular importance because their burial chambers simulate family shrines with performance stages incorporated into their architectural and pictorial programs (see Chapter Three). Taking into account local ritual and funerary culture, it seems most likely that these symbolic underground theaters helped to turn tomb chambers into communicative spaces between human beings and their ancestors.

Scholars have also discovered important information about theater culture of the time from secular sources such as temple and tomb inscriptions, as well as written manuscripts and printed books. An inscribed brick carved with “Duan Family Admonitions” regarding ways of life, health, and entertainment, shows us that local people viewed watching drama as an important part of a healthy and harmonious life.¹³ In a recently unearthed mural tomb in Houma, researchers found ink inscriptions on chamber walls of *zhugongdiao* arias symbolizing a play that bemoans the transience of happiness and the destined human fate (see Chapter Two).¹⁴ These recent discoveries reveal the infiltration of popular theater into local life and culture in Jin and Yuan Pingyang.

Until recently, however, the importance of Pingyang and its visual record of Jin and Yuan theater was not fully recognized outside the field of theater studies. In the

¹² It should be noted that Liu Nianzhi was the first scholar to conduct a comprehensive study of the rich theatrical relics and theater remains in Jin and Yuan Pingyang. For more information about theater studies of Pingyang’s material, see the Appendix.

¹³ Tian Jianwen 田建文 and Li Yongmin 李永敏, “Macun zhuandiao mu yu Duanshi kemingzhuan 馬村磚雕墓與段氏刻銘磚,” *Wenwu shijie* 文物世界 no. 1 (2005): 12-13.

¹⁴ Yang Jiyun 楊及耘 and Gao Qingshang 高青山, “Houma ershui musi faxian mobi tishu de muzhi he sanpian zhugongdiao ciq 侯馬二水 M4 發現墨筆題書的墓志和三篇諸宮調詞曲,” *Zhonghua xiqu* 中華戲曲 vol. 29 (2003): 1-5.

1930s, Laurence Sickman introduced the drama scene of the Shuishen Temple to American scholars as an example of distinguished Yuan mural art.¹⁵ However, theatrical representations of Jin and Yuan China were not studied from an art history perspective until the late 1970s when Western scholars again had access to mainland China and thus to more archaeological materials. Robert Maeda used brick reliefs of drama actors from a late-Northern Song tomb in Yanshi 偃師, Henan province to point out new themes in Song-Yuan art, thus introducing them as valuable documents in the history of genre art and popular theater of the time.¹⁶ Ellen Laing highlighted the abundance of mortuary art in Pingyang, such as the molded stages and actor figurines in the Macun tombs, in her introduction to Jin material culture.¹⁷

As with representations of performance, illustrations of fiction and drama also attracted the attention of art historians. Susan Bush once suggested *Sima Yu's Dream of Su Xiaoxiao* was comparable to the print, *Four Beauties*, in terms of its romantic subject. This painting not only shows the regional influence on Jin-dynasty court art, but also underlines the importance of popular culture in the He-Fen Region toward the end of the Jin.¹⁸ Most illustrations in prints and paintings have perished with the passing of time, but ceramic decorations, especially Cizhou-ware pillows (Cizhou zhen 磁州枕), serve as a

¹⁵ Laurence Sickman, "Wall-Painting of the Yuan Period in Kuang-sheng-ssu, Shansi," *Revue des Arts Asiatiques* no. 2 (1937): 53-55.

¹⁶ Robert Maeda, "Some Sung, Chin and Yuan Representations of Actors," *Artibus Asiae* 41 no. 2/3 (1979): 135-8.

¹⁷ Ellen J. Laing, "Chin 'Tartar' Dynasty (1115-1234) Material Culture," *Artibus Asiae* 49 (1988-89), 80-83.

¹⁸ Susan Bush, "Five Paintings of Animal Subjects or Narrative Themes and Their Relevance to Chin Culture," in *China Under Jurchen Rule: Essays on Chin Intellectual and Cultural History*, eds. Hoyt C. Tillman and Stephen H. West (New York: State University of New York Press, 1995), 198-200.

valuable alternative resource for learning about popular theater through the pictorial arts of the time. Since a large percentage of Cizhou wares were marketed in southern Shanxi, their decoration is a reliable reflection of local taste. Those pillows inscribed with ballads or decorated with theatrical stories, as shown in Mino's and Zhang's catalogues, showcase a public love of theatrical themes in the commercial art market of Jin and Yuan Pingyang.¹⁹ Through these images, local people not only learned about their history and culture, but also became informed about popular beliefs and values (see Chapters One and Five).

In addition, Zhou Xinhui catalogued most of the surviving illustrations in printed dramas and operas since the late Yuan, which, until then, had been neglected because of their "low" craftsmanship and "vulgar" content.²⁰ In his study of Chinese folk art, Wang Shucun also collected a variety of theatrical images as important visual evidence, including popular prints of dramatic stories and murals and engravings of performance scenes.²¹ Although mostly dated later than Pingyang's material, these collections of visual records enable us to speculate on the use and reception of theater-in-pictures during the thirteenth century. As an extension of live theater in durable format, these theatrical images in prints and decorative arts served audiences of all social strata,

¹⁹ Yutaka Mino, *Freedom of Clay and Brush Through Seven Centuries in Northern China: Tz'u-Chou Type Wares, 960-1600 A.D.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980); Zhang Ziyi 張子英, *Cizhou Yao Cizhen 磁州窯瓷枕* (Beijing: Renmin meishu chubanshe, 2000).

Numerous American museums have collections of Cizhou pillows decorated with fictional or theatrical stories. Yet, due to the lack of recognizable motifs and the unfamiliarity of vernacular literature, most illustrations are not specifically identified.

²⁰ Zhou Xinhui 周心慧 ed. *Zhongguo gudai xiqu banhua ji 中國古代戲曲版畫集* (Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 2000a), 1-14.

²¹ Wang Shucun 王樹村, *Zhongguo minjian meishu shi 中國民間美術史* (Guangzhou: Lingnan meishu chubanshe, 2004), 257-273.

thereby allowing most people to experience theater at home, on the street, or in temple fairs without being limited to certain days.

In his study of Buddhist influence on Chinese fiction and drama, Victor Mair made a major contribution to expanding our understanding of pictorial depictions of theater by suggesting that the communicative power of theater could be transferred from the actual performance into various portable theatrical images. Mair emphasized the primary role of pictures in early theater, either as props or illustrations of story episodes, comparable to the actions, gestures, and words of actors.²² Another scholar, Yuan Pengfei, also treated theatrical images as the visual extension of performance. He explored the impact of performance traditions on printed illustrations with a focus on the viewer's visual and theatrical experience.²³ If theatrical pictures were indeed an integral component of theater during that time, we need to expand our examination of theater culture beyond stage performance and study the use and reception of theatrical imagery in Jin and Yuan visual culture.

Ritual and Theater in Local Society

When writing a commemoration for the reconstruction of a local temple to Houtu 後土, the Earth Goddess, Wang Yun 王恽 (1228-1304) commented:

[Pingyang people] deeply dedicate themselves to worshipping deities and repaying divine blessings. During New Year's Day they all rush out [to ceremonies], fearing to lag behind others. Isn't it true that they all count a year's work on a day's *la* ceremony?

²² Victor H. Mair, "The Contributions of Tang and Five Dynasties Transformation Texts to Later Chinese Popular Literature," *Sino-Platonic Papers*, no. 12 (1989): 34-39.

²³ Yuan Pengfei 元鹏飞, *Xiqu yu yanju tuxiang ji qita* 戏曲与演剧图像及其他 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007), 1-6.

...事神報本之禮尤恪，歲時單出，惟恐居後，豈終歲之勞一日蠟者之意欤？²⁴

Although this comment may well be something of an exaggeration, Wang did clearly pinpoint two features of ritual culture of Jin and Yuan Pingyang: thriving ceremonial activities and local devotion. Popular cults and ritual affairs flourished in Pingyang where local people built or expanded innumerable temples and shrines. Aside from temple inscriptions, regional surveys have also revealed that most villages and communities had their own temples dedicated to popular or folk deities in charge of different aspects of human life. And yet, pious villagers and townspeople did not rush there only to conduct ceremonies and present offerings. There was a growing entertainment aspect to these village festivals and temple fairs where locals gathered around stages and found amusement in watching dramas and plays.

The wide distribution and constant construction of temple stages, as shown by historical records and stage remains, indicate the close relationship of vernacular drama and popular religion, as well as the deep roots of ritual theater in the towns and villages of Pingyang.²⁵ Over the past two decades, many historians of Chinese theater, such as Ding Mingyi, Feng Junjie, and Che Wenming have conducted systematic field surveys of extant temple stages in Shanxi.²⁶ They have collected important historical records and

²⁴ Wang Yun, “Stele Commemorating the Reconstruction of the Temple of Earth Empress in Linfen, Pingyang (Pingyangfu Linfenxian chongxiu houtumiao bei 平陽府臨汾縣重修後土廟碑),” collected in the *Anthology of Mr. Qiujian (Qiujian xiansheng daquan wenji 秋澗先生大全文集, hereafter QJXSWJ)* (Shanghai: Shangwu chubanshe, reprinted in 1965), *juan* 53, 543.

²⁵ Until early in the last century, local people still conducted traditional temple rituals and village theater in which scholars could observe a thousand years of ritual tradition in southern Shanxi. However, because of the earthquakes during the early Yuan and later reconstructions, no Jin stage survives in Pingyang, except for a few Jin sites with later Yuan construction.

²⁶ Ding Mingyi 丁明夷, “Shanxi zhongnanbu de Song Yuan wutai 山西中南部的宋元舞台,” *Wenwu* no.4 (1972): 47-56; Che Wenming 車文明, *Ershi shiji xiqu wenwu de fazhan yu quxue yanjiu* 20 世

preserved detailed documentation of surviving Jin-Yuan stages. It is notable that Feng Junjie paid extra attention to temple inscriptions as valuable evidence for reconstructing the histories of individual stages and the theatrical conventions associated with the temple complexes.

There would have been no need to build a permanent stage if a temple did not frequently host dramatic performances within its routine ceremonies and celebrations. Thus the boom in temple stage construction in twelfth-century southern Shanxi suggests a rapid integration of *zaju* drama into local ritual traditions after this new vernacular performing art was introduced from elsewhere. A close relationship between theater and ritual is also suggested by the simultaneous rise of *zaju* drama in village theater and spread of the Daoist Quanzhen 全真 movement in Shanxi.²⁷ As Daoist priests were utilizing drama to encourage lay people to undertake religious conversion, Pingyang people also were using plays to help the deceased achieve spiritual transcendence. Such features of local theater help us understand the larger cultural and religious contexts in which locals received various theatrical images and representations.

Another major question then arises: How did *zaju* drama arrive in Pingyang? Liao Ben speculates that Kaifeng's political turmoil directly contributed to the development of vernacular theater and popular culture in Pingyang, particularly when scholars, artisans, and actors fled there after this capital city was conquered by the Jurchen.²⁸ The discoveries of *zaju* representations in Song and Jin tombs support his view, showing that

紀戲曲文物的發現與曲學研究 (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 2001); Feng Junjie 馮俊杰, *Shanxi shenmiao juchangkao* 山西神廟劇場考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006).

²⁷ Idema and West 1982, 90-91.

²⁸ Liao 2003, 109-113.

these representations spread from the mortuary art of Kaifeng to Pingyang via trade routes connecting northwestern Henan and southern Shanxi. Yet this view contrasts with that of Huang Zhusan, who emphasizes the indigenous development of vernacular drama in southern Shanxi.²⁹

Although archaeological evidence supports Liao's view that *zaju* was introduced to Pingyang from Kaifeng, we should not neglect Pingyang's temple rituals and local festivals, which provided a major venue for *zaju* drama to rise to its apex. Based on discoveries of theatrical material at Pingyang, Stephen West asserts that Yuan drama had its roots in the vast rural areas of North China and that its rise was neither simply due to literati involvement nor to promotion by the Mongols.³⁰ David Johnson also points out the significance of village theater in understanding Chinese culture and the role of ordinary folk in creating ritual and theatrical traditions.³¹ From the perspectives of clan, community, and market, Tanaka Issei analyzes the development of traditional theater, proposing that the fusion of ritual and theatrical performances marked a crucial point in the evolution of popular culture in Jin and Yuan China.³²

²⁹ Huang Zhusan 黃竹三, *Xiqu wenwu sanlun* 戲曲文物散論 (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 1998), 43-46. Based on Liao's and Huang's proposals, Jing Lihu 景李虎 raised an eclectic view, asserting that theatrical activities in commercial entertainment districts in cities and those at temples and shrines in villages were both major origins of *zaju* drama and that each propelled its development in twelfth-century North China. See Jing Lihu, *Song Jin zaju gailun* 宋金雜劇概論 (Guangzhou: Guangdong gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 1996), 156-8.

³⁰ Stephen West, "Mongol Influence on the Development of Northern Drama," in *China under Mongol Rule*, ed. John Longlois (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 454-56.

³¹ David Johnson, *Spectacle and Sacrifice: The Ritual Foundations of Village Life in North China* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009), 6-16.

³² Tanaka Issei 田仲一成, *Chugoku engekishi* 中国演劇史 (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1998), 114-5 and 118.

The newly developed drama soon became prevalent in Pingyang and profoundly affected local religious and secular lives. This led to another important feature of Pingyang's visual culture: local folk learned to utilize theatrical images and representations for entertainment, ceremonial, and didactic purposes. They integrated dramatic scenes into architectural, sculptural, and mural programs of local buildings and tombs to simulate actual performances. At the same time, they also built performance stages at local shrines and temples and sponsored theatrical performances on frequent occasions. To some extent, temples, shrines, and tombs shared similar functions in Jin-Yuan Pingyang; if public temples and shrines were places for locals to access deities and gods, then private tombs were places for families to connect with their deceased ancestors. Thus, within these religious and secular settings, Pingyang people frequently presented dramas and their pictorial substitutes as offerings to connect the human and divine worlds.

Theatrical performances and images provided spiritual and moral teachings to their audiences as well. Based on his investigation of temple oracles and theatrical images at folk temples, Wolfram Eberhard convincingly demonstrated the informative function of popular theater among the illiterate masses in China.³³ Barbara Ward further elaborated on Eberhard's idea in her study of theater in late Imperial China, proposing that local theater was the commoners' textbook for learning about a variety of things, including knowledge of their history and culture, views of their family and society, and

³³ Wolfram Eberhard, "Oracle and Theater in China," in his *Studies in Chinese Folklore and Related Essays* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), 191.

beliefs about their own lives and the world.³⁴ Pingyang's material not only proves these scholars' views, but also shows the rise of new social forces and cultural needs in Jin and Yuan societies.

Finally, it is noteworthy that a Yuan literati official and playwright, Hu Zhiyu 胡祇遹 (1225-1293), offered a valuable comment on the question of why theater mattered in contemporary society. In prose gifted to the famous *zaju* actress (Zeng Songshi xu 贈宋氏序), Lady Song, Hu explained what *zaju* drama was and why it amused and cultivated the human spirit.³⁵ In his view, *zaju* clearly showed, through realistic representations of everyday life and local society, all types of human beings and social realities. The variety of its themes thus could attract audiences of different social strata. Hu also pointed out that "among hundreds of things, human beings are the smartest and most valuable, yet their lives have the most worries and bitterness." "Because of this very reason," he then asserted, "the sages created music entertainment to relieve human depression and gloom. This is also why people of the time enjoyed performance of musicians and actors."³⁶ In addition to its entertainment function, Hu further pointed out

³⁴ Barbara Ward, "Readers and Audiences: An Exploration of the Spread of Traditional Chinese Culture," in *Text and Context: The Social Anthropology of Tradition*, ed. Ravindra K. Jain (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1977), 131.

³⁵ Hu Zhiyu, a native of Cizhou, wrote prose and poetry to several famous actors and actresses of the time, such as actress Zhu Lianxiu 朱帘秀 and actor Zhao Wenyi 赵文益. See Hu, *Complete Anthology of Mr. Zhishan (Zhishan daquan ji 紫山大全集, hereafter ZSDQJ)*, Wenyuange edition, vol. 1196, *juan* 8, 56a, 9b, and 13b.

³⁶ "百物之中，莫靈貴於人，然莫愁苦於人...此聖人所以作樂，以宣其抑郁，樂工伶人之亦可看也..." in ZSDQJ, *juan* 8, 56ab. According to Hu, the reason why the term for Jin and Yuan drama included the character "za 雜" was because its performance covered a variety of formats and contents. In particular, the various themes of *zaju* dramas closely related to politics and society, thereby attracting audiences of different social strata.

the didactic function of drama, considering its incorporation of various stories and plots a means of promoting religious teachings and conveying moral instructions.

As a literati official, Hu presented a view of theater that was popular among the Yuan cultural elite during the second half of the thirteenth century. Many of them believed that theater was closely related to social issues and politics of the time, with its content and performance formats changing with the evolution of social and cultural fashion. And yet, the discoveries of the Duan family's brick inscriptions, and a variety of other material evidence in Pingyang, indicate that Hu's idea was anything but original. Rather, it was a literati summary of ideas that had been widely accepted among commoners in both rural and urban areas since the early thirteenth century. Pingyang's evidence convincingly shows us the increasing cultural impact of ordinary folk on popular theater, a medium that was not completely controlled by the government or the elite. Consequently, the boundaries between high and low art, secular and religious lives, as well as urban and rural cultures were gradually blurred within the context of Jin and Yuan Pingyang, where the masses had great power in formulating their own cultural and visual traditions.

Research Methods and Chapter Overview

This dissertation discusses the entertainment, ritual, communicative, and didactic significances of theatrical images and representations within the original cultural and religious contexts of Jin and Yuan Pingyang. Jing Anning's research on the Shuishen Temple informed me of the necessity of treating a drama scene as part of its mural program and interpreting its symbolic significance within the local performing tradition

of rainmaking ceremonies.³⁷ Accordingly, my research collects the rich visual documents of theater together and studies them as a whole, in association with cultural traditions and folk rituals of Jin and Yuan Pingyang. It not only employs tomb inscriptions and funerary traditions to explain the use of theatrical representations in individual tombs, but also introduces related artistic and cultural practices to reconstruct the larger context in which various theatrical images were used. The more we learn from a variety of visual and textual sources about local life and culture, the better we can understand the multiple functions of theatrical imagery in Jin and Yuan Pingyang. Yet we also need to be aware of the variations of regional and historical traditions, which often resulted in different visual cultural traditions in the vast rural and urban areas in North China.

Compared to studies of the art and culture of the Southern Song, traditionally considered the legitimate Chinese regime, less scholarly attention had been paid to art and culture during the Jin period. Due to the paucity of relevant historical records, we also know little about Han Chinese living under Jurchen and Mongol occupations.³⁸ Unlike the Khitan Liao (906-1125) and Mongol Yuan, Jurchen Jin is less ethnically distinct in its material remains. Its visual culture developed mainly from the local cultural base of its occupied territory, under conditions of regional isolation between North and South. Thus the study of regional cultures within the Jin/Mongol territories is equally important, if not more so, than the study of cultural confrontation and interaction among

³⁷ Jing Anning, *The Water God's Temple of the Guangsheng Monastery: Cosmic Function of Art, Ritual, and Theater* (Boston: Brill, 2002), 198-99.

³⁸ Although we can obtain some information regarding provincial life in North China from travel diaries and embassy reports written by Song envoys and travelers, cultural bias and unfamiliarity with northern peoples and lands unavoidably affect the objectivity and credibility of their writings.

different ethnic groups. By introducing Pingyang's material, I will bring these neglected issues to scholarly attention in visual cultural studies of China's Conquest Dynasties.

My study also highlights the influence of non-elite people, especially those well-to-do households and affluent lineages, on the formation of Jin and Yuan visual culture, during a period when rapid economic growth and urban development considerably changed popular and folk cultures. Previous overemphasis on elite art has led to an incomplete understanding of the visual culture of the time because not everyone could access literati painting or read illustrated play books. In this regard, David Johnson's study of village theater in southern Shanxi inspired my further exploration of the role of common villagers and townspeople in creating their own art and culture. Since their voices were less heard and their stories seldom recorded in official histories and literary works, I turned to extant sources such as local temple inscriptions, tomb inscriptions, and ritual manuscripts. These sources demonstrate that Pingyang people enthusiastically employed theatrical images as their own way of communicating with deities and ancestors, understanding history and pursuing pleasure, as well as preserving the solidarity of their lineages and culture in a time full of uncertainty.

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Primarily based on examples of printmaking and painting, the first chapter addresses the interaction between popular theater and image-making in Pingyang. On the one hand, contemporary performing arts in Pingyang contributed to the occurrence of popular prints of new theatrical themes, as exemplified by *Four Beauties*. The painting, *Sima Yu's Dream of Su Xiaoxiao*, also shows that direct theatrical experience more or less influenced local artists' creations. On the other hand, artistic developments in printmaking and the emergence of printed scripts

prepared the way for the rise of printed illustrations of fiction and drama. The mass production of decorative arts, especially of Cizhou-ware pillows decorated with story scenes, contributed to the spread of popular theater in and beyond Pingyang.

The second chapter tackles the question of the role of theater in the spread of popular religion and knowledge among common folk. The recent discovery of elegy-like *zhugongdiao* arias, which were inscribed on the chamber walls of a peasant woman's tomb, demonstrates the instructive and spiritual power of dramatic text for even those who were illiterate, as well as the infiltration of theater into local life and culture. These arias did not belong only to one individual, but had symbolic implication as a representation of the theater culture of Pingyang where local people used song medleys and plays to spread popular values and beliefs. Similarly, Quanzhen practitioners also employed drama to proselytize Daoist teachings. Religious plays thus became rooted in local society and their textual and symbolic representations became important in secular life.

The third chapter illuminates how local people adopted and adapted theatrical representations in their tombs and how these practices related to the distinctive funerary tradition and ancestor worship in Pingyang. It first introduces the spread of drama representations from northern Henan to southern Shanxi, and then discusses the features and development of these representations in Song and Jin tombs. Case studies of the Duan family tombs show that Pingyang people made innovative use of *zaju* representations and incorporated them into the pictorial and architectural programs of their tombs. These representations helped to transform tomb chambers into underground

family shrines, where descendants could make offerings to the deceased and appeal for ancestral blessings.

Chapter Four discusses theater and its representations at local temples within the context of the distinctive ritual culture of Pingyang. By comparing similar themes and compositions between the pictorial program of the Shuishen Temple and those of local tombs, it demonstrates that the presence of drama scenes in tomb space is closely related to contemporary theatrical activities at local temples. It also proposes that the introduction of *zaju* scenes into temple space was probably a local innovation resulting from the thriving ritual culture of Pingyang where the use of dramatic representations in folk temples overshadowed those at institutionalized temples during the Jin and Yuan periods. In addition to theatrical representations, the presence of temple stages and ritual manuscripts is valuable evidence of the elevated status of drama in village theater and temple rituals of Pingyang.

This dissertation concludes with Chapter Five, which introduces the significance of the recently-discovered Duan family admonitions and the spread of didactic theater through the pictorial art of the time. The admonition texts of the Duan family indicate the role of new social forces, such as the *fuzuhu* 富足戶 (well-to-do households), in creating local culture and preserving family traditions at that time. The pictorial program of Dong Hai's tomb showcases how local people extended the didactic function of theater through illustrations of historical-military plays about filial piety and imperial loyalty. These theatrical images helped to spread common historical knowledge and moral values and were thus of great importance to Pingyang people who were living under foreign rule.

Indeed, Pingyang provides us with a unique opportunity to observe an important aspect of Jin and Yuan visual culture, which we cannot know from the current visual records of other places. Pingyang people developed an unparalleled enthusiasm for art, ritual, and theater, and made drama, more than a vehicle for worship and entertainment, an integral part of their daily life and afterlife. Now let us turn to the rich theatrical images and representations of their world.

CHAPTER ONE

Picture and Performance:

Exploring the Visual Culture of Pingyang

During the Jin and Yuan periods, Pingyang distinguished itself as a thriving regional center featuring complicated interactions among art, theater, and ritual. Local people not only dedicated themselves to frequent spiritual worship and temple fairs, but also entertained themselves with theater and its representations in their secular and religious lives. In particular, this simultaneous flourishing of art and theater, a circumstance documented only in Pingyang, constituted the specific context for the rise in popularity of theatrical imagery in Jin and Yuan China. On the one hand, the rise of theater affected image-making in Pingyang, generating a social preference for pictures of entertainment and pleasure. On the other hand, the widespread circulation of various theatrical illustrations and representations, through prints, paintings, and the decorative arts, not only made theater culture accessible to a wider audience, but also helped it penetrate every aspect of local life and culture.

This chapter, therefore, examines the close interrelationship of Pingyang's pictorial art and theater as a significant factor that shaped the visual culture of this place. It begins with a discussion of *Four Beauties*, a woodblock print produced by a Pingyang print shop (Figure 1.1).¹ While one might well attribute the artistic quality of this print to the highly developed printing industry of this region, it is important to note that both its subject matter and its composition reflect the influence of popular theater. The placement

¹ Wang Bomin 王伯敏 is among the earliest scholars who introduced this print to China. See his *Zhongguo banhua shi* 中國版畫史 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe, 1961), 23-27.

of four beauties from different periods in the same garden suggests that they are probably actresses representing these historical figures. Their presence under a banner-like inscription also reminds us of the common stage practice of using banners to inform the audience of what they are seeing, as exemplified by the mural of a troupe presence at the Shuishen Temple in Hongdong. Furthermore, case studies of Pingyang-made prints indicate that its advanced level of commercial printing not only prepared local skills and capacities for making narrative images, but also developed a regional taste for such illustrations in popular prints and books. At the same time, the printing of dramatic scripts generated a new form of theatrical experience and spurred demand for story pictures among secular readers.

The thriving development of narrative and dramatic genres also promoted secular interest in pictures of pleasure and fantasy, as well as new artistic approaches to illustrating dramatic stories. Possibly helped by their own experience of theater, some Pingyang artists achieved a high degree of skill in creating pictorial works with extraordinary theatrical effects and emotional power. *Sima Yu's Dream of Su Xiaoxiao*, painted by Pingyang native, Liu Yuan, is a case in point. This handscroll painting depicts a dramatic encounter from a ghost love story between a courtesan and a literatus (Figure 1.2). The artist's application of a close-up format and development of a poignant atmosphere, through skillful depiction of facial expression and inner emotion, exemplifies the high level of achievement of this region's pictorial art under the influence of popular theater. Decoration of ceramic pillows illustrates, in a durable form, various dramatic stories, which thereby obtained access to audiences outside the theater.

It is not simply a coincidence that the popular print, *Four Beauties*, and the handscroll painting, *Sima Yu's Dream of Su Xiaoxiao*, are both associated with Jin dynasty Pingyang. Rather, they are the products of an exceptional center of artistic creation that featured advanced skills, innovative styles, and mass-produced mediums, along with a social vogue for entertainment imagery. It was via these different visual dimensions that theater culture could spread quickly and obtained its popularity in the He-Fen region. Plays and dramas of favored themes, such as romance and beauties, reached beyond southern Shanxi to a variety of audiences in the countryside and city, in the marketplace, and at court. Indeed, swift integration of love of theater with a preference for pictures contributed much to the development of pictorial representations of theater in Pingyang, which so greatly enriched the potentialities of the visual culture of Jin and Yuan China.

Four Beauties: A Forerunner of Printed Illustration of Drama?

In 1909, the Russian explorer, Pyotr Kuzmich Kozlov (1863-1935), found roughly two thousand pieces of sutras, scripts, statues, textiles, and paintings inside a Buddhist stupa outside the city wall of Karakhoto (Heicheng 黑城, Inner Mongolia), a desert frontier town of the Xixia State, which was conquered by the Mongols around 1226 and abandoned at the end of the Yuan.² These pieces were probably the property of a local temple and purposefully stored in the stupa right before the invasion of the

² For a detailed description of the excavation, see Kozlov's diary in his book *Mongolia and Amdo and the Dead Town of Khara Khoto: The Russian Geographical Society's Expedition to the Mountains of Asia, Led by P. K. Kozlov, Honorary Member of the Russian Geographical Society* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe, 1923), 550-9. S. F. Oldenburg and V. Kotvich further studied these finds and published: *Some of P.K. Kozlov's Finds from the Town of Khara Khoto* (St. Petersburg: Russian Geographical Society, 1909). Most of these works are now preserved at the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Mongol army.³ Surprisingly, among the twenty or so woodblock prints of this find, two individual prints and a booklet (to be introduced later) were made in Pingyang.

One of these prints, *Four Beauties*, dated around 1200 and printed on hemp paper, deserves special attention. Different from illustrations of religious or moral teaching common to prints from previous periods, this single-sheet print displays four historical beauties from different periods. A banner-like register at the top of the picture reads, “beautiful ladies from previous dynasties with fragrant visage that overwhelmed the whole state 隋朝窈窕呈傾國之芳容.” Underneath, the four historical beauties wander in a garden, with their bodies and faces detailed in three-quarter view. They wear luxurious garments and splendid headdresses that signify their noble status. Different from the virtuous Confucian paragons, who touched viewers with their moral stories, these graceful ladies attract the interest of the audience with their beautiful appearance and the well-known romantic stories associated with them.⁴

³ Samosyuk 1996, 42-46.

⁴ The lady on the right is Lüzhū 綠珠 (c. 250-300), who was purchased by the wealthiest merchant of the Western Jin dynasty, Shi Cong 石崇 (249-300), to be his concubine. Because he did not want to give this lovely lady to others, Shi was framed for planning a rebellion by an envious official and finally sentenced to death. So this talented lady committed suicide in front of Shi. For related tales, see Lu Zunwu 陸尊梧 and Li Zhijiang 李志江, *Lidai diangu cidian* 歷代典故辭典 (Beijing: Zuojia chubanshe, 1990), 603 and 888.

Lüzhū turns back and looks towards Zhao Feiyan 趙飛燕 (45-1 BCE), who became the consort of Emperor Chengdi 成帝 (r. 33-7 BCE) of the Han dynasty because of her extraordinary beauty and dance skills. To secure her position, she managed to make her sister, Zhao Hede 趙合德, a consort of the emperor too. But this led to a sad ending: an excessively licentious life caused the sudden death of the emperor. *Ibid.*, 821.

In the middle stands Wang Zhaojun 王昭君 (c. 100-50 BCE), a beautiful Han palace lady who missed her chance to be a consort of the Han emperor, Yuandi 元帝 (r. 48-33 BCE), because she refused to bribe the painter to make a nice portrait of her for review by the emperor. Thus the emperor did not get a chance to see her and, instead of keeping her for himself, gifted her to a chieftain of the Xiongnu. The emperor was deeply remorseful when he discovered Wang's unparalleled beauty before her departure from the palace. *Ibid.*, 882-3.

On the left follows Ban Ji 班姬 (48-2 BCE), a virtuous consort of Emperor Chengdi, who once refused to sit with him in the same palanquin and admonished him for improper conduct. But she was then

This attractive print obviously serves the purpose of secular amusement and is probably the earliest example of its kind.⁵ It evokes a sensual experience through its rich surface decoration and the detailed way in which the characters' figures are depicted. In addition to elaboration of their beautiful appearances, the artisan gave much care to creating a pleasing setting—a palace garden filled with sumptuous artificial stones and blossoming peonies. This setting is possibly derived from earlier scenes of court ladies in gardens that were prevalent in Tang mortuary art, as exemplified by the mural (dated 711) on the west wall of the front chamber in the Crown Prince Zhanghuai's 章懷 (654-684) tomb near Xi'an (Figure 1.3).⁶

Measuring about 57 by 32.5 cm, the *Four Beauties* is one of the largest examples of surviving Jin-dynasty woodblock prints. Prints of this kind were most likely made to be displayed on walls or doors where they could be seen clearly by their viewers.⁷ Wang Shucun differentiates *Four Beauties* from other popular religious iconic images, *zhima* 紙馬, which were used either for warding off evil or appealing for blessings. Instead, Wang categorizes *Four Beauties* as a paper picture for holiday display and believes that it is a prototype for New Year's pictures, which mainly include beautiful scenes and

deserted by the emperor, because he favored Zhao Feiyan and her sister. While she was confined to the palace without visitors, Ban Ji inscribed a famous poem on a fan to express her lament. *Ibid.*, 22-23.

During the Song and Yuan periods, these love stories had been incorporated into the plots of many popular fiction, ballads, and plays, such as the short story, *Biography of Lüzhū* (*Lüzhū zhuan* 綠珠傳), the fiction, *Anecdotes of Feiyan* (*Feiyan waizhuan* 飛燕外傳), the ballad, *Song of the Round Fan* (*Duansanke* 團扇歌), and the *zaju* drama, *Autumn of the Han Palace* (*Hangongqiu* 漢宮秋).

⁵ Wang Shucun 王樹村, *Zhongguo nianhua shi* 中國年畫史 (Beijing: Beijing gongyi meishu chubanshe, 2002), 81.

⁶ This tomb is located near Xi'an and dates to 711. For more information, see Li 2005, 274-7.

⁷ Given the relatively large size of this print, Wang Bomin believed that it was made to be posted on a wall or a door. Wang 1961, 26.

entertainment stories for household decoration or for festival use.⁸ Aside from auspicious motifs, pictures of this kind often include historical events and mythical figures drawn from narrative and dramatic genres.⁹ To attract buyers and cater to their need for social recreation, artisans could experiment in this kind of print with stylistic innovations and various themes which were not applied to traditional religious prints of more fixed subjects and stereotypical compositions.

The extraordinary quality of *Four Beauties*, which is unmatched by the many elaborate prints of this time or later centuries, demonstrates the high level of artistic accomplishment of Jin-dynasty printing in Pingyang.¹⁰ In particular, this print prominently displays its maker and place of manufacture in a cartouche that reads, “carved and printed by the Ji family of Pingyang 平陽姬家雕印.” This trademark, probably made for commercial reasons, shows that this high-quality print was from a renowned print shop in Pingyang. However, traditional scholarship focused only on the highly developed state of the printing industry in Pingyang to explain its existence and artistic quality, ignoring Pingyang’s role as a theater center, an equally crucial element. In fact, the theme, style, and composition of this unusual Pingyang-made print clearly reflect the influence of local narrative and dramatic genres of the time.

⁸ Wang 2004, 85-86 and 168-170.

⁹ James Flath has an insightful discussion of the theatrical conventions in traditional Chinese New Year’s pictures. He points out that these pictures are not real theater, but rather a “free-frame” view of a story or play made by importing elements of staged theater and printed fiction. They thus provide the distinctive experience of viewing the theatrical narrative as a graphical form of text. James A. Flath, *The Cult of Happiness: Nianhua, Art, and History in Rural North China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 84-88.

¹⁰ We know nothing about this Ji family print shop from extant historical records. Given that details were densely inserted and every line was elaborately cut within the picture frame of this large size print, the artistic merit and skill of printmakers in this Ji family print shop must have been higher than average. Wang 1961, 25-26.

It is worthwhile to note a few stylistic and compositional characteristics of this print in the context of Pingyang's theater culture. First of all, it does not illustrate a particular episode in a traditional narrative approach, but instead depicts favorite characters from popular stories that frequently became protagonists in Jin and Yuan dramas.¹¹ Although viewers can identify these figures from inscribed cartouches, the artisan also equipped these ladies with attributes to make their identities clear, as though they were actors carrying props. For instance, Ban Ji 班姬 carries a fan, reminding the viewer that she once composed the *Song of the Round Fan* (Tuansange 團扇歌), her famous palace lament. Similarly, Wang Zhaojun 王昭君 is writing something on a long strip. This reminds the viewer that Wang wrote a text before her departure to the North, expressing her sadness and regret at no longer being able to serve the emperor.

Second, the ladies in this scene are from different historical periods. Rather than juxtaposing them in individual cells in chronological order, as does an earlier illustration of virtuous royal consorts on the lacquer panel from Sima Jinlong's 司馬金龍 tomb (Figure 1.4), dated 484, the artisan puts them all together in a garden setting, like a group of actors performing on a stage. This fantastic display, which denies the passage of time, certainly implies influence from the performing arts of the time.¹² Some practices

¹¹ The traditional approaches to narrative illustration often imply the conceptual relationship between the image and the associated stories by representing an episode's major figures, plot, or setting. For more information, see Julia Murray's discussion of three important aspects of analyzing the visual presentation of a narrative (conceptual approaches, compositional structures, and formats) in her book, *Mirror of Morality: Chinese Narrative Illustration and Confucian Ideology* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2007), 15-22.

¹² In Chinese classical theater, characters from different periods sometimes are present on the same stage. For example, Zheng Guangzu 鄭光祖 (active early 14th cen.), a famous Yuan playwright born in Pingyang, created the play, "Queen Zhong Lichun Saved the Qi State with Wisdom and Valor (Zhong Lichun zhiyong ding Qi 鐘離春智勇定齊)." It is about the famous Qi minister Yan Ying 晏嬰 (d. 550 BCE) of the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BCE) helped King Xuan of the Qi 齊宣王 (c. 350-301

common in the theater of the time further suggest such an influence. For instance, the Lucheng 潞城 ritual manual (which will be discussed more fully later in Chapter Four) records twenty-five troupe plays (yatuixi 啞隊戲) in its list of characters and spectacles (jiaose paichang dan 角色排場單).¹³ In these plays, various historical figures and dramatic protagonists would gather in processions to perform dances and amuse the audience. Since these figures and characters are primarily from the plays and dramas listed in the repertoire of this festival, their presence before or after the shows would attract larger audiences to the temple festival. In one of these play demonstrations, players of the “Ten Historical Beauties (shi meiren 十美人)” would perform dances in a procession in order to attract a larger audience for the drama in the evening.¹⁴ Similarly, the printed *Four Beauties* would have drawn viewers to the romantic plays of these beauties by showing a fascinating scene meant to tap into the voyeurism of ordinary people and their curiosity about these ladies’ tragic fates.

Third, the background decoration of *Four Beauties* is unusual and suggests a close link between picture and story-recitation in the performing arts of earlier periods.

BCE) marry Zhong Lichun 鐘離春, one of the “Four Ugliest Women” in Chinese history. Yet with her wisdom and valor, Zhong successfully saved the Qi State from invasions of the Qin and the Yan States during the Warring States Period (475-221 BCE). Also, the Ming play, “Prince Guan Defeated Demon Chiyou (Guangong zhan Chiyou 關公戰蚩尤),” is about the battle between Prince Guan, a general of the third century, and Chiyou, a mythical demon from a prehistoric legend. See Feng 2002, 42.

¹³ Han Sheng 寒聲 et al. “Yinshen saishe lijie chuanbu sishiqu gongdiao chutan 迎神賽社禮節傳簿四十曲宮調初探,” *Zhonghua xiqu* vol. 3 (1987): 106-117.

¹⁴ Actors of these famous historical beauties performed in the same procession of the play “Prince Siddhārtha Gautama Travelling to the Four City Gates” (Xida taizi you simen 悉達太子遊四門). At least half of these ladies, such as Daji 妲己 (active 11th cen. BCE), Bao Si 褒姒 (active 770s BCE), Concubine Li 驪姬 (d. 650 BCE), Xi Shi 西施 (active 490s BCE), Lüzhu 綠珠 (c. 250-300), and Consort Yang 楊貴妃 (719-756), caused their masters to lose their regimes or brought serious troubles to the state. *Ibid.* 108; For some stories of these ladies, see Lin Xinnai 林新乃 ed., *Zhongguo lidai mingyuan* 中國歷代名媛 (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1993), 1, 19, 109, 212 and 306.

Specifically, its format imitates the kind of mounted hanging scrolls that were commonly unrolled before the audience during a story recitation. It reminds us too of monks' secular talks, during which they would often display pictures as part of their Buddhist storytelling. This was the case during the Song, when an image was only suggestive of its narrative subject and viewers still needed help from storytellers to fully enjoy the details of the related historical episodes. A brick relief in the Northern Song tomb at Jiuliugou 酒流沟 shows a play introducer displaying a picture on a scroll as a prelude to a drama performance (Figure 1.5).¹⁵ This tradition of using narrative pictures in early theater would have stimulated the spread of theatrical images.¹⁶ With an illustration of a dramatic episode or major characters, the play introducer could better advertise to the audience the plot and secure their interest in watching the coming performance. Additionally, the borders of this print are decorated with patterns of flying phoenixes and flower scrolls. These auspicious symbols of wealth and nobility would have drawn the viewer's attention by making the overall image aesthetically pleasing.

If the *Four Beauties* demonstrates the close relationship between theater performance and print culture, it can also be viewed as an antecedent to printed illustrations of fiction and drama. Extensive illustration of fiction books had occurred at least by the early fourteenth century in Jianyang 建陽, Fujian 福建. This is demonstrated by a series of fully illustrated Pinghua 平話 (expository tales) books that were published

¹⁵ Dong Xiang 董祥, "Yanshi xian Jiuliu gou shuiku Song mu 偃師縣酒流沟水庫宋墓," *Wenwu* no. 9 (1959): 84-85.

¹⁶ Victor H. Mair, *Painting and Performance: Chinese Picture Recitation and Its Indian Genesis* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988), 3-13.

by the Yu 虞 family bookstore during the Zhizhi 至治 reign (1321-1323).¹⁷ Accompanied by illustrations of dramatic moments, these texts are divided into short episodes under different titles. Given the refined editorial work, the craftsmanship of woodblock carving, and the skill of illustration, it seems likely that illustrations in this format had been used in printed fiction for some time. Yet it should be noted that extant illustrated playbooks are dated later than illustrated fiction books.¹⁸ Although scripts of *zaju* had been printed in Yuan-period Hangzhou and Beijing, there is no surviving illustrated version from the thirteenth century.¹⁹ Nevertheless, five reused pages, including two full-page illustrations and three pages of text, were found in the cover wrapper of a Yuan-edition book in 1983. These pages, which belong to the playbook, *Romance of the West Chamber* (Xixiangji 西廂記) (Figure 1.6), are evidence that printed script, with illustration, had appeared as early as the fourteenth century.²⁰

Scholars have tried to search for earlier evidence of illustrated books of fiction and drama so that they could find the origin of this practice. But so far, the earliest

¹⁷ Zhou Xinhui 周心慧 ed. *Zhongguo gubanhua tongshi* 中國古版畫通史 (Beijing: Xuanyuan chubanshe, 2000b), 98-99; also see Robert E. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 172.

¹⁸ For a brief introduction to illustrated fiction and dramas in China, see Yuan 2007, 24-48; for illustrated dramas, see Zhou 2000a, 1-14.

¹⁹ For a selection of page illustrations of these books, see Chen Jian 陳堅 and Ma Wenda 馬文大 eds. *Song Yuan banke tushi* 宋元版刻圖釋 (Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe), vol. 4, 47-59 and 247.

²⁰ The full-page illustration depicts the episode of “The Presence of General Sun Feihu (Sunfeihu shengzhang 孫飛虎升帳)”, and the broken piece probably illustrates the episode of “Cui Yingying Listening to the Zither in the Moonlight (Cui Yingying yuexia tingqin 崔鶯鶯月夜聽琴)”.

Before the discovery of these few pages, scholars could only use Ming-dynasty samples to discuss illustrated playbooks. The most famous pieces were discovered in 1967 in a Ming tomb near Shanghai, mostly printed by a Beijing print shop during the Chenghua 成化 reign (1465-1487). There are eighty-six illustrations of dramatic moments from twelve books, including a *Nanxi* play and eleven changeable books (*shuochang* 說唱). Zhou 2000a, 1-2; also see Anne E. McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables* (Boston: Brill, 1998), 15-20.

example they have found is the *Brief Accounts of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sanfen shilue* 三分事略), an illustrated fiction printed by the Li 李 family bookstore of Jianyang in 1294 (Figure 1.7). Nevertheless, one cannot assume that no illustrated fiction and drama books were made in the thirteenth century, or earlier, simply because no examples survive.²¹ Here I am not going to argue for the existence of illustrated fiction or drama in the twelfth century. The more critical question is: If a trend favoring extensive illustration developed in the thirteenth century, what were its contributory factors? What can we learn from Pingyang's evidence?

In examining the significant impact of illustrations of fictional narratives in transformation texts (*Bianwen* 變文) on the development of printed fiction and drama, Victor Mair suggests that the primary prerequisite for a story to be illustrated was its popularity.²² After oral narratives had achieved sufficient popularity and stability of content, they would be depicted graphically in individual pictures before they were mass-produced as prints. In his study of the origin of printed illustrations, Robert Hegel also proposes that they probably are derived from “religious art for mass audiences and the painting traditions supported by the cultural elite.”²³

Previous scholars paid much attention to Jianyang in the South, since the earliest extant illustrated books of fiction and drama were printed there. But the early printing

²¹ Zhou 2000b, 98-100. Zhou particularly mentions that the extant *Biographies of Ancient Virtuous Ladies* (*Gu lienü zhuan* 古烈女傳) was not a Song book dated to 1063. Instead, it was a Yuan book printed in Jianyang. Thus it cannot be regarded as the earliest example of illustrated fiction.

²² Mair 1989, 32-33. Wu Hung also conducted an important study on the illustration of transformation texts, see his article “What is Bianxiang?: On the Relationship Between Dunhuang Art and Dunhuang Literature,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* no. 52.1 (1992), 111-192.

²³ Hegel 1998, 241.

practices of Jin-dynasty Pingyang have received less attention, despite the fact that individual prints and ceramic decorations of fictional and dramatic stories circulated there earlier than did printed illustrations in Jianyang, Fujian. In particular, Pingyang's popular prints, such as *Four Beauties* and *Prince Guan's Throne*, were made nearly a century earlier than the Yu family's illustrated fiction series in Jianyang.

Some scholars have tried to find, from mediums other than print, additional visual evidence bearing on the origin of the illustrated fiction of the Yuan dynasty. In her study of Jianyang imprints, for instance, Lucille Chia has noticed that the illustrative style of these Yuan books also appears on the surface of pillows and vases of Jin and Yuan Cizhou wares 磁州窯, but she did not further explore this important collection of material.²⁴ If these ceramic decorations suggest the popularity of some story pictures in the North and their possible impact on later narrative illustrations in printed books, there is no reason we should ignore Pingyang and its abundant visual material in both print and ceramic decoration.²⁵ Pingyang did provide the necessary circumstances for the occurrence of illustrated books of fiction and drama as well as a social preference for viewing narrative pictures of stories and plays. It is very possible that theatrical images first occurred on popular prints and ceramic decoration in Jin-dynasty Pingyang, through which they would have been accessible to an audience that did not own books or read, and then to a wider audience in the rest of China. It is also possible that, at the same time,

²⁴ Lucille Chia, *Printing for profit: The commercial publishers of Jianyang Fujian (11th-17th centuries)* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), 114. Cizhou refers to modern Handan 邯鄲 area, Hebei. Scholars named this type of ceramics after the ancient prefecture where most kilns were located.

²⁵ Also, if the trend toward making popular prints and book illustrations with narrative qualities was initiated in the North and then spread to the South, one should not ignore the impact of Pingyang on the later practice of the extensive illustration of printed fiction and drama during the Yuan dynasty.

artisans introduced illustrations into printed scripts to improve the pleasure of those who could read.

In addition to ceramic decoration featuring particular narrative episodes, the prevalence of picture-story manuscripts was also a precondition for the emergence of illustrated books of fiction and drama in Jin and Yuan Pingyang. For instance, it was unknown if the *Twenty-Four Stories of Filial Piety* had been illustrated in a complete set before the Yuan dynasty, when Guo Juring 郭居敬 compiled a popular version of these filial paragon stories and published them in an illustrated book. Yet in a Jin-dynasty mural tomb at Weicun 魏村, Changzhi 長治, a city west of Pingyang, a complete set of painted illustrations of the *Twenty-Four Stories* was found with accompanying textual inscriptions.²⁶ Dated 1151, the title of this set of texts and images reads “Inscriptions of Twenty-Four Filial Piety Stories with Illustrations 畫像二十四孝銘” (Figure 1.8). These serial illustrations must have been copied from a prototype, probably a picture-scroll with a series of inscriptions. While working from their prototype, however, the artisans not only used many wrong characters, but incorrectly inscribed the fifth picture on the west wall as well.²⁷ This discovery indicates that, at least in the Jin dynasty, picture-story manuscripts, or even cheaper printed editions, had been available to the masses in the vast rural and urban areas of Shanxi. Since pictures could help illiterate or moderately educated commoners understand text, their presentation in conjunction with text became

²⁶ Changzhi shi bowuguan 長治市博物館, “Shanxi Changzhishi Weicun Jindai jinian caihui zhuandiao mu 山西長治市魏村金代紀年彩繪磚雕墓,” *Kaogu* no. 1 (2009): 59-64. Filial piety stories frequently have been discovered in Northern Song and Jin tombs, either in complete sets or a few individual pictures, but none have detailed expository texts.

²⁷ The image depicts the story of Bao Shan 鮑山, who carries his mother to escape the war, but the inscription references another Han-dynasty story in which the filial son Jiang Shi 姜詩 fed his mother with carp fish. *Ibid.*, 63.

a useful form of instruction in popular manuscripts and books. In addition, narrative and expository illustrations in the format of contiguous wall paintings were prevalent in the temples of southern Shanxi, such as the Qinglong Monastery in Jishan and the Shuishen Temple in Hongdong.²⁸ This circumstance probably also laid the foundation for extensive illustration in books there.

All these sources demonstrate Pingyang's importance and the necessity of studying its visual records. As a printing center, Pingyang had the resources necessary for high-volume production of illustrations: advanced printing techniques and skills; secular use of illustrated manuscripts; and a tradition of painting murals in series. Given this high level of development in pictorial art and the concurrent thriving theatrical activities in Pingyang, it is reasonable to regard the *Four Beauties* as a vital antecedent to the printed illustrations of fiction and drama there during the Yuan and Ming dynasties. This work represents a new stylistic trend in prints and anticipated the rise of a new genre of popular woodblock print.²⁹ These paper pictures, with their depicted historical tales, served both as secular amusement for a wide range of audiences and as fashionable, decorative displays for private or public spaces.³⁰ The following sections will further examine how

²⁸ For a brief introduction to temple murals and local muralists of southern Shanxi, see Chai 1997, 5-7; Chu Qien 楚啟恩, *Zhongguo bihua shi 中國壁畫史* (Beijing: Beijing gongyi meishu chubanshe, 2000), 189-199.

²⁹ When he studied Pingyang's books and prints, Wang Chongmin 王重民, a scholar of rare books, noticed that Pingyang's imprints were not only famous for their elaborate craftsmanship, but also possibly represented a distinctive regional style. He was particularly attracted by the vividness of the *Four Beauties*, but he did not elaborate his ideas since he only examined this and other Pingyang-made prints from the perspective of a librarian and historian of printing. Qi Feng 齊峰 and Li Jinlin 李晉林, "Shanxi Pingshui keshuye yu Zhongguo gudai chuban 山西平水刻書業與中國古代出版," *Journal of Shanxi University*, no. 6 (2004): 44.

³⁰ A famous Jin scholar-official, Wang Ji 王寂 (1128-1194), mentioned in his diary that he inscribed poems for the pictures of the four princes in the bedroom of a private residence when he traveled in the Yanglü-River region in Liaoning province. The "Four Lords (si gongzi 四公子)" are four legendary

Pingyang's printmaking industry contributed to new illustration styles meant to attract viewers' interest and, more importantly, initiated the trend for printing dramas in illustrated books, which fundamentally changed the experience of theater and provided a new use for images.

Pingyang's Printmaking and the Rise of Theatrical Images

Printmaking in Jin and Yuan Pingyang

The rapid development of commercial, official, and religious printing of Jin and Yuan Pingyang owed much to the printing industry of Kaifeng.³¹ By the end of the twelfth century, Pingyang had become one of the largest printing centers in North China and retained this vital role through the next century.³² Supported by various goals such as preserving cultural heritages, spreading religious beliefs, or making profits in the marketplace, innumerable print shops in this region produced a great quantity of woodblock prints and books. Since printing activities were not concentrated within the

aristocrats who lived during the Warring States period (476-221 BCE): Lord Mengchang of the Qi 齊孟嘗君 (? -279 BCE), Lord Pingyuan of the Zhao 趙平原君 (? -253 BCE), Lord Xinling of the Wei 魏信陵君 (? -243 BCE), and Lord Chunshen of the Chu 楚春申君 (? -238 BCE). Decorative pictures of famous historical figures were prevalent in residences, hotels, and restaurants in the North. Some store owners posted them on their front doors to attract visitors or guests. Wang 2004, 51-52.

³¹ When the Jurchens conquered Kaifeng, they took all the important books and woodblocks in private and public collections, such as the Confucian classics and Daoist canons from the imperial academies and libraries, and brought them back to Shangjing 上京. They also transported northward thousands of captured artisans and craftsmen, including some printmakers and actors. Looted treasure and captives were scattered in southern Shanxi on the trip to the Northeast. But fortunately, Pingyang scholars and publishers were able to re-collect many important books and some of the displaced artisans and craftsmen settled down in southern Shanxi. For more information, see Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘 (1126-1207), *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 三朝北盟彙編 (reprinted in Taipei, 1962), vol. 2, *juan* 73, 108a; *juan* 77, 139b-141a; *juan* 97, 259a; and *juan* 98, 266b. Also see Su Bai 宿白, *Tang Song shiqi de diaoban yinshua* 唐宋時期的雕版印刷 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1999), 57 and 60-63.

³² This region's prosperous book production was comparable in scale and importance to other major regional printing centers of Song and Yuan China, such as Hangzhou, Jianyang, and Chengdu 成都. Qi and Li 2004, 38.

city but rather scattered throughout the region between the Yellow and Fen Rivers, scholars often call books printed in the He-Fen region “Pingyang imprint”, or “Pingshui imprint 平水本.”³³ Because the majority of surviving Jin books were compiled or printed there, historians and librarians of rare books used the term “Pingshui imprint” as the equivalent of the Jin dynasty imprints.³⁴

The printing of a Chinese edition of the Buddhist canon, known as the Zhaocheng Tripitaka 趙城藏, in almost seven thousand rolls, was executed in Pingyang. With financial support from local Buddhist temples and pious individuals, the entire project lasted about twenty-five years (1148-1173).³⁵ Many religious and commercial print shops were involved in the time-consuming work of cutting tens of thousands of woodblocks. The accomplishment of this tremendous project is a good indication of the production capacity and craftsmanship of the local printing industry. In addition to official and religious printing, Pingyang was a regional center for commercial printing during that

³³ Since Pingyang prefecture was partially occupied by the Yuan army in the 1220s, the Jurchen court raised Pingyang’s Jiangzhou 絳州 sub-prefecture to the status of administrative prefecture of southern Shanxi. It also founded a new county, Pingshui, on the unoccupied land of southern Shanxi. The founding of this county was recorded in *Jinshi* 26: 209b. Local people began to use the name “Pingshui” during the late Jin, probably to distinguish Jurchen-occupied land from that of the Mongols.

Because the Mongols had occupied Linfen, the township of the former Pingyang prefecture, many Jin books of this period were supposed to be printed in Pingshui. Some scholars have suggested that the name Pingshui, which was not in use until the 1220s, became popular among local publishers and print shops during the Mongol and Yuan periods. Qi Feng and Li Jinlin mentioned this traditional view when they introduced their views of the history of Pingshui county. Qi and Li 2004, 39-40.

³⁴ Beijing tushuguan 北京出版社, *Zhongguo banke tulu* 中國版本圖錄 (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan, 1963), 3.

³⁵ The only extant set of this Triptitaka was actually reprinted with original Jin woodblocks during the Mongol period. With a frontispiece picture of the Buddhist teaching attached to every scroll, this set was stored in the Guangsheng Monastery 廣勝寺 in Zhaocheng 趙城 County until 1936. About 4500 scrolls have survived and are now preserved in the Chinese National Library in Beijing. Zhou 2000b, 74.

time.³⁶ Similar to Jianyang, its prosperous commercial printing had a profound impact on shaping this region's culture.³⁷

During the Jurchen-Mongol wars, Pingyang survived as a major center of Chinese culture in the Central Plains. Because of its location and printing industry, the Mongols utilized Pingyang as a major site of access to Chinese culture after they had conquered most of Shanxi around 1219.³⁸ At the request of Yelü Chucai 耶律楚材 (1190-1244) in 1236, the Mongol court founded the Bureau of Sutras and Classics (Jingjisu 經籍所), the only official institute of this kind outside the capital Beijing, which regulated book

³⁶ K. T. Wu, "Chinese Printing under Four Alien Dynasties," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 13 (1950): 454-5.

³⁷ Western scholars have discussed the extensive influence of commercial printing in the Renaissance period. Elizabeth Eisenstein particularly refers to the Renaissance in terms of a two-phase cultural movement. If the Renaissance was initiated by Italian literati and artists in the first phase, known as the "age of script", it is in the second phase, the "age of print", that the printing press promoted the spread of new cultures and styles to more regions and professional fields in Europe. This idea, though still open to discussion, makes a certain amount of sense when understanding the development of Song-Jin culture. The flourishing printing industry of the twelfth century really prompted the extensive impact of popular culture and made its influence penetrate every stratum of society. See Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 143. This is a simplified version of her two-volume book, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

Following her idea of a printing revolution, there are two major types of models for discussing the revolution of book culture. The dissemination model focuses on the multiplication of texts and presses as new means of communication and acculturation. The constructive model treats publishing as a group practice for negotiation, conventions, and controversies to build a book culture. See Sabrina A. Baron eds. *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007). These discussions of printing and Renaissance culture are helpful for understanding Pingyang's printing industry and its significant role during the Song-Yuan cultural transition.

³⁸ Rather than directly colonizing the land of the Chinese people, the Mongols appointed a surrendered Jin official, Li Shouxian 李守賢 (ca. 1200s-1230s), who was Han Chinese, to be the governor of southern Shanxi. Meanwhile, many Shanxi literati, who had fled south to Kaifeng, returned to Pingyang after the demise of the Jin regime. The participation of these literati in local cultural and social affairs helped to preserve traditional culture and boost publication of classical, practical, and fictional books in Pingyang.

Additionally, southern Shanxi was probably one of the regions that had the most literati sojourning and residing during the Jin period. Many officials also traveled between the Jin capitals and Pingyang and thus helped to spread local culture to other regions. Tian Tongxu 田同旭, "Lun Yuan zaju sida huodong zhongxin de xingcheng yu Jin Yuan hanren shihou zhi guanxi 論元雜劇四大活動中心的形成與金元漢人世侯之關係," *Nanjing shifan daxue xuebao* 南京師範大學學報 no.3 (2003), 29-31; *Yuanshi*, 150: 1602-4.

publication and administrated the public and private printing industries.³⁹ Pingyang maintained its status as a significant official and commercial publishing center until the Mongol Empire conquered South China in 1279.

Some textual records indicate a significant role for commercial publishers and print shops in Pingyang's print culture. Because of the large scale of local book industry, both the Jurchen and Mongol governments had to recruit local literati and merchants to process the administrative issues involved in this sector's activities.⁴⁰ These publishers

³⁹ *Yuanshi*, 2: 13a.

⁴⁰ In the late Jin dynasty, around 1200, the Jurchen court set up an official administration to regulate local publishing affairs. Since this institute was not officially recorded, its specific name is unknown. Yet based on private notes of Jin and Yuan literati, some scholars speculate that its name related to *Pingshui shuji* (Books of Pingshui 平水書籍). Interestingly, Wang Wenyu 王文郁 (ca. 1200s-1230s), the only known administrator of this institute, was also a publisher who owned his own print shop and published books for commercial purposes. He associated with Jin scholar officials of high rank and invited them to write prefaces for his books. For instance, Xu Gu 許古 (1156-1230), a former Censor-in-Chief of the Jin court, wrote a preface for Wang's book *Brief Introduction to Rhymes, Newly Published in Pingshui* (*Pingshui xinkan yunlue* 平水新刊韻略, printed in 1229). Qi and Li 2004, 42.

Rather than an institutionalized bureaucratic office with absolute administrative power over local affairs, the Bureau of Sutras and Books of the Mongol period was most likely a temporary administrative committee that coordinated local publishers and directed official and commercial publishing. In addition to officials serving the Mongol court, influential local literati also participated in its administration, such as Ma Ge 麻革 (after 1184-before 1161) and Cao Zhiqian 曹之謙 (after 1194-1265), who were members of the famous "Elderly Gentlemen of the He and Fen Region 河汾諸老". For the introduction of these scholars, see Liu Dake 劉達科, *Jiedu hefen zhulao* 解讀河汾諸老 (Beijing: Zuoja chubanshe, 1993), 3-12. Peter Bol's article is also a good resource for understanding literati thought during the Jin; see his "Seeking Common Ground: Han Literati under Jurchen Rule," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 47 (1987): 461-538.

As Qi Feng proposed, the official history the Yuan probably deliberately omitted names of these famous literati, who once served at the Jin court, when recording the event of the founding the Bureau of Sutras and Books in Pingyang. These literati were traditionally known as leftover scholar-officials of the Jurchen regime who declined the service request of the Mongol court. But a tomb inscription, which was written by Wang Yun 王恽 (1228-1304) for a Xiangling 襄陵 scholar official, Zhang Zhu 張著 (1226-1292), records that these two literati were actually involved in the daily administrative affairs of this bureau in 1238. See *QJXSDQJ*, *juan* 60, 602. Considering that these former Jin literati had officially declined service calls of the Mongol court, the semi-official status of their jobs and the importance of preserving Confucian culture should have been important reasons for them to take the offer. When Zhang Cunhui published his *Materia Medica* in 1249, he particularly invited Ma Ge to write a preface. As the official in charge of local printing, Ma not only praised Zhang's efforts to preserve knowledge, but also recommended that local families with elderly members and children keep a copy of this illustrated book for medical reference. Tang Shenwei 唐慎微, *Chongxiu Zhenghe jingshi zhelei beiyong bencao* (1249 Pingyang reprint of a 1116 version) (Beijing: Renmin weisheng chubanshe, 1957), 2ab.

Given the frequent association between local book publishers and literati scholars, commercial publishing houses had good relationships with these "officials" who were in charge of their business.

enthusiastically tried to preserve local knowledge and traditions, especially during the social chaos of the Jin and Yuan transition. It has been learned from the prefaces of some Pingyang reprinted books, such as the *Illustrated and Collated New Book of Earth Patterns* (*Tujie jiaozheng dili xinshu* 圖解校正地理新書, reprinted in 1192, hereafter the *Earth Patterns*) and the *Revised Materia Medica of the Zhenghe Era, Classified and Verified from the Classics and Histories* (*Chongxiu Zhenghe jingshi zhenglei beiyong bencao* 重修政和經史證類備用本草, reprinted 1249, hereafter *Materia Medica*), that many local publishers and literati re-collected books from Song public or private collections that had been scattered and reprinted them with additional collations and annotations. In the process of compiling and reprinting, they evaluated their editions and selected the valuable ones, sorting out mistakes and imprecisions. They also cared about the credibility and quality of the sources of both texts and pictures. Their evaluations and selections helped to preserve Chinese cultural traditions and publicize useful knowledge. Even in the last fifteen years of the Jin regime, Pingyang publishers still sustained their production after moving to Pingshui, as proven by two surviving books produced by a Pingshui print shop.⁴¹ Their effort to maintain cultural and social traditions thus can be regarded as a cultural project to disseminate this region's influence.⁴² It also met the

Therefore, both the dual identity of a Jin official and the temporary, committee-like Mongol institution in charge of local printing affairs reflect the strong influence of Pingyang's commercial publishers in the first half of the thirteenth century.

⁴¹ This publishing house, which belonged to Wang Wenyu, reprinted in 1228 the Song book *Treasured Text of Ethics* (*Daode baozhang* 道德寶章) and published the above-mentioned *Brief Introduction to Rhymes* in 1229. *Ibid.*, 40.

⁴² When Pingyang's publishers promoted traditional culture by reprinting or publishing important books, they spread this region's traditions and fashions elsewhere. The *Brief Introduction to Rhymes* is a case in point. This book had an important role in regulating the creation of lyrics and poetry. It actually propagated a rhyme system that included many local sounds as the new standard for pronunciation. Its

cultural and entertainment needs of local people, especially when the thriving publishing industry allowed more affluent families to have their own practical or fictional books.

Commercial Publishers and Printed Illustrations

A major contribution of Pingyang's commercial publishers was their effort to develop a market demand for illustrated books and to promote public appreciation of popular prints. When non-religious printing began to flourish, the practice of inserting a picture or a chart on a page had become increasingly prevalent in the Northern Song.⁴³ Printers of the time had employed the format of *shangtuxiawen* 上圖下文, or "picture above, text below," commonly used in illustrated Buddhist texts since the Tang, in the printing of classical and practical books.⁴⁴ Pingyang publishers inherited printing traditions and techniques from Kaifeng, including awareness of the importance of book illustrations for clarifying texts and instructing readers. Historical records and surviving books have suggested that Pingyang publishers applied illustrations to Confucian classics and Buddhist canons, as well as to a variety of popular books, including encyclopedic and medical works.⁴⁵ It seems that they had perceived the market advantage of printing

publication could be regarded as a project to promote this region's book culture and increase its influence within the literature and theater cultures of the time.

⁴³ During the eleventh century, printed classics and encyclopedias frequently had illustrations, including charts, diagrams, and images, to record facts, define things, and explain ideas. Meanwhile, paper pictures of religious icons, talismans, and famous individuals were also mass-produced and sold in the marketplace. See Chia 2002, 52-61; Hegel 1998, 168-172.

⁴⁴ Chia 2002, 40.

⁴⁵ In the *Annotations to the Venerated Book* (*Shangshu zhushu* 尚書注疏), for instance, some nineteen new illustrations were specially made when this book was reprinted (Figure 1.9). Chen and Ma 2000, vol. 3, 38.

illustrated books. For both the literati and modestly educated readers, printed illustrations were efficient ways of explaining things and supplementing reading.

Yet even more notable is the increasing recognition of illustration as a means through which local readers could obtain authoritative knowledge and satisfy their fascination with nature. Some publishers aimed very directly at making book illustrations as precise and lifelike as possible. In the preface to the *Materia Medica*, the publisher Zhang Cunhui 張存惠 (fl. 1240s) asserted that his new edition featured “authentic” images (Figure 1.10). If an illustration was identified as a later addition or as incorrect, it would be corrected or remade according to authoritative knowledge, or at least to what the publisher himself had seen.⁴⁶ In his preface, Zhang particularly emphasized the addition of illustrations of three types of bamboo and two ways of making salt, which had been omitted from previous editions.⁴⁷ The practice of re-making illustrations was a critical procedure for improving the scholarly and artistic quality of Pingshui imprints.⁴⁸

Some books, such as medical manuals and household encyclopedias, clearly needed illustrations to introduce concepts and species. Yet Pingyang publishers sometimes “excessively” illustrated their books. This practice was unprecedented in earlier books, though it became popular after the Yuan dynasty, as noted by Lucille Chia, who asserts that commercial publishers of the Ming often used supplementary

⁴⁶ *Materia Medica*, 1.

⁴⁷ Since the publisher and his printmakers were directly familiar with the production of lake salt from Xiezhou 解州, a sub-prefecture not far away from Pingyang, much detail could be provided on its production. The publisher was proud of this local natural resource and claimed that Xie salt 解鹽 was ranked the best among some twenty types of salts from different sources.

⁴⁸ The three salt-making prints in the *Materia Medica*, which all are marked with the name of their carver, Jiang Yi 姜一, provides a rare example of a block carver identifying himself on each folio (“平陽府姜一刊” or similar phrases). If this practice had something to do with quality control of block carving, it should prove that Pingyang publishers cared about the quality and authenticity of their book illustrations.

illustrations to make books more attractive and entertaining, thus attracting more buyers.⁴⁹ This may account for the choice of Pingyang publishers to cultivate a public preference for printed pictures, assuming that more individuals and households in this region would prefer to collect and read locally-published popular prints and illustrated books, and thus developed a distinctive book culture.

In the *Materia Medica*, for instance, one illustration distinguishes itself from others. with its subject, a cormorant (Luzi 鸕鶿), displayed in a landscape background (Figure 1.11). When the text introduces this species, it discusses the use of its excrement in particular.⁵⁰ Had he been following the format of text and illustrations in previous chapters, the printmaker would have had no need to render anything except the bird itself. But he depicted the cormorant resting on a riverbank, with feces at its side, and used refined lines to delineate the contours of the riverbank and water waves. The picture thus became a well-rendered outdoor scene rather than just a basic illustration of a particular species and its medicinal use. Obviously, this print represents a new trend in book illustration, which meant to satisfy readers' interest in nature with naturalistic scenery and to amuse them with the pleasures of vivid pictures.

The pursuits of vivid details and naturalistic settings, along with improved mastery of refined line, enhanced the readability of printed pictures. Again in the *Materia Medica*, Pingyang printmakers vividly designed woodblock illustrations of the different

⁴⁹ In her study on Ming imprints, Lucille Chia notices that many illustrated books, such as manuals and school primers, had unnecessary diagrams and tables linked to the text of neighboring registers. She speculates that these illustrations had been looked at as often as the text had been read, noting that sometimes an image can relax the reader's eye from the crowded black text underneath. Chia 2002, 53-57.

⁵⁰ *Materia Medica*, 404b. Although most of the illustrations in this book have their plant or animal subjects illustrated against a blank background, these few exceptions indicate that local artisans had experimented with ways to make the viewing experience more naturalistic and authentic.

procedures for salt making in three full-folio pictures.⁵¹ The picture marked No.1 depicts the making of sea salt, while another, No. 11, shows the making of lake salt (Figures 1.12 and 1.13). The artisan vividly illustrates every procedure, from workers putting lake water into evaporating pools, to collecting the crystallized salt, and moving it to storage. It is apparent from these detailed illustrations that Pingyang artisans had the requisite advanced skills for rendering expository illustrations in an appropriately artistic manner. To some extent, their accomplishments were not rivaled until the mid-Ming, when Chinese woodblock printing reached its apex.⁵²

And yet, the third print, No.12, which shows the distribution of Xie salt, is really an “extra” illustration in this medical book (Figure 1.14). While it is reasonable to illustrate the making of salt as an introduction to the characteristics of this material, there is no additional need to illustrate the processes of collecting and distributing it. In contrast to the other two images, this supplementary picture has even more figures and details displayed counterclockwise within the frame of the full folio. These activities encompass the processes of salt piling, storing, packing, and weighing, as well as its final sale to dealers and transportation to other places.

More noteworthy are the numerous, vividly detailed figural interactions in this print. For instance, the figures around the desk on the right are rendered with distinctly different appearances: the bureaucratic official, the waiting dealers, and the distracted

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 104b and 105ab. Judging from Zhang Cunhui’s introduction in the preface and the non-sequential numbers on these prints, it seems that this publisher borrowed these illustrations from another book.

⁵² When the 1249 version of *Materia Medica* was reprinted by other publishers in the late Yuan, printmakers significantly simplified these illustrations of salt-making, turning to basic diagrams with inferior aesthetic quality. Two bookstores reprinted this book in the middle of the fourteenth century, but their illustrations are not comparable in artistic quality to their source, the 1249 version from Pingyang. Some of their illustrations are collected in Chen and Ma 2000, vol. 4, 108-110 and 128.

attending staff. We can recognize their different attitudes because their facial expressions are so carefully rendered. Among the figures on the left side of the image, an overbearing supervisor is commanding a worker to add more salt into his basket. This worker seems to have an unhappy face in contrast to the relaxed appearance of two nearby resting workers who are drinking from tea bowls. The designer of this print purposefully inserted sub-narratives: at the upper right, a groom is trying to restrain a variegated donkey with a stick, while another worker prepares to load a big salt bag on its back. Meanwhile, a black donkey, on which a bag has already been loaded, is quietly waiting on the side. The print captures a new liveliness that echoes the dramatic performance of Jin theater.

Given the location of the salt industry at Xiezhou, which was tens of miles away from Pingyang, the designers and carvers of these prints must have witnessed the processes of salt-making themselves and could therefore achieve a high level of precision in illustrating its production. Confident in their ability to illustrate familiar things, these artisans designed a composition that was easy for the viewer to follow. They also showed their interest in daily life activities and incidents, as well as an excellent ability to render detail and nuance. The vivid appearance of various figures and skillful depiction of their different activities dramatically increases the readability of the picture.⁵³ The masses, for whom an anecdotal visual description of this production process would be of interest,

⁵³ Considering that prints from different shops shared some of the same features, one may speculate on the formation of a Pingyang style in printed illustration. One important piece of evidence for such a possibility is that Pingyang's print shops did not exclusively "own" certain printmakers. Instead, they could invite or borrow them from other shops based on project needs. Names of at least five carvers of the *Shangshu zhushu*, for instance, also are shown in the *Materia Medica* of the Zhang family. Chen and Ma 2000, vol.3, 38.

In this process of cooperation and exchange, the master printmaker could influence other artisans and their apprentices with their advanced printing skills and interest in rendering detail. The relative freedom of this cooperation and exchange was crucial for the development of a Pingyang style and formation of a regional print culture.

could thus satisfy their curiosity. If such enhanced skills in rendering details and composing plots could help Pingyang prints become beloved by more viewers, these enhanced narrative illustrations could further stimulate a public predilection for printed illustrations.

Aside from illustrations in books of learning and of practical use, Pingyang's print shops also made religious prints for devotional activities and liturgical use.⁵⁴ One such print, *The Throne of Prince Guan*, which was found together with *Four Beauties* in the same Karakhoto stupa, shares similar characteristics with the above-mentioned book illustrations. This print measures 60 x 31cm and displays the trademark—"Pingyang Xujia yin 平陽徐家印 (Printed by the Xu Family of Pingyang)" —at the upper right corner.⁵⁵ It depicts Guan Yu 關羽 and his attendants at rest under a pine tree (Figure 1.15). Historically a famous general of the Shu Kingdom (221-263), Guan was worshiped as the God of War in Imperial China because of his bravery and loyalty. A banner at the top reads "Yiyong wuanwang wei 義勇武安王位 (The Throne of Prince of Loyalty and Valor)," an imperial title granted by Emperor Huizong in 1123. This title indicates that this print was used as an iconic image for popular religious worship.

Yet this print differs from earlier religious prints, which often simply represented a seated god in a niche with text marking its identity. This piece instead vividly presents a scene filled with legendary figures, auspicious clouds, framing pine, patterned garments,

⁵⁴ On the one hand, these printed images of religious icons and talismans had ritual functions. Used as a means of appealing for good fortune or warding off demons, these pictures were posted on walls or doors in private houses or public spaces. But on the other hand, they were also auspicious decorations and holiday displays in households wishing to attract happiness and blessings.

⁵⁵ Wang 2002, 90-91.

and a fluttering banner.⁵⁶ It was not merely a religious icon, but was also meant to be appreciated for its decorative character.⁵⁷ Similar to the illustration of salt production, this print features elaborate detail and improved readability. Through skillful rendering of facial expression, it vividly conveys Guan's widespread charismatic appeal. In fact, Guan is a deity who, though derived from history, was sanctioned by emperors and popularized by fiction and drama. In the process, he became the personification of loyalty and bravery.⁵⁸ Clearly, it was considered necessary that Guan's appearance and character meet the anticipation of viewers who had read or listened to accounts of him in historical tales and fiction. The different appearances and subtle facial expressions of supporting figures convey their distinct personas too, such as Guan Ping's 關平 wisdom and Zhou

⁵⁶ In this print, Guan is sitting in a folding, movable chair; his imposing appearance conveys both physical strength and firmness of mind. On the left, Guan Ping, carries his father's official seal and turns his face to Guan. On the right, the Deputy General, Zhou Cang, carries Guan's weapon, a long-handled, bronze broadsword. A guard stands firmly in the middle, holding a flag showing the character "Guan." In the foreground stand two figures that have their legs wrapped with cloth strips for a long march. The messenger on the left carries a signal flag in his right hand and lifts his left hand, as if waiting to report something. The guard on the right carries a shield on his back and holds a long-handled sword in his hand.

⁵⁷ It is worth noting two religious pictures that suggest possible Pingyang styles of pictorial representation in print design. They differ from earlier Buddhist prints that feature stereotypical styles and compositions, though both have less theatrical effects than the print of Guan Yu.

One is a drawing from the same site in Karakhoto as the Guan Yu print and was probably made as a pictorial model for woodblock carvers (Figure 1.17). This piece measures 45 by 20.3cm and depicts a gentleman, who is believed to be the God of Great Fortune, in a garden setting. Seated in front of a pine tree, he is surrounded by symbols of good fortune and wealth. His appearance, especially his large ear and a robe decorated with patterns of circled dragons, suggest noble status. On the ground are eight precious things, including pearls, a coral tree, strings of coins, gold and silver, shells, etc. Beside him is a goat with the fungus of immortality in its mouth, which also signifies good fortune. All these signs and symbols of affluence and honor were thought to give this print power to bring good fortune to its viewers. Maria Rudova ed., *Chinese Popular Prints* (Leningrad: Aurora Art Publishers, 1988), 6-7.

The other picture is the frontispiece of the Zhaocheng Tripitaka scrolls and it depicts a Buddhist teaching scene (Figure 1.16). Seated on a throne under a tree, the Buddha is surrounded by his disciples. Precious objects, which symbolize the treasure and pleasures of the Buddha's land, are displayed on the ground, as in the above-mentioned drawing. These auspicious motifs and treasures would have been of interest to local worshippers as they unfolded these sutras for recitation.

⁵⁸ For more discussion of related fiction and drama about Guan Yu, see chapter two of Hong Shuling's 洪淑苓 book *Guangong minjian zhaoxing zhi yanjiu* 關公民間造型之研究 (Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 1995).

Cang's 周仓 valor. The printmaker even painstakingly depicted different species of grass in the foreground to show off his skill in rendering outdoor scenes, a skill obtained from years of experience of copying pictorial models. Through such details, this print has great power to draw the viewer's interests and help him recall the related historical story.

Another legendary figure, Dongfang Shuo 東方朔, is the subject of another large, Pingyang-style print of the twelfth century (Figure 1.18).⁵⁹ Dongfang, a minister of the Western Han period, was believed to be a demoted immortal because he stole the “peaches of longevity” thrice from the palace of the Queen Mother of the West.⁶⁰ Signed in the block with the spurious signature of the great Tang-period master painter, Wu Daozi (c. 680-759) (Wu Daozi bi 吳道子筆), this image served religious, entertainment, and decorative functions. It depicts the moment when Dongfang fled the heavenly palace, carrying the stolen peaches. In contrast to the indifferent expressions and self-restrained manner of other religious idols, the immortal Dongfang Shuo appears to be an elder full of wisdom and humor. While he is looking back to see if anyone is chasing him, his face expresses a pleasant, carefree attitude. It seems likely that such a vivid presentation of Dongfang evolved from the humorous performance of this popular tale by an actor, whose role was expected to provide crowd-pleasing dance steps and belly laughs during seasonal festivals or birthday celebrations.⁶¹ This level of detail in the image helped the

⁵⁹ This print measures 108.8 by 55.4 cm; it was originally sealed in a Confucian stele in Xi'an that was restored during the Dading reign (1160-1190) of the Jin. Sometimes famous names were attached to those popular prints; a phenomenon which suggests the public's favoring of legendary artists from ancient times. The multi-color technique, which enhances its decorative function, also suggests that the market demand at the time was not limited to prints with monochromatic linear depictions. Wang 2002, 81-82.

⁶⁰ Lu and Li 1990, 128-9.

⁶¹ This tale was converted into a variety of plays entitled “Offering Peaches of Longevity (Xianpantao 獻蟠桃)”, which were regularly performed in festival or birthday celebrations. For more

viewer relive the pleasing moments of the performance and experience its message of happiness and blessing.

Although these prints constitute only a tiny portion of the enormous quantity of prints that were once made in Pingyang, they still convince us that the mass production of popular prints and book illustrations made stories and dramas visually accessible. Guan Yu and Dongfang Shuo are both historical figures who were later turned into deities by folk tradition. Pingyang artists successfully illustrated them in pictures that catered to the tastes of contemporary secular viewers, who paid increasing attention to narrative details, characters' appearances, and elaborate settings. While these qualities were not new in Chinese pictorial arts, their assemblage within the art of the print seems to have been a distinctly Pingyang innovation. Vivid portrayal of characters and atmosphere not only convinced viewers that the illustrated scenes were really happening in front of them, but also paved the way for the extensive inclusion of illustrations in printed drama and fiction.

Printing Drama in Books

It was under the influence of local performing arts that a distinctive Pingyang style in print design and a great secular interest in viewing pictures with vivid narrative elements arose. And yet, Pingyang publishers themselves made a major innovation that changed the book culture and popular theater of the time. If printmaking prepared the necessary stylistic basis for illustrating fictional and dramatic stories, the mass-printing of drama scripts further changed local people's theatrical experience and propagated a

information, see Li Xiusheng 李修生 ed. *Guben xiqu jumu tiyao* 古本戲曲劇目提要 (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 1997), 144-5 and 166.

secular preference for theatrical imagery as a visual aid for appreciating plays, both in books and on stage.

The *zhugongdiao* medley play was a performing art form invented by a southern Shanxi native during the late Northern Song. After several decades of development, it had evolved from a simple set of ballads into a dramatic performance consisting of a suite of arias in a mixture of vernacular and classical languages. Jin people integrated this theatrical form into *zaju* performances, leading to the birth of Yuan drama.⁶² The *Medley Play of Liu Zhiyuan's Story*, an extant playbook with exceptional literary value, was discovered in the stupa where *Four Beauties* was stored (Figure 1.19). This play presents the historical tale of Liu Zhiyuan 劉知遠 (895-948), a poor peasant who later became the founding emperor of the Later Han (947-951). Given that Liu was a native of Taiyuan, Shanxi, his stories enjoyed great popularity in Pingyang. The publication of this script by a Pingyang print shop indicates the close connection between the local printing industry and this vernacular performing art. In other words, the printing and circulation of this playbook not only promoted the *zhugongdiao* genre that was welcome among local folk, but also developed a broader audience that included the literati elite beyond Pingyang.⁶³

⁶² The medley play was usually performed by a single singer with supporting musicians. In addition to prose portions that are supposed to be spoken, the play has verse portions, including a set of arias in fixed musical modes to be sung to various tunes. Favored by ordinary villagers and townspeople, its performance gradually developed into an extended form that incorporated dramatic elements into the singer's solo narrative. For more information about this performing art form, see Wilt Idema, "Performance and Construction of the Chu-Kung-Tiao," *Journal of Oriental Studies* vol. 16 no. 1/2 (1978): 63-78.

⁶³ In addition, the printing of histories of previous dynasties in vernacular language and fictional narrative was crucial for the birth of historical fiction and the dramatization of historical stories. For instance, the prevalence of tales about General Guan Yu partly resulted from the printing and widespread circulation of the *History of the Three Kingdoms* (Sanguozhi 三國誌) during the Song and Jin, which further contributed to the birth of many Yuan dramas about Guan Yu. Pingyang publishers probably printed this kind of historical book, as suggested by a surviving Jin-dynasty version of the *History of the Three Kingdoms*. See Chen and Ma 2000, vol.3, 53.

Another playbook in the *zhugongdiao* format, *Master Dong's Western Chamber Romance* (Dong xieyuan xixiang zhugongdiao 董解元諸宮調), is thought to have been printed in Pingyang by the early twelfth century too.⁶⁴ During the Mingchang 明昌 reign (1190-1208), this Pingyang scholar, whose full name is unknown, wrote this medley play from a Tang-dynasty short story based on a local tale from southern Shanxi.⁶⁵ The story took place at the Monastery of Universal Salvation (Pujiusi 普救寺) in Puzhou 蒲州 where a young gentleman, Student Zhang 張生, met Cui Yingying 崔鶯鶯, a beautiful girl who was taking refuge with her mother at this temple. Mainly helped by Yingying's maid, Hongniang 紅娘, and other friends, these two lovers finally married. The site became a famous tourist attraction in the Jin territory and many literati and officials visited this temple where they associated with friends and inscribed poems. A stele, which was carved in 1204 at the site of the former residence of Yingying within this temple, records the 1170 visit of a Jin official, Wang Zhongdong 王仲通 (active 1160-1180), and his friends to this monastery (Figure 1.20).

⁶⁴ Dong xieyuan (fl. 1190-1208). *Xixiangji zhugongdiao* (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1961). Although no original copy survives, the text of this play is preserved in later literary works. We only know that the author's surname is Dong and that he lived around 1200. As a prefectural graduate with honors, he was a literatus with an honorific title. For more information on this play and its playwright, please see Chen Li-li's *Master Tung's Western Chamber Romance* (A Translation) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); also see Wilt Idema, "Satire and Allegory in All Keys and Modes," in *China Under Jurchen Rule: Essays on Chin Intellectual and Cultural History*, eds. Hoyt C. Tillman and Stephen H. West (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 238-280.

⁶⁵ This play was developed from the Tang short story, *The Story of Yingying*, but is much more elaborate. For discussion of this story, see James R. Hightower, "Yuan Chen and 'The Story of Yingying,'" *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, no. 33 (1973): 90-123.

The famous Yuan playwright, Wang Shifu 王實甫 (ca. 1250-1307), further elaborated this *zhugongdiao* play into a *zaju* drama. A translation of this Yuan drama is provided by Stephen H. West and Wilt Idema in *The Moon and the Zither: The Story of the Western Wing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

The social and economic forces that supported the popularity of narrative and dramatic genres extended also to books and prints in Pingyang. Printing a drama is actually a distinctive form of publishing. Instead of performing the drama to a live audience, it was presented in written form to a reading public.⁶⁶ Innumerable local playwrights and publishers were the major parties involved in the process of transforming temporal performances into printed text.⁶⁷ To some extent, these professionals acted as agents for cultural communication between the masses and the elite. Commercial publishers adapted local ballads and vernacular plays and converted them into readable texts for a reading public. When theater-going increased along with book-reading, playwrights were encouraged to create more plays, which were then further documented and printed by publishers as books. In addition, these printed plays obtained a wider circulation beyond local audiences. The participation of educated playwrights in adapting narrative and dramatic performances further improved their theatrical and literary quality and contributed to their popularity among various secular audiences. Through both the performance and the illustrated scripts of these plays, more social elite were able to enjoy vernacular entertainment.

How did the printing of these popular plays and narratives impact public theatrical experience in Pingyang? Printed playbooks not only had a profound impact on the way readers thought about live performance, they also affected the way readers imagined the

⁶⁶ Julie S. Peters's discussion of the printing of play texts in the fifteenth century is very helpful for understanding the relationship between printing and early theater. See Julie Peters, *Theater of the Book 1480-1880: Print, Text, and Performance in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 14-40.

⁶⁷ In addition to innumerable drama troupes and actors, many playwrights also were born or lived in this thriving theater center. Based on my statistics, the *Register of Ghosts* (Luguibu 錄鬼簿), which introduces renowned playwrights of the Mongol and Yuan periods, records at least eight playwrights of Pingyang origin: six were born or lived in Pingyang (including one from Jiangzhou) during the early Yuan (*juan* 1); and two during the late Yuan (*juan* 2).

spectacle from the text. Readers became used to reading playbooks in which dialogues and songs were written down and the mood conveyed was codified in musical tunes. The plots were extended and organized via different song suites and monologues that were assigned to actors in various roles. With the help of instructions provided in these printed drama scripts, readers would have clearer ideas about characters, scenes, and activities on stage, which further helped them imagine the full-length play.⁶⁸ Thus, these books were actually theater-in-print, allowing their readers to experience the performance in a unique way with understanding and involvement comparable to that of a real performance. Furthermore, these printed plays not only served as documentation of performances, but were books of pleasure as well. They could be used as promptbooks by theatergoers or as entertaining leisure reading. Thus, their dissemination spurred public interest in vernacular narrative and dramatic genres, and eventually constituted a new means for experiencing popular theater.

Ultimately, the enhanced experience of reading scripts and the emotional involvement of the reader with the play called for better visual aids in books of *zhugongdiao* plays and *zaju* dramas. Presumably, some readers were theater-lovers who were accustomed to seeing staged plays, to inspecting the makeup and appearance of the actors, and to feeling the emotional nuances of the characters. In addition, if a performance could turn the past event into a performed present, a book of the drama should help the reader turn the recorded performance into a living presence. But how

⁶⁸ The early editions of *zhugongdiao* playbooks, such as the *Medley Story of Liu Zhiyuan*, did not clearly mark the place where the actors were supposed to speak or the moods they should present, yet it opened a new tradition in print culture by making annotations to role types and song melodies. Later editions of playbooks printed in Beijing and Hangzhou during the Yuan dynasty clearly recorded information regarding actions and moods, music modes, and the stage setting.

could artisans make this transition in printed books? Pingyang's evidence suggests that they managed to employ narrative pictures to serve the image-hungry readers/theater-lovers. They particularly pursued elaborate details and naturalistic settings to create animated effects, simulating the vivid atmosphere of a live performance. But I must admit that this line of argument is still speculation that needs further evidence. What we know now is only the tip of the iceberg since most of the printed illustrations of fiction and drama have been lost in the passage of time. Nevertheless, visual evidence in some durable mediums, such as bronze mirrors and ceramic pillows, still showcases the visual culture of theater of that time and enables modern scholars to examine the scope and popularity of its visual dimensions.

In sum, Pingyang is the very place that not only witnessed the swift integration of love of performance with love of imagery, but also stimulated a need for narrative pictures by initiating the printing of drama scripts. The *Four Beauties* reflects a new visual tradition of experiencing narrative and dramatic genres through pictures in direct consequence of a thriving entertainment culture and a secular incentive for printed illustration. The printing of the *zhugongdiao* plays signifies the new extent to which printing and theater were integrated in Pingyang. However, due to the technical limitations of woodblock carving, we do need to admit that it was difficult to present all the facial nuances and dramatic atmosphere of stage performances in woodblock prints. Thus, the next section turns to paintings, particularly silk scrolls that provide a suitable medium for easy application of ink strokes and tones to pursue more sophisticated visual effects, to further illustrate the development of image-making in Pingyang under the influence of the performing arts.

Sima Yu's Dream of Su Xiaoxiao: Experiencing Theater in Painting

If Pingyang's print culture prepared the way for the rise of theatrical images by propelling a secular preference for narrative illustration and initiating the genre of printed playbooks, its flourishing theater culture further contributed to the rise in popularity of theatrical images by encouraging their creation and expanding interest in them to new audiences. To better understand the close relation between theater and pictorial art, one can examine some Chinese terms describing stage performance. When introducing the history of Chinese storytelling, for instance, Chen Ruheng insightfully observed that some Chinese terms connect the experience of viewing pictures with that of viewing performance.⁶⁹ The phrase “yazhouxi 壓軸戲,” for instance, describes the final play in a theater as a scene at the end of a scroll, implying its superior quality or significance. Similarly, “lianzhouxi 連軸戲” refers to a set of plays in series as a succession of scrolls. The rhetoric associated with these terms suggests that such connections probably came from picture recitation and other theatrical activities of the Tang. On these occasions, a storyteller unrolled scrolls to display spectacles before the audience, while he recited the associated stories. In addition, some terms in fiction, which were adopted from earlier texts of picture recitation, refer to a reader as a spectator (kanguan 看官). Based on this observation, Victor Mair suggests that storytelling was actually a narrative complex, including both narration and display of images, with the audience looking at the picture while listening to the story recitation. Given that these two different experiences

⁶⁹ Chen Ruheng 陳汝衡, *Songdai shuoshu shi* 宋代說書史 (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1979), 14.

sometimes were referred to as being the same, it seems that they were of equal importance to the audience.⁷⁰

Mair also discusses the relationship between performing arts and the rise of theatrical illustrations. He notices that about ten percent of Ming and Qing strum lyrics had titles with the character *xiang* 相, or “picture”, such as the *Recitation of the Picture on the Affinities of Ten Beauties, Augmented with Illustration* (Zengxiang shimeiyuan tuyong 增相十美緣圖咏). If these titles suggest a predilection for pictures in popular narrative and dramatic genres, as he argues, there must be some deep reason for it, one which he says links to “an old tradition of picture recitation that goes back through expository tales to the oral antecedents of transformation texts.”⁷¹ Mair further speculates on the possible evolution from Buddhist picture-recitation, to shadow and puppet plays, and then onto performance by human actors.⁷² During this process in the Tang and early Song periods, increasing interest in animated pictures led to public attention to live drama, and, in turn, the popularity of theatrical performances resulted in increasing interest in pictures.

If this is so, one should not ignore the significant development of theater that occurred in the late Northern Song and Jin periods, in regard to stage architecture, performance format, and actor roles. These developments remind us to ask these questions: Did the evolution of drama contribute to new styles and forms of illustrations of plays or stories? How would the theatrical experience of a painter affect his artistic

⁷⁰ Mair 1989, 37.

⁷¹ Mair 1988, 13.

⁷² Ibid, 10-16.

creation of illustrations of drama and that of a spectator affect his viewing of theatrical images?

A visual analysis of *Sima Yu's Dream of Su Xiaoxiao*, which combines a romantic theatrical subject with innovative pictorial styles, allows us to consider these questions. Painted in a traditional scroll format by a Pingyang native, Liu Yuan, it exemplifies the accomplishments of Pingyang artists in creating narrative paintings under the influence of local theater culture.⁷³ It depicts the moment in a ghost story in which the spirit of Su Xiaoxiao 蘇小小, a legendary Southern Qi (479-502) courtesan, meets Sima Yu 司馬樵 (late 11th cen.), nephew of the famous Northern Song literati official Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086). According to this story, the young scholar, Sima Yu, dreamed of the spirit of Su Xiaoxiao while he was taking an afternoon nap in his residence in Luoyang. In his dream, Su sang the first stanza of a lyric song and told Sima that they would meet again in Hangzhou, where her body was buried. Later, Sima passed a special examination and obtained his official position in Hangzhou. However, he soon died in a strange accident on the Qiantang River where someone saw him boarding a boat with a mysterious, beautiful lady.⁷⁴

In order to depict the mysterious encounter in Sima's dream, Liu Yuan invested much effort in rendering vivid details and used an innovative spatial composition. A text version of this story says that a beautiful girl wearing clothes in the old style came in through a curtain and sang a song to Sima, who was taking his afternoon nap. Departing

⁷³ Avril 1997, 59-60.

⁷⁴ This story was recorded in several miscellaneous notes of Song literati, such as the famous scholar officials Zhang Lei 張耒 (1054-1114) and He Wei 何薳 (1077-1145). For the text, see *Anthology of Zhang Lei* (Zhanglei ji 張耒集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998), 814; and He Wei, *Hearsay at the Spring Sandbank* (Chunzhu jiwen 春渚紀聞) (Beijing, Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 102.

from what was recorded in the text, Liu moved Sima and his attendant from the studio interior to the edge of an open veranda for better viewing. The two protagonists, Sima and Su, who are from the separate realms of the living and the dead, are placed close to one another, as if they were actors giving a performance on the same stage. The painter also freely applied his imagination to render the appearance of Su. As noted by Susan Bush, Liu Yuan delicately delineated Su's appearance to render an atmosphere full of poignancy. Hunched forward with a sleeve covering her mouth, Su's face expresses grief at the passing of time and the transience of beauty.⁷⁵ The dim light, heavy mist, and sudden breeze also make the viewer feel the kind of chill that would not have occurred in the "afternoon setting" of the original story. The moment is frozen, as Su is lifting the clappers that she carries and is beginning to lure Sima with her song. The pictorial atmosphere closely echoes the tune of Su's lyric "Golden Threads (Huangjin lü 黃金縷)," in which this lovely, but lonely lady yearned for her lover.

I used to live by the Qiantang River,
 Flowers fall, flowers bloom,
 Without regard for the passing of years.
 The swallows are taking with them the colors of spring,
 At the gauze window- how many bouts of yellow plum rain?

妾本錢塘江上住，
 花落花開，
 不管流年度。
 燕子銜將春色去，
 紗窗幾陣黃梅雨。

Soon after he woke up, Sima completed the second stanza of Su's lyric to the tune of *Dieliehua* 蝶戀花 (Butterflies love flowers):

The horn comb is set at an angle in her hair, which is so like half-rising clouds,

⁷⁵ Bush 1995, 197.

Lightly marking time with her sandalwood clapper,
 She pours her soul into the song of “Golden Threads.”
 The dream ends, colored clouds are nowhere to be found,
 In the coolness of the night, the moon rises on the spring riverbank.

斜插犀梳云半吐，
 檀板轻敲，
 唱彻黄金缕。
 梦里彩云无觅处，
 夜凉明月生南浦。⁷⁶

Indeed, this painting showcases the possible contributions of Pingyang’s theater culture to improvements in dramatic narrative and the emotional power of pictorial art during the Jin period.⁷⁷ In particular, the close-up format was lacking in earlier Chinese narrative paintings, whereas this method was skillfully applied by Liu Yuan to enhance the dramatic quality of his chosen scene. The nature of several important factors involved in this artistic development deserve further study in relation to the development of theater culture in this region during the Jin period.

First of all, performance stages significantly evolved in Jin-dynasty Shanxi, as demonstrated by miniature stages from the Jishan and Macun tombs.⁷⁸ The evolution of permanent theaters from open stages to walled ones with frontal viewing encouraged

⁷⁶ The translation of the lyrics follows the Cincinnati Museum catalogue, see Avril 1997, 59-60; also see Li Wai-yee, “Dream Visions of Transcendence in Chinese Literature and Painting,” *Asian Art* no. 4 (1990): 71-72. According to Zhang Lei’s record, Su Xiaoxiao wrote the first stanza of this song and Simu Yu completed the second one. But He Yuan wrote in his *Chunzhu jiwen* that the song was initiated by Su Xiaoxiao and completed by Simu Yu’s friend, Qin Gou 秦觀. Personally, I think that Zhang Lei’s record is more reliable. It is more likely that Simu Yu himself wrote all of the lyrics, considering that Su’s character was a spirit.

⁷⁷ It is worthwhile to note that Wu Hung once differentiated episodic representations from iconic ones in his study of Han pictorial arts. He asserts that the self-contained, asymmetrical, episodic mode represents an indigenous narrative tradition that lacks power to engage the viewer. The introduction of Buddhist imagery affected Chinese pictorial arts during the second century through promoting the frontal, iconic mode that had more capacity to involve viewers than did the episodic ones. Wu Hung, *The Wuliang Shrine* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1989), 132-40.

⁷⁸ Chapter Four will return to the development of Song, Jin, and Yuan stages.

spectators to view from a single direction rather than from multiple directions. In other words, this architectural evolution indicates a gradual transition of the audience's viewing experience from de-centered, multiple scenes towards centralized, framed scenes—even though sometimes multiple plays still coexisted on stage.⁷⁹ Could this new manner of presenting plays have affected contemporary painters' view of how to render the pictorial narrative of a story?

Although this issue has not been studied by Chinese art historians, some western scholars have explored possible interactions between the evolution of dramatic illustrations and the new architectural norms for theatrical space. For instance, Julie Peters argues that some of the manuals used by stage designers and theater-builders recorded new architectural norms that influenced painters in Renaissance Europe. The idea of controlling the audience's attention can be observed in some architects' designs for new stages. Following these strategies, European painters used a framed, unified perspective to encourage spectators to focus their eyes on particular parts of their paintings.⁸⁰

However, Chinese painters did not fully develop this kind of scientific perspective in their work to focus viewers' attention on a central event or major characters within a framed space. Instead, they applied another solution, the close-up mode, to attract viewers' gazes and engage them in the dramatic narrative. An antecedent of close-up depiction in narrative painting is *Han Xizai's Night Revels* 韓熙載夜宴圖 (Figure 1.21). This handscroll purportedly records what the painter witnessed in Han's nightlife as a

⁷⁹ Jing Lihu 景李虎, *Song Jin zaju gailun* 宋金雜劇概論 (Guangzhou: Guangdong gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 1996), 207-212.

⁸⁰ Peters 2000, 185-194.

detailed visual report to the emperor of the Southern Tang (937-978), who was suspicious of this official's loyalty and capability. In the middle section of this scroll is a depiction of musical entertainment activities in which Han and his guest are listening to a lute solo. The viewer is like an observer standing at a certain distance, witnessing every detail but staying out of the characters' world, hardly involved in their musical entertainment. Unlike this scene, Liu's painting enables an intimate observation and emotional involvement of viewers. The viewer is deeply touched by the atmosphere Liu creates, especially from the mood depicted on the face of the female protagonist, Su Xiaoxiao, who is singing on stage. Everyone, including the play audience and the painting viewer, is looking at her, with the exception of the sleeping Sima and his attendant.

Second, the performance of *zaju* developed considerably during the Jin dynasty. Actors invested more in presenting dramatic performances combining action, song, dance, and dialogue. With a greatly improved viewing experience, the audiences were more closely involved in the plots and the psychological state of the protagonists. Their imaginative freedom was improved as a result of the greater attention paid to actors' makeup, costumes, and facial expressions.⁸¹ It is reasonable to assume that the prototype for Su Xiaoxiao was probably an actress who once performed a song solo with her own musical instrument. Influenced by direct theatrical experience, Liu Yuan was able to imagine the vivid appearance and gesture of this mythical singer, Su Xiaoxiao, who was ready to sing to her lover with fully charged emotion. He successfully captured the facial

⁸¹ The clay figures and brick tiles in the Macun tombs provide vivid examples of make-up and costumes of these *zaju* actors. As seen in tomb no. 1, the cheeks of one of these figures were even painted with white and his lips with red to show his role as a clown. This detail also suggests that the audience cared about drama actors' facial expressions and appearances. The development of typical make-up for different roles probably reminded artists to pay attention to physiognomic and psychological details with subtle brushwork.

expression of this female protagonist and re-created a nostalgic moment from the dramatic performance in his painting.

If their own viewing experience of theater taught painters and artisans how to improve the depiction of emotional and narrative nuance, as well as how to create dramatic effects in their paintings, these small enhancements very likely led to a new trend in the pictorial art of the time. At least they had by then more stylistic and compositional choices to extend plots and construct dramatic effects. Furthermore, upon experiencing the emotion of a live performance artists quite naturally developed an impulse to render vivid representations of characters' motions and expressions in their paintings. In addition to depicting characters' inner worlds, they excelled in rendering atmosphere through elaborate settings.

Liu Yuan successfully applied a close-up mode in his painting, which provides more opportunity for detailed rendering of characters' faces and emotional nuance. In Renaissance religious paintings, the close-up mode was well-suited to the contemporary preoccupation with details of bodily appearance and emotional reaction.⁸² It enabled Renaissance artists to develop great skill in rendering physiognomic minutiae and psychological nuance in order to convince viewers of what they saw. This reminds us of the similar emotional penetration that can be observed in Liu's painting, though it has nothing to do with religious persuasion. Under the influence of contemporary theater and

⁸² Interestingly, this method had been developed on religious panel paintings around the same time when the scientific perspective was applied to manipulate perceived space in fifteenth-century Italy. Sixten Ringbom has pointed out that in Franco-Flemish paintings of Christian icons, such as scenes of *Pieta* and *Salvator Mundi*, artists had applied a close-up mode on half-length devotional pictures to shorten the distance between the viewer and the presented scene. The augmentation of facial details enhanced the representation of physiological nuance on the faces of Jesus and other characters. It also increased the intimacy of theatrical effects and enhanced the worshiper's emotional experience. Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-up in Fifteenth Century Devotional Painting* (Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers, 1984), 50-52.

literature, his painting departed stylistically from earlier Chinese figure paintings that put emphasis on copying the appearance of stereotypical models of spiritual resonance.⁸³ Liu also manipulated the perceived space to strengthen viewers' response to his work. Viewers could observe a well-designed representation of dramatic time and movement as Liu's scroll was unrolled from the right to left. The story is in progress while the moment is frozen in each image. This viewing process reinforced the contrast between the stillness of Sima's deep sleep and the movement of the billowing clouds and flying ribbons. Viewers could also feel the breeze, while noticing the quivering flame of the candle. By featuring a distinctive way of directing the act of seeing and imbuing it with exceptional emotional power, this handscroll painting represents a significant departure from previous conventional representation modes in narrative painting.

Third, viewer interest in themes of fantasy and romance, particularly the interaction between human and spirit worlds, encouraged Liu to render his ghost story as though it were a live performance taking place right before viewers' eyes. Susan Bush has observed that the theme of romantic love between singing girls and literati was well known in literature but rare in the art of the Northern Song period, considering that no comparable paintings survive from that time.⁸⁴ However, Jin-dynasty artists such as Liu Yuan transformed ghost love stories of this kind into vivid pictures of fantasy and

⁸³ It cannot be ignored that, conforming with the emotionalism expressed by Song and Jin literature in the form of poetry and lyrics, there was an increasing artistic capacity for satisfying the demand for emotionally charged subject matter through elaborate, naturalistic illustration as shown in literati paintings of birds and flowers.

Also, pictorial representation of females evolved greatly during the Northern Song. Lara Blanchard has pointed out that Song artists applied several modes to render the inner world of females such as facial expression and gesture, employment of musical instruments and intimate objects, as well as through inscription of poems and associated texts. See her conclusion in "Visualizing Love and Longing in Song Dynasty Paintings of Women," (Ph.D. Diss., University of Michigan, 2001), 262-5.

⁸⁴ Bush 1995, 197.

imagination. Although the scene is a silent moment, it is nevertheless an emotionally charged one. This intimate perspective allows the viewer to enter the scene, experiencing the everlasting poignancy and melancholy of this ephemeral encounter between human and ghost, reality and dream. A comparison can be made with *The Nymph of the Luo River* (Luoshenfu 洛神賦), a handscroll depicting Cao Zhi's 曹植 (192-232) encounter with a goddess who briefly appeared near the Luo River in Luoyang (Figure 1.22).⁸⁵ To memorialize his unconsummated passion for this mythical lover, Cao Zhi wrote a famous rhapsody around 231. Both stories are equally attractive, however, without taking text into consideration, the image of Sima's story has more capacity to touch the viewer's emotions and convey a sense of verisimilitude.

If they had considered the image-making of Pingyang as represented by Liu's scroll, some scholars would probably never have asserted that the Chinese were not interested in making storytelling pictures for pleasure.⁸⁶ Kohara Hironobu, for example, would probably have been more cautious about speculating that Chinese artisans did not

⁸⁵ Li Wai-yee was particularly interested in the role of this painting in initiating the pictorial tradition of depicting literary works of mythical encounters between spirit and human worlds. She compared it with Liu Yuan's painting in her discussion of dream motifs in Chinese painting and literature. See Li Wai-yee 1990, 65-72.

⁸⁶ It is notable that narrative pictures gradually developed in Japan during the Heian period (794-1185). One of the earliest Japanese picture scrolls (*emaki* 繪卷), *the Tale of Genji* (Genji monogatari 源氏物語), was painted around 1120, about a century after the novel upon which it was based.

The rise of the Japanese *emaki* resulted from several factors, such as the influence of Buddhist narrative art and traditional elite literature, etc. Here I only emphasize the influence of entertainment culture and performing arts. For more information on the history and art of Japanese *emaki*, see Mushakōji Minoru 武者小路穰, *Emaki no rekishi* 繪卷の歴史 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1990), chapters 1 and 2.

In a comparative study of Chinese and Japanese narrative illustration, Kohara Hironobu proposes that Chinese painters had little interest in depicting a full story in the format of successive pictures, but instead preferred to select a dramatic moment that symbolized the whole story. He suggests that this preference was more the result of Chinese emphasis on Confucian morality than of entertainment goals. Kohara Hironobu, "Narrative Illustration in the Handscroll Format," in *Words and Images: Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting*, eds. Wen C. Fong and Alfreda Murck (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), 249-52.

illustrate episodes like novelistic dramas in scrolls because of their distain for fiction and fantasy. In fact, an interest in story pictures had arisen in Jin dynasty China, if not earlier, along with the flourishing of vernacular narrative and dramatic genres. Liu Yuan's painting represents this pictorial tradition that was once highly fashionable in twelfth- and thirteenth-century North China, but became buried in the rubble of wars and forgotten over time.

Last, but not least, the influence of woodblock prints on the composition of Liu's painting is noticeable. In this painting, the single moment of the two characters' encounter is abruptly cropped from its surroundings. This erasure of extra-scenic space forces the viewer's eye to focus on the major characters rather than on their surroundings. Similar spatial composition and absence of background setting are often seen in printed illustrations of fiction books during the Yuan. One scene from the illustrated *Expository Tales of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sanguozhi pinghua* 三國誌平話), printed in about 1321, shows a diagonally arranged residence with doors and roof removed, enabling the viewer to see what is happening in the interior from an expanded perspective (Figure 1.23).⁸⁷ Viewers can see Zhang Fei 張飛, a famous general of the Shu Kingdom (221-263), angrily killing a corrupt magistrate and his wife in this hall. The printmaker cropped the surrounding scenes along the picture's frame to highlight this episode, a design that not only cleverly saves the labor of woodblock carving but primarily helps viewers focus on

⁸⁷ Yao Dajun also points out that, for the convenience of the viewer, Chinese printmakers often took away doors, screens, and roofs in printed illustrations. This reminds us of the widely-used "blown-off roof method" (*fukinuki-yatai* 吹き抜き屋台) in Japanese paintings and prints. Yao Dajun, "The Pleasure of Reading Drama: Illustrations to the Hongzhi Edition of *The Story of the Western Wing*," in *The Moon and the Zither: The Story of the Western Wing*, eds. Stephen H. West and Wilt L. Idema (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 447.

the major figures without being confused or losing track of the narrative.⁸⁸ We do not know if this kind of spatial composition and visual efficiency was borrowed from book illustration, or the other way around, but mutual influence between woodblock prints and paintings is possible.

In addition, a two-line inscription on Liu's painting, which is the sole source of information about this artist, provides several interesting facts about Pingyang art. In the first line, Liu emphasized that he was an apprentice of Santang Wang 三堂王, who was probably a renowned secular artist in regional association with Luoyang.⁸⁹ Inscriptions on extant paintings of the Song, Jin, and Yuan indicate that it was common practice to mark the origin or office of the painter. But there was rarely this sort of highlighting of the artist's identity as an apprentice of a local master, except in temple murals of the time. In the second line, Liu stated that he was a Pingyang native serving at the Commission of Palace Services (*Zhiyingsi* 祇應司) of the Jin court, an office responsible for providing painting and weaving services.⁹⁰ Since Liu served the court as an artist who rose from the secular world, he could introduce local ideas to the court. In this case, if the confident assertion of his Pingyang origin made his work more welcome at court, this likely

⁸⁸ Possibly, considering limited space and scope, the printmaker applied the principle of subtraction and reduced the narrative to the single moment right before Zhang's killing, leaving the viewer to imagine the blood and violence that would immediately follow. With their gaze directed right into the interior, viewers are led to focus on the dramatic moment that is highlighted by the contrast between a body lying on one side of the floor and a begging official on the other.

⁸⁹ This inscription reads “三堂王門人/祇應司平水劉元製.” We know nothing about Santang Wang except from a reference to him in a poem collected in the literary anthology of the Duan brothers, Duan Keji 段克己 (1196-1254) and Duan Chengji 段成己 (1199-1279), who were from Jishan and members of the famous Elderly Scholars of He-Fen Region. Duan Chengji wrote this poem for Santang Wang to praise one of Wang's self-portraits. Susan Bush suggests that this painter's name refers to where he was from, considering that Santang was a place near Luoyang, Henan. Bush 1995, 198-9.

⁹⁰ Bush has a detailed discussion of this institution at the Jin court. She suggests that many scholar-officials in government posts painted for the imperial family, and that there was no organized “Painting Academy” under the Jin court's supervision as there was in the Song. Bush 1995, 208-11.

indicates that the popularity of love stories in pictures had expanded from the secular world to the court. It evidences Pingyang's reputation as a center for high-quality artistic production and the strong influence of this region's popular culture among Chinese and non-Chinese elites.

A question remains as to whether Liu Yuan painted his scroll by imitating other painted pieces or directly copying a prototype. It is likely that Liu Yuan would have enjoyed hearing related songs and ballads, or watched similar dramatic performances of ghost love stories, before condensing this story into one dramatic moment. Both the composition and style of this image, not to mention its subject, bear obvious marks of influence from the theatrical activities that occurred in Jin and Yuan Pingyang. Comparable to a live performance, this painting directly involves its viewers in an illustrated happening and provides a theatrical experience that could directly touch their innermost emotions.

The Spread of Dramatic Stories Through Pictures

Jin and Yuan Pingyang was a center of narrative and dramatic genres where local tales and love stories were turned into ballads, fiction, and plays for entertainment. The spread of storytelling and stage performances further stimulated artisans to convert stories and plays into pictorial arts in a variety of mediums. In addition to woodblock prints and painting, ceramic decoration was another major vehicle for further dissemination of theatrical imagery throughout the secular society of Pingyang. In particular, ceramic pillows from Cizhou 磁州 (modern Linzhang 臨漳 county, Hebei

province) have generated the most revealing visual evidence to date of a thriving image-making industry related to Jin and Yuan narrative and dramatic genres.

It is worthwhile to note that Cizhou wares were mostly produced in kilns in the border areas of the Southern Circuit of Hedong and Western Circuit of Hebei.⁹¹ The nearby location and convenient trade network of these Cizhou kilns not only meant that their products had a large market in southern Shanxi, but also enabled Pingyang artisans to use them as a vehicle carrying theatrical images for daily viewing. Thus, compared to other regional centers in North China, Pingyang was lucky enough to have both prints and ceramics available to spread the influence of its theater culture.

The production of Cizhou wares peaked during the Jin dynasty.⁹² Although local workshops created a large number of beautiful pieces with finely-executed designs and innovative decorations, Cizhou wares have long been known as popular wares aimed at serving the general public. They were mass-produced in popular forms out of a common stoneware clay, which meant they could be sold at more affordable prices. Different from other renowned Song wares that featured a subtle glaze of one color, Cizhou wares were chiefly decorated with white and black slip beneath a transparent glaze. This likely explains why Cizhou wares were not valued by the Song and Yuan elite, considering that they neither praised these vessels in their writings nor used them as tribute to the court.⁹³

⁹¹ The west corner of the ancient Cizhou region (modern Shexian 涉縣 county, Hebei 河北 province) belonged to the Southern Circuit of Hedong and was under the administration of the Pingyang prefecture during the Jin. Prof. Feng Junjie informed me that a stele inscribed “Pingyang” was once unearthed during his survey in Shexian, where there are some sites of Cizhou-ware kilns.

⁹² For a general introduction, see Zhang Ziyang, “*Shilun Guantai Jindai Cizhou* 試論觀臺金代磁州窯,” *Huaxia kaogu* no. 2 (2001): 86-88; Mino 1975, 138-147; Robert L. Hobson, *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain* (New York: Dover Publications, reprinted in 1975), 101-8.

⁹³ S. J. Vainker, *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain: From Prehistory to the Present* (New York: George Braziller, 1991), 116. Because of their association with folk needs and vernacular taste, neither did

Nevertheless, Cizhou wares enjoyed great popularity among ordinary townspeople and villagers, and local artisans employed their white surface as a venue for displaying various attractive scenes and auspicious motifs. Pingyang people widely used Cizhou wares as domestic decoration and enjoyed their floral patterns and poetic inscriptions at leisure. In particular, Cizhou pillows became prevalent because of their utilitarian and decorative functions in daily life. One inscription on a pillow surface clearly states that a decorated pillow is not merely a tool to cool down the body in the summer, but an artwork for collection and appreciation as well (Figure 1.24).⁹⁴ Many commoners would like to have at least one decorated pillow to use and enjoy at leisure, or even just to show off their imitation of literati culture. Abundant trademarks refer to a recluse who lived by the Zhang River (Zhangbin yiren zhi 漳濱逸人製) as the maker, but we know that it is impossible that one person could have made the large quantity of pillows that fortunately survive today. In most instances, this name actually had nothing to do with any recluse, but rather was a popular title claimed by some workshops that wished to sell their products quickly in the market. It was also a prevalent practice to place ceramic pillows in tombs, as shown by discoveries of Song, Jin, and Yuan tombs in

the Song court collect Cizhou wares as tribute, nor did Ming literati connoisseurs appreciate them. According to the *Records of Essential Affairs of the Song* (*Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要集稿 (juan 52, 34), there were no Cizhou wares in the official records of imperial ceramic storage at Northern Song court. The *Essential Criteria of Antiquities* (*Gegu yaolun* 格古要論), the earliest connoisseurs' book written in 1388, Cao Zhao 曹昭 only briefly mentioned this important kiln system in North China. He said that the recently made Cizhou wares (in the late Yuan and early Ming) were worthless and had lost their appeal to contemporary collectors (juan 3, section 9). Both excerpts are collected in Xiong Liao 熊寥 ed. *Zhongguo taoci guji jicheng* 中國陶瓷古籍集成 (Nanchang: Jiangxi kexue jishu chubanshe, 2000), 72-74 and 147. For a translation of Cao Zhao's introduction to Cizhou wares, see Hobson 1975, 101-2.

⁹⁴ In a text on the pillow surface, entitled the "Rhapsody of Pillow" (Zhenfu 枕賦), the author asserts that the owner of a refined Cizhou pillow should treasure it and store it in a silk wrapping inside a box, showing it to visitors in the studio or appreciating himself on a hot summer night.

Shanxi, Hebei, and Henan.⁹⁵ The frequency of such discoveries reflects the popularity of this form of decorative art among common villagers and townspeople of the time.

Over the white pillow surface artisans often inscribed in iron-rich slip popular lyrics, poems, and proverbs. They also painted scenes of landscapes, flowers, and animals accompanied by decorative floral patterns and auspicious motifs. Ceramic pillows decorated with narrative and landscape scenes did not become fashionable until the second half of the twelfth century, with their prevalence closely related to the concurrent development of narrative and dramatic genres. Cizhou artisans in particular preferred to depict popular fictional and dramatic scenes on the surface of pillows so that people could enjoy stories and plays before going to sleep on a summer night. Roderick Whitfield points out that, “Given the rarity of Song illustrated books and narrative figure paintings, the pillows must be one of the major bodies of material illustrating these developments of [fiction and drama].”⁹⁶

Indeed, Pingyang’s popular theater and vernacular literature left their mark on the decoration of Cizhou wares. To cater to local taste and preference, decoration of Cizhou-ware pillows included many fictional and dramatic stories, which enjoyed popularity in Shanxi because of their historical and cultural association with this region. For instance, a local story of Shanxi, from which a Yuan drama derives, appears on a pillow surface (Figure 1.25). It is about Li Cunxiao’s 李存孝 (?- 894) killing of a tiger. Impressed by his

⁹⁵ Ceramic pillows have frequently been discovered in tombs since the Ming dynasty. When the Ming scholar Tu Long 屠隆 (1542-1605) introduced old ceramic pillows, he mentioned that those in small sizes were called “corpse pillows 屍枕 (shizhen)” and that they could not be re-used in daily life. This excerpt is collected in Xiong 2000, 58. Zhang Ziyang also briefly introduced recent discoveries of Cizhou pillows, see Zhang 2000, 11-14. The majority of some 200 pillows in this catalogue were unearthed by local farmers and then collected by various museums in the past few decades.

⁹⁶ Roderick Whitfield, “Tz’u-chou Pillows with Painted Decoration,” in Margaret Medley ed. *Chinese Painting and the Decorative Style* (London: University of London, 1975), 84.

bravery, the passing Prince Li Keyong 李克用 (856-908) adopted this young man as his son and promoted him to be a general.⁹⁷

The *Romance of the West Chamber*, a local tale that had been adapted into both *zhugongdiao* plays and *zaju* drama, has been a popular theme in Chinese pictorial art ever since the Yuan, if not earlier.⁹⁸ Scenes of this story were circulated as separate images in the form of either ceramic decoration or more affordable prints. Comparable to an illustration in the 1498 version of the *Romance of the West Chamber*, the most beautifully illustrated version of this drama, a similar moment decorates a Yuan-dynasty pillow. Viewers can easily identify the scene in both depictions as the moment when the protagonist, Yingying, is praying in front of an incense burner in the moonlight (Figures 1.26 and 1.27).⁹⁹ Another pillow scene (Figure 1.28), in which a gentleman is being introduced to two palace ladies in a garden, is probably taken from an episode in the *Anecdotes of Zhao Feiyan*.¹⁰⁰ The circulation of these prints and decorated ceramics enabled theatrical stories of romance and beauty to reach a wider public and to achieve a new degree of cultural popularity.

⁹⁷ This pillow is at the collection of the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, MD (49.2384). The story is believed to have occurred near Yanmen Pass 雁門關, in northern Shanxi. For an introduction to the Yuan drama, see Li 1997, 65-66.

⁹⁸ Craig Clunas, "The West Chamber: A Literary Theme in Chinese Porcelain Decoration," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* no. 46 (1981-82): 82. It is most likely that the extant Yuan prints were copied from earlier Jin versions that had been lost.

⁹⁹ The printed image from pages 49 and 50 of the *Western Chamber* book (1498, reprinted in 1961). The picture of the pillow is from Wei Chengguang 魏成光, *Zhongguo wenmingshi: Song Liao Jin shiqi* 中國文明史 / 宋遼金時期 vol. 6.4 (Taipei: Diqu chubanshe, 1991), pl. 670.

¹⁰⁰ This scene probably shows that Marquis Fuping 富平侯 introduces Emperor Chengdi to Zhao Feiyan in the residence of Princess Yang'e 陽阿公主.

In fact, extant decorated Cizhou pillows showcase theatrical stories from all three major categories of Jin and Yuan drama, including historical stories of famous figures and battles, stories of immortals and religious conversions, as well as love romances and courtroom stories.¹⁰¹ These vivid illustrations bring an imaginary theater to their viewers—not only telling them what to see in the story but also helping them relive what they watched on stage. Local people could have a theatrical experience outside of the theater and had more opportunities to view theatrical images at home or in the marketplace. Consequently, the illustration of theatrical stories in durable mediums helped theater reach a wider audience and connected people of different social strata. The accessibility and popularity of these theatrical images explains how commoners learned about popular historical knowledge. Welcomed among the masses of Jin and Yuan Shanxi, these images of vernacular drama and fiction were not only enjoyed in daily life but imported into burials as well.

Notably, it was during the Jin dynasty that love romances enjoyed wide popularity in the secular world, with their stories increasingly converted into dramatic moments in pictures and on-stage drama.¹⁰² The spread of the ten most popular songs of Jin and Yuan

¹⁰¹ Zhang 2000, 13. Zhang Ziyang's catalogue offers a selection of representative story scenes on Cizhou pillows. Hsu Wen-Chin also provides a brief survey of story scenes on later ceramic decoration in his article "Fictional Scenes on Chinese Transitional Porcelain and Their Sources of Decoration," *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 58 (1986): 1-142.

¹⁰² During the Northern Song, many love stories were told in the form of tales, poems, and lyrics and the presence of courtesans was often associated with the creation of poetry at literati social gatherings. It seems that love affairs with, or the possession of, a talented and beautiful courtesan became an element of literati fantasy, and even part of literati identity in some circles. Beverly Bossler, "Shifting Identities: Courtesans and Literati in Song China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* no 62.1 (2002), 7-8 and 30.

Given that pictorial representations of literary romance was rare in Northern Song art, Susan Bush suggests that the increasing popularity of this genre among literati reflects loosened moral standards within this growing scholar class during the late Jin. Bush 1995, 199. Bush's view is appealing, but neglects possible regional differences between the North and the South. The rise of Neo-Confucianism, as Beverly Bossler has observed, led to moral learning replacing traditional culture as the key element in defining true literati. Hence there was an increasingly negative view of courtesans among literati in the South, when

daqu (grand song 大曲) or *dayue* (grand music 大樂) reflects the popularity of love stories among the masses in North China.¹⁰³ The majority of these popular songs originated in the Central Plains during the early twelfth century and maintained an enduring popularity throughout the Jin and Yuan. Although the literati chose these songs and ranked them in the newly compiled handbook of the Music Bureau, these songs were selected based on their popularity rather than on their literary value or their author's fame. Moreover, some of these songs are not pure literati or intellectual works but are lyrics adapted from popular tales and ballads. The association of these songs with *zaju* performances further supported their popularity among the masses.¹⁰⁴

growing concerns resulted in the proliferation of laws regulating literati relations with courtesans in the Southern Song regime. Bossler 2002, 32-33. However, the prevalence of love stories among Jin literati does not necessarily indicate their diminished moral status. Rather, it suggests an increasing influence from non-elite culture in North China under the reign of the Jin dynasty. Thus, literati cultures of the North and the South featured varied concerns and tastes during the thirteenth century under a period of cultural separation and isolation.

¹⁰³ A scholar at the Yuan court probably recorded these ten most popular songs in the first chapter of the *Newly Compiled Sunny Spring and White Snow by the Music Bureau* (Yuefu xinbian yangchun baixue 樂府新編陽春白雪), an anthology of songs and ballads of the Jin and Yuan periods. The first chapter of this anthology records these popular songs; the following chapters introduce *sanqu* songs (diverse ballads 散曲) that were collected in the form of songs and lyrics. The prime position of these songs suggests that the compiler viewed them as important examples for setting standards for other popular songs and ballads. Zhang Ming 張鳴, "Song Jin shida qu/yue jianshuo 宋金十大曲/樂箋說," *Wenxue yichan* 文學遺產 no.1 (2004): 83-85.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 83-84. For instance, these popular songs were often sung before formal drama performances, as recorded in the first act of the *Wind and Moon, A Medley Play of the Purple Clouse Pavilion* (*Zhugongdiao fengyue ziyunting* 諸宮調風月紫雲亭), written by Shi Junbao 石君寶 (1190-1275?), a Pingyang-born playwright. This play is a love story between a gentleman, Ling Shouchun 靈壽春, and an actress, Han Chulan 韓楚蘭, from a family troupe. The actress Chulan sings in the first act, "I will sing the ten popular songs before reciting the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*; my mother will narrate the *History of Five Dynasties* before adding a talk on the Bayang sutra." See *Yuan kan zaju sanshizhong* 元刊雜劇三十種 (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1962, hereafter YZJSSZ), 181.

Gentlemen of the time carried small booklets of these popular songs to show off their literary talents and artistic taste. In a play entitled *Pavilion of Hundred Flowers* (*Baihuating* 百花亭), the protagonist Wang Huan 王煥 met a singing girl, He Lianlian 賀憐憐, and lived with her in her parents' house near Luoyang. In the first act of his presentation, Wang Huan brought out a small booklet of the ten popular songs out of his sleeve. See Zang Maoxun 臧懋循 (1550-1620) comp. *Yuanqu xuan* 元曲選 (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1958, hereafter YQX), vol. 4, 1427.

At least five of these top ten songs are related to love stories between literati and courtesans.¹⁰⁵ The “Song of the Golden Threads (Huangjinlü 黃金縷),” to which Liu Yuan’s painting of Su Xiaoxiao’s story relates, is one of these songs. Sima Yu’s story enjoyed widespread popularity during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. A similar scene is also illustrated as decoration on the surface of a ceramic pillow, with some variation in the composition and detail (Figure 1.29). The visual effect of rendering a dramatic moment and nostalgic atmosphere significantly differs in these two images, though the viewer can immediately recognize that they are the same story.¹⁰⁶ The popularity of this scene was essentially based on this well-known tale that it illustrates, which was adapted into ballads and plays as well, such as the famous *Su Xiaoxiao’s Moon Night Dream at Qiantang River* (*Su Xiaoxiao yueye Qiantang meng* 蘇小小月夜錢塘夢). Since an illustrated text of this short play was incorporated before the main text in the *Romance of the West Chamber*, as seen in the playbook of a 1498 version, this play probably served as a prologue to the performance of this Yuan drama in traditional theater (Figure 1.30).¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ These songs include Sima Yu’s (late 11th cen.) “Butterflies Love Flowers (Dielianhua 蝶戀花)”, Liu Yong’s 柳永 (987?-1053) “Bells Ringing in the Rain (Yulinling 雨霖鈴)”, Cai Songnian’s 蔡松年 (1107-1159) “Man-mode of Shi Prefecture (Shizhouman 石州慢)”, and Zhang Xian’s 張先 (990-1078) “Heavenly Fairy (Tianxianzi 天仙子)”.

Notably, Cai Songnian was a Chinese who served at the Jurchen court and earned his highest official position as a minister. Cai supposedly wrote this song on his journey to Koryo (918-1392) as an envoy. It was said that he fell in love with a Korean courtesan in the hotel and left this lyric for her before his departure. Afterward it turned into a romantic love story that became well known among secular people. It also was adapted into *yuanben* plays and *zaju* dramas during the Jin and Yuan.

¹⁰⁶ Obviously, this decorative image lacks the dramatic effect seen in Liu Yuan’s silk painting. Judging from the movement of a billowing cloud in this image, the lady is leaving the scene. A large artificial stone, which is added in the middle of the garden, separates the two protagonist characters and reduces their intimacy.

¹⁰⁷ Wang Shifu, *Xinkan qimiao quanxiang zhushi xixiangji* 新刊奇妙全相註釋西廂記, reprinted in 1498 (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1961), 14.

Romantic love stories appealed not only to the literati class in the form of poems and lyrics, but also to commoners in the form of popular songs, fiction, and plays.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, illustrations of these stories were not exclusively presented in the form of paintings, but appear in the decorative arts as well. A handscroll of Lady Cai Wenji's 蔡文姬 (c. 177-239) story was painted by another Jin-dynasty court painter, Zhang Yu 張瑀 (active early 13th cen.), who also served at the Commission of Palace Services, as did Liu Yuan (Figure 1.31). This painting depicts, in ink and color, a single episode from the story of Lady Wenji's return to China, which had been adapted into several popular plays and dramas by that time. This story was frequently illustrated by artists, from both the Chinese Song and Jurchen Jin, in various formats and for diverse purposes.¹⁰⁹ Yet we should not ignore the fact that this story was also a popular subject for depiction in the decorative arts because it was so celebrated in vernacular literature and theater. Simplified versions of this painting are shown on ceramics, as seen on the surface of a Cizhou pillow in the British Museum, London (Figure 1.32).¹¹⁰ Wang Zhaojun's story,

¹⁰⁸ Zhang 2004, 93-94.

¹⁰⁹ Aside from the scene of her return, another typical narrative format depicts eighteen successive scenes of Wenji's life between her abduction by the Xiongnu soldiers and her eventual return to Luoyang in 201, as exemplified by a scroll in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY. See Wen C. Fong and Alfreda Murck eds., *Words and Images: Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), 209-212. Julia Murray briefly described some versions of these subjects in Song and Jin paintings, see Murray 2007, 81-82. It seems that the Southern Song used this theme as a vehicle to express anti-Jin sentiments, while the Jurchen Jin idealized Wenji as a paragon female to promote Confucian virtues for their own sake.

¹¹⁰ Vainker 1991, 116. The composition and style of this pillow's image is similar to that of the scroll, though with fewer figures and reduced detail.

which was often executed in a similar form, sometimes undistinguishable from Lady Wenji's story, also frequently appeared in both silk paintings and ceramic decorations.¹¹¹

During his trip to the Liaodong 遼東 region around 1190, Wang Ji 王寂 (1128-1194), a famous Jin-dynasty literati official, inscribed poems for four colorful *daqu* pictures that decorated the screens surrounding his bed when he stayed in a guest room at the Buddhist Monastery of the Great Brightness (Damingsi 大明寺) in Hanzhou 韓州, Liaoning 遼寧.¹¹² Wang recorded the content of these theatrical scenes, which were all part of love stories that had been converted into popular dramas of the time, such as the plays “Xiangru Pursuing Female Phoenix (Xiangru qiuhuang 相如求凰)” and “Broken Mirror Restored (pojing chongyuan 破鏡重圓)”.¹¹³ The presence of these images of theatrical stories at a remote Buddhist monastery in the countryside suggests the widespread popularity of theater culture of the time.

The prevalence of theatrical images also reflects a thriving entertainment culture with increasing non-elite influence during the Jin and early Yuan periods. Because of their lowered social status, scholars were less distant from commoners and thus had more contact with different aspects of folk life and vernacular culture. In addition, ordinary people had easier access at this time to elite culture for entertainment and educational

¹¹¹ Whitfield, 1975, 84.

¹¹² Wang Ji's travel diary from his Liaodong trip was collected and annotated in Jia Jinyi's book *Wudai Song Jin Yuanren bianjiang xingji shisanzhong shuzhengao* 五代宋金元人边疆行记十三种疏证稿 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 255-311.

¹¹³ In the first play, a talented scholar, Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 (active 2nd cen. BCE), proposed to a beautiful lady, Zhuo Wenjun 卓文君, and eventually earned her heart by playing zither music. The second story is about how a princess of the Chen Dynasty (557-589) managed to reunite with her husband by matching two halves of a broken mirror. See Lu and Li 1990, 366 and 752; also Li 1997, 160.

purposes through their contact with literati recluses in the countryside, cheap books and printed images, as well as widespread narrative and dramatic performances.

To some extent, the prevalence of theatrical images indicates a cultural change from the bottom up at the time. Folk ballads and vernacular dramas had more direct appeal for the illiterate than did sophisticated, intellectual works, as did various pictorial representations of narrative and dramatic genres. The circulation of abundant theatrical images enriched local life, altered entertainment culture, and met viewers' need for fantasy and novel experience. The popularity of vernacular theater and its pictorial illustrations among the masses further helped win their access to elite circles and to the court, as exemplified by the rise of *zhugongdiao* and *zaju* performances in Jin and Yuan societies. When dramatic scenes and theatrical spectacles attracted viewers of all social strata, the cultural boundaries between the literati and illiterate, between the urban and rural areas, gradually dissolved.

Summary

Based on pictorial evidence, this chapter has demonstrated how distinctive aspects of visual and theater cultures became integrated in Pingyang, resulting in the popularity of fictional and dramatic images across all social strata. The mass-production of theatrical images, which constituted a new genre that directly responded to the pleasure-seeking interests of townspeople and villagers, reflects a major characteristic of Jin and Yuan visual culture. Pingyang-sourced images really brought a fresh trend into Jin and Yuan art in terms of their entertaining subject matters, vivid narrative illustrations, affordable mediums, and unprecedented popularity among the masses.

It is in this specific context that we can better understand the occurrence of the woodblock print, *Four Beauties*, as an antecedent of the new genre of theatrical images in books and pictures, as well as the contribution of Pingyang's commercial print shops in developing a secular preference for viewing narrative illustrations. At the same time, a boom in the performing arts encouraged local artists and artisans, who were theatergoers themselves, to apply innovative methods and styles in their narrative illustrations to attract viewer interest. They enabled the masses to experience theater in new ways and to pursue pleasure via pictures. In this regard, various illustrations of theatrical themes not only helped theater to expand its influence, but also dissolved social and cultural boundaries in the secular society of the time. Thus, we should take note of the vital role of Pingyang in promoting this genre of pictorial art and expanding its influence to wider spheres. Without Pingyang, the visual culture of the Jin and Yuan would lose much of its charm.

When local publishers printed dramas in books and artisans depicted them in pictures, country folk also had theatrical scripts placed in their tombs and Daoist priests utilized dramatic performances to proselytize their teachings. These activities all contributed to the formation of a distinctive theater culture in Pingyang. The next chapter, therefore, turns to a discussion of another characteristic circumstance that shaped this region's visual culture—the overlap of the rise of *zhugongdiao* and *zaju* performances with the spread of Quanzhen Daoism. Visual and textual analyses of Pingyang's material will demonstrate the spiritual significance of drama scripts and performances and show how Jin and Yuan theater penetrated into local life and profoundly affected the religious world of the masses.

Chapter Two

Theater in Text:

Zhugongdiao Scripts and Spiritual Transcendence

Given that most Song-Yuan mural tombs have pictorial decorations such as domestic scenes and auspicious motifs, the recent discovery of a Pingyang tomb fully decorated with ink inscriptions of poems and lyrics is very unusual. Of greater surprise is that the lyrics inscribed around the coffin bed of this tomb are *zhugongdiao* arias, which constitute a song suite bemoaning transient pleasure and destined human fate. This is the very first evidence of this performing art form being represented in a mortuary context. A series of questions then arise: Who is this tomb occupant and did this decorative program have something to do with his/her particular interests? What were the meanings of these *zhugongdiao* arias and why did the tomb builder inscribe them in the tomb interior?

A discussion of these questions informs us about some neglected aspects of Pingyang's visual culture, as well as the deep infiltration of religious theater into local life and culture. First, the occurrence of these arias in the tomb space suggests they had symbolic and ceremonial significance in local burial tradition and popular beliefs. To some extent, these inscribed arias are comparable to those Buddhist sutras and Daoist talismans that functioned to purge the souls and ward off demons in local tombs.

Although most viewers could not read them, the spiritual significance of these texts and symbols could assist the deceased to transcend to another world. Second, in fact, these arias are emblematic representations of theater on instructive and religious themes and local people appreciated them. In particular, these texts functioned similarly to

illustrations of plays and dramas and informed the illiterate of their history and society, as well as common views and beliefs. Lastly, the flourishing of the Quanzhen (Complete Perfection 全真) movement in Shanxi suggests a further exploration of the impact of popular religious traditions on the development of local theater in Jin and Yuan Pingyang.

Decoding *Zhugongdiao* Arias in Madame Zhang's Tomb

The tomb of Madame Zhang 張氏 (dated to 1200), roughly measuring 2.1m by 2m, has brick decorations simulating a dwelling interior and architectural components with painted floral patterns. Its entrance opens on the east side of the south wall, leading into a passageway to the north end of the chamber. Next to the passage is a platform that simulates a bed, with painted standing screens on three sides and a brick railing on the fourth side.¹ Just considering its size and architectural decoration, this tomb is ordinary. The plain chamber hardly attracts any attention because, except for a simulated window on the east wall, it has no furnishings or daily life scenes depicted on its walls. However, the inscriptions of poems and lyrics within rectangular frames that are everywhere on its walls make this tomb unique in our present corpus of Chinese mortuary art.²

Normally, if a tomb has decorations featuring inscriptions of poems and lyrics, the ideal candidates for its occupants would be literati or learned officials. It makes sense

¹ This tomb, along with other twelve tombs, was unearthed in a family cemetery at the town of Houma in 2000. Yang and Gao 2003, 1-5.

² In particular, these arias written in ink occupy horizontal frames that represent screens surrounding the coffin bed. Corresponding to these screens on the lower part of the chamber walls, another painted frame is in a similar position on the east wall and has an inscription of lyrics as well. Above these horizontal frames are vertical frames positioned side-by-side, in which there are six couplets and four quatrains that describe poetic scenery. In addition, a tomb inscription that offers important information about the tomb occupant and her family is written in a plaque-shaped frame opposite the entrance.

from a traditional viewpoint if the tomb occupants were able to create and enjoy lyrics and poems. However, the tomb inscription informs us that such an assumption is actually false in this case (Figure 2.1). The occupant, Madame Zhang, who died at the age of fifty-five in 1182, was neither from a privileged elite family, nor married into wealthy local gentry. Rather, she was married to Tian Fumao 田福茂 from the same village.

Considering the Tian family's property as recorded in the tomb inscription, this family's holdings were similar to those of typical well-to-do peasant families and included some land and livestock to meet the family's basic needs.³ This family actually did not have enough money to build Madame Zhang a brick tomb until nearly twenty years after her initial entombment. By then the family had accumulated enough land and property, and thus Mr. Tian discussed with his sons the plan to rebuild his late wife a tomb in brick, believing that this deed would gain her blessings for the prosperity of the whole family.

Madame Zhang, who had six sons and two daughters, spent most her life raising her children. Most likely she had no formal education, so she would not have been able to compose or appreciate poems and lyrics. But, as suggested by many scholars, this illiterate housewife loved *zhugongdiao* plays that became very popular in the vast rural areas of Jin and Yuan Shanxi. Notably, *zhugongdiao* plays were often despised by literati

³ Yan Baoquan, a historian of theater, provided a collated text of the full tomb inscription, see his article "Houma Ershui M4 sanzhi Jindai moshu canqu shiyi 侯馬二水 M4 三支金代墨書殘曲釋疑," *Zhonghua xiqu* 中華戲曲 vol. 29 (2003): 7.

According to the tomb inscription, Tian remarried a local woman and expanded his dwellings and property. This large family by then had thirty-five members, including the six sons and their respective wives and children. In total, they had six oxen, one horse, one mule, one hundred goats, one large cart, and one carriage.

Here is part of the Chinese text of this tomb inscription: "...秦村田福茂為妻張氏，系本縣牛村張守真女，自入門已後，成置產業，兼生長到六男二女。...別娶到朱長官裴德遇女為妻，同治至今庚申歲，已十九年矣。又將產業增置，添展舍院，地土普全。家三十五口，除兒男□外半養，□畜外□，家牛六只，馬一疋，騾一投，羊百口，大車一具，通轆車一具。緣此，與男眾人商議，將張氏舊墳並用磚砌造，葬殯記耳。"

elite but welcomed by the illiterate majority because of their vernacular language and vulgar content.⁴ This peasant woman, like other village theater lovers, was a devoted listener of this performing art. Probably because of her passion for watching plays of this kind, her descendents used inscriptions of *zhugongdiao* arias to decorate her tomb interior.⁵

However, we should not regard this decoration merely as an individual preference and oversimplify its implications for the larger cultural and religious context. The occurrence of the inscribed *zhugongdiao* arias in this tomb demonstrates that this art form achieved its popularity through players' songs and performances. In addition to stage performance, local people often received *zhugongdiao* plays in the form of text. As discussed earlier, the thriving commercial printing industry enabled the publication of theatrical scripts in Pingyang. The commercialization of entertainment activities in urban centers led to the development of a market for fiction and drama books, which were often sold together in urban entertainment quarters.⁶ In addition, a manuscript culture that combined text and image also enabled publishers to experiment with illustrations in

⁴ Yan Baoquan confirms the identification of three *zhugongdiao* arias and believes that their occurrence in the tomb of a local peasant demonstrates the popularity of *zhugongdiao* plays among commoners during the Jin dynasty. Since Madame Zhang's tomb is only about two miles away from the Dong family cemetery at Niucun, he suggests that the Dong family members also loved the *zhugongdiao* performances and that Dong Xieyuan, the author of the famous *zhugongdiao* play of the *West Chamber*, was possibly related to this local lineage. Yan 2003, 19-20.

⁵ Yang and Gao 2003, 5.

⁶ For instance, an early version of the *Journey to the West* (Xiyouji 西遊記), was printed by a Zhang 張 family bookstore at Zhongwazi 中瓦子, an entertainment quarter in Hangzhou, where various storytelling and plays were performed. Soren Edgren, "Southern Song Printing at Hangzhou," *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* no. 62 (1989): 32.

Given their shared features of prosimetric form, vernacular language, episodic nature, fiction and drama were actually two sides of the same coin during the Song and Yuan periods. Because these features are also evidence of the fundamental importance of transformation texts, Victor Mair suggests that they both were closely tied to popular storytelling of the Tang. Mair 1989, 17 and 40.

printed fiction and drama to attract more readers. These factors contributed to the wide circulation of written scripts and arias in secular society, allowing more educated and moderately-educated people access theatrical texts.

Despite the frequent publication of drama scripts, not all people could read them or afford to buy them. Then, how could the illiterate appreciate the printed scripts? Why did this Tian family deliberately decorate the whole chamber full of inscriptions of arias and poems that most family members could not read? Why did they not choose traditional mural subjects such as common domestic scenes to make the tomb decoration more readily understood?

An observation made by some scholars helps us address these questions—the inscriptions of these arias have some mistaken characters and cursive handwriting. This detail suggests that the craftsmen of Madame Zhang’s tomb copied from elsewhere these popular *zhugongdiao* arias.⁷ It also implies that the assumed audience for the inscribed arias in this tomb, whether the deceased or the living, seemed to care less about the correct written characters than about the correct sounds. Inscriptions on ceramics and buildings show similar situations in Shanxi too. Usually, the illiterate could not read written/printed theatrical texts, but they could depend on the educated to recite the scripts or sing the lyrics, or access the vernacular texts through performing arts in various occasions. Additionally, the first chapter has introduced that the theater culture of Jin and Yuan Pingyang featured a close relationship among performance, picture, and text. Local

⁷ The craftsmen of this tomb were probably at best moderately educated. They sometimes replaced complicated characters with simplified ones and used wrong characters, making the text hard for modern scholars to read. However, most of these substitutions or scribal errors had the same pronunciations as the original characters. Many lyrics and arias transcribed on ceramic pillows and vases also have this kind of substitution. Yang Dong 楊棟 thus speculates that local craftsmen often copied vernacular plays and ballads based on their own memory of the lyrics that they had heard. See Yang Dong, “Jinan chutu ciyao qiwu shangde Jin Yuan ciqu 冀南出土磁窯器物上的金元詞曲,” *Wenyi yanjiu* 文藝研究 no.1 (2004): 94.

people mass-produced theatrical texts and images and circulated them in the marketplace, while giving live performances in theaters and at temple fairs. Since theatrical performances and pictures had been integrated into local life, the illiterate could easily make connections between the arias they heard, the images they saw, and the plays they watched.

Yet in the case of Madame Zhang's tomb, members of the Tian family most likely "read" these texts as representations of dramas with spiritual power that purified the souls and instructed the living. Given that local peasants had many chances to access theatrical activities on streets or in markets, the limited literacy of Tian family members was not a problem for receiving the instructive and religious teachings embodied in these arias. Thus, the discovery of inscribed arias in this tomb actually indicates the penetration of dramatic texts into the domain of Buddhist sutra and Daoist talismans, which were traditionally used as ways of dispelling demons and purifying the souls in the tomb space.

The recent study by Professor Ning Xiyuan, a scholar of classical Chinese literature, sheds new light on these questions.⁸ Ning points out that the text on the west wall is actually a *zhugongdiao* aria too. Together with the three other arias surrounding the coffin bed, they constitute a complete *zhugongdiao* medley, including a prelude, two major songs, and a postlude. Then, Ning explores the possible sequence of these arias and suggests that, beginning from the north wall and ending with the west wall, this suite of songs served as an elegy for the deceased. Their ink inscriptions could also be a record of the plays that Tian family members wished to have in their deceased mother's tomb.

⁸ Ning Xiyuan 寧希元, "Zaoqi zhugongdiao keci de zhongda faxian 早期諸宮調歌詞的重大發現," *Zhonghua xiqu* 中華戲曲 vol. 31 (2004): 14-17.

A further examination of the format and content of these arias will better inform us of the extent to which local people appreciated *zhugongdiao* plays and were informed about the theatricality of life and the necessity of religious enlightenment. The first aria on the north wall functions as a prelude to the *zhugongdiao* play, which instructs the listener to take heed of the patterns of history by reviewing the successes and tragedies of famous historical figures (Figure 2.2).⁹ It reads:

Let us ponder tales of old:
 Telling of the ten great feats, Han Xin was ranked the top one.¹⁰
 Cao Cao the hero, mourned that the five Tiger Generals of the Ma family
 defeated him.¹¹
 The hegemon [Xiang Yu], possessed the strength to lift the tripod and move
 the hill, contending with the Han ruler [Liu Bang] for his kingdom.¹²
 Sui He was capable of persuading [Han Xin's follower] Wentong [to admit
 guilt],¹³ Minister Di Qing [promoted?] General Wei Hua.
 [Yang] Beizhong secluded himself in the Taihang Mountain and removed his
 official robes.¹⁴
 [We might] boast at length of Zhuge Liang's knowledge of the patterns of
 heaven,¹⁵ and feel sorrow for Zi Lu [a disciple of Confucius].

⁹ Ning provided collated texts of these arias and my English translations are mainly based on the texts he established; see Ning 2004, 16-24. Also, missing and unidentifiable characters are replaced with blank squares in the Chinese text and my notes are in brackets in the translation.

¹⁰ For the ten feats of Han Xin 韓信, see the Yuan drama *Xiao He Pursue Han Xin in the Moonlight* (*Xiao He yueye zhui Han Xin* 簫何月下追韓信), written by Jin Renjie 金仁傑 (?-1329). YZJSSZ, 365-380.

¹¹ The Yuan drama, *Five Ma Generals Defeated Cao at the Yangping Pass* (*Yangpingguan wuma pacao* 陽平關五馬破曹), is derived from this story. Li 1997, 116-7.

¹² See above the note on Han Xin's story.

¹³ The related Yuan drama is *Sui He Persuaded Kuai Tong* (*Sui He zhuan Kuai Tong* 隋和賺蒯通). The play is about how Kuai Tong argued for his executed master Han Xin and claimed this general's ten feats in founding the Han dynasty. His effort helped Han receive some sympathy from other officials at the Han court. YQX, 70-83.

¹⁴ Yang Beizhong 楊悲重 was the grandson of Yang Linggong 楊令公, who was a famous Northern Song general who defended the Khidan invasions. Some stories about this family's generals were adapted into popular fiction and dramas of the Jin and Yuan.

¹⁵ Two Yuan dramas are possibly related to this anecdote. One is *Guan Yuan and Zhang Fei Both Appear in a Dream in the Western Shu* (*Guan Zhang shuangfu xishu meng* 關張雙赴西蜀夢), and the other

[...] Zhang Fei.¹⁶ All return to the void one day and perish forever.
 Even if one were granted ten thousand hectares of good land, everything
 eventually needs to be dropped off upon death.
 Fortune and fame belong to the realm of illusion.
 Foolish and besotted men, listen to my speech, boast no more!
 What could be better than discovering our nature at leisure, unburdened by
 cares?
 In the mode of *Nanlögong*, to the tune “Moon over the Jade Terrace”.

閑思古話。
 說十大功勞，韓信刎扎。
 英雄曹操，悲五馬破卻渾家。
 這霸王舉鼎拔山，供漢主爭其天下。
 隋何會賺文通，狄相公共□達魏化。
 悲重立太行把朝衣下。
 漫夸諸葛亮會天文，悲子路□□□□。
 □□張飛，一旦歸空永化。
 便饒君□□良田萬頃，現盡終須趁下。
 利名場都是假。
 呆癡漢聽我分說，休夸！
 不如閑中取性，全無系掛。
 南呂宮·瑤台月

This aria introduces stories of famous historical figures, such as Han Xin 韓信 (?
 -196 BCE) and Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮 (181-234), who were protagonists in numerous
 dramas of the time, with their characteristic appearances familiar to various audiences.¹⁷
 It would not be too difficult to recognize these figures and have related performances of
 military and historical stories flash before their eyes. Various illustrations of these stories

is *Zhuge Liang Plotted Fire Attacks at Bowang* (*Zhuge Liang Bowang shaotun* 諸葛亮博望燒屯). In both plays, Zhuge used his knowledge of astrology to predict the future. YZJSSZ, 17-28 and 397-412.

¹⁶ The related Yuan drama is “Guan Yuan and Zhang Fei Both Appear in a Dream in the Western Shu. In the third act of this play, the souls of Guan Yu and Zhang Fei appear in their brother Liu Bei’s 劉備 dream, requesting Liu to avenge them.”; see YZJSSZ, 17-28.

¹⁷ For instance, the ritual manuscript of 1574 from Lucheng that I introduced earlier provides the repertoire of a local *sai* celebration in Shanxi, in which plays of Han Xin and Zhuge Liang were included. In fact, the majority of its *yuanben* plays and *zaju* dramas are about historical figures and battle stories, which were very welcome among local audiences.

also spread in the format of ceramic decoration, print, and painting of the time, though losing most of their implications in the view of spectators of today.

After the narrator listed the heroic deeds and accomplishments of famous figures, he reveals the subject of the first aria—predetermined human fate and the false illusion of earthly temptation. He then persuades his audience to live a life of *laissez faire*, giving up all concerns and worries. This message closely relates to those of the second (on the south wall) and the third aria (on the east wall), which respectively address the wrongdoings of a skeleton and the short lives of human beings (Figures 2.3 and 2.4). The second aria reads:

This karma of yours; the skeleton is as white as snow.
 Exposed in wind and sun, how can you find a respite this time?
 [Your] three *hun* souls and seven *po* souls vanished with the wind...
 This is indeed the horse of mind and the monkey of heart!
 Did anyone ever comment on your greedy mind?
 What kind of karma did you have, so that your skeleton was broken into eight pieces by a shepherd with a stick?
 Remember still your ambitious spirit; yet contemplate it now, [all turned into past].
 Depressed in the mind, [you] had better only take care of your own life.
 A kind person persuaded you and taught you how to cultivate yourself, yet you did not take it seriously.
 So deep you indulged yourself in the sorrow and regret, because of [your lust for] wine, sex, money, and honor.
 No wonder things now turned worse after you played tricks; to whom could you talk, you lonely soul without a master?
 In the Qingming festival, whom can you ask to offer wine and have a libation for you?
 In the mode of *Daogong*, to the tune of “Xiehong (a dancer’s name)”.

自家緣業，這骷髏形骸白如雪。
 風吹日炙，如何這回休也。
 三魂杳杳，七魄幽幽隨風滅。
 有□□周□□□，意馬心猿何徹！
 貪婪心性有誰說？
 不知你作何緣業，被牧童亂棒打做八截。
 猶記當初驕豪氣，到如今尋思，已守□說。

心兒裡憔悴，顧性命些些。
 好人勸著，交你修行，你調侶。
 你傷悲酒色並財氣，特聞別烈。
 如今弄巧番成拙，這無主孤魂有誰說！
 □□是清明節，托誰余酒奠羅列。
 道宮·解紅

In this aria, a judge-like narrator first tries to persuade a skeleton to change its reluctant mind, commenting on the sorrow and regret resulting from its lust for wine, sex, fortune, and honor during its lifetime.¹⁸ He then asserts that this stubborn desire for earthly temptation enslaves human beings and calls for meditation of the causes of their endless suffering even after death. Similar texts and scenes often instructed people in Medieval Europe to contemplate their sins and death, as the scholar of theater, Glynne Wickham, has observed. For instance, numerous scenes depict skeletons as envoys from the underworld, leading men and women from every status of life to their destined death. Combined with priests' sermons, these scenes formed a drama that taught its audience that "all their finery, rank, power, strength, and beauty would fade into bones and dust."¹⁹

¹⁸ The "Four Delusions" is a popular Daoist idea. In his discussion of this idea, Wang Zhe, the founder of the Quanzhen School, explained "qi" as anger and discontent caused while competing for honor and fame (爭強逞氣). See the *Chongyang's Collection of the Complete Realization Teaching* (*Chongyang Quanzhen ji* 重陽全真集), juan 1, in *Daozang* 道藏 (Collection of Daoist Sutras), reprinted in 1988, vol. 25, 696c-697a.

Idema translates the word "qi" as honor, while Hawkes read it as "anger". Here I think the "honor" is the better translation. See Wilt Idema, "Skulls and Skeletons in Art and on Stage," in *Conflict and Accommodation in Early Modern East Asia: Essays in Honor of Erik Zürcher*, eds. Leonard Blussé and Harriet T. Zurndorfer (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993), 213; David Hawkes, "Quanzhen Plays and Quanzhen Masters," *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient*, vol. 69.1 (1981): 160.

¹⁹ Glynne Wickham, *The Medieval Theater* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 111-2. For instance, on the triangular roof panels of the Spreuer Bridge, a covered wooden bridge leading to the medieval fortification of Lucerne, Switzerland, sixty-seven color paintings dating from 1626 to 1635 depict subjects of the macabre dance. In these pictures, skeletons invite people of all professions and social strata to dance with them, signifying that death sees no difference between rich and poor, old and young. Of more importance are the expository verses within each picture. While the spectators were viewing vivid pictures and listening to the words of preachers, animated theatrical representations occurred before their eyes.

These kinds of images were often used in mortuary art to instruct a morally-misguided audience.

As presented by the third aria on the east wall, another voice mourns the shortness of human life and the ephemeral quality of earthly pleasure. Similar to the flash of a shooting star or the sunset, life and fame are vulnerable when confronted with the passage of time.

[Things] hasten each other; one hundred years is but a moment.
Think about a tender child [turning into an elder], [this process] seems like the
flash of a shooting star...

[...?]

It is like waiting beside the window, viewing horses flee away.

In the rustling wind, leaves fall from parasol trees in the yard, with a lonely
few still attached to the twigs and swinging in the air.

Looking towards the distant mountains in the sunset, the west hill and the red
sun, tiny trails and [thatched] pavilions.

Such [a scene of] nostalgia...yet moments later, life has half passed.

Have you ever considered why the body and mind of this person were so
stubborn?

In the mode of *Boshe*, to the tune of “Spring of the Qin Garden.”

□□相催，百年一向。

縱思倚嬌，似拂然石內流星火，雨□□□，水□□漚。

扔毬球□，子子到底，擗斷風雞□碧霄。

傷□抱，似窗間坐看，縱騎奔逃。

□蕭蕭，落下庭梧，掛孤梢枝頭紛亂拋。

看遠山□□□半天落，西山紅日，微路□亭。

人煞展，□□□□，轉離胡□有半遭。

曾思無，此人身性，猶自堅牢！

般涉調·沁園春

The ballad suite finally ends on the west wall in a postlude, which describes the splendors of the land of immortals (Figure 2.5). They form groups and play grand music to welcome newcomers, who have just ascended there to enjoy a free and pleasant life.²⁰

Heavy clouds suddenly disappeared; the frosty sky became bright.
 Behind an array of halberds, the celestial gates open and a procession of
 immortals appear.
 Wearing coats of brocade and embroidered robes [...?]
 Three thousand hangers-on appear with jade hairpins and shoes with pearls.
 Tapping gilded stirrups, [Lord Mengchang (?-279 BC) of the Qi state] rides a
 white horse at leisure.
 Towards the Qin pavilion where pipes and zithers are played.
 He returned drunk several times in the bright moonlight,
 Songs and pipe music led him to the front of a splendid hall.
 Written by Lord Mengchang.

陰雲忽散曉霜天，
 畫戟門開見隊仙。
 錦袂繡衣宮□□□，
 玉簪朱履客三千。
 閑騎白馬敲金鐙，
 悶向秦樓動管弦。
 幾度醉歸明月夜，
 笙歌引至畫堂前。
 孟嘗君作

This aria is another sermon that convinces the audience of the necessity of religious cultivation and portrays the prospect of spiritual transcendence over death. It reminds the spectators of the images of celestial palaces and immortal life that they had seen before at local temples and tombs. Of greatest interest are two sets of trapezoidal bricks of the Eight Immortals on the ceiling of Dong Ming's tomb and the nearby tomb no. 65H4M102 (Figure 2.6), which are among the earliest extant representations of these

²⁰ This last aria has no title. By comparing its text with traditional lyric modes, scholars believe that this aria is written in the mode of Nanlü, to the tune of "Mocking a Song of Pipe Music" (南呂調.喬和笙).

immortals.²¹ Given that these tombs are located only a few miles away from Madame Zhang's burial, their ceiling images might function similarly to the postlude of the *zhugongdiao* suite on the west wall of her tomb.²² Local people used these similar means to represent heavenly life and guide the souls of the deceased to the immortal land.

Without ballads and plays of similar function in local burial and religious traditions, the Tian family would not have commissioned artisans to decorate the tomb chamber with these arias and employ them as a means to assist the transcendence of the deceased. It is also notable that the structure of this *zhugongdiao* medley echoes that of a ballad written on a Cizhou pillow of the same time, considering that they both admonish their viewers with historical lessons, then move to describe the pleasant, free recluse or immortal life (Figure 2.7). Their similarity suggests that these kinds of lyrical or theatrical expressions were popular in daily life in Jin and Yuan Pingyang.²³ Hence, the interior decoration of this tomb is more than the private choice of the Tian family, but it also exemplifies a local preference formed under the influence of vernacular theater and popular religion. The following section further discusses the teachings of theatricality and

²¹ Because the Eight Immortals helped those poor in need, local commoners loved their stories, plays, and pictures. As introduced by Stephen Little, the earliest depictions of these Daoist immortals all survive in Shanxi, such as these two sets of relief tiles and the mural at the Yongle Temple. See Steven Little and Shawn Eichman ed. *Taoism and the Arts of China* (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 2000), 22.

²² Yang Fudong, "Jin mu zhuandiao cong tan 金墓雕磚從探," *Wenwu shijie* no. 4 (1997): 69-72.

²³ Yang 2004, 91; Zhang 2001, 136-7. To the tune of "Red Embroidered Shoes" (Hongxiuxie 紅繡鞋), this ballad first describes the accomplishments of two famous historical figures, Han Xin and Zhu Gelang, commenting that their fame perished after their death. Then it mentions two literati recluses, Shao Ping 邵平 and Tao Yuanming 陶淵明, who enjoyed their free life in the mountains, as if immortals without restrictions or worries. Apparently, this ballad applies contrast to highlight the advantage of living a secluded life, free from pursuit of vanity or fortune. Its text is "韓信功勞十大, 朱客亮位治三台, 百年都向土中埋。邵平瓜盈亩種, 淵明菊夾籬開, 聞安樂歸去來。紅繡鞋"

It is notable that Tao Yuanming's story was converted into a Yuan drama, entitled *Yuanming Appreciates Chrysanthemum at the Dongli Garden* (*Yuanming dongli shangju* 淵明東籬賞菊). Li 1997, 118.

spiritual conversion embodied in these inscribed arias within the larger cultural and theatrical context of the time.

Theatricality and Spirituality in the *Zhugongdiao* Play

For the living members of the Tian family, the recorded text was a symbolic representation of a *zhugongdiao* performance with ceremonial and didactic significances. After looking at these signs on walls, these illiterate peasants could receive the implications of these arias, since they had listened to narrations or songs of similar content in their daily life. But why did they favor these arias and prefer them to decorate their tombs, or even dwellings?

It is noteworthy that twelve song-prose scripts known as “chantefables” were placed as burial objects in a local woman’s tomb (dated 1470s) near Shanghai. While explaining their inclusion in this tomb, Anne McLaren suggests that these printed scripts, similar to graphical representations of performance, functioned as substitutes for real performances.²⁴ She further asserts that the “performability” and “recitability” of these theatrical scripts was an important aspect of their attractiveness to the masses.²⁵ Equipped with familiar ballads and acceptable literacy levels, these arias could be read loud to a family circle or sung to a wide public. The thriving commercial theater and printing of the time also boosted the circulation of these dramatic texts in form of cheap books. It is no surprise that commoners living near Shanghai would buy these printed scripts from Beijing, hundreds miles away. Yet the evidence from Madame Zhang’s tomb, nearly

²⁴ Anne E. McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables* (Boston: Brill, 1998), 27-30; also see Zhou 2000a, 2-3.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 283-4.

three hundreds years before this lady's tomb near Shanghai, reminds us another factor that also accounts for the popularity of theatrical texts among the illiterate masses in pre-modern China—the religious teaching embodied in lyrics and arias.

In Jin and Yuan Pingyang, various plays had a profound influence on informing commoners of their world and history, and on shaping their religious views and beliefs as well. Thus the inscribed arias on walls, like their performance, obtained spiritual significance before the eyes of local viewers, whether or not they could read. In the case of Madame Zhang's tomb, its first aria reminds the viewers of the theatricality of life, by persuading that fame and fortune were illusory, heroes and commoners all return to the void after their lives end.²⁶ This aria is comparable to the prologue in the first act of the *Medley Play of Liu Zhiyuan's Story*, a well-known *zhugongdiao* play printed in Pingyang. Written in the mode of Shang and to the tune of *Huige*, this ballad reveals to the audience that war and chaos always existed in the dynastic cycles.²⁷ Even if the emperor had

²⁶ It seems that the deceased Madame Zhang was by no means the only listener to the suite of songs in her tomb. Her descendants would also have been an audience for the represented theatrical performance, reminded by these inscribed signs of similar plays in their daily life.

In fact, the tomb chambers were often accessible by the living in Jin and Yuan Pingyang. Local people would visit the tombs of their deceased relatives during construction or renovation, considering tomb construction and cemetery maintenance important affairs. For instance, most members of the Dong family were local peasants who lived in the same village. The earliest tomb in the Dong family cemetery is no. 101, which dates to 1173 and belongs to Dong Wan 董萬. According to inscriptions, twenty-five family members visited Dong Wan's tomb and inscribed their names on the chamber walls. These names include several nephews of Dong Wan, such as Little Uncle Dong 董小叔, who was the head of the village, and Dong Zhen 董珍, who was the father of Dong Hai 董海. See Houma gongzuozhan, "Houma 101 hao Jinmu 侯馬 101 号金墓," *Wenwu shijie* 文物世界 no.4 (1997): 18-21. As shown by Dong Ming's tomb, some families practiced group burials and reused the same tombs for decades; see Houma gongzuozhan, "Houma 102 hao Jinmu 侯馬 102 号金墓," *Wenwu shijie* no.4 (1997): 17-27. Also, the Dong'ercun tomb demonstrates that some descendants would reenter their family's tombs to sweep the chamber and conduct ancestral rites during the Qingming festival. Chapter Three will introduce these tombs in detail.

²⁷ Here is my brief translation of the text: "Looking towards the window at a leisure time, [I] review classical and historical books. Browsing the history of the past seventeen dynasties, from the ancient times to the modern periods, there were always disunions and chaos. Gonggong angrily clashed on the Buzhou Mountain, Chiyu interrupted the human world, and King Tang of the Shang invaded King Jie of the Xia. King Wu of the Zhou sent his troops to take over the throne of King Zhou of the Shang. The states of Wu and Yue overthrew each other's regimes, and then the seven states fought each other [during the

enough luck to found his dynasty and keep it for hundreds of years, disorder and turmoil would eventually disturb the regime and cause its decline. No wonder Pingyang people remembered these stories in theater and enjoyed them in the decorative arts, or brought their images into tombs. As seen on a relief tile found in tomb no. 65H4M102 in Houma, four players are using fake bamboo horses to perform a battle scene in a festival parade (Figure 2.8).²⁸ We cannot identify exactly which battle is represented, but viewers of the time probably recognized this image immediately. By having such a series of familiar images flashed before their eyes, the audience reinforced their common knowledge of history.

Typically, a prologue in Chinese theater would provide a brief historical review or an account of related figures and events in the past. It served primarily to introduce the theme of a play and fan the audience's interest for the performance that followed. During this quick review, the narrator would also help the audience learn about their history and

Warring States period]. After the states of Chu and Han gradually arose, it turned out that Emperor Gaozhu had a greater fortune. His regime lasted for four hundred years, except for [an incident] in the middle, when the treacherous official Wang Mang [stole the throne]. But Wang was completely defeated by Emperor Guangwu in the battle of Kunyang. Later, the Han Empire was divided into three kingdoms. [As the aftermath of the incident,] halberds and pikes were lifted continuously. Most sorrows were given to the dynasties of the Western and Eastern Jin, Chen and Sui, when alarming smoke was always seen [to alert to the offense of barbarians]. [Among] the twenty-one emperors of the Great Tang, Emperor Xizong listened to malicious words, resulting in the disorder of his court. The Five Dynasties then arose, with enduring turmoil full of hardships and famines. Conclusion: since the riot of Huang Chao, the land had been wasted for more than fifty years. People all over the country seriously suffered from wars and disasters.” See *Liu Zhiyuan zhugongdiao* (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, reprinted in 1958), 1.

“知遠走慕家莊沙陀村入舍第一”[商調·迴戈樂][引子] 悶向閑窗檢文典，曾披覽，把一十七代看，自古及今都總有罹亂。共工當日征於不周，蚩尤播塵寰，湯伐桀，周武動兵取了紂江山。併吞吳越，七雄交戰，即漸興楚漢。到底高祖洪福果齊天，整整四百年間社稷。中腰有奸篡，王莽立，昆陽一陣，光武盡除剪。末後三分，舉戈鋌不暫停閑。最傷感兩晉陳隋，長是有狼煙。大唐二十一朝帝主，僖宗聽讒言，朝失政，後興五代，饑饉□嚙艱難。[尾]自從一個黃巢反，荒荒地五十餘年，交天下黎民受塗炭。”

²⁸ For more on this tomb, see Houma gongzuozhan, “Houma 65H4M102 Jinmu 侯馬 65H4M102 金墓,” *Wenwu shijie* no.4 (1997): 28-40.

culture.²⁹ This frequent inclusion of historical stories at the beginning of theatrical performances reminds us of a similar theatrical practice in Medieval Europe, where Christian sermons often started with a historical or fictional anecdote, also known as a “cautionary tale”, with which the preacher attracted the attention of his audience. Preachers also used illustrations and plays to address complicated religious doctrine and moral issues.³⁰

In the second and third inscribed arias in Madame Zhang’s tomb, the judge-like narrator not only talked to the skeleton and the tomb occupant, but also talked to the descendants of the Tian family, helping to admonish them of their destined mortal life. Theatricality and spirituality were embodied in the rhetoric, allegory, and persuasion of these arias, which guided the living to discover the essence of their being and pursue spiritual salvation through prayer and meditation. In fact, the theater of the time often urged people to conduct religious exercises and warned them of various bad deeds. According to Zhou Mi’s 周密 (1232-1308) book *Words of a Retired scholar from the East of Qi* (*Qidong yeyu* 齊東野語), four actors performed the roles of wine, sex, fortune, and honor in a satirical drama in Sichuan. Through jokes to each other, they persuaded the audience of the harm in excessive pursuit of these vices.³¹ Notably, the famous Southern Song court painter, Li Song 李嵩 (fl. 1190-1230), painted *Four Delusions*

²⁹ In Jin and Yuan theater, various prologues often cover similar historical stories, but lead to different subjects and comments. In the case of Madame Zhang’s tomb, the first aria offers examples to convince the audience that, no matter what fame and accomplishment all those famous figures achieved; their pursuits eventually turned out to be pointless. In the case of the playbook *Liu Zhiyuan zhugongdiao*, the prologue introduces the story of Liu Zhiyuan, who rose to power at a time of chaos and continued the dynastic cycle by founding his own state.

³⁰ Wickham 1987, 110-1.

³¹ Liao 2007, vol. 1, 286.

(*Simitu* 四迷圖), which depicted four individual story scenes that represented respectively humanity's four vices according to popular belief of the time: lust for wine, women, money, and honor.³² The lost painting and play apparently relate to the moral persuasion of the second inscribed aria—human lust for earthly temptations actually drives people to pursue many pointless activities.

According to the record in Li E's 厲鶚 (1692-1752) *Catalogue of Southern Song Academy Paintings* (*Nan Song yuanhua lu* 南宋院畫錄), Li Song also painted at least three paintings of skeleton puppet players of similar composition on both silk and paper.³³ His fan-shaped painting, entitled *Skeleton Puppet Show*, depicts a mysterious subject at its center—dual skeletons (Figure 2.9). Lifting a skeleton marionette and controlling its movement with strings, a puppeteer in skeletal form is giving a show. Attracted by its movement, a toddler is crawling towards the marionette to grab it, while his maid hurries to stop him. The viewer of the painting is also the spectator of the puppet play, which includes multiple allegorical implications. The skeleton puppeteer and marionette remind the viewer of the unenlightened state of human existence, which is comparable to the life of a puppet manipulated by pulling its strings.³⁴ The child

³² Although the original painting was lost, Li E quoted a poem that discusses its content from Yuan Hua's 袁華 (1316-?) *Anthology of the Studio of Plowing and Studying* (*Gengxue zhai shiji* 耕學齋詩集). See NSYHL, vol. 829, 608a.

³³ Famous for his genre paintings and boundary paintings, Li Song was a court painter who served as a painter-in-attendance in the Painting Academy during the reigns of Guangzong (r. 1190-1194), Ningzong (r. 1195-1224), and Lizong (r. 1225-1264). For more information on this painter, see Ellen J. Laing, "Li Sung and Some Aspects of Southern Sung Figure Painting," *Artibus Asiae* vol. 37:1/2 (1975): 5-27.

Ellen Laing proposes that Li Song had at least three paintings of macabre themes, as recorded in historical texts. *Ibid.*, 11, note 21; also see Li E's *Nan Song yuanhua lu* 南宋院畫錄 (Taipei, reprinted in 1991), vol. 829, 602b (paper painting); vol. 829, 607a (silk painting).

³⁴ Idema 1993, 207.

approaching the skeleton marionette is probably a *memento mori*. The close distance between the boy and the skeleton implies the short span of life's journey from cradle to grave. This child's movement toward the skeleton marionette also signifies the final destination of mortal life that is impossible to stop.

The subject of skeleton puppet plays indicates an obvious influence of secular theater and popular religion on the creation of these paintings. For instance, Liao Ben believes that these paintings indicate the prevalence of puppet plays and local views of the theatricality of life.³⁵ Idema discusses the development of the subject of skeleton and skull in Daoist teaching and popular theater. He also suggests the possible influence of early Quanzhen Daoism on Li Song, considering the influx of immigrants to the Southern Song.³⁶ Kang Baocheng adds that Tantric Buddhism also contributed to the popularity of the skeleton theme in literature and theater, since this sect also used motifs and metaphors of the skeleton in its teachings.³⁷ Therefore, Li Song is by no means the only artist who painted this subject. The spread of macabre themes in religious and secular theater enabled the creation of these pictures imbued with visual metaphors of life and death.³⁸

³⁵ Liao 2003, 242.

³⁶ But Idema also points out that we might have overestimated the "originality and exclusiveness" of Quanzhen thought. Many such ideas were current outside Jin territory, where the teachings of the Quanzhen school had not yet become prevalent. Idema 1993, 213-4. When discussing Li Song's *Skeleton Puppet Play* in her dissertation, Jeehee Hong also points out that this particular subject cannot be understood solely in reference to a single religious doctrine. Hong 2008, 300-1. Thus, I use a question mark in the title of the third section, because the Quanzhen doctrine was not the sole factor leading to the inscription of the arias in Madame Zhang's tomb.

³⁷ Kao Baocheng 康保成, "Bushuo kulou huanxi tu 補說骷髏幻戲圖," *Xueshu yanjiu* 學術研究 no. 11 (2003): 127-9.

³⁸ Itakura Masaaki 板倉聖哲, "Skeleton, Illusion, and Theater: Representations of Life and Death from China こ髑幻戲—中國における「生と死」の表象," *Fine Arts Forum* 美術フォーラム, no. 2 (2003): 53-58.

Secular viewers of the time could have numerous chances to watch performances and view pictures of this and other similar subjects which are no longer extant.

It should be noted, however, that the skeleton was not a popular subject in Chinese painting, probably because most Chinese people would rather enjoy pictures of more pleasant subjects, especially those conveying wishes for a pleasant life and good fortune.³⁹ Although the skeleton was frequently used as an admonition subject in religious paintings and popular theater, the masses did not welcome depictions or parables of death in everyday life. Nor did they want to apply awe and fear in tomb space to persuade their descendents to stay away from temptation.⁴⁰ This could be a reason why text rather than image was used in Madame Zhang's tomb chamber, given that the visual representation of macabre or hell themes was still a taboo in mortuary art. Theatrical text was probably a better choice for the Tian family, because the inscription of arias had a similar instructive effect to that of the images but avoided any visually gruesome motifs.⁴¹ Influenced by the popular theater of the time, Pingyang people successfully transplanted ideas about the theatricality of human life and spiritual transcendence into

³⁹ Idema has noticed that the skeleton never became an important subject in literati art and literature, but that it had obtained popularity in religious art and popular theater. He further suggests that our knowledge of peripheral traditions, such as popular theater and folk culture, is fragmentary and incomplete. Idema 1993, 192-3 and 214.

⁴⁰ Avoidance of this theme in Chinese elite painting and mortuary art contrasts with the tradition of European art, in which skulls and skeletons were frequently used as *memento mori* in cemeteries and on sarcophagi to urge people prepare themselves for the unforeseeable moment of death. In particular, the skeleton enjoyed considerable popularity as a macabre subject in genre paintings and funerary art north of the Alps, as seen in the *danse macabre* murals and prints of *memento mori* themes. A famous example is the *Dance Macabre of Women* (Ms. fr. 995 of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), an illustrated book printed in 1491 (Figure 2.10). For more information, see Idema 1993, 193; Thomas Boase, *Death in the Middle Ages: Morality, Judgment, and Remembrance* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), 104-6.

⁴¹ A possible connection between image and text in the tomb space also call for further study of the reception of various inscribed theatrical texts in local cultural and religious contexts, if people of the time were able to experience contemplation and illusion just by looking at inscribed arias or by listening to the presentation of written scripts.

their tomb space. We have no surviving evidence of their household decorations, but it seems probable that Pingyang people also applied theatrical inscriptions to decorate their homes, considering that the Chinese often built their tombs by simulating their dwellings.

Theatrical Persuasion from the Quanzhen Sect?

The founder of the Quanzhen Sect, Wang Zhe 王喆 (1112-1170), also known by his religious name as Wang Chongyang 王重陽, employed storytelling and pictorial illustration to proselytize Quanzhen teachings. In the murals that depict his hagiographical stories in the Hall of Double Yang, which was dedicated to him at the Yongle Temple, we can see Wang Zhe displaying two pictures in his preaching to disciples.⁴² In the twenty-seventh scene, for instance, Wang himself painted a hanging scroll of a skeleton and showed it to Ma Yu 馬鈺 (1123-1183) and Sun Buer 孫不二 (1119-1182) in an attempt to persuade this rich couple to convert to the Quanzhen sect and leave their family (Figure 2.11). The inscription includes a poem entitled “Lamenting the Skeleton 嘆骷髏”:

How sad it is that everyone lives in pain and sorrow,
So I now have to paint a skeleton.
During their lifetime only lusting after sins,
They will not stop until they are like this! ⁴³

堪嘆人人忧里愁，
我今須畫一骷髏。
生前只會貪冤業，
不到如斯不肯休！

⁴² In the 26th scene of this mural program, for instance, Wang Zhe displayed a scene of the heaven to encourage the religious conversion of his followers. Zhu Xiyuan 朱希元 et al, “Yonglegong bihua tiji luwen 永樂宮壁畫題紀錄文,” *Wenwu* no. 8 (1963): 76.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 76.

Apparently, this poem shared a similar idea with the second inscribed aria in Madame Zhang's tomb.⁴⁴ Given that this and other similar preaching scenes were on public display near Pingyang, local people would have been familiar with pictorial subjects associated with Daoist theater, such as the skeleton that served as a visual reminder of the destination of mortal life. By showing death and heavenly scenes in their religious storytelling, Quanzhen priests often encouraged believers to leave the burden of family and pursue the eternal joy of immortality, either through religious exercises or reclusive life in mountains.

The original authors of the arias inscribed on the walls of Madame Zhang's tomb must have had considerable knowledge of Quanzhen teachings, or may even have been Quanzhen priests, because some of their subjects and allegorical concepts derive from tenets of the early Quanzhen sect. Their structure echoes that of a typical Daoist persuasion text, in which a transition always occurs from laments over human lust and sins to descriptions of the joyful life in the immortal land, thus propagating the exercise of Daoism. The second Quanzhen leader, Ma Yu, composed a poetic text on the subject

⁴⁴ This Quanzhen idea mainly developed from a tale of Zhuangzi 莊子 (369-286 BCE), an influential philosopher in early China. It is said that Zhuangzi encountered a skeleton on his trip to the countryside and had a conversation with it in a dream, in which he questioned the skeleton about the reason for his death and his experience in another world.

Wang Zhe addressed this allegorical theme in several poetic lyrics. For instance, Wang lamented a lonely skeleton lying by the road in a poetic work in the mode of *zhuyingtai* 祝英臺. "Drenched by the rain, blown by the wind all through and through, defenseless when the children trample you; you now regret your lifetime lack of good deeds!" He further questioned the skeleton, "Leisurely I was strolling on the countryside, when I saw a coffin with a broken lid. Inside a skeleton, oh white so white, alone so sad and sorrowful! For what reason was it lying by the road, so passers-by were free to have their say? In life he was not wise enough to cultivate himself, but now it was too late, too late!" [祝英臺. 詠骷髏] 無事閑行郊野過，見棺函板破。裡頭白白一骷髏，獨瀟灑愁愁。為甚因緣當路臥，往來人誹謗。在生昧昧了真修，這回卻休休。 See DZ, vol. 25, 721a; translation from Idema 1993, 204. In this and the following excerpts from writings of early Quanzhen masters, I followed Idema's translations with a few modifications.

of skeletons and the land of the immortals in his *Luster of the Hallowed Radiance*

(Danyang shenguang can 丹陽神光燦):

[He was] ashamed to go out begging in the streets,
But now shows his white bones without shame.
If he but would have realized that living we dwell in a house on fire,
And upon death fall in a dungeon dark,
He would have ripped the ash of his emotions,
And having left the family and free of any fetters practiced his austerities.
Oh luster of the hallowed radiance and occurrence of auspicious clouds!
Steadily walking toward the Isles of the Immortals.⁴⁵

恥向街前求乞，
到如今顯現白骨無羞。
若悟生居火院，
死墮陰囚，
決烈灰心，
慷慨捨家，
緣物外真修。
神光燦得祥雲，
褰步直赴瀛洲。

This and other similar Quanzhen texts draw our attention to the possible connection of the Quanzhen Daoism with popular theater of the time, considering their overlap of time and place. When theater culture flourished in the vast rural and urban areas of the Central Plains, the Quanzhen movement also thrived and penetrated local life and society during the Jin and early Yuan periods.⁴⁶ Wang Zhe formally claimed the title

⁴⁵ In DZ, vol. 25, 631c; translation from Idema 1993, 205-6.

⁴⁶ Chen Yuan 陳垣 is the first Chinese scholar who systematically studied the development of the early Quanzhen sect and its roots in both literati elite and lower classes. See Chen Yuan, *Nan Song chu Hebei xin Daojiao kao* 南宋初河北新道教考, firstly published in 1941 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1989), 20-23 and 34-37. Recent representative scholarship on the early Quanzhen sect includes Yao Tao-chung's (1980) and Vincent Goossaert's (1997) dissertations that focus on the development of this sect, Paul Katz's (1999) work on the cult of Lü Dongbin, Hachiya Kunio's (1992) study on Wang Zhe and Ma Yu, and Stephen Eskildsen's (2004) book on the teaching and practices of this sect's early masters.

of Quanzhen for his movement in 1167 at Ninghai 寧海 county, Shandong 山東.⁴⁷ After securing his base there, Wang led his disciples to preach in Henan in 1169, but died in Kaifeng a year later. His disciples, including Ma Yu, Wang Chuyi 王處一 (1142-1217), Tan Chuduan 譚處端 (1123-1185), and Qiu Chuji 丘處機 (1148-1127), continued to spread his teachings and convert believers to the Quanzhen sect. It soon surpassed other Daoist sects in popularity during the last quarter of the twelfth century.⁴⁸ The major regional bases of the Quanzhen Movement, such as Henan, Hebei, Shanxi, and Shandong, were also places where *zaju* drama developed its roots.

Similar to *zaju* drama, the Quanzhen sect was enthusiastically received by both the elite and the lower classes. On the one hand, the early Quanzhen masters were all educated and frequently associated with literati officials and recluses. They had left about twenty books of their teachings and anthologies, which were unmatched by the founding masters of other Daoist sects.⁴⁹ On the other hand, they were well connected with the

⁴⁷ Wang Zhe was born in a rich family in Shanxi and received a good education, but he failed to pursue an ideal official career through regional examination. Not satisfied with a minor position in the government, he began to practice rigorous Daoist self-cultivation in the Zhongnan mountains, where he lived and meditated for three years in a burial mound named “the tomb of the living dead (Huo siren mu 活死人墓)”. Then Wang set out to preach his ideas and established a base in densely-populated Shandong. This strategy, as pointed out by Paul Katz, was crucial to the success of the Quanzhen movement since it enabled this sect to attract a larger group of followers, given that Hebei and Henan were bases for two other sects at that time. In Ninghai, Wang successfully recruited seven famous disciples, including the couple of Ma Yu who were wealthy local elite. This devoted couple donated all their property to support the preaching of the Quanzhen doctrine. They also built a pavilion for Wang behind their residence, known as the Abbey of Complete Perfection (Quanzhen an 全真庵). See Qin Xitai 卿希泰 ed. *Zhongguo daojiao shi* 中國道教史 (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1996), vol. 3, 33-37; Paul Katz, *Images of the Immortal: The Cult of Lü Dongbin at the Palace of Eternal Joy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 69-70.

⁴⁸ Ren Jiyu 任繼愈 ed. *Zhongguo daojiao shi* 中國道教史 (Beijing: Zhongguo sheke chubanshe, 2001), vol. 2, 671. Compared to the Taiyi 太一 (Supreme Unity) sect that originated in Henan in 1130s and the Dadao 大道 (Great Way) sect that arose in Hebei during the 1140s, the Quanzhen sect was a relative latecomer.

⁴⁹ Qin 1996, vol. 3, 30 and 53. For a collection of their major books, see DZ vol. 25.

ordinary people at the lower strata of society. As demonstrated by Ma Yu's anthology, this Quanzhen leader wrote many poems to commoners of various professions, such as government staff members, craftsmen, doctors, peasants, and vendors, while preaching in Shaanxi.⁵⁰

Several factors contributed to the rapid growth of the Quanzhen sect in the Central Plains. First, its widespread popularity attracted the attention of Jurchen and Mongol rulers. Instead of persecution, this sect successfully won recognition and support from these non-Chinese rulers through a variety of means.⁵¹ Second, the Quanzhen leaders particularly emphasized the equality of Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, without assigning one a role superior to the other two. Wang Zhe required his disciples to read texts of the Confucian *Classic of Filial Piety* (Xiaojing 孝經), the *Buddhist Heart Sutra* (Xinjing 心經), and the *Daoist Classic of the Way* (Daodejing 道德經). By this means, Quanzhen teachings could attract more followers. Third, as Paul Katz and others

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 38-40.

⁵¹ Wang Chuyi was summoned in 1187 by Emperor Shizong (r. 1161-1189), who also summoned Qiu Chuji in 1188. Emperor Shizong's successor, Zhangzong (r. 1190-1208), summoned both Wang and Qiu several times around 1202. These Quanzhen masters discussed immortality with the Jurchen emperors and also performed healing and funerary rituals at the court. In addition, the Quanzhen masters successfully negotiated with the government and solved the crisis resulting from the court's restriction of numerous religious sects during 1190-1197. See Qin 1996, vol. 3, 42-44; Katz 1999, 71-72.

Qiu Chuji, the leader of the Quanzhen sect at the end of the Jin, perhaps contributed most to the development of the Quanzhen movement during the Mongol period. After analyzing current political circumstances, Qiu correctly realized the necessity for obtaining Mongol support after their foreseeable conquest of Jurchen and Chinese regimes. Declining several summons from the Jin and Southern Song courts, Qiu instead accepted Genghis Khan's (r. 1206-1227) invitation and marched on a two-year trip with his eighteen disciples to visit this Mongol ruler in the snowy mountains near the Hindu Kush in Central Asia. Impressed by Qiu's knowledge and cultivation, Genghis Khan not only granted him the authority to lead all Daoist sects in his empire, but also allowed the nation-wide construction of Daoist temples and the exemption of all Daoist priests' from tax and levy. Qiu and his successors strengthened the influence of the Quanzhen sect in both the court and secular society in the following decades. This trend did not slow until Khabilai Khan (r. 1260-1294) felt threatened by the over-growth of Quanzhen Daoism and instead promoted Tibetan Buddhism as a counterbalance. Nevertheless, the Quanzhen sect still maintained its popularity in the Central Plains and even regained favor at the court of Yuan emperor, Wuzong 武宗 (r. 1307-1311). See Qin 1996, vol. 3, 182-7; Katz 1999, 72.

have suggested, the success of the Quanzhen movement is attributable to popular faith in the spiritual powers and benevolent nature of the immortal patriarchs of the sect, such as Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 and the Eight Immortals 八仙. These patriarchs were willing to assist devoted believers to attain immortality and to help poor people in need.⁵²

Yet another major factor also guaranteed the spread of Quanzhen doctrine among people of all social strata. Namely, it employed multiple media to convey its tenets, including poems and songs, fiction and dramas, as well as pictures and prints.⁵³ Judging from Quanzhen textual records, for instance, early Quanzhen masters such as Wang Zhe, Ma Yu, and Tan Chuduan, often applied ballads and images in their preaching on the subject of the skeleton to hasten the enlightenment of reluctant disciples.⁵⁴ The success of visual and theatrical aids in Daoist persuasion is reflected in several poems written in response to viewing an image of a skeleton.⁵⁵ Daoist promotion also contributed to several plays about this subject during the Jin and Yuan periods.⁵⁶

⁵² Katz 1999, 74-76; for miraculous powers and hagiographical tales of early Quanzhen leaders, see Stephen Eskildsen, *The Teachings and Practices of the Early Quanzhen Taoist Masters* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 126-138.

⁵³ Katz 1999, 71. For instance, Vincent Goossaert studied the Daoist use of sermons and lyric texts and David Hawkes discussed Daoist factors in the popularity of Jin and Yuan dramas. For details, see Goossaert, “*La création du taoïsme moderne: L’ordre Quanzhen*,” Ph. D. diss., École Pratique des Hautes Études, 1997, 368-396; Hawkes 1981, 160-9.

⁵⁴ Idema 1993, 203-7. Wang Zhe himself painted a few skeleton images and wrote accompanying poems, as recorded in his anthology. See DZ, vol. 25, 710 b, 721a, 745c, and 754b. For Ma Yu’s poems on skeletons see DZ, vol. 25, 631c and 633a; For Tan Chuduan’s poem, see DZ, vol. 25, 851b.

⁵⁵ For instance, the above-mentioned poem written by Ma Yu is actually his response after viewing Wang Zhe’s painting of a skeleton. For more information, see Idema 1993, 205-7.

⁵⁶ For instance, Tao Zongyi’s *Taking a Break from the Plow* (*Chuogenlu* 輟耕錄) records numerous titles of Jin and Southern Song *yuanben* plays, including one on the subject of a skeleton. A Yuan playwright Li Shouqing 李壽卿 (2nd half of the 13th cen.) adopted the theme into a drama entitled *Singing While Drumming a Pot: Master Zhuang Laments a Skeleton* (*Gupenge Zhuangzi tan kulou* 鼓盆歌莊子嘆骷髏). In addition, Ming dynasty Daoists elaborated and applied the skeleton as one of the major

Various poems and lyrics warning the audience of vanity, lust, and death laid down a good basis for the audience to understand the allegorical inputs and religious implications of Daoism-related dramas in Jin and Yuan theater.⁵⁷ In the *Formulary of the Correct Sounds of an Era of Peace* (*Taihe Zhengying pu* 太和正音譜), a rhyming dictionary dated 1398, Zhu Quan 朱權 (1378-1448) introduced twelve categories of *zaju* drama, with two relating to Daoist teachings.⁵⁸ This classification actually suggests two facets of Jin and Yuan drama that supported the spread of Quanzhen Daoism. They could be deliverance plays that helped souls to ascend to heaven and informed the living of the wonders of Daoist transcendence, but at the same time were also didactic dramas that educated the audience about correct life style, free from earthly temptation, as well as the advantages of becoming a recluse.

Professor Yao Shuyi has estimated that about one tenth of surviving Jin and Yuan drama titles belong to these two categories. He also observes that about forty of some four-hundred drama titles listed in the *Registrar of Ghosts* (preface dated 1330) do as well.⁵⁹ These plays introduced deliverance stories of people from different social strata and promoted hagiographical tales of Daoist immortals helping ordinary people achieve immortality. They also propagated the ideas of reclusion in the mountains and

themes in sixteen-and-seventeen-century Daoqing 道情 (Daoist storytelling) performances. Idema 1993, 198-9.

⁵⁷ The didactic significance of theatrical images in Jin and Yuan societies will be the focus of the fifth chapter.

⁵⁸ THZYP, *juan* 1, vol.3, 24. They are ranked the top two among the twelve categories: the first category covers deliverance plays and stories of immortals; the second includes plays about recluses and hermits.

⁵⁹ Yao Shuyi 么書儀, "Yuan zaju zhongde 'shenxian daohua' xi 元雜劇中的神仙道化戲," *Wenxue yichan* 文學遺產 no. 3 (1980): 64-65.

undertaking self-cultivation. In particular, ordinary people were often transformed into Daoist immortals after Quanzhen patriarchs arranged several incidents that eventually convinced them to change their minds, as shown in the decoration of a Cizhou pillow that displays an episode from “A Bamboo-leaf Boat (Zhuye zhou 竹葉舟)” (Figure 2.12). In this famous Yuan drama, the Quanzhen master, Lü Dongbin, converted the reluctant literatus, Chen Jiqing 陳季卿, through a journey on a bamboo boat in his dream, into a Daoist practitioner who achieved final transcendence.⁶⁰ Like Lü, Wang Zhe and Ma Yu are also the protagonists of several Yuan dramas. Their multiple identities—Daoist master, literatus, and recluse—and their divine miracles easily caught audience attention. It is still an open question as to whether the Quanzhen masters purposefully created dramas to present Daoist teachings, but their teachings spread rather fast in conjunction with popular dramas and plays.

David Hawkes thus proposed calling these *zaju* dramas Quanzhen plays, which were secular in format and religious in content.⁶¹ Important concepts of Quanzhen teachings are embodied in various plays about religious conversion or hagiographical tales, including the Four Delusions and the Fire Courtyard (huoyuan 火院).⁶² He also observed a close relation between the rise of the Quanzhen sect and the development of popular theater on Daoist themes. To some extent, the popular plays of the Eight Immortals best represent the success of Quanzhen theater in Shanxi.⁶³ Although the

⁶⁰ YZJSSZ, 381-396.

⁶¹ Hawkes 1981, 168.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 160.

⁶³ Hawkes proposed that the popular notion of the Eight Immortals was influenced by some folk memory of Wang Zhe and his seven disciples, because the eastward and westward journeys of the

scripts of most of these plays have been lost, their popularity in local theater is still suggested by the prevalence of relief tiles and wall paintings of the Eight Immortals in local tombs and temples. Over the northern entrance of the Chunyang Hall at the Yongle temple, for instance, a wood panel picture shows *Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea* (Figure 2.13).⁶⁴ A similar scene is also seen on the surface of a Cizhou pillow, indicating the popularity of this subject in the decorative arts of the time too (Figure 2.14).

It is also worthwhile to note that some playwrights of Quanzhen plays were not Daoist priests, but literati scholars or government clerks influenced by Quanzhen teachings. For instance, Ma Zhiyuan 馬致遠 (c. 1250-1321) adapted previous tales into at least four important Daoist deliverance plays, including *Ma Danyang Converts Crazy Butcher Ren Thrice* (*Ma Danyang sandu Renfengyi* 馬丹陽三度任瘋子), *Dream of Millets* (*Huangliangmeng* 黃粱夢), *The Tower of Yueyang* (*Yueyanglou* 岳陽樓), and *Stories of the Daoist Chen Tuan* (*Chen Tuan gaowo* 陳抃高臥).⁶⁵ Luring the masses with the prospect of ascension to the land of immortals and enjoyment of eternal longevity, Ma's plays powerfully persuaded people to look through superficial realities and flee their predetermined fate. Though Ma was by no means a Daoist priest, it is most likely that Daoist ideas affected this educated playwright.

Quanzhen masters in the early days of their preaching are similar to the multiple trips of the Eight Immortals, who traveled from their islands of the Blest to the banquets of the Queen Mother of the West. See Hawkes 1981, 170.

⁶⁴ For more discussion of the motifs of the Eight Immortals, see Jing Anning, "The Eight Immortals: The Transformation of Tang and Song Taoist Eccentrics During the Yuan Dynasty," in *Arts of the Song and Yuan*, eds. Maxwell Hearn (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 213-29.

⁶⁵ Li 1997, 25-27.

These plays reflect a trend in which Daoism became integrated into secular society through theater, in which they often utilized a literati identity in creating their own public images. No matter what the social roles of the protagonists before their transcendence—for instance, butchers or prostitutes—they always suddenly became representatives of the literati after their Daoist transcendence.⁶⁶ At the same time, many literati scholars dedicated themselves not only to conducting self-cultivation but also to creating and promoting plays about religious conversion and immortal recluses.⁶⁷ In fact, both Daoist preachers and literati scholars invested their interest in converting the uneducated masses through the newly rising *zaju* drama. Their involvement enabled this performing art form and its various representations to profoundly affect commoners' life and culture in Jin and Yuan North China.

Summary

This chapter examines the symbolic and spiritual implications of the inscribed *zhugongdiao* arias in Madame Zhang's tomb within a larger theatrical and religious context, while linking them to pictures, performances, and Daoist teachings with similar themes. The use of theatrical scripts as graphical decoration in Pingyang suggests that local people, including those who were illiterate, could connect associated pictures, arias, and performances by viewing such symbolic representations of theater. The choice of a Pingyang family to inscribe arias in their tomb reflects the local search for mental relief and spiritual transcendence during the social turmoil of the Jin and Yuan periods.

⁶⁶ Yao 1980, 69.

⁶⁷ Chen 1941, 34; Ren Jiyu 任繼愈 ed. *Daozang tiyao* 道藏提要 (Beijing: Zhongguo sheke chubanshe, 1991), 8.

The rise of Jin and Yuan theater actually reflects a process in which *zhugongdiao* plays and *zaju* dramas developed their roots in local society by incorporating popular religious teachings into their scripts and performances. To some extent, the distinctive ways in which Pingyang people used and received theatrical scripts reveal the instructive and spiritual nature of local theater under the influence of Quanzhen Daoism during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Within this particular cultural and religious context, local people learned the power of representations of drama in various forms and purposefully utilized both scripts and pictures to instruct themselves and their descendents, as well as to communicate with their ancestors and deities. To further explore this distinctive aspect of Pingyang's visual culture, the next chapter will discuss how pictorial and sculptural representations of drama constituted symbolic theaters and transformed ceremonial spaces in local tombs.

CHAPTER THREE

Theater Presented Underground:

Zaju Scenes in Burials in Pingyang and Beyond

In addition to illustrations of theatrical stories and scripts of plays, representations of drama performances are also among Pingyang's distinctive theatrical records.

Archaeological excavations and field surveys have shown that Pingyang is probably the only region in North China that has preserved a wealth of theatrical representations in local tombs and temples. To date, more than forty tombs with *zaju* scenes in brick reliefs, wall paintings, and stone engravings have been found in Pingyang and its environs.¹

Since they often occur in intact mortuary contexts, these valuable visual records are much more than an indication of the flourishing state of theater culture of Jin and Yuan Pingyang. They are, in fact, primary sources with which to explore the cultural and religious significance of visual representations of popular theater in North China.

My discussion begins with a survey of major discoveries of *zaju* representations in northern Henan and southern Shanxi. This survey indicates that Pingyang people actually followed a traditional practice of incorporating scenes of musical performances in tomb space and adapted dramatic representations from Song mortuary art. But the particular ritual and burial culture of Pingyang enabled local people to utilize *zaju* representations differently and incorporate them into the pictorial and architectural

¹ Here I mainly give an estimate based on published archaeological reports. The actual number should be larger, since much of the data was still unpublished or had been destroyed by looting. For a brief summary of excavations before 1993, see Shanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo 山西省考古研究所, *Shanxi kaogu sishinian* 山西考古四十年 (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1994), 287-93. It mentions that more than two hundred Song, Jin, and Yuan tombs had been excavated in Shanxi by that time. Since then, more than one hundred fifty tombs have been unearthed.

programs of their tombs in an innovative way. The material from Pingyang's tombs, particularly that from the Duan family burials, will show that local people adapted *zaju* representations to obtain new symbolic significance by placing actor figures on miniature stages in the tomb space. Finally, an analysis of local traditional burial practices and ancestral rites will give some clues as to why such an innovation occurred in Jin and Yuan Pingyang and not elsewhere.

Discoveries in Southern Shanxi and Northwestern Henan

Judging from discoveries of performance scenes in Tang and Song tombs, contemporary theatrical practices seem to have been important in mortuary art. As new forms and styles of performing arts developed over time, musical and theatrical scenes in tomb spaces also developed. Performing arts of mid-Imperial China cover roughly three categories, including *yuewu* 樂舞 (music and dance), *biaoyan* 表演 (stage performances), and *shuochang* 說唱 (prosimetric forms).² These various performances were often represented in tomb space in the form of clay figures of clown actors, wall paintings of musicians and dancers, and stone engravings of ballad singers.³ During the second half of

² Wu Sheng proposes that the performances of music and dance mainly included *daqu* 大曲 (grand music), *faqu* 法曲 (religious music), *duiwu* 隊舞 (procession dances), and *zhuangta* 轉踏 (stomping songs). Theater performances included *canjunxi* (adjutant plays), *zaju* (variety plays), *kuileixi* 傀儡戲 (puppet plays), and *yinxi* 影戲 (shadow plays) etc. Performances of story-telling and picture recitation included *zhugongdiao*, *gongzici* 鼓子詞 (drum lyrics), and *pinghua* 評話 (expository tales). The boundaries between different performing arts were not strict. For instance, *daqu* could be either a performing *wuqu* 舞曲 (dance music) or a narrative *dayue* 大樂 (popular song). See Wu Sheng 吳晟, *Washe wenhua yu Song Yuan xiju* 瓦舍文化與宋元戲劇 (Beijing: Zhongguo sheke chubanshe, 2001), 61-75. There is also a brief introduction to the performing arts of the time in Wilt Idema and Stephen West's *Chinese Theater 1100-1450: A Source Book* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1982), 15, 56, and 83.

³ For more information on various performance scenes in Tang tombs, see Li Xingming 李星明, *Tangdai mushi bihua yanjiu* 唐代墓室壁畫研究 (Xi'an: Shanxi renmin meishu chubanshe, 2005), 167-

the eleventh century, *zaju* scene emerged in mortuary art as a new subject soon after this performing art thrived in Northern Song's urban centers. *Zaju* drama was highly synthetic and included a range of different stage performances such as dancing, singing, music, playing, acting, and story-telling. Its popularity made it a fashionable choice for the decoration of Song, Jin, and Yuan tombs in the Central Plains. Artisans typically assembled brick reliefs and clay figurines into a set of *zaju* actors performing in generalized role types, but sometimes they captured the spectacles of specific plays in stone carvings and wall paintings.

Although representations of *daqu* 大曲 and *shehuo* 社火 were also seen in Song and Jin tombs, this chapter mainly focuses on scenes of *zaju* performance to better explain the diffusion of and changes in theatrical representations in the visual culture of North China during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁴ To discuss the development of this subject in the mortuary art of Pingyang, a brief survey of *zaju* representations found in southern Shanxi and its neighboring area is necessary. In 1959, the first set of *zaju* representations was found in Pingyang (hereafter the Houma set) at a Jin dynasty tomb in

170. Li particularly proposes that the mural styles and themes of Tang tombs in southern Shanxi are closely related to those of the Tang capital, Chang'an, since there were frequent cultural and commercial exchanges between these two neighboring regions. Considering that murals of musical and dance scenes were often found in Tang tombs in Shaanxi, this tradition could have been introduced across the Yellow River to contemporaneous tombs in southern Shanxi. Li 2005, 109-114.

For illustrated histories of Chinese theater and a further introduction to entertainment scenes, see Liao Ben 廖奔, *Zhongguo xiju tushi* 中國戲劇圖史 (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2000), 1-15; and Liu Yanjun 劉彥君, *Tushuo Zhongguo xiqu shi* 圖說中國戲曲史 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001), 1-35.

⁴ Scenes of *daqu* performances, which often consisted of one or two dancers and a musical band, became dominant in Northern Song and Liao tombs. But the popularity of this subject declined in mortuary art during the following twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Liao Ben studied images of *daqu* scenes in his book *Xiqu wenwu fafu* 戲曲文物發覆 (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2003), 220-33. In addition, theatrical performances in folk rituals, generally known as *shehuo*, also came into fashion in Song and Yuan societies. Their representations were frequently shown in contemporary tombs, displayed either as an assemblage of individual players or as a procession of dance teams.

Niucun 牛村 village, Houma county.⁵ This tomb, dated 1210, has a miniature stage with five *zaju* actor figures set on its north chamber wall (Figure 3.1). Since it showed historians of theater the form of a Jin dynasty stage for the first time, this tomb soon became one of the most well-known Jin-dynasty tombs of southern Shanxi.⁶ With its vivid visual evidence, this model stage provides more precise and direct information about Jin dynasty stages than do the textual records scattered in stele inscriptions and drama books. These five clay *zaju* figurines sheltered in this miniature stage also have been frequently examined as typical Jin-dynasty actor figures in theater studies.⁷

During the following decades, six more tombs were excavated next to the Dong Brothers' burials in this family cemetery. Of particular interest is another miniature stage and a set of four actors that were found in nearby tomb no. 104 in 1965.⁸ In this tomb, however, the stage is located on the south wall, directly opposite the images of the tomb occupants (Figure 3.2). Although the supporting brackets of these two miniature stages are slightly different, their actor figures appear to have been made from the same molds,

⁵ This tomb that was excavated in January 1959 is designated no.1 of the Dong brothers' burials. Inside the chamber we can see a plaque over the entrance where a tomb contract was inscribed. It says that the Dong brothers purchased this tomb land from their relative in the same village and were buried there around 1210. Since the contents of the two deeds are similar, scholars cannot tell which brother owned tomb no.1. Here I regard tomb no. 1 as Dong Ming's tomb for the convenience of introduction. Houma gongzuozhan 侯馬工作站, "Houma Jindai Dongshi mu jieshao 侯馬金代董氏墓介紹," *Wenwu* no. 6 (1959): 50-55.

⁶ Although it is not known if this stage model was exactly copied from its aboveground prototype, historians of theater are still excited about its discovery, since at that point they knew no surviving stages of the Jin dynasty. Some scholars were even sent from Beijing to the site in Shanxi only one month after its discovery to study its representations of theater.

⁷ Zhou Yibai 周貽白, "Houma Dongshimu zhong wuge zhuangyong de yanjiu 侯馬董氏墓中五個磚俑的研究," *Wenwu* no. 1 (1959): 29-31.

⁸ Yang Fudou 楊富斗, "Shanxi Houma 104 hao Jinmu 山西侯馬104號金墓," *Kaogu yu wenwu* 考古與文物 no. 6 (1983): 32-39. This tomb is numbered 65H4M104, which means M104 in the Zone H4, excavated in 1965. Later, I will discuss another nearby tomb named 65H4M102.

suggesting the date of this tomb is similar to that of Dong Brothers. Then in the late 1970s, archaeologists found fourteen tombs and excavated nine of them in another family cemetery at Macun village, Jishan County, about 50km away from Houma.⁹ In this cemetery belonging to the Duan family of the Jin dynasty, six more sets of *zaju* representations were found, including miniature stages as well as figures of actors and musicians. In addition to these Dong and Duan family burials, numerous individual tombs or family cemeteries have been unearthed in Pingyang and its neighboring areas, with the majority of them located in Jishan, Xinjiang 新絳, Xiangfen 襄汾, and Houma counties.¹⁰ Theatrical representations in these tombs of southern Shanxi typically take the form of brick relief and carving, but there are exceptions, such as the Xilizhuang 西里莊 tomb in Yuncheng 運城 (Figure 3.3) and Pan Dechong 潘德冲 tomb in Ruicheng 芮城 (Figure 3.4).¹¹

Archaeological excavations have shown that the tradition of depicting musical performances had existed for a long time in the mortuary arts of southern Shanxi, but the

⁹ Shanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo, "Shanxi Jishan Jinmu fajue jianbao 山西稷山金墓發掘簡報," *Wenwu* no.1 (1983): 45-63. In addition to the Macun tombs, this report introduces another six tombs excavated in the same area. There are five tombs at Huayu (about 4 km northwest of the Macun tombs), and one tomb at Miaopu (about 20 km northeast of the Macun tombs). Two sets of drama actors, with five brick figurines in each set, were found in tomb no. 2 and no.3 at Huayu 華峪.

¹⁰ Shanxisheng kaogu yanjiusuo, *Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao* 平陽金墓磚雕 (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1999), 8-9.

¹¹ For instance, two drama performance scenes were painted in a thirteenth-century mural tomb at Xilizhuang in Yuncheng. A scene of performing drama on a stage pavilion was carved on the front panel of Song Defang's stone coffin, dates to the 1260s. An almost identical scene is also seen on the stone coffin panel collected at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. For more details, see Shanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo 山西省考古研究所, "Shanxi Yuncheng Xilizhuang Yuandai bihuamu 山西運城西里莊元代壁畫墓," *Wenwu* no. 4 (1988): 76-78; and Shanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo, "Shanxi ruicheng yonglegong jiuzhi Song Defang Pan Dechong he Lü zhu mu fajue jianbao 山西芮城永樂宮舊址宋德方潘德冲和呂祖墓發掘簡報," *Kaogu* no.8 (1960): 22-25.

zaju scene was a fairly new subject in Jin and Yuan tombs there.¹² Since no evidence suggests that Pingyang people had used *zaju* representations in earlier tombs, two questions arise: Where did Pingyang people get the idea of representing *zaju* scenes in tomb space? What was the purpose of incorporating a set of freestanding actors and a stage into the tombs' decorative programs? In order to answer these questions, scholars had to shift their attention to neighboring regions where earlier *zaju* representations had been found.

Northwestern Henan has attracted scholarly attention, since the earliest *zaju* representations all were found in Northern Song tombs in this region, south of the Yellow River, between Luoyang and Kaifeng. These representations include stone engravings, wall paintings, and brick reliefs. The earliest dated *zaju* scene appears on a stone coffin, which belonged to Zhu Sanweng 朱三翁, a local peasant buried near Luoyang in 1096.¹³ Carved in refined lines on a stone panel, a daily-life scene depicts a couple watching a *zaju* play in their residence, while attendants are serving them food.¹⁴ The corresponding

¹² The wall paintings of a Northern Song tomb in Houma evidence that the practice of illustrating musical entertainment for the afterlife of the deceased had existed in southern Shanxi before the introduction of *zaju* representation. Wan Xinmin 萬新民, "Houma de yizuo dai bihua Songmu 侯馬的一座帶壁畫宋墓," *Wenwu* no.6 (1959): 56-57. In addition, earlier Tang tombs have occasionally been discovered in southern Shanxi and a few images of musical performances have been found. As seen in the tomb of Xue Jing 薛儼 (dated 721) in Wangrong 萬榮 county, fragments of a wall painting depict an actor-like figure holding a zither. Li 2005, 112-4.

¹³ This coffin was unearthed in Xingyang 荊陽 near Luoyang, in the winter of 1978. This discovery suggests that representations of *zaju* scenes were first presented in the Central Plains in the traditional ways of two-dimensional stone engravings and murals, and then in the newer ways of assembled clay figures or brick reliefs of individual actors in a row. Lü Pin 呂品, "Henan Xingyang bei Song shiguan xianhua kao 河南荊陽北宋石棺線畫考," *Zhongyuan wenwu* no. 4 (1983): 91-96.

¹⁴ In this scene, three *zaju* actors are performing in a group, with a fourth staying behind. Among the three male actors of the group, a figure with a pointed hat is bowing to another figure on the left, who is holding a stick in his right hand and pointing back with his left hand. The third figure who wrapped his hair into a bundle is standing in the middle, but turning his face toward the right. An actor portraying a lady from the countryside stands behind them, holding her hands and facing towards the viewer. Servants are preparing food and grooming a horse on the far left.

image on the other side of the coffin depicts a procession departing from the residence to send the deceased to another world (Figure 3.5). Three ladies in the front are holding banners and a censer; they are walking in clouds, as if leading the procession in ascending to the heavens. Then, four monks playing musical instruments of cymbal and conch escort the deceased couple who are ready to leave for their new destination. The woman is holding her hands in prayer, while the man is looking back toward the house where he once enjoyed living. Apparently, artisans of this tomb treated this *zaju* performance as a family amusement to constitute a pictorial narrative from daily life to posthumous transcendence.

In fact, a *zaju* scene was often depicted as part of domestic life in residence scenes simulated in the tomb space, as exemplified in the wall pairings of Song Silang's 宋四郎 tomb in Xin'an 新安, Henan. This is another dated tomb with *zaju* representations that was found on the southern shore of the Yellow River.¹⁵ Seven walls of its octagonal chamber are painted with murals, including simulated windows and furniture, as well as banquet, kitchen, and rent-collecting scenes. The couple is shown banqueting on the north wall, while five *zaju* actors are depicted within a brick frame on the south wall next to the entrance, suggesting that they are performing for the deceased.

¹⁵ This tomb is now preserved at the Luoyang Ancient Art Museum, but its *zaju* scene, which measures 90 cm by 57 cm, is not well-preserved. Thus I cannot provide a clear photograph here. Judging from the partially damaged image of these actors, it seems that the third and fourth figures from the left are the Clown Duo of a Song *zaju* troupe. Additionally, the tomb inscription records the date as the eighth year of the Xuanhe 宣和 reign (1119-1125), the last moment before the Jurchen army was to conquer Kaifeng. Since there was no such year in official history, excavators speculate that it was instead the first year of the short-lived Jingkang 靖康 reign (1126). Yang Jianmin, *Zhongzhou xiqu lishi wenwu kao* 中州戲曲歷史文物考 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1992), 57-58.

Compared to the few scattered examples of *zaju* scenes shown in stone carvings or wall paintings, representations of *zaju* actors in brick carvings and reliefs are more frequently discovered in tombs of Northwestern Henan. These tombs often have a set of assembled brick tiles that present a troupe of *zaju* actors performing different roles.¹⁶ The finest examples of these representations were found in a late Northern Song tomb, which was excavated at Jiuliugou 酒流溝 in Yanshi 偃師, in April 1958.¹⁷ There are six brick tiles of different sizes juxtaposed on the north wall of the tomb chamber (Figure 3.6, hereafter the Yanshi set). The left three tiles represent five *zaju* actors, including paired figures on two square bricks and a single figure on a rectangular one. The right three depict female attendants engaged in various domestic activities, including cutting fish, boiling soup, and holding a wine container. These figures involved in different domestic activities served different functions in the afterlife of the tomb occupants: the *zaju* actors were there for their amusement, while the female attendants were there to serve them.¹⁸

The discovery of the brick tiles of this tomb also enabled scholars of the 1960s to confirm the provenance of another five bricks, formerly in the collection of Fang Ruo 方若, Zhejiang 浙江, and now in the National Museum of China, Beijing.¹⁹ On one brick

¹⁶ Discoveries on both the north and south shores of the Yellow River in northwestern Henan have clearly shown that a typical production process for making a brick relief includes two basic procedures—mold pressing and hand refining. Once reliefs with outlines of a silhouette or contours of a figure were made from various molds, artisans would further carve surfaces of these half-made products to elaborate certain details, such as facial expressions and drapery. After these clay reliefs were fired in the kiln, additional procedures were sometimes conducted to refine the final product. Finally, according to different requirements and needs, artisans would assemble these brick reliefs and tiles on the tomb construction site and add some facial details with color and ink.

¹⁷ Dong Xiang 1959, 84-95.

¹⁸ Xu Pingfang 徐苹芳, “Songdai de zaju diaozhuan 宋代的雜劇雕磚,” *Wenwn* no. 5 (1960): 40.

¹⁹ These bricks all are believed to have been unearthed from burials in Yanshi. Four of them depict images of maids boiling tea, washing vessels, wrapping hair, and preparing fish. Particularly, the tile of

from this group, a female *zaju* actor is depicted in a slightly bowing pose with her hands held before her chest. The inscribed cartouche indicates that this actress is Dingdusai 丁都賽 (Figure 3.7). This brick is very famous in studies of Chinese theater, because Dingdusai performed for Emperor Huizong in a Shangsi 上巳 festival,²⁰ as mentioned by Mengyuanlao 孟元老 in his *Reminiscences of the Eastern Capital* (*Dongjing Menghua lu* 東京夢華錄, preface dated 1147).²¹ Since Mengyuanlao pointed out in the preface that all events recorded in his book occurred between the Chongning 崇寧 (1102-1106) and Xuanhe 宣和 (1119-1125) reigns, this brick with Dingdusai's image is likely to have been made at the end of the Northern Song. So too are those bricks found in the Jiuliugou tomb. These representations from late Northern Song tombs thus indicate that *zaju* performance and its representations rapidly spread in Henan during the last two or three decades before the fall of the Northern Song in 1127. Xu Pingyang, one of the pioneering scholars of Song-Yuan mortuary arts, further proposed that the popularity of *zaju* was related to the newly rising class of wealthy merchants and landlords in the late Northern Song and that the subject of *zaju* became a common choice in decorating their tombs.²²

slicing the fish is almost identical with the one that appeared in the above-mentioned Jiuliugou tomb. Given that they were likely copied from the same prototype, these bricks have similar dates and provenances to the Yanshi set. Shi Zhilian, "Bei Song funü huashangzhuan 北宋婦女畫像磚," *Wenwu* no. 3 (1979): 87-88; Liu Nianzi, "Song zaju Ding Dusai diaozhuan kao 宋雜劇丁都賽雕磚考," *Wenwu* no.2 (1980): 58-62.

²⁰ Also known as traditional Chinese Valentine's Day or Girls' Adult Ceremony Day, the Shangsi festival occurred on the third day of the third lunar month.

²¹ Meng Yuanlao 孟元老, *Dongjing menghua lu* 東京夢華錄 (reprinted in Shanghai, 1962), *juan* 7, 43.

²² Xu 1960, 41-42. Considering the material I discussed in this and the fifth chapter, his view is open to discussion.

The rest of the area of northwestern Henan, along the north shore of the Yellow River was part of the Southern Circuit of Hedong (Hedong nanlu 河東南路), which was administered by the Pingyang prefecture during the Jin dynasty. Archaeologists also found brick carvings of *zaju* performances there. For instance, a set of five actors was discovered in a Song tomb at Wangcun 王村, Wenxian 溫縣, in 1982 (hereafter the Wenxian set).²³ The two bricks on the northeast wall represent a kitchen scene and a musical performance, while the five bricks on the northwest wall all represent performing *zaju* actors (Figure 3.8). In addition to this set, two undated groups of brick carvings also were collected by the Wenxian County Museum.²⁴ The first group includes images of two actors and two musicians, all of whom are represented in low-relief. The second group comprises five *zaju* actors represented in high-relief.

Archaeological discoveries have revealed that *zaju* scenes were prevalent in Song, Jin, and Yuan burials in northern Henan and southern Shanxi (Figure 3.9), and that local workshops mass-produced and widely distributed generic representations.²⁵ It seems that their use was mainly aimed at creating a symbolic theater and a joyful atmosphere in the tomb space. Like maids carrying out in different activities in the domestic setting, these

²³ Zhang Siqing 張思清, "Wenxian Songmu fajue jianbao 溫縣宋墓發掘簡報," *Zhongyuan wenwu* no.1 (1983): 19-20.

²⁴ Yang Jianmin 1992, 53-54.

²⁵ When local artisans assembled these figures to present a *zaju* performance in tomb space, they did not follow strict rules. Sometimes role types were missing, and sometimes there were repetitions. For instance, a role type appeared more than once in tomb no. 104 in Houma. It is unknown if the repetition was made purposefully to represent a certain form or play, or just a random choice of the tomb builders. In addition, when comparing them with those of the nearby Dong Ming's tomb, Yang Fudou noticed that clay figures of the same role type were actually made from the same mold, except that the figures from tomb no. 104 were not decorated with color. Another set of actor figures in brick relief, which were found in nearby Xinjiang county in 1988, also have appearances and costumes similar to those Houma figures. This suggests that the same mold or a similar prototype was used among local brick-making workshops, or that a workshop had its markets in several counties. Yang 1983, 37-39.

actors were also supposed to serve the deceased in their afterlife. Unfortunately, there is no easy solution to the identification of specific dramatic content based simply on the appearance and regalia of a set of stereotypical actor figurines.²⁶

Features and Diffusion of Zaju Representations

Discoveries of new theatrical scenes since the late 1950s have significantly helped scholars to systematically study *zaju* representations that exemplify typical gestures, regalia, and clothing of major actor roles in Song and Yuan dramas. Among the five actors in a typical *zaju* troupe, the pair of clown duo are easiest to identify, though sometimes it is hard to distinguish the *fujing* 副淨 (secondary clown) role from the *fumo* 副末 (secondary jester).²⁷ Also, the *yinxi* 引戲 (play introducer) role is easier to recognize than the *zhuanggu* 裝孤 (role of an official) and the *moni* 末泥 (actor-director).²⁸ From a collection of typical representations of *zaju* actors from different

²⁶ Robert Maeda expressed similar concerns in his article on representations of actors. See his article "Some Sung, Chin and Yuan Representations of Actors," *Artibus Asiae* 41 no. 2/3 (1979): 135-6.

²⁷ In both the Yanshi and Wenxian sets, the pair of clown figures are in stomping poses, as if echoing one another in accordance with a certain musical rhythm. They both move with T-shaped steps, one foot forming a right angle with the other. In the Yanshi set, the whistling figure with a turban-like cap wears a baggy robe and loose fitting stockings. The other figure is looking at the birdcage he is lifting with his left hand, as if showing something to the whistling figure. The figure left of the clown duo in the Wenxian set is also whistling with the thumb and index figures of his right hand, while holding a flat paddle in his left hand. He has a cap with a bamboo twig inserted on its side. His companion, who wears a short robe and exposes his legs, bows his body as if waiting humbly, holding his hands in front of his chest.

²⁸ The central figure of the Wenxian set, possibly female, as suggested by a feminine face and small feet, twists her torso as if dancing. She wraps her left arm around her chest and her right arm around her waist. Her left hand lifts a fan-like object above her shoulder, while her right hand carries a ribbon. Next to her stands an official-like figure, or *zhuanggu*, who is holding a *hu* tablet. He wears official headgear and a robe with a round collar and wide sleeves. The male actor on the far left, who wears a hat possibly called the *Dongpojin* 東坡巾, or Su Dongpo's hat, plays the *moni* role. He is pointing to something with his right hand, while holding a scepter in his left hand. The central figure of the Yanshi set is unrolling a hanging scroll. His torso is bent forward as if telling a story to the viewer. The two figures on the right tile are talking to each other. The figure on the left turns his face to the official-like actor on the

periods, one can see a developmental sequence of actor figures across time (Figure 3.10).²⁹ This sequence indicates that the type of leading roles changed from the clown duo to the *moni* role. As we see in both the Yanshi and Jishan sets, the clown figures are the major roles in Song and Jin *zaju*. But the *moni* became the leading role in Yuan drama, as seen in the theater scene of the Shuishen Temple (to be discussed in the next chapter). The official-like figure at the center, probably a *zhuanggu* role, is performed by the leading female *moni* actor, with the clown duo standing on either side of her. This change suggests that the humorous dialogue and comic activities of the clown duo in a Song *zaju* had been replaced by the songs and monologues of the leading actor in a Yuan *zaju*. Evolved from Song and Jin *zaju*'s vaudeville and narrative content, Yuan *zaju* has more literary content and more complicated plots in its performance.

Since early *zaju* representations all were found in areas outside Pingyang, scholars tried to identify the origin of this new theme in mortuary art. Liao Ben was the first scholar to suggest that the *zaju* theme was introduced from mortuary art of Northern Song's capital cities, i.e. Kaifeng and Luoyang, to that of Pingyang.³⁰ Based on his analysis of the distribution of tombs with *zaju* representations, Ben proposed that *zaju* performance and its representations were introduced along the trade routes connecting

right, who is nodding. For more information about the *zaju* performance and its roles, see my introduction in the appendix.

²⁹ Zhou Huabin, "Guangshengsi Zhongduxiu xiqu bihua xikao 廣勝寺忠都秀戲曲壁畫新考," in *Pingyang Song Jin Yuan xiqu wenwu yanjiu* 平陽宋金元戲曲文物研究 ed. Che Wenmin (Yanbian: Yanbian daxue chubanshe, 2005), 210-2.

³⁰ Liao Ben, "Jinnan Jindai xiqu wenwu kaosuo 晉南金代戲曲文物考索," in Liao 2003, 112-3. Some historians of theater, such as Huang Zhusan, do not agree with Liao's idea of diffusion. Instead, they emphasized that *zaju* had its indigenous development in southern Shanxi at the end of the Song. See Huang Zhusan, *Xiqu wenwu sanlun* 戲曲文物散論 (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 1998), 43-46. Personally, I agree with Liao's opinion that *zaju* firstly thrived in urban centers and then spread to other regions, given that strong archaeological evidence supports this view.

northern Henan and southern Shanxi. Although there are several hundred kilometers between Kaifeng and Pingyang, dates and distributions of archaeological sites have indicated traces of routes from northwestern Henan to southern Shanxi, through which subjects of *zaju* representations gradually spread in mortuary arts. Those earliest *zaju* representations were all found in areas near capital cities south of the Yellow River, when *daqu* scenes were still in fashion in most provincial areas at the beginning of the twelfth century. Marginal areas of southern Shanxi, such as some counties in the modern Changzhi 長治 area, preserve *zaju* remains dated earlier than those of Pingyang. The scene of “Wang Gui’s *zaju* 王貴雜劇”, for instance, was discovered in a mural tomb in Tunliu 屯留, southeastern Shanxi.³¹ Dated 1135, this tomb is decorated with two registers of wall paintings (Figure 3.11).³² In addition, a recent discovery indicates that there was another route leading from Luoyang or Xi’an to Pingyang during the late Northern Song. This tomb was found at Panle 盤樂 in Hancheng 韓城, not far from an ancient port on the Yellow River connecting Pingyang and the Guanzhong 關中 region (Figures 3.12 a and 3.13).³³ A performance scene of seventeen actors and musicians is painted on the west

³¹ Two tombs with similar mural decoration were found in Tunliu in 1999. See Changzhi shi bowuguan, “Shanxi Tunliu Songcun Jindai bihuamu 山西屯留宋村金代壁畫墓,” *Wenwu* no. 3 (2003): 43-51 and no.8 (2008): 55-62. Interestingly, the tomb inscription mentions this tomb chamber as both an outside residence (*waizhai* 外宅) and a ritual residence (*lizhai* 禮宅).

³² The Twenty-Four Filial Piety Stories are illustrated on the upper register, with six images on each wall. Scenes from the daily life of the tomb occupants are depicted on the lower register. On the north wall the couple is sitting behind a table, as if watching the *zaju* scene on the opposite south wall, where two *zaju* troupes are painted on the two sides of the entrance. Each group includes six actor figures who all rush toward the center as if moving onto the stage. The excavation report named the performance according to the inscribed name “Wang Gui 王貴” of the second figure in each group. But we do not know if these scenes show two troupes playing the same drama, or two acts of the same *zaju* play.

³³ The official report of this excavation is not yet published, but there is a brief news report in the *Guangming ribao* (*Guangming Daily* 光明日報, issue of April 11, 2009). This late Northern Song tomb has been moved for preservation to the Jingwei base of the Shanxi Provincial Institute of Archaeology. I will discuss this tomb in detail in next chapter.

wall of a small rectangular chamber. Accompanied by other supporting actors and a musical band, two pairs of clown duos are giving a comic play in the center.

Liao also suggested that representation of *zaju* was introduced from Kaifeng to other regions via different routes. For instance, some *zaju* representations were found in Southern Song tombs in Guangyuan 廣元, located on the border between Sichuan 四川 and Shaanxi 陝西 provinces (Figure 3.14).³⁴ In the border areas of Henan, Shanxi, and Hebei, some *zaju* representations, such as those from a Jin tomb in Anyang 安陽, Henan province, were also found (Figure 3.15). These tombs all are dated later than the late Northern Song tombs in northwestern Henan.³⁵

In addition to role types and diffusion routes, archaeological discoveries also show that Northern Song people had used a various types of *zaju* representations in their tombs.³⁶ This raises an important question: If models of all representational types were available, what were Pingyang people's preferences and why did they make the choices

³⁴ Since Guangyuan was an important port on the trade route connecting Sichuan and Shaanxi, it is believed that *zaju* was also introduced there from Kaifeng. Following a tradition of constructing stone tombs, local people used *zaju* representations in stone carvings. Representations of drama were also found in southern Song tombs in Luzhou 瀘州, Sichuan province. Representations of theater, such as ceramic figures and pillow decoration, were also occasionally discovered in Southern Song tombs in Jiangxi 江西 and Zhejiang. Liao Ben, "Guangyuan Nan Song mu zaju. daqu shike kao 廣元南宋墓雜劇、大曲石刻考," *Wenwu* no.12 (1986): 25-35; Sichuansheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, *Luxian Songmu 瀘縣宋墓* (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2004), pl. 47-50.

³⁵ This Jin tomb, dated to 1186, was found at Jiangcun 蔣村 in Anyang in 1982. Clay figures represent a couple, with two servants at their sides, watching a performance on stage. Judging from their clothing and make-up, it seems that the central figure is the major actress and the four males at her side are supportive musicians. Yang 1992, 64-66.

³⁶ Personally, I believe that archaeological excavations have demonstrated that Pingyang people had learned more than one medium for representing musical and theatrical performances in their tombs. Compared to those of brick carvings and clay figurines, however, few surviving murals or stone carvings of *zaju* scenes are found in local tombs. The absence of painted drama scenes in Jin-dynasty Pingyang tombs suggests that local people preferred brick tiles and sculpture to other mediums while using *zaju* representations in their tombs. Additionally, they more frequently chose high-relief carvings and freestanding figures than using low-relief carvings.

they did? Compared to the earlier *zaju* representations from northern Henan, we have found few *zaju* representations in wall paintings in southern Shanxi. Rather, they are typically found in high-relief and freestanding sculpture. Jeehee Hong believes that Shanxi people gradually came to prefer representations in high-relief and freestanding figures rather than those in low-relief during the twelfth century. She further speculates that this preference evidences a demand among contemporary viewers for heightened animation in *zaju* imagery.³⁷ Yet previous discoveries also indicate that Song people had made and used *zaju* representations in both low- and high-relief simultaneously in their tombs.³⁸ Thus, it is most likely that local stylistic preference for these representations resulted mainly from the particular regional culture of Pingyang. As specific examples from local burials will demonstrate, displaying three-dimensional actor figures on miniature stages was a distinctive Pingyang phenomenon, which closely related to the distinctive mortuary and ritual culture there.

In sum, scholars typically used theatrical representations as visual evidence in theater studies rather than in the broader domain of visual cultural studies. Nevertheless, they had learned about the generic styles of dramatic representations and the continuity of Song-Yuan theater. They also learned the advantages and limitations of their material: the

³⁷ Hong 2008, 60-65. But one needs to take this speculation with caution, since there might be reasons other than changed taste and viewing habits leading to the prevalence of high-relief and freestanding figures in southern Shanxi.

³⁸ For instance, some *zaju* actors and musicians in brick carvings were found in two neighboring late Northern Song tombs at Xiaojie 小界 in Luoning 洛寧 county in 1973. There are three sets of twenty-five brick reliefs in total. The first set has ten square bricks, with each piece carved with a pair of players, including eight pairs of *shehuo* performers and four musicians. The ten bricks of the second set are only carved with individual single figures in low relief. The middle three *zaju* actors are of most interest in the third set. The one on the left appears in a dance pose, possibly the *yixin* role. The middle one has a fan-like object inserted in his waist, possibly the *fumo* role. The right one is a whistling *fujing* role. The dimension of the first set of bricks is 31 x 28 x 5 cm, the second set is 47 x 24 x 6 cm, and the third set is 47 x 23.5 x 6 cm. According to the size and color of these pieces, the second and third sets of bricks should come from the same tomb. Yang Jianmin 1992, 55-57.

visual information of these representations was more helpful in studying the changes of performance forms and role types than it proved to be in identifying the name of the specific play so presented. But it took scholars a longer time to recognize the impact of a distinctive Pingyang culture on the visual arts of theater and the necessity of discussing theatrical representations in this region's particular mortuary and ritual contexts.

Miniature Theater in the Duan Family Burials

The molded-brick tombs of the Duan family are among the most revealing Jin tombs discovered to date in terms of their distinctive representations of theater and elaborate decoration of brick reliefs. This family cemetery is located at Macun village, Jishan county, where the Duan lineage lived since the Northern Song. Fourteen tombs were located and nine of them were excavated during the late 1970s (Figure 3.16).³⁹ High-relief carvings and sculpture, which showed actors performing drama on stage, were found in six of the excavated tombs in this family cemetery. An inscription engraved in a stone panel on the north wall of tomb no. 7 provides us with important information about the cemetery and the lineage of the Duan family. The inscription reads:

Duan Ji's Note on Preparing His Tomb": [Among] the ten thousand things created by Heaven, the most marvelous are human beings. Whether noble or humble, virtuous or foolish, they are different. But they all have one cycle of life, from birth to death. I realize that I am at the end of my life and the everlasting night is coming. Thus I built this tomb in advance, as a place to shelter my coffin. I was born in the eighth year of the Zhenghe reign of the Song (the year of *wuxu*)(1118), and now am sixty-four years of age in the twenty-first year of the Dading reign of the Jin (the year of *xingchou*) (1181). My tomb is located below the position of my mother's tomb. My mother is Lady Li, who was widowed in the year of *bingwu* (1126) and died in the year of *xingsi* (1161). I have a son

³⁹ Three tombs were found by local farmers in 1973 and six more were excavated by archaeologists between 1978 and 1979. There is a brief archaeological report on the Macun tombs in *Wenwu* no.1 (1983): 45-83; and a detailed report on tomb no.4 in *Wenwu shijie* no.4 (1997): 40-51.

named Zuyu and a daughter named Sunliang, two grandsons named Ze and Yi, and two granddaughters. I built this tomb for my offspring as their place for ancestral ceremonies.

[Written in] the fourth month of the twenty-first year of the Dading reign.

Duan Ji, with courtesy name Jizhi, later changed to Hao.

Great-grandfather: [Duan] Yongcheng, had five sons

1st son: granduncle [Duan] Xian

2nd son: granduncle [Duan] Mi

3rd son: grandfather [Duan] Shichang; father [Duan] Liulang

4th son: granduncle [Duan] Wang

5th son: granduncle [Duan] Zhifang

段楫预修墓记: 夫天生万物, 至灵者人也。贵贱贤愚而各异, 生死轮回止一。予自悟年暮, 永夜不无, 预修此穴以备收柩之所。楫生〔巨〕宋政和八年戊戌岁, 至大金大定二十一年辛丑六十四载矣。修墓于母亲坟之下位。母李氏, 自丙午年守停至辛巳岁化矣。楫生祖裕一子、一女舜娘, 长二孙泽、译二人, 二女孙。故修此穴以为后代子孙祭祀之所, 大定二十一年四月□日。段楫字济之, 改颢字; 曾祖十耶(爷), 讳用成, 五子。大耶(爷)讳先; 二耶(爷)讳密; 三耶(爷)讳世长, 父六郎; 四耶(爷)讳万; 五耶(爷)讳智方。⁴⁰

From this text we know that the tomb occupant, Duan Ji 段楫, built this tomb in 1181 in preparation for his afterlife. His mother, Madame Li 李氏, who died in 1161, was buried in a nearby tomb with his father, Duan Liulang 段六郎, who died in 1126. It seems that this cemetery was mainly in use during the second half of the twelfth century and that, for at least four generations, members of this large family were buried in some sequence according to their genealogical relationship.

Judging from the styles of their decorations, the six tombs with theatrical representations, including tombs nos.1-5, and 8, are most likely dated to the Dading 大定 reign (1160-1190), if not earlier.⁴¹ They all have single rectangular chambers, with a

⁴⁰ See Shanxi 1983, 51-52.

⁴¹ Because of the lack of datable tomb inscriptions, we cannot identify each individual tomb corresponding to the family lineage and date it accurately. The original report speculates that most of the Macun tombs were built in the early Jin dynasty. Since Duan Ji's tomb (tomb no. 7) was built in 1181, tombs of his grandfathers and granduncles should have been constructed several decades before. In my view, however, this assumption is open to discussion. Given that many surviving members would rebuild

height of 3-4 m and a length of 2-2.7 m. The basic structure and style of all these tombs is similar. Variations in architectural decoration probably resulted from their construction by different workshops at different levels of expense. It is notable that the size of these tomb chambers is not grand, but their architectural decoration is imposing. Their interior decoration of molded bricks simulates the wooden architectural details of small-scale carpentry (*xiaomuzuo* 小木作). The elaborate brick decoration that extends from floor to ceiling can be divided into three parts: single- or double-tiered *xumizuo* 須彌座 (Buddhist-style *sumeru* bases), supporting a middle section of simulated columns, lattice doors, and semi-enclosed porches, surmounted by four- or five-*puzuo* 鋪作 bracket sets and eaves.

Generally, pavilions with high bases protrude from the south and north walls directly opposite one another, with the ones on the south wall simulating performance stages (Figure 3.17). These miniature stages actually exemplify different types of temple stages in Pingyang as they were recorded in historical texts, such as stele inscriptions regarding local ritual theater. The official archaeological report suggests that the stages in Macun tombs nos.1, 2, and 5 are the *wuting* 舞亭 (stage pavilion) type, since they are tall and narrow in proportion, and have high roofs (Figure 3.18). Those in tombs nos. 3 and 8

their ancestors' tombs decades later, we cannot assume that a tomb's construction date is the same as its occupant's death year, particularly when no tomb inscriptions survived.

Judging from the similar interior styles of these Macun tombs, it is more likely that many of them were built or rebuilt by family members within a couple of decades. Liao Ben has proposed that the Macun tombs were built after Pingyang recovered from the ravages of the Song-Jin wars, which were stopped under a peace treaty in 1141. Liao further suggests that some lavishly decorated Macun tombs were built quite late in the 12th century, since he found that brick figurines in tomb no. 8 were made from the same molds as those in a nearby tomb, which was dated by inscription to 1199. See Liao Ben, *Xiqu wenwu fafu* 戲曲文物發覆 (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2003), 105-6. Thus, I consider that the majority of the Macun tombs were built in the second half of the twelfth century, particularly during the Dading 大定 reign (1160-1190).

suggest the *wulou* 舞楼 (stage tower) type, since they straddle the entrance and have two stories (Figures 3.19 and 3.20). The stage in tomb no. 4 suggests the *wuting* 舞厅 (stage hall) type. Because its roof is not fully represented and its construction does not protrude out of the wall, it seems to be a performance hall widely opened on its front side.⁴²

The seated statues of the deceased couple are often positioned side-by-side in the north pavilions (Figure 3. 21). The south stages incorporate representations of actor and musician figures in brick relief or sculpture. A complete troupe of actors and musicians is represented in tombs nos. 1, 4, and 5 (Figure 3.22), while in each of the other three tombs, there is only one row of four or five actors. These actors are performing comic plays consisting of songs, dances, and dialogues.⁴³ We cannot speculate on the specific content of the drama performed, but we can identify the different role types represented by the actor figures' varied gestures, costumes, makeup, and props.

I turn now to a detailed analysis of one of these tombs: Tomb no. 4 is representative of the Macun tombs in terms of its interior decoration. Its rectangular chamber is not spacious and only measures 2.6 m by 2.1 m, with a height of 3.7 m (Figure 3.23a). The coffin bed, which has a dirt surface, covers most of the chamber ground. On this narrow space lay the remains of three bodies—a male flanked by two females—who were probably the husband and his wives.⁴⁴ Its entrance opens on the south wall, with a façade built as an independent pavilion. Under the four-*puzuo* bracket sets is

⁴² Yang 1992, 82.

⁴³ Maeda 1979, 138.

⁴⁴ Interestingly, no wooden coffins were used in the Macun tombs. Remains of the occupants were directly laid on a wooden board on the coffin bed. This practice was also seen in other Song and Jin tombs, such as the Baisha tombs. Su Bai pointed out that this was a common burial practice in Henan and Shanxi during the twelfth century. Su Bai 宿白, *Baisha Songmu* 白沙宋墓 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2002), 94.

a plaque flanked by two female immortals amid clouds (Figure 3.23b). It was not unusual for Song and Jin people to build an entry gate to the tomb chamber with a plaque hanging over the entrance, but the decoration of this plaque is characteristic, which probably suggests an entry to a grand hall or residence.⁴⁵

Inside this tomb's small chamber, the plain platform contrasts with the complicated ornamentation of the walls. At the top of the chamber walls, layers of bracket sets protrude under the roof, and the bottom portion of each wall is carved as an elevated *sumeru* base. These one-meter-high bases are similar in scale to those used in grand temples of the period. They are made of layers of bricks that were molded and carved to suggest multiple registers of decorations of various patterns and motifs, such as bands of lotus petals. Between the muscular demons who bear the weight of the bases, there are lions, horses, deer, and flowers set into individual openings within geometric frames (Figure 3.23c).⁴⁶ The use of such ornamented *sumeru* bases was popular in Jin tombs and can be viewed as a characteristic architectural feature. They helped to elevate the tomb space and make the interior decoration look imposing.⁴⁷ Because *sumeru* bases were often used in religious buildings of the time, their appearance in these tombs contributed to the creation of a sacred atmosphere.

Between the bracket sets and *sumeru* bases are walls divided by twelve brick columns, which suggests a courtyard with buildings of three bays on each side. Bays of

⁴⁵ There was no trace of characters inscribed on this plaque, but it is worth noting here that another plaque with an carved inscription was found over the entrance to a tomb dated 1126 in Xin'an 新安 near Luoyang. Its first line reads: "The outside residence (*waizhai*), tomb of the family of Song Silang 宋四郎家外宅".

⁴⁶ Houma gongzuozhan, "Shanxi Jishan Mucun sihao Jinmmu 山西稷山馬村 4 号金墓," *Wenwu shijie* no.4 (1997): 43.

⁴⁷ Shanxi 1999, 10.

the east, west, and north walls have pairs of lattice doors decorated with various geometric patterns. The central bay of the north wall is constructed as a protruding pavilion facing a performance stage on the south wall. The wall's recess on the top of its base provides extra space, which creates a porch with molded balustrades attached to its side.

Fifty-seven clay figurines, arranged in twenty-four groups, are situated counterclockwise along the porch surrounding the walls. Echoing performing actor figures in brick relief on the south wall, these figurines present a didactic set of "Twenty-Four Filial Piety Stories" in the tomb chamber. Marked sequentially with numbers and paragon names, they vividly illustrate a complete set of filial piety and family virtue (Figures 3.23e and 3.23f).⁴⁸ These figurines, which are the only set of freestanding sculpture that has been found so far in Shanxi, contribute to a strikingly vivid theatrical atmosphere and supplement the drama performance of actor figures in the tomb chamber.

The performance stage, which is positioned opposite the figurines of the deceased couple, is designed as an important component of the decorative and architectural program of the Macun tombs. As seen in tomb no. 4, a large standing screen is set on this two-tiered stage (Figure 3.23d). Four actors are performing different dramatic roles in the lower tier, while on the upper tier five musicians are playing drums, flutes, clappers, and pipes. The deceased couple is watching them, sitting side by side in the open room of the projecting north pavilion. A comparison of drama actors in the Jiuliugou and Macun tombs shows an obvious difference: Within the domestic setting of the Jiuliugou tomb,

⁴⁸ For example, the sculptural group designated as the twenty-third set, shows the sad moment of parting from the story of Liu Mingda, a filial son who sold his baby to save his sick parents. The buyer, holding the baby on a horse, is ready to leave. Liu is standing in the middle and consoling his wife. This filial piety story was adapted into a drama during the Yuan dynasty. See Shanxi 1999, 31.

zaju actors and female attendants on the walls portray different aspects of daily life, while in the simulated courtyard complex of the Macun tombs, actor figures were placed in sets on miniature stages, making their performance the focus of the tomb space.

More notably perhaps, the interiors of the Macun tombs are modeled on a building complex with a central courtyard, rather than representing a single dwelling with kitchen or other domestic scenes in its rooms, as seen in earlier Song tombs.⁴⁹ As excavators noted in their official archaeological report, the style and content of the interior decoration of the Macun tombs was different from those of earlier Song tombs.⁵⁰ The interiors of the latter often used low-relief carvings and murals to represent furnishings and architectural details attached on the wall surfaces, while interiors of the Macun tombs featured three-dimensional effects created by complicated assemblages of high-relief and sculpture.

The Zhao family tombs at Baisha near Luoyang are good examples displaying the typical decorative program of Song tombs. They feature domestic scenes, such as offering tea and preparing meals, as well as dressing and grooming in simulated living quarters (Figure 3.24).⁵¹ Instead of including numerous burial objects for use by the deceased, Zhao family members commissioned detailed murals and reliefs to create

⁴⁹ Chen Chaoyun, “Huanghe zhongxiayou diqu Jindaizhuanshimu tanlun 黃河中下游地區金代磚室墓探論,” *Zhengzhou daxue xuebao* no.1 (1996): 67.

⁵⁰ Shanxi 1983, 56 and 63.

⁵¹ Tomb no. 1 at Baisha, dated 1099, is modeled on a residential house, with a front rectangular chamber imitating living and dining halls and a rear hexagonal chamber suggesting bedrooms. Found in the front chamber was an image of musical entertainment on the east wall, echoing the banquet scene of the deceased couple on the west wall. These two scenes are accompanied by other domestic scenes in the rear chamber. Similarly, murals of tomb no. 2 showcase domestic activities in different rooms of a house, including a performance scene in which male and female performers are entertaining the deceased couple before the banquet table. Su 2002, 35-42; 73-75.

luxurious underground dwellings, including attendants and entertainers to serve them in the afterlife (Figure 3.25). In contrast, interiors of the Macun tombs simulate a courtyard-style building complex, including a main hall, side halls, and a stage.⁵² Instead of domestic scenes and various servants in residential settings, dramatic performances and stories of filial piety are highlighted in this courtyard setting. Also, the consecutive lattice doors in pairs decorating the walls suggest grand halls with three bays. They are different from the ordinary dwellings suggested by the wall with a wooden door and two windows of Song tombs.

Scholars have speculated on the implications of theater in the mortuary context. For example, Ellen Laing points out that, given the arrangement of performance stages opposite the figurines of the deceased couple, performances represented in the tomb space probably served as “deliverance plays” meant to escort their souls to eternal destination.⁵³ Based on records of Song funeral rites, Elaine Buck has proposed that the performing actors on the stage in Dong Ming’s tomb, together with the Eight-Immortal figures on the ceiling, were part of a combined pictorial and ritual program that was designed to help the deceased achieve immortality.⁵⁴ Performance scenes in tomb space are also reminiscent of a twelfth-century Buddhist painting that was found in the

⁵² Shanxi 1983, 47. We know little about residential architecture of the Jin and Yuan dynasties, but we can still obtain some ideas of local houses from extant Ming dwellings in Dingcun 丁村 village in nearby Xiangfen 襄汾 county. A dwelling, built in 1593, includes a main hall on the north, an entry gate on the southeast side, and side halls with two bays on the east and west. There is extra space at the back of the front hall, where drama can be performed for viewers sitting inside the main hall. Nancy Steinhardt ed. *Chinese Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 248.

⁵³ Ellen J. Laing, “Chin ‘Tartar’ Dynasty (1115-1234) Material Culture,” *Artibus Asiae* 49 (1988-89): 82. She mainly follows Wilt Idema’s idea regarding this issue.

⁵⁴ Elaine Buck, “The Eight Immortals on Jin Dynasty Tomb Tiles,” in Stacey Pierson ed. *Song Ceramics: Art History, Archaeology and Technology* (London: University of London, 2004), 114-5.

Karakhoto stupa discussed earlier. This scroll depicts the Moon and Water Avalokitesvara receiving the soul of a deceased gentleman. Accompanied by music and songs, the deceased is ascending to meet the Bodhisattva on his journey to the West Land (Figure 3.26). It is probable that the people of Pingyang regarded *zaju* scenes in the tomb space as deliverance plays as did other people across time and regions. And yet, we should not ignore that local reception of these theatrical representations depended on the decorative program and the particular mortuary and ritual traditions in southern Shanxi.

The use of miniature stages was a new element in decorating tomb chambers in Jin-dynasty Pingyang. Coordinated with other architectural components, these miniature stages were built as part of the building complex, right opposite the hall where the spectators were supposed to sit.⁵⁵ To some extent, the stage was used as an attention-focusing device in the tomb chamber. Together with its actor figures, it presented a symbolic theater space in the tomb and induced viewers' dramatic experience. In fact, the arrangement of miniature tomb stages in tomb space became a frequent practice in Pingyang and its environs during the second half of the twelfth century. To date, more than ten miniature stages have been discovered, with the majority of them located in the Pingyang region. They include seven miniature stages in Jishan and three in Houma, such as Jishan's Miaopu 苗圃 tomb no.1 (Figure 3.27) and Houma's Zhiyaochang 製藥廠

⁵⁵ Liao Ben suggests that wealthy families might have invited outside drama troupes to give private performances in their residence, and thus these stages might simulate private stages in private dwellings. See Liao 2003, 118-9. But it seems less likely that wealthy families built permanent, independent stages inside their dwellings during the Song and Jin, when drama was still in its early stages and most performances were given in village theaters or temple rituals. It was during the Ming and Qing that more individuals invested in constructing a large stage in their own residence complex.

tomb (Figure 3.28).⁵⁶ Another two, including the stage found in Qingyang 沁陽, dated 1202, and another one unearthed in Anyang 安陽 (Figure 3.15), dated 1186, are located in Henan province, but not far from the border of southern Shanxi.⁵⁷

Why did these Pingyang people painstakingly simulate a courtyard complex setting and place actors on miniature stages in local tombs? If they were intending to reconstruct a drama performance within a particular courtyard complex, what particular kind of building complex was it? Though the decorative programs preserve basic features of a local courtyard-style dwelling, the lavish interiors and miniature stages are more suggestive of a grand building complex for civic or religious use. During the Song and Jin periods, the three-bay room was acceptable under official restrictions on the dimension of commoners' dwellings, but the use of complicated double-eaves and five-*puzuo* bracket sets went well beyond officially approved architectural scale. Judging from the architectural details of these Macun tombs, some scholars suggest that their builders incorporated elements from aboveground temples to create this kind of simulated building complexes in tomb chambers.⁵⁸ Chen Chaoyun also proposed that the flamboyant *sumeru* bases and elaborate architectural bracketing of some Jin tombs should not be viewed simply as replicating interiors of ordinary residential houses.⁵⁹ Ellen Laing

⁵⁶ A set of four drama actors on a miniature stage was found in tomb no.1 at Miaopu in the town of Jishan. Shanxi 1983, 50; this Zhingyaochang set now is preserved at the Shanxi Provincial Museum, see Houma gongzuozhan, "Liangzuo Jindai jinnianmu fajue baogao 兩座金代紀年墓發掘報告," *Wenwu Shijie* no.3 (1996): 72-78.

⁵⁷ Yang 1992, 64-65 and 72.

⁵⁸ When introducing these miniature stages, the author has suggested the architectural similarity between this underground complex and aboveground family shrines in later dynasties. Shanxi shida xiqu wenwu yanjiusuo 山西師大戲曲文物研究所, *Song Jin Yuan xiqu wenwu tulu* 宋金元戲曲文物圖錄 (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1987), 68.

⁵⁹ Chen 1996, 66.

and David Johnson also have observed that the placement of the miniature stages in the Macun tombs is similar to that of local temple stages and suggested that the tomb chamber can be viewed as the equivalent of a contemporary temple courtyard. This resemblance suggests that tomb occupants were treated with theatrical performances in a way similar to how gods were treated at local temples.⁶⁰

Although buried in chambers with lavish interior decoration and overwhelming visual impact, occupants of the Macun tombs were not powerful officials or members of the privileged elite. Previously, if there was no epitaph inside, a practice almost exclusive to official use at that time, occupants of decorated brick tombs were always thought to be wealthy merchants and landlords. However, because of the recent discoveries of moderately decorated brick tombs with textual records, such as tomb contracts and burial inscriptions, scholars have now come to realize that the majority of these tomb occupants were actually well-to-do peasants and merchants. This phenomenon reflects the social reality of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century China. On the one hand, the state was less able to control tomb construction of affluent villagers and townspeople according to their social status; on the other hand, it was common for filial sons and daughters without social privilege or political power to build lavishly decorated tombs even though they could hardly afford to do so.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Laing 1988, 80-83; Johnson 2009, 153.

⁶¹ Liao Ben mentions that, beginning in the tenth century, rich peasants and merchants liked to spend more money on the elaboration of architectural details of their dwellings and tombs. Compared to the Song regime, the Jurchen government was less strict in controlling secular use of clothing, carriages, and housing. In particular, the Song-Jin wars of the 1120s and 1130s altered the previous social structure and lessened state control over the masses to the extent that there were no strict regulations about their clothing and housing based on social status. It was not until 1314 that the emperor Renzong 仁宗 (r. 1312-1321) of the Yuan dynasty restored statewide sumptuary laws to regulate commoners' use of daily objects. See Liao 2003, 157-8.

Scholars have speculated that the majority of the members of the Duan lineage were well-to-do peasants, and that a few might have been rich doctors, teachers, or village heads.⁶² This view is supported by a comparison with the well-decorated tombs of the Dong family from Houma, which was similar in scale to the Macun tombs.⁶³ It is not surprising that, like other rich households villages and towns, the Duan and Dong families counted on ancestral blessing and filial piety to maintain their lineages. Despite the fact that they were not notably wealthy, these filial members were closely involved in the construction of decorated ancestral tombs and in the routine maintenance of family cemeteries.

Ultimately, these considerations suggest the possibility that the Duan family decorated their tombs with a scheme different from that of a family dwelling. They purposefully applied elaborate architectural and pictorial programs to construct tomb chambers as an appropriate place to conduct family rituals, or even a space functionally equivalent to an aboveground family shrine. For them, representations of drama functioned significantly to create a ceremonial setting in tomb space. Next, a discussion of the funerary culture and ancestral rituals of Jin and Yuan Pingyang will constitute an important foundation for us to examine this possible use of representations of theater in local mortuary context.

⁶² This Duan lineage still lives in the same village today. We know from the tomb stele and the two inscribed bricks that some members of this family were local doctors. We also know that two famous Jin dynasty scholars, the Duan Brothers, were descendants from this lineage. See Tian Jianwen and Li Yongmin, "Macun zhuandiaomu yu Duanshi kemingzhuan 馬村磚雕墓與段氏刻銘磚," *Wenwu shijie* no. 1 (2005): 13.

⁶³ Earlier, I introduced the Dong brothers' burials and tombs no. 101, no. 102, and no. 104 in this family cemetery. I will come back to this important cemetery at the end of this chapter and Chapter Five.

Local Burial Practices and Ancestral Rites

The people of Jin and Yuan Pingyang believed that burial sites and funerary rites for the deceased could affect the fate of their descendents. To ensure that the living received their ancestral blessings, local people tried, on the one hand, to keep the deceased free from outside interruptions from evil demons, and, on the other hand, to conduct ancestral rites and demonstrate their filial piety to their ancestors. To ensure that deities would bring protection and that ghosts would make no trouble, they conducted funerary rites at family cemeteries and buried tomb contracts and grave goods in tombs. They also paid extra attention to finding a suitable location for the family cemetery and to arranging individual burials in appropriate ways. In addition, they offered frequent ancestral rites and decorated tomb chambers as family offering halls. In this regard, they most likely applied theatrical representations as a means to create a ceremonial theater underground.

Family Group Burials (*Congzang* 從葬)

Scholars previously emphasized the contrast between elite burials of the Song and those of the Tang and Liao, as reflected in tomb construction and inclusion of burial objects. If the Tang and Liao tombs pursued complexity and luxury, the Song tombs showed more simplicity and modesty. The abandonment of the Han-Tang tradition of aristocratic tombs reflects how Song scholar-officials propagated their new cultural values and ethnic norms over old ideas of an hereditary nobility.⁶⁴ However, this is only

⁶⁴ Dieter Kuhn, *The Age of Confucian Rule: The Song Transformation of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 153-4.

half the story; another trend arose in Song mortuary art. In contrast to the economy and simplicity promoted in burial manuals, rich Song merchants and peasants invested a lot in the construction and maintenance of their family burials, sometimes even excessively, as compared to their financial ability and social status.

This phenomenon frequently occurred in Henan and Shanxi and peaked in Jin dynasty southern Shanxi, where more and more people considered it to be an honorable deed to rebuild tombs or maintain family cemeteries for their deceased relatives. If a person was fortunate enough to improve his financial situation or earn a civil service position, one of the first priorities he would consider was to upgrade his parents' tombs or family cemetery. This person or his descendants would record such meritorious deeds in his tomb inscription. According to one such a tomb inscription, for instance, we know that Dong Hai's 董海 three sons built an elaborately decorated tomb to rebury him in 1196. These sons also recorded in this tomb Dong Hai's deed of maintaining the family cemetery. The inscription says that Dong Hai bought twenty-seven cypress trees and planted them in and around the cemetery in 1175. Then, in 1184, he and his brother, Dong Zheng 董政, erected a sutra pillar in front of the tomb of their father, Dong Zhen 董珍.⁶⁵ Dong Hai's services to his family thus became memorable deeds for his descendants and were carved in his tomb as a permanent record.

Ina Asim has pointed out that the use of tomb contracts and the belief in burial geomancy became prevalent during the Song, since people of that time particularly cared

⁶⁵ See Houma 1997, 33.

about securely obtaining a suitable site for their burials.⁶⁶ In her study of Song cremation practices, Patricia Ebrey also notices that there was a decline in the use of burial goods and an increase in the attention to locations of graves. She thus suggests that Song people cared more about *where* their ancestors were buried than *how* they were entombed.⁶⁷ The surviving *Earth Patterns* (reprinted in 1192) evidences their speculations of this development in burial culture since the tenth century. This burial manual, which was originally compiled at the Song court and republished in several versions by private publishers in Jin period Pingyang, offers important information regarding how people chose their gravesites, arranged burial procedures, and conducted funeral rites.⁶⁸ As shown in the preface of this book, the publisher asserted that, even though several versions of this book were available in the local market, his latest version had integrated collated texts and authentic learning of a knowledgeable local geomancer named Bi Lüdao 畢履道.⁶⁹ In fact, the major focus of this manual, with its many detailed charts and diagrams, is about locating optimal burial sites. Its wide circulation in several versions and the popularity of geomancers in Pingyang indicate that local people followed this Song trend and paid extra attention to finding a suitable site for family burials.

⁶⁶ Ina Asim, "Status Symbol and Insurance Policy: Song Land Deeds for the Afterlife," In *Burial in Song China*, Dieter Kuhn ed. (Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 1994), 322-33.

⁶⁷ See Patricia Ebrey, "Cremation in Song China," Chapter Six in her book *Women and the Family in Chinese History* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

⁶⁸ Wang Zhu 王洙 (997-1057), *Tujie jiaozheng dili xinshu* (reprinted by Zhang Qian 張謙 in 1192) (Taipei: Jiwen shuju, 1985).

⁶⁹ *Earth Patterns*, 2. We know that geomancers were popular in Pingyang because many tomb inscriptions have mentioned their work in helping decide the burial location. We can also speculate that these Pingyang geomancers contributed a lot to the development of geomantic theories and regional standards, considering that this book corrected some mistakes in the earlier Song version, as well as added new geomantic charts and methods.

It was a common practice to bury family members in the same cemetery in many places in China. The *Earth Patterns* made particular mention that, after selecting their family cemeteries, people needed to locate individual burials according to several charts, which had integrated the traditional *zhaomu* 昭穆 system to detect auspicious spots.⁷⁰ Yet it should be noted that, due to regional variation and individual preference, the actual burial practice of a particular locale was sometimes different from what a popular manual instructed, or is even completely omitted in textual records. In southern Shanxi, for instance, local families often did more than simply burying members in the same cemetery; family members of two or three generations would often share the same tomb. Many filial sons and chaste wives wanted to bury their deceased parents or husbands in decorated tombs, which often were kept in use for several decades and sheltered the remains of family members of several generations.

The family group burial seems to be a particular regional practice that was not recorded in the *Earth Patterns*. Yet archaeological discoveries provide the majority of examples of this kind of burial practice. For instance, the remains of seven bodies were found in a single chamber tomb (dated 1180) at Dalicun 大李 in Houma county.⁷¹ Nine human remains were found in a Jin tomb at Nandong 南董 in Xiangfen county, with six

⁷⁰ It is recorded in the *Zhouli* 周禮 (Zhou Rituals) as a traditional way of burying deceased family members. After burying the ancestor in the front, a senior family member (*zhao* 昭) would be buried on the left, and a junior member (*mu* 穆) on the right. Then this alternation would be repeated when burying family members of the following generations. See *Earth Patterns*, 394. It should be noted that there were many variations in local practice and archaeologists can seldom find a cemetery that strictly followed this rule.

⁷¹ See Houma gongzuozhan, “Houma Dali Jindai jinianmu 侯馬大李金代紀年墓,” *Wenwu shijie* no. 3 (1999): 3-7.

in the rear chamber and three in the front.⁷² Information about tomb occupants' relationships was sometimes recorded in tomb inscriptions, as seen in a tomb (dated 1279) at Wulingzhuang 吳嶺莊, Xinjiang county (Figure 3.29). There are representations of *zaju* and *shehuo* performances on the top of the south entrance to the square chamber of this tomb. Although this burial site has been disturbed, inscriptions on its walls record that the father, son, and grandsons, together with their wives, were all buried in this tomb according to a certain sequence.⁷³ Scholars originally thought it was a burial practice relating to non-Chinese people that settled in the region, but more and more archaeological evidence made them realize that this was a popular burial practice among the Chinese living under Jurchen and Mongol rule.⁷⁴

It was reasonable to build a family cemetery so that the descendants could conveniently maintain the tombs of all deceased members and regularly pray to their souls at the same graveyard. But why did members of many Pingyang families want to be buried together in the same tomb chamber? In addition to economic and practical considerations, this burial practice reflects local values of family unity and continuity, especially the belief that immediate family members should stay together in the afterlife. It also shows an impulse to keep family members all at rest under ancestral protection and thereby to preserve the lineage with ancestral blessings during a turbulent period.

⁷² Tao Fuhai 陶富海, "Houma Xiangfenxian Nandong Jinmu qingli jianbao 山西襄汾縣南董金墓清理簡報," *Wenwu* no. 8 (1979): 18-25.

⁷³ Ink inscriptions marked their respective positions in the rear chamber: The grandfather Wei Jian 衛堅 and two wives were laid on the west. Wei Zhong 衛忠 and his wife were on the north, while his son Wei De 衛德 and daughter-in-law were on the east. Bodies of the grandsons and their wives were in the two side chambers. Shanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo, "Shanxi Xinjiang Nanfanzhuang, Wulingzhuang Jin Yuan mu fajue jianbao 山西新絳南范莊、吳嶺莊金元墓發掘簡報," *Wenwu* no.1 (1983): 67.

⁷⁴ Houma gongzuozhan, "Houma Yuandai mu fajue jianbao 侯馬元代墓發掘簡報," *Wenwu* no. 12 (1959): 48.

This idea is supported, in part, by ink inscriptions on two bricks from a Ma family tomb in Houma, which was built by Lady Zhao (Zhaoshi 趙氏) in 1314 to rebury her deceased husband and her parents-in-law. These inscriptions clearly state the purpose of reburying the deceased was to ensure that surviving family members obtained good fortune and remained free from disasters.⁷⁵ Although no remains were preserved in nearby tomb no. 31, an ink inscription on the wall states that members of three generations were buried together in this chamber in the hope that their descendents would have no ill luck. It also says that the sons who built this tomb thereby demonstrated their great filial piety to the whole village.⁷⁶ Since this tomb, dated 1212, belongs to the same Ma 馬 family cemetery, we can deduce that this family had practiced this kind of group burial for at least a hundred years.

Ancestral Rites at the Graveyard

Graveyard rituals (*muji* 墓祭) of making offerings to deities and quelling unwelcome demons (*jishenzhenmu* 祭神鎮墓) were crucial to the peaceful rest of souls underground. The *Earth Patterns* emphasizes libation rites before and after entombment

⁷⁵ Lady Zhao, her son, and daughter-in-law also were buried in this tomb. The inscription on the brick at the northwestern corner reads: "...Lady Zhao gladly reburied parents-in-law, Ma En 馬恩 and Lady Gao 高氏, on the twelfth day of the third month in the first year of the Yanyou reign (1314). It is her hope that, after the reburying, they can rest together in this quiet place without interruption 趙氏於延祐元年三月十二日, 復番喜葬祖翁翁馬恩並婆婆高氏, 更願喜葬已後□□ 肅靜, 長幻合安...". The other inscription on the brick at the southeast corner states: "...Lady Zhao gladly reburied husband Ma Dahe 馬大和 on the twelfth day of the third month in the first year of the Yanyou era. It is her hope that the tomb construction will extend life and fortune, as well as help to avoid all misfortunes 趙氏於延祐元年三月十二日, 重番喜葬夫主馬大和, 更願施工增福壽, 助力彌千災..." *Ibid.*, 47-49.

⁷⁶ Houma gongzuozhan, "Shanxi Houma Jinmu fajue jianbao 山西侯馬金墓發掘簡報," *Kaogu* no. 12 (1961): 681-3. About thirty meters away from tomb no. 31, seven human remains are clustered in the main chamber of tomb no. 29, including one at the center, and two on the east, north, and west sides, with another two bodies in the side chamber.

of the deceased, such as the *mingtang* (bright hall)-altar ritual (*mingtang jitan fa* 明堂祭壇法).⁷⁷ This burial rite aimed at making petitions to surrounding deities and spirits, such as the Earth Goddess and tomb spirits, by simulating formats and procedures of official rituals in temples. A diagram with simple instructions in this manual illustrates how mourners and professionals conducted a libation ceremony within a sacred altar space in the cemetery (Figure 3.30).⁷⁸ Material evidence of this libation rite was also found in Jin-dynasty Shanxi, as seen in an excavation at Donglongguan 東龍觀 village in Fenyang 汾陽 county.⁷⁹ A *mingtang* 明堂 structure was discovered in a pit next to tomb no. 5 at the center of the Wang 王 family cemetery, accompanied by a tomb contract in red ink that

⁷⁷ *Earth Patterns*, 447-8; for libation after burial, see 478-9.

Zhang Zibing 張子兵 states that *mingtang* is a very broad and complicated concept in Chinese religious and cultural history. It originally meant an earth terrace where rituals were conducted to worship the sun and the moon, since *ming* 明 is associated with the brightness of the sunlight or moonlight, and *tang* 堂 means platform or terrace. Later, this term would refer to different things in different contexts. For instance, it referred to imperial shrines in official rituals, or a spot where the earth's energy (*diqu* 地氣) gathered according to secular geomancy. See Zhang Zibing's introduction in his *Mingtang zhidu yanjiu* 明堂制度研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005), 27-33 and 47-58.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 451; Valerie Hansen also presents this diagram and translates its instructions into English. See Hansen, *Negotiating Daily Life in Traditional China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 176-8.

⁷⁹ This excavation was conducted during the summer of 2008 and was briefly reported in the *Taiyuan Evening Newspaper* (*Taiyuan wanbao* 太原晚報) on Jan. 11, 2009. Two inscribed bricks and a storage jar were found at the spot of *mingtang*. The inscription on the bottom brick indicates the cardinal directions and auspicious spots for the graveyard, with that on the top brick recording the tomb contract. The jar holds some bronze coins and an ink stone, which probably show a wish to bring fortune and knowledge to the descendants.

The latest archaeological report published these tomb contracts in tomb no. 5 and in the *mingtang* pit. These two contracts, which were written by the same person and had the same content, state that the tomb was built in 1196 and that the occupant was Wang Li 王立, a townsman in Fengyang. Shanxisheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, "2008 nian Shanxi Fenyang Donglongguan Song Jin mudi fajue jianbao 2008 年山西汾陽宋金墓地發掘簡報 (A brief report on archaeological excavations of Song and Jin cemeteries at Donglongguan in Fenyang, Shanxi, 2008)," *Wenwu* no. 2 (2010): 30-32.

was identical to that in tomb no. 5.⁸⁰ This find demonstrates that Pingyang people of the time had applied this manual when conducting graveyard rituals that helped to provide a peaceful place for the deceased.⁸¹

In addition to libation rites in funerals, regular graveyard rituals designed to worship family ancestors had a long tradition in China. Wang Shanjun, a scholar of Chinese rituals, has asserted that family rituals and ancestral worship by the Song always had two complementary components, one including rituals at family shrines or ancestral halls at home, and the other consisting of ancestral rites at graveyards and practices of building family cemeteries.⁸² These practices are related to the popular belief that when sacrifices were offered with sincerity to ancestors, their spirits would come down and intervene with the living at their own whim.⁸³ But the *Earth Patterns* mentions little regarding *muji* rites at graveyards, despite its detailed notes on libation rites.⁸⁴ Similarly, when the famous literati scholar Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200) compiled his *Family Rituals*, a

⁸⁰ Archaeologists speculate that this cemetery was arranged in accordance with *mingtang*'s position, and that the arrangement of individual tombs in the cemetery followed certain rules. Since *mingtang* was the gathering place for earth energy and the residence of the tomb deity (*zongshen* 冢神), as the *Earth Patterns* introduced, it is the key landmark for defining both the parameters of a graveyard and the funerary ceremonial space.

The discovery of two tomb contracts also evidences a dual system in burial practices of the time. As noted by Prof. Hansen, for example, two copies of tomb contracts would be buried for different functions. One copy was buried on the *mingtang* altar for deities, while the other was buried in the tomb chamber and was supposed to be carried by the tomb occupants. Similarly, graveyard rituals had two kinds of recipients: the deceased and the deities. Hansen 1995, 183-5.

⁸¹ *Earth Patterns*, 470-1.

⁸² Wang Shanjun, "Songdai de zongzu jisi he zuxian chongbai 宋代的宗族祭祀和祖先崇拜," *Shijie zongjiao yanjiu* no. 3 (1999): 116-9.

⁸³ Julia Ching, *The Religious Thought of Chu Hsi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 66-67.

⁸⁴ Wu Hung points out that, though famous ancient ritual canons record funerary ceremonies in detail, they omitted instructions of graveyard rituals. In his opinion, graveyard rituals are different from funerary and burial rites. If funerary and burial rites were conducted immediately following a death, graveyard rituals were a kind of routinely conducted ancestral rite. See Wu Hung, "From Temple to Tomb: Ancient Chinese Art and Religion in Transition," *Early China* no. 13 (1988), 107, note 23.

book first edited in 1174 but not printed until after 1201, he did not discuss in detail ancestral rituals at the graveyard either.⁸⁵

The lack of textual records on regular *muji* rites at graveyards does not mean these practices did not take place in the secular world. On the contrary, they were prevalent among the masses during the Song and Yuan periods.⁸⁶ The Qing-dynasty scholar Zhao Yi 趙翼 (1727-1824) provided insightful observations regarding the spread of the *muji* tradition in the secular world.⁸⁷ He particularly noted that graveyard rituals were still

⁸⁵ The *Family Rituals* clearly states the need to maintain family unity and lineage by conducting ancestral rituals and building family shrines. It explains in detail the importance of setting up an altar for ancestors and ways of serving their spirits at home, but only briefly mentions ancestral rites at graveyards. If the burial manual, *Earth Patterns*, has an excuse to neglect ancestral rituals at graveyards, it seems strange that the *Family Rituals*, a book aiming to regulate correct secular practices for venerating ancestors, omitted this important part of ancestral rituals. For more details of Zhu Xi's introduction of *muji* rites, see Patricia Ebrey, *Chu His's Family Rituals* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991a), 211-2 (55-57ab). In this book Ebrey provides a translation of Zhu Xi's book with images of the full text. She also discusses certain issues of ancestral rituals in another book, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991b). It should also be noted that Zhu Xi lived in the South under the reign of the Southern Song, and that his ideas of family rituals were not as influential in the North as they were in the South.

⁸⁶ Archaeologists had unearthed architectural and sacrificial remains above Shang dynasty burial pits, such as that of Lady Fuhao 婦好 (12th cen. BCE). It suggests the possibility of graveyard sacrifices during the Shang dynasty. For more discussion, please see Yang Hongxun 楊鴻勳, "Guanyu Qindai yiqian mushang jianzhu de wenti 關於秦代以前墓上建築的問題," *Kaogu* no. 4 (1982): 402-6. During the Song and Yuan periods, the masses routinely went out to sweep their family tombs and make offerings to ancestors during the Qingming 清明 festival. This festival now is still a traditional holiday when people go out to sweep tombs of their deceased relatives.

⁸⁷ Zhao Yi, *Miscellaneous Critical Notes Taken in Leisure While Caring for the Parents* (*Gaiyu congkao* 陔餘叢考), *juan* 32 (reprinted in 1963), no. 3, 32ab. His comment reflects that, although it had been occasionally conducted during the Shang dynasty, the Han court's edict for conducting *Shanglingli* 上陵禮 (imperial mausoleum sacrifices) in the year of 58 AD was a key factor leading to the dissemination of graveyard rituals in secular society.

Based on Zhao Yi's discussion, Wu Hung has suggested a pivotal change in funerary practices during the Eastern Han (25-220), when the center for ancestral rituals was moved from royal temples to imperial mausoleums. This change profoundly affected the mortuary arts of this period because people paid more attention to graveyard rituals and funerary shrine decorations. For those who believed that ancestral spirits did not completely dissipate after death, the aboveground offering hall and the underground burial chamber functioned as a set, with the *hun* souls staying in offering halls and *po* souls living in burial chambers. Wu Hung further suggests that the practice of graveyard rituals declined after Emperor Wendi (r. 220-226) of the Wei dynasty (220-265) banned wasteful graveyard rites and burial practices. Wu 1988, 101-4.

practiced, though the practice of building aboveground shrines at graveyards declined among the elite after the Han dynasty. Graveyard rites became a statewide custom among commoners from the late Tang on, when traditional ritual institutions centering on the aristocracy were destroyed by political and social chaos. It seems that commoners could not build their own funerary shrines at graveyards as aristocrats and high officials could, but they instead conducted ancestral rites in family cemeteries.⁸⁸

The revival of family shrines among social elites during the Northern Song probably also boosted commoners' practices of conducting ancestral rituals and building funerary halls at graveyards. Regular or occasional family rituals at graveyards could have become a vital means for commoners to worship ancestral souls and petition for their blessings. They probably viewed it a useful strategy for bringing together family members and building a collective identity. By worshipping their common ancestors, family members could reinforce their bonds of kinship in a lineage.⁸⁹ This was the case for many Pingyang residents who were trying to preserve their family values and lineage under non-Chinese rule. As discussed earlier, Daoist teachings of the Quanzhen Sect also promoted ethics and filial piety in many regions of North China. When social elites were the only privileged population to have their own family shrines and conduct ancestral

⁸⁸ Wu Hung expressed a similar idea when he mentioned that the Western Han (206-9 BCE) court had to reinforce the role of mausoleum rituals because its founders had no royal origin. Wu 1988, 101. It is also interesting to consider why Zhu Xi did not introduce specific ways to build offering halls and conduct ancestral rites at graveyards. I believe that it probably has something to do with the popularity of graveyard rituals among common people of the time, which made it difficult to regulate these secular practices or make them exclusive to social elites.

⁸⁹ Chang Jianhua 常建華 has conducted a study on the practice of building offering halls at graveyards during the Yuan and Ming periods. He suggests that this practice was popular among the commoners during the Yuan, but declined in the early Ming. This is because commoners of that time had obtained more freedom to build their own family shrines, which were exclusive to social elites in earlier dynasties. See Chang Jianhua, *Mingdai zongzu yanjiu* 明代宗族研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmen chubanshe, 2005), 443-55.

rituals, commoners found rituals at graveyards suitable alternatives to ancestral rites at home. Some of them even tried to build symbolic offering halls in their tomb chambers.

Tomb Chambers as Offering Halls

Numerous tomb inscriptions have indicated that Jin and Yuan people viewed tomb chambers of ceremonial significance in their family rituals. For example, the tomb stele in Macun tomb no. 7 records that Duan Ji built his own tomb so that it would be not only a shelter for his remains, but an eternal site for his descendents to make offerings to him.⁹⁰ Although it was only a wishful idea to have routine family rituals in tombs, it was very likely that some descendents would revisit their grandparents' and parents' tombs and clean their chambers on certain occasions. A Yuan-dynasty mural tomb at Dongercun 洞耳村 in Pucheng 蒲城 in neighboring Shaanxi, offers evidence regarding a ritual family visit (Figure 3.31). The inscription, which is written in ink on a plaque above the images of the tomb occupants, records that, as the *jizhu* 祭主 (chief mourner) in the ancestral rite, the elder son brought all his wives and children to visit this tomb of his parents during a break in the Qingming festival in the second month of the sixth year of *Zhiyuan* 至元 reign (1269).⁹¹

⁹⁰ In this inscription Duan Ji said, "I realize that I am at the end of my life and the everlasting night is coming. Thus I built this tomb in advance, as a place to shelter my coffin.... I built this tomb for my offspring as their place for ancestral ceremonies." It is unknown exactly how long this tomb was in use, but it is possible that this Duan family's descendents re-entered the tomb chamber. Considering the local practice of burying family members together, many tombs were actually in use for decades.

⁹¹ This is a brief translation of the inscribed Chinese text, which reads "祭主長男閨童悉婦/二月清明日閑穴躡個真." Shaanxisheng kaogu yanjiusuo 陝西省考古研究所, "Shaanxi Pucheng Dongercun Yuandai bihuamu 陝西蒲城洞耳村元代壁畫墓," *Wenwu yu kaogu* no.1 (2000): 16-22. Prof. Nancy Steinhardt is also interested in this inscription and she told me that "*xianxue* 閑穴" could be translated as an empty tomb chamber.

It is worth noting that few burial objects were found in Jin tombs in Pingyang, even among those with elaborate interior decoration. The simplicity of burial goods was partially the consequence of the use of paper burial goods, but it also suggests that burial practices changed during that time.⁹² Qin Dashu, an archaeologist at Beijing University, has noticed that, compared to Tang tombs, burial goods in full sets and of luxurious quality were less common in Jin tombs in the Central Plains. Instead, altarpieces were often found, sometimes in sets of bowls, jars, and oil lamps. He further suggests that funeral ceremonies or ancestral altars could have been set up in these tomb chambers before they were permanently closed.⁹³

Ancestral rituals and offerings also were represented via images and texts in tomb chambers. For instance, an illustration of an altar setting was found on the front panel of a stone coffin unearthed in a Northern Song tomb at Baisha in northwestern Henan, a region with close cultural links to southern Shanxi. This altar set, including an incense burner, plates, and candlesticks, was displayed on a table in front of an empty chair, which probably signified the *lingwei* 靈位 (spirit seat) of the tomb occupants (Figure 3.32).⁹⁴ Another carved inscription refers to the making of offerings with fragrant flowers (*xianghua gongyang* 香花供养) in the chamber of a well-decorated Jin tomb near the Dong family cemetery in Houma. This text, carved on a simulated pillar next to the

⁹² It might partially result from a wider use of mural and sculptural facsimiles, such as brick imitations of furniture and images of household utensils, which were symbolically represented for use in the afterlife.

⁹³ Qin Dashu 秦大樹, *Song Yuan Ming kaogu* 宋元明考古 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2004), 151.

⁹⁴ Zhongguo huaxiangshi quanji bianweihui, *Zhongguo huaxiangshi quanji* 中國畫像石全集 (Zhengzhou: Henan meishu chubanshe, 2000), vol. 8, pl. 201.

seated statue of the tomb occupant beside an offering table, suggests that this tomb, dated 1151, was regarded as a place to receive offerings from the occupant's offspring.⁹⁵ Thus, as implied by the decorative programs, tomb inscriptions, and burial objects of these Song and Jin tombs, it is reasonable to speculate that Pingyang people built their tomb chambers as family ceremonial sites, where they could present theatrical representations as ancestral offerings.

Decorating Tomb Chambers with Theatrical Scenes

Dieter Kuhn has suggested that, since Song people inherited a deeply-rooted belief about the magic power of auspicious symbols and subjects, they often incorporated auspicious motifs, such as lions, deer, peonies, and herbs of immortality, into the murals and carvings of domestic scenes. The presence of these favorable decorations in tomb space, which implied good fortune and wealth, thus had supernatural significance for the living.⁹⁶ Song people also employed contemporary *daqu* scenes, which are also known as “*kaifangyan* 开芳宴” (grand banquet with performance), and furnished them with ceremonial implications in the mortuary context.⁹⁷ In this respect, Li Qingquan might be

⁹⁵ Houma 1996, 67. Similar texts also were carved on north chamber walls in other tombs, such as the tomb at Qucun 曲村 in Tianma 天馬 and another one at Qiaocun 喬村 in Houma. Yuan Quan thus speculates that many scenes of flower vases on tables actually imply a setting for making offerings with flowers. If he is right, this practice indicates that some Song and Jin people viewed tomb chambers not only as shelters where souls of the deceased lived, but also as places to pray for and receive ancestral blessings. Yuan Quan 袁泉, “Song Jin muzang maoque ticaikai kao 宋金墓葬猫雀題材考,” *Kaogu yu wenwu* no.4 (2008): 108-11.

⁹⁶ Dieter Kuhn, *A Place for the Dead: An Archaeological Documentary on Graves and Tombs of The Song Dynasty (960-1279)* (Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 1996), 343.

⁹⁷ The term “*kaifangyan*” was possibly originated from a poem written by the Tang poet Lu Zhaolin 盧照鄰 (ca. 635-689). Titled “*Shiwu ye guandeng* 十五夜觀燈” (Watching lanterns at the night of a fifteenth day), this poem says *jili kaifangyan* 錦里開芳宴 (the grand banquet held in groups of flowers). Su Bai applied this term when describing the three Baisha tombs, since *kaifangyan* provides a good

a pioneering scholar who reminded us of the possible ceremonial functions of these performance scenes. In his study of the Liao tombs at Xuanhua 宣化, dated about 1100, he proposed that the *daqu* murals, along with those of tea preparation, constituted a ceremonial setting for the rebirth of the deceased in the Buddhist pure land. He thus called for further study of the implications of *daqu* performance scenes in tomb space within specific local cultural and religious contexts.⁹⁸

Notably, Song and Jin people sometimes positioned a *daqu* scene directly in front of the spiritual tablet or symbolic seat of tomb occupants instead of their portraits. This practice often occurred in northwestern Henan, as seen in Zou Fu's 鄒複 tomb that was found in Jiaozuo 焦作 (Figure 3.33).⁹⁹ In this tomb, dated 1199, decorations of offering and performance scenes turned the tomb chamber into a place for conducting family

description of a daily life scene of singing and dancing in front of a hall inside which tomb occupants are banqueting. But later archaeologists often used *kaifangyan* to name images in Jin tombs without much further consideration, as long as they depicted a couple sitting in front of musicians and entertainers. They sometimes neglected the ritual implications of *daqu* scenes and took them as depictions of ordinary domestic entertainment. When re-examining some performance scenes indistinguishably described as “*kaifangyan*” in previous archaeological reports, one can find that some scenes were actually distinguishable from ordinary banqueting and entertaining scenes and probably had obtained ceremonial importance in local mortuary contexts. Qin 2004, 145-7.

⁹⁸ Six tombs of the Zhang family cemetery, which are located in Xuanhua and dated between 1080-1120, have murals of musical entertainment in their chambers. Li points out that representations of performance were purposefully included in these tombs, not only bringing a pleasant and auspicious atmosphere, but also becoming part of the ritual program in the mortuary context. The new significance of entertainment and attendance scenes in these Xuanhua tombs may have been closely related to the local life style and Buddhist beliefs in this northern frontier area around 1100. Li Qingquan, “Xuanhua Liaomu bihua sanyuetu yu beichatu de liyi gongneng 宣化遼墓壁畫散樂圖與備茶圖的禮儀功能,” *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 no.3 (2005): 126; also see a more detailed discussion in his book *Xuanhua Liaomu—muzang yishu yu Liaodai shehui* 宣化遼墓—墓葬藝術與遼代社會 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2008), 146-176.

⁹⁹ The tomb occupants were not depicted in domestic scenes this tomb. Instead, they were represented by two empty chairs behind two individual tables, with servants standing by. This scene, called by archaeologists as a *jisi tu* 祭祀圖 (ritual scene), echoes a *daqu* scene on the north wall constituting a ceremonial setting. Henansheng bowuguan 河南省博物館, “Henan Jiaozuo Jinmu fajue jianbao 河南焦作金墓發掘簡報,” *Wenwu* no. 8 (1979): 1-2.

rituals, echoing aboveground family offering halls. There are no images of ancestral spectators except their spiritual tablets in the engravings on wall. A replacement of this kind reflects that tomb builders cared about the symbolic presence of the recipients of a performance more than their actual representation in the tomb space. It is reminiscent of a section of Li Gonglin's (c.1041-1106) *Classic of Filial Piety*, which illustrates ritual vessels and offerings displayed in front of the spiritual tablets in a family shrine. On the two sides of the outside terrace, musical bands are ready to play ritual music with chimes and bells (Figure 3.34). By praying with devotion and making offerings with piety, filial sons and daughters would receive efficacious blessings from their ancestors.¹⁰⁰

As drama culture developed during the twelfth century, representations of *zaju* scenes were introduced from Henan to Shanxi. These representations soon became a popular theme in the decoration of local tombs and were welcomed by well-to-do peasants and merchants in Pingyang. Notably, one can observe in numerous tombs that the deceased couples were not represented as being amused by a drama during a leisurely banquet. Instead, they often had indifferent faces and sat in formal poses, as if detached from their surroundings. Their appearance actually reminds the viewer of deities receiving offerings at temples.¹⁰¹ Local people did not merely aim to represent scenes of the deceased *being* amused by dramas in the tomb space. They actually made offerings of

¹⁰⁰ Richard Barnhart, *Li Kung-lin's Classic of Filial Piety* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), ch.16.

¹⁰¹ As seen in the Zhiyaochang tomb, dated 1210, five actors are presenting a drama to the deceased couple, who are sitting beside a table side-by-side, with two attendants behind. Rather than appearing to be fully relaxed and seen in casual postures, this couple sits in quiet, self-restrained poses before the ongoing amusement. The husband holds a rosary in his hand, and the wife holds a sutra book. They are not having a banquet either, since only a large vase of flowers shows on the table. Similar to those flowers, the drama performance probably was presented to the deceased as an offering for their ancestral blessings. Houma 1996, 72-74.

amusement to the recently deceased and other ancestral spirits in an underground family ritual.

Indeed, a major innovation by Pingyang folk was the creation of a ceremonial theater underground by placing actor figures on miniature stages in a simulated courtyard complex. The particular burial culture of this region affected the use of theatrical representations and, consequently, the meanings of theater presented in local tombs. The choice to represent figures in high-relief and sculpture also closely related to the decorative program of tomb chambers, since such figures, in various appearances and poses, present a more vivid performance scene, echoing surrounding decorations of simulated three-dimensional buildings in tomb space.¹⁰² In addition, it was during the Jin period that village theater of various *zaju* plays became popular in southern Shanxi and that the architectural development of sheltered temple stages made available new representational models for local mortuary art. All these factors thus contributed to local people successfully incorporating *zaju* representations into the pictorial and architectural programs of their tombs.

Finally, an inscription on a pavilion-like entry gate at the rear chamber of Dong Hai's tomb, dated 1196, provides us with a specific annotation to the ceremonial function of tomb chambers in Pingyang. Found in 1964 in the Dong family cemetery in Houma county, eleven people from three generations were buried in this two-chamber tomb.¹⁰³ The three characters written in ink on the plaque above the entrance read “*qingyintang* 慶

¹⁰² Liao 2003, 103.

¹⁰³ The Dong Hai couple was buried with their eldest son and his wife in the rear chamber, while the other two sons, their wives, and a granddaughter were buried in the front chamber. Houma 1997, 33-35.

陰堂”, or Hall of Ancestral Blessings (Figure 3.35).¹⁰⁴ Traditional ritual practices embodied this idea that when ritual and music were offered with sincerity, the *ling* 靈 spirit would come, as well as their *qingyin* 慶陰.¹⁰⁵ Since the term *qingyin* specifically refers to the shadow blessings of ancestors, this inscription marks the function of the tomb chamber as a family’s offering hall, through which locals strengthened family bonds and appealed for ancestral blessings.

Therefore, it is reasonable to consider that the major purpose of presenting a scene of *zaju* performance in tomb space was to invite ancestral spirits to visit, and then to receive them with dramatic performances, in the hope of obtaining their protection. Pingyang villagers and townspeople viewed presenting drama performances as equally important, if not more important than making regular offerings of food and flowers in the tomb space. With well-designed decorative programs, they turned their burial chambers not only into memorial sites to demonstrate family unity and filial piety, but also into ritual spaces for communication with their ancestors.

¹⁰⁴ Kuhn mentioned a few interesting names of tomb chambers, such as *qingtang* 慶堂 (Hall of Blessings) and *shoutang* 壽堂 (Hall of Longevity) in his survey of Song tombs. I think the meaning of these names also provides hints to the ceremonial significance of interior decoration of tomb chambers during the twelfth century. Kuhn 1996, 342-3.

¹⁰⁵ The sentence “lingzhizhi, qingyinyin 靈之至, 慶陰陰” can be found in ritual songs at countryside temples (*Jiaomiao sige* 郊廟祀歌), as recorded in the “Treatise of Ritual and Music” in the *History of Han* (*Hanshu*. *Liyuezhi* 漢書. 禮樂志), 22: 457. It also appears in the collection of ritual songs at countryside temples in Guo Maoqian’s 郭茂倩 (1041-1099?) *The Music Bureau Collection of Songs* (*Yuefu shiji* 樂府詩集, reprinted in 1979), *juan* 1, vol. 1, 3. In addition, when describing offering songs in front of the *mingtang*, it mentions “while making offerings with piety, blessings will be given (*chengyi shangjiao*, *qingyin xiamao* 誠意上交, 慶陰下冒)” in the “Tenth Treatise of Music” (*yuezhishi* 樂志十) in the *Songshi*, 88: 1293.

Summary

This chapter discusses the use of *zaju* representations within the distinctive funerary culture in Jin and Yuan Pingyang, where local residents deemed their own fates and fortunes as closely associated with their ancestors' protection and blessings. They paid particular attention to the choice of an ideal gravesite, group burials of direct family members, elaborate decoration of tomb chambers, and proper burial and ancestral rites at the gravesite. These matters were all of importance for them to claim ancestral blessings. Influenced by this funerary culture, theatrical representations obtained particular ceremonial significance in local tombs.

As suggested by rich material and textual evidence, Pingyang people did not copy the Northern Song tradition of using *zaju* representations simply to entertain the deceased in the afterlife or to help their souls ascend to heaven. Rather, given the cultural context that I have developed in this chapter, Pingyang people preferred to treat these representations as efficacious offerings in tombs in order to obtain ancestral blessings. Their adaptation of theatrical representations successfully turned tomb chambers into eternal underground "family shrines," where deceased family members reunited. This particular phenomenon unfolds before us the close relation between theater and mortuary art in Jin and Yuan Pingyang. The next chapter will demonstrate how the uses of drama scenes in tombs echoed those at local temples, and how the distinctive local ritual context enabled *zaju* performance and its representations to achieve symbolic significances in Pingyang's temple fairs and village festivals.

CHAPTER FOUR

Theater in Festivals and Rituals:

Representations of Drama at Local Temples

Chapter Three has examined a major feature of theatrical representations in Pingyang's mortuary art—the placement of *zaju* actors on miniature stages in the tomb space. Influenced by their distinctive burial traditions and thriving theatrical activities, Pingyang people not only seriously treated the choice of family graveyards and the arrangement of individual burials, but also purposefully adopted *zaju* representations to create a symbolic theater in their underground “family shrines”. If tombs were places for individual families to evidence filial piety and appeal for ancestral blessings, then temples and shrines were places for villages and communities to show devotion to deities and spirits. In their temple fairs and festivals, local villagers and townspeople frequently offered drama to deities in exchange for their blessings for great fortune and good harvests. As demonstrated by architectural remains and ritual manuscripts, they built permanent temple stages and designed ritual procedures to regularly incorporate dramatic performances into their time-honored ritual traditions.

Pingyang's rich material records demonstrate the importance of studying representations of theater in both mortuary and ritual contexts. It also encourages our consideration of a set of related questions: How did local people enjoy theatrical activities in village festivals and temple fairs? How were representations of drama presented in a religious context, for example, in the hall of a folk temple?¹ How is the

¹ It is necessary to clarify the term “su miao 俗廟”, which mainly refers to village-based temples dedicated to folk and popular deities. Both “folk temple” and “popular temple” will be acceptable

placement of theatrical representations in tombs connected to those at temples? And ultimately, why did *zaju* drama, a newly-developed performing art form that originated in the urban centers of the late Northern Song, soon become an indispensable part of village theater and temple fairs in Shanxi? A visit to a theater scene at the Shuishen Temple, which has been extensively studied as an important visual record of Yuan *zaju* drama, serves as a starting point for discussion of these questions.

Presenting Performances in Tombs and Temples: A Pictorial Parallel

The Shuishen Temple, dedicated to the Water God of the Huo Spring 霍泉, also known as the eldest son of the God of Mount Huo, is located to the west of the Lower Monastery of Universal Triumph (Guangsheng xia si 廣勝下寺, hereafter the Guangsheng Monastery), where the famous Buddhist canon *Zhaocheng Tripitaca* 趙城藏 was stored.² This temple had been quite popular during the Northern Song, though its original construction date is unknown. The surviving main hall, where the statue of the Water God is enshrined, is a Yuan-dynasty building.³ According to this hall's stele and

translations, but I prefer to use “folk temple” here. The term “popular temple” has a broader meaning and includes many officially administrated temples for popular and regional deities. In particular, those state-owned temples had few opportunities to host theatrical performances in their regular rituals because of their stereotyped ceremonial regulations and liturgical protocols. Nevertheless, their local branches in the countryside, which were mainly maintained by local folk, sometimes had theatrical performances within their ceremonies.

² Jing Anning provides an English introduction to the history of this temple and the neighboring Guangsheng Monastery. See Jing 2002, 17-29.

³ According to the *Collected Records of Essential Affairs of the Song* (*Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿, hereafter *SHYJG*), compiled by Xu Song 徐松 (1781-1848), Emperor Huizong granted the plaque “*mingying* 明應” (numinous response) to this temple in 1113. See *SHYJG* (reprinted in 1957), vol. 20, *juan* 155, 815. But local people mistakenly thought its title was for the Water God who was also enshrined inside, and thus called him Mingyingwang 明應王 (Prince of Numinous Responses). Apparently, Dalang 大郎, Mingyingwang, and Shuishen all refer to the same person, the eldest son of the god of Mount Huo.

wall inscriptions, local people finished its wooden structure and statues in the fifth lunar month of 1319, with its murals finally being painted in 1324 (Figure 4.1).⁴

The murals of this temple depict scenes relating to the worship of the Water God and the rainmaking ritual. On the southwest wall is a scene illustrating a local tale of the God of Mount Huo as a patron god of the Tang dynasty, along with an idyllic scene of recluse life at the foot of Mount Huo. Scenes on the west and the east walls show rain petition and rain delivery themes respectively. They celebrate the Water God's numinous and prompt responses to human petition, i.e., rain always is delivered in time under his blessings. Some daily activities, such as people playing chess and selling fish, have been incorporated into these scenes to hint at human wishes for rain and a good harvest.⁵

See Huang Zhusan 黃竹三, *Xiqu wenwu sanlun* 戲曲文物散論 (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 1998), 172.

The temple was rebuilt soon after it was heavily damaged at the end of the Jin, only to be destroyed again in the 1303 earthquake, and once again rebuilt soon after. In addition to the main hall and platform from the Yuan dynasty, an entrance gate was rebuilt in 1924 on the original site. A performance stage, right above the arched gateway, was built at the rear side of this entrance gate. *Ibid.*, 176.

⁴ Extant inscriptions provide important information regarding the history of the Shuishen Temple and the Huoqu canals, agreements for administration and maintenance of irrigation systems, regulation of expenditures, and preparation of annual ceremonial offerings and rites. Huang Zhusan has listed the twenty-five titles and dates of all surviving stele and mural inscriptions at the Shuishen Temple. *Ibid.*, 194.

Six pieces of these inscriptions date to the Jin and Yuan dynasties. The *Nan Huoqu caihui xibi ji* 南霍渠彩繪西壁記 and *Bei Huoqu caihui dongbi ji* 北霍渠彩繪東壁記, both dated to 1324, were written above the murals on the south walls in the main hall. Four others were engraved on steles displayed along the exterior walls of the main hall, including *Duzhongguan zhenguo ding liangxian shui bei* 都總管鎮國定兩縣水碑 (1139), *Chongxiu Mingyingwang miao bei* 重修明應王廟碑 (1283), *Chongxiu Mingyingwang dian zhibei* 重修明應王殿之碑 (1319), and *Ji Huoshan Guangshengsi Mingyingwang qiyu wen* 祭霍山廣勝寺明應王祈雨文 (1367). For the complete contents of all these texts, see *Hongdong Jiexiu shuili beike jilu* 洪洞介休水利碑刻輯錄, eds. Huang Zhusan and Feng Junjie (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003).

According to the *Chongxiu Mingyingwang dian zhibei*, the reconstruction project was initiated by local villagers and monks and finally authorized to begin in 1305. Supported by local government, villagers who used water from the Huo Spring shared the major expenses and provided the labor (the rich donating the money and the poor contributing the labor). The wooden structure of the hall was built first, then villagers made sculptures, added roof tiles, and installed doors. Finally, a canal administrator (quzhang 渠長), Gao Zhongxin 高忠信, hired workers to build its dirt walls and construct its stone floors in 1319.

⁵ Jing Anning accurately observed that some images supplemented the theme of rain petition. For instance, the ball and chess playing scenes on the right side of the west wall, echo the petition scenes in the center of this wall. The Chinese character *qiu* 球 (ball) has the same pronunciation of *qiu* 求 (to beg); *qi* 棋

Flanking the statue of the Water God in the central niche, murals on two sides of the north wall depict the residence of the Water God and his female attendants. They echo the mural on the southwest wall that depicts the presence of an entire drama troupe on a stage.⁶

Scholars have already noticed that the murals of the Shuishen Temple are different from those at contemporary Buddhist and Daoist temples in Shanxi, as exemplified by the Buddhist Guangsheng Monastery and the Daoist Yongle Temple, where assemblages of deities in certain cosmic and iconographical order attract the most attention from the viewer.⁷ Laurence Sickman noted that the murals of the Shuishen Temple were remarkable among Yuan-dynasty temple murals because of their subject matter of folk cults as well as the inclusion of secular and dramatic scenes rarely seen in Buddhist mural compositions.⁸ Isobe Akira also notes that the unique pictorial program of the Shuishen Temple, which consists of scenes of a drama's four acts, distinguishes

(chess) pronounced similarly to that of *qi* 祈 (to pray). He called it “homophonic symbolism” and believes that this cultural phenomenon was quite popular in traditional China. It shows that local people were careful about the ways in which they made appeals for rain. To avoid agitating the Water God with direct demands and persistent requests, they would conceal their appeals within scenes of ordinary motifs and daily activities. See Jing 2002, 126-7. These implicit means of expression, originally meant to inform the wise deities, easily keep modern spectators from recognizing the symbolic meanings of some murals.

⁶ Chai Zejun 柴澤俊, “Guangshengsi shuishenmiao bihua xintan 廣勝寺水神廟戲曲壁畫初探,” *Wenwu* no.5 (1981): 86-91.

⁷ The Guangsheng Monastery and the Yongle Temple provide examples of typical Buddhist and Daoist temple murals of the time. For more introduction to these temples and their murals, see Jing Anning's introduction of the surviving Guangshengsi murals and their cosmological significance in Jing 2002, 201-224; and Paul R. Katz's introduction of the Yonglegong murals and their ritual and didactic functions in his book *Images of the Immortal: The Cult of Lu Dongbin at the Palace of Eternal Joy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 131-175.

⁸ When they conducted their architectural survey in Shanxi, Liang Sicheng and Lin Huiyin first introduced this mural to Chinese scholars. They noticed that the murals in the Mingyingwang Hall were secular, whereas murals from most existing temples only depicted Buddhist images. Laurence Sickman also visited this temple in the fall of 1934 and studied its murals and sculpture. See Liang Sicheng and Lin Huiyin, “Jinfen gu jianzhu yucha jilue,” *Zhongguo yingzao xueshe huikan* vol. 3 (1935): 41-54; Sickman 1937, 66.

itself from the murals of Buddhist deities at the Guangsheng Temple.⁹ Although the contemporary Yongle Temple has contiguous murals of hagiographical stories of Daoist patriarchs that include secular scenes and musical performances, it has no drama scene that occupies such a prominent position as the one at the Shuishen Temple.

Since the drama scene on the southeast wall plays such a distinctive role in the mural program of the Shuishen temple, it warrants closer examination: Ten *zaju* actors stand on the stage, with a female figure peeking from behind the curtain (Figure 4.2). The figures in the front row, who wear beautiful robes decorated with various patterns, are apparently major actors and actresses, while those in the rear, dressed in plain robes of a single color, are musicians and supporting players.¹⁰ Above the stage a banner reads, “Loved in the capital of Yao, the troupe of Zhongduxiu of Dahang, performed on the day of (no character written), fourth month of the first year of Taiding reign (1324) 堯都見愛 大行散樂忠都秀在此作場 / 泰定元年四月日.” Apparently, this mural scene depicts the

⁹ Idobe suggests that murals of the Shuishen Temple show plots of the drama, “Liu Quan Presents Pumpkins (Liu Quan jin guan 劉泉進瓜).” See Isobe Akira 磯部彰, “Kosho ji Myoo o ten no Gendai gikyoku hekiga no gadai ni tsuite 廣勝寺明應王殿の元代戯曲壁畫の畫題について,” *Tohogaku* 東方学 no.79 (1990), 50.

¹⁰ The female figure in the middle of the front row, evidenced by her delicate face, long fingers, and small lips, is the leading actress of this troupe, Zhongduxiu. Playing a *moni* role in the drama, Zhongduxiao is flanked by two male figures acting as the Comic Duo. Wearing a thick artificial beard and exaggerated, saw-like eyebrows, the left figure is dressed in a yellow robe that reveals his bare chest. His body is slightly bent and his left hand is raised, with the index figure pointing to something. His mouth is open, as if speaking to people on the right. On Zhongduxiu’s right, a *fujing* role figure wears a light blue robe with similar flower patterns decorating its shoulders, sleeves, and bottom hem. He listens humbly in response to his partner, clasping his hands in front of his chest. A stick used to hit the *fujing* role figure is tucked into the long red sash around his waist. Their costumes and gestures correspond to the traditional depiction of the Comic Duo.

The two figures at either end of the scene wear robes with dragon and crane patterns. Judging from their tiny lips, long eyebrows, and small feet, they are both actresses. The figure on the right is holding a saber with a long handle, comparable to the actor holding a long stick in the Wenxian set. These props are characteristic of *zaju* performance. The first figure from the left wears a dark green robe and lifts a fan with her right hand, while holding the bottom edge of her robe with her left hand, as if ready to move her feet to dance. This is a typical gesture of the *yinxi* role that is seen in the Wenxian set too.

presence of a drama troupe led by the actress Zhongduxiu 忠都秀, who stands in the middle of the front row. This famous troupe traveled from Pingyang to perform at this village temple in the fourth lunar month of 1324.

This mural is the only surviving performance scene in Pingyang temples, though similar murals perhaps may have existed in elsewhere. It was also one of the few reliable visual records of a Yuan *zaju* performance until the end of the 1950s, when more archaeological discoveries of theatrical representations in tombs became available to scholars.¹¹ Most scholars studied it only from theatrical and literary perspectives, discussing such issues as role types, theater settings, and performance formats.¹² Because they mainly treated this mural as a visual record of Yuan theater, these scholars easily overlooked the significance of its presence in the mural program of a folk temple.¹³ In other words, they treated this drama scene only as a depiction of a secular performance in everyday life. When scholars divorced these “secular” scenes from their religious context, they unfortunately missed their iconographical implications relating to the Shuishen Temple and its rainmaking ceremonies.

¹¹ It is notable that reliable visual records from archaeological excavations enabled scholars to realize that this mural scene and other *zaju* figurines were generic representations with neatly characterized role types. See Huang 1998, 124 and 198-9; Liao Ben 2003, 160-1; Zhou Huabin 2003, 211; Jeehee Hong 2008, 124; and Cai Zejun 柴澤俊, *Shanxi shiguan bihua* 山西寺觀壁畫 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1997), 71.

¹² For a brief review of basic theatrical issues relating to this mural, see Zhou Huabin 周華斌, “Guangshengsi ‘Zhongduxiu’ xiqu bihua xinkao 廣勝寺忠都秀戲曲壁畫新考,” in his *Zhongguo xiqu shi lunkao* 中國戲曲史論考 (Beijing: Beijing guangbo xueyuan chubanshe, 2003), 73-86. Also see Zhou Yibai 周貽白, “Houma Dongshimu zhong wuge zhuangyong de yanjiu 侯馬董氏墓中五個磚俑的研究,” *Wenwu* no. 1 (1959): 30-31.

¹³ Liu Nianzi’s and Chai Zejun’s introduction of the Shuishenmiao murals are two typical cases. Liu Nianzi 劉念茲 published the first theatrical study of this mural in an article in 1957. See Liu Nianzi, “Yuan zaju yanchu xingshi de jidian chubu kanfa 元雜劇演出形式的几点初步看法,” *Xiqu yanjiu* no. 2 (1957, reprinted in Che 2005), 8-42; Chai Zejun, “Guangshengsi shuishenmiao bihua xintan 廣勝寺水神廟戲曲壁畫初探,” *Wenwu* no.5 (1981): 86-91.

When considering this drama scene within a folk temple setting, a critical question arises: Why was a *zaju* scene depicted in this particular hall and how was this drama related to its deity and ritual? To answer these questions, Zhou Guoxiong focused on the rainmaking context and suggested that this performance scene was a celebration of the needed rainfall represented in other murals.¹⁴ This contextualization inspired Jing Anning to interpret the role of this drama scene as a portion of a rainmaking ceremony that is illustrated clockwise in the murals along the walls. Beginning with an officials' *budao* 步禱 (prayer on foot) scene on the southwest wall and moving to a rain-petition scene on the west wall, the narrative proceeds to depict the Water God's court residence on the north wall (featuring a balance of Yang and Yin elements). It then goes onto the rain-delivery scene on the east wall, finally ending with the entertaining drama scene on the southeast wall. Thus, according to Jing, the drama performance signifies an offering to the deity, a final step in the process of human petition for rain.¹⁵

Yet over-emphasis on a single narrative focusing on a rainmaking ceremony possibly led to the neglect of other possible symbolic implications of the mural program. Let's first zoom into the scenes on the east and west sides of the north wall that illustrate different aspects of the spiritual residence of the Water God (Figure 4.3). The left scene, *shangbaotu* 尚寶圖, highlights court ladies presenting auspicious flowers and treasures,

¹⁴ Zhou Guoxiong 周國雄, "Shanxi Hongdong Mingyingwangdian xiqu bihua xintan 山西洪洞明應王殿戲曲壁畫新探," *Huanan shifan daxue xuebao* 華南師範大學學報 no.3 (1985): 101.

¹⁵ Based on his detailed study of local rainmaking ceremonies, Jing identifies this mural as a depiction of a particular Yuan play, "Lü Dongbin's Love Affairs with White Peony (呂洞賓戲白牡丹 Lü Dongbin xi Baimudan)." Since this play is filled with characters and plots involving a Yin-Yang duet, its depiction has iconographical implications for a rainmaking ceremony. *Ibid*, 198-9.

while the right scene, *shangshitu* 尚食圖, features them serving food and drink.¹⁶ They serve as the background for the statue of the Water God in the central niche (Figure 4.4). In fact, in the eyes of contemporary viewers, the theater scene and its recipient, the statue of this deity, along with these offering scenes on the north wall, constituted a permanent ceremonial setting within the hall of the Water God, rather than simply representing a final step in a spring rainmaking ceremony.

Recent discoveries of offering scenes on chamber walls or coffin panels in Song and Jin tombs shed light on the pictorial programs of temple murals in southern Shanxi. The composition of the triptych scenes of the Water God's residence and the opposite *zaju* scene is akin to the visual tradition of depicting offering scenes in tomb space. Perhaps the most revealing evidence comes from a late Northern Song tomb at Panle 盤樂 village in Hancheng 韓城, Shaanxi.¹⁷ In the rectangular chamber of this brick tomb, remains of the tomb occupants, a couple, are lying on a decorated wooden bed on a platform—a burial practice similar to that seen in the Macun tombs in Jishan and Madame Zhang's tomb in Houma. Although its size is small, roughly 2.5 x 1.8 x 2.3 m, this tomb has elaborate murals on its walls. The north wall has two registers of images (Figure 4.5). At the upper level is an artificial stone with auspicious flowers, flanked by two standing cranes. At the lower level is a gentleman who represents the male tomb

¹⁶ Chai 1997, 70. When viewed from the front, these two side scenes and central niche form a triptych, with the female attendants in the murals relating to the central statue of the Water God.

¹⁷ The official report of this excavation is not yet published, but there is a brief news report in the *Guangming ribao* (光明日報 *Guangming Daily*, issue of April 11, 2009). I particularly visited this tomb in summer 2009.

occupant sitting in a frontal pose before an inscribed screen, attended by servants.¹⁸ On the left side, servants are busy preparing tea and dessert, while on the right, two doctor-like figures are selecting some medicinal ingredients to make dietary supplements or drug pills.¹⁹ The tomb occupant is supposed to be regarding the scene depicted on the west wall, in which two pairs of clown duos and a group of supporting actors and musicians are performing a *zaju* drama.

Another similar offering scene is found on the front panel of Yue Chongjin's 樂重進 stone coffin, which was commissioned by his four sons in 1117 (Figure 4.6).²⁰ According to the tomb inscription, Yue was a peasant with duties as head of the Baojia group (baoren 保人) at Dasong 大宋 village in Luoning 洛寧 county. Accompanied by figures depicting filial sons and virtuous women, this scene, also in triptych composition,

¹⁸ Some mural details provide hints as to the date of this tomb and some information about its occupant. For instance, a depicted coin in the hand of a female figure represents money made in the Xining 熙寧 reign (1068-1077). Also, the medical book in the hand of another figure, *Prescriptions from the Imperial Benevolence of the Taiping Era* (*Taiping shenghui fang* 太平聖惠方, compiled in 992), did not become popular in the secular world until 1088. Wang Huanyin 王懷隱 (active 970s) originally compiled this book for court use in 992.

In order to make imperial medical books more accessible to commoners at affordable prices, Song emperor Shenzong 神宗 (r. 1068-1085) ordered the Imperial Academy (guozijian 國子監) to supervise the editing of simplified, small-font versions of some ten imperial medical books in 1088. These less costly books, including this one and Zhang Zhongjing's 張仲景 (c. 150-219) *Discourse on the Cold Damage* (*Shanghanlun* 傷寒論), soon became prevalent in secular society. The information is recorded in the preface of *A Complete Collection of Zhongjing's Works* (*Zhongjing quanshu* 仲景全書) (Taipei: Jiwen shuju, 1972), 6a. It is probably in this circumstance that this particular medical book was selected for depiction in the domestic scene of this mural tomb. Thus, the tomb most likely dates around 1100.

¹⁹ As indicated by characters marked on the box in a servant's hands, the medicine offered to the tomb occupant is "cinnabar pills (zhushawan 朱砂丸)". The medicinal material of Baishu 白朮 and Dahuang 大黃 in the mural is also recorded in the introduction of this type of medicine in *juan* 52 of the *Taiping shenghui fang*. Apparently, these doctor-like figures are making it to cure the patient's indigestion and help him recover his lost appetite.

²⁰ This musical performance is depicted differently from the *zaju* scene on Zhu Sanweng's stone coffin, which was dated to 1096. If the former seems like a formal performance presented as a sacrifice, the latter is more like daily entertainment enjoyed by the deceased. Li Xianqi and Wang Liling, "Henan Luoning bei Song Yue Chongjin huaxiangshiguan 河南洛寧北宋樂重進畫像石棺," *Wenwu* no.5 (1993): 30-33.

depicts at its center the tomb occupant, sitting in a frontal pose behind an offering table, while several maids preparing wine and tea in two side chambers. Probably limited by the two-dimensional ground, a *daqu* performance, given by two dancers in front of the table, is directly engraved on the stone panel. If this seated male in a formal gesture echoes the Water God, the carved *daqu* performance is comparable to the *zaju* scene at the Shuishen Temple.²¹ Obviously, this pictorial tradition of representing performance scenes, which lasted at least two hundred years in the mortuary art of the Jin and Yuan, is closely related to the ritual theatrical traditions at contemporary temples. But why did Pingyang people want to deploy murals of drama scenes permanently in local temples, after the associated performances had already been presented on the temple stages?

To answer this question, let's turn to the *Stele Inscriptions of Ritual Regulation of the Shuishen Temple* (Shuishenmiao jidian wenbei 水神廟祭典文碑, inscribed in 1620), which offers a detailed record of dates, places, organizations, and procedures of regular ceremonies at the Shuishen Temple. In particular, an excerpt reveals a local view of the connection between human offerings and the rain, suggesting possible religious implications of this temple's mural program. It says:

Because of the water [we obtained] from the god, the sacrifice is presented to thank his virtue and merit. It is not true that the water appears once we made a sacrifice. If the amount of water was decided by the quality of the rite, isn't it too late to display sacrifice on a dry and barren land? How can we expect to obtain water welling out of the ground [without making sacrifices regularly]?

²¹ The drama scene is not presented directly opposite his throne (because of the limited space available for murals), but this placement does not contradict the idea that it was being presented to entertain the Water God. In fact, the drama scene is not necessarily supposed to be displayed opposite the viewer. The locations of these theatrical representations sometimes were adjusted according to the actual architectural background. For example, when the entrance door is in the center (as seen in Macun tomb no. 8 and the Zhiyaochang tomb), representations of actors were moved to the wall next to the entrance.

夫祭因水設，以報功德，非先有祭而後有水也。若以祭之繁簡，定水之大小，假令陳犧牲於旱荒之野，可得涌泉乎？²²

Obviously, local gentry tried to persuade the public that it was unwise to assume that once sacrifices were made water would be obtained, given that commoners often expressed devotion and made offerings at the last minute, during drought for example. They also considered it misconduct to “trade” with the Water God and to assume that the grander the scale of the offerings, the more generous he would be with rain. Instead, sacrifices should be maintained on a continual basis and offerings should be motivated by ongoing devotion to the deities rather than provisional need. Another stele excerpt dated to 1322 indicates a similar view among local people. It says “(when people) prayed every drought, the holy kings responded (with water), we thus respect their virtue, and will not forget them even while eating and sleeping.”²³ These two excerpts partly explain why the ritual tradition lasted so long and why local folk constantly dedicated themselves to regular ceremonies. This kind of view also propelled local people to make great efforts and spend years building offering halls and stages so that wine, food, and drama could be presented regularly to their deities.

²² Liu Weituo 劉為妥, the magistrate of Zhaocheng, inscribed in 1620 for the erection of nine steles of ritual regulations of the Shuishen Temple. This magistrate condemned some wasteful activities and corrected some misconceptions. He warned organizers, that if they wished to show that they were truly devout, they should not try to squeeze or waste public money by organizing extravagant ceremonies. Apparently, the major purpose of erecting these steles of ritual regulations during the Ming was to regulate ceremonial preparation and sacrificial expenditures to avoid waste and corruption. For the inscription text and its analysis, see Huang 1998, 178-201.

²³ This stele is erected in a Holy Kings’ branch temple (shengwang xingong 聖王行宮) at Xiagebei 下閣碑 village at Qinshui 沁水 county, which is dedicated to King Yao and King Shun. Some villagers volunteered to build a stage at this temple and this project took them twenty years (1302-1322) to finish. The inscription partly reads “每遇歲旱禱則應之，是以懷神之德，食息不忘焉。至大德六年壬寅 (1302) … 修建舞庭一座。累年 … 以年不時施工。金碧雜煥 …” See Feng Junjie, *Shanxi xiqu beike jikao* 山西戲曲碑刻輯考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002b), 110.

Therefore, the idea of making offerings in perpetuity (*yongwei gongyang* 永為供養) became a major theme underlying pictorial programs in both tombs and temples of the time, which resulted in similarities of subject matter and composition in their murals.²⁴ These offering scenes in wall paintings and engravings normally reflect two ideas in their design.²⁵ First, people would often commission artisans to represent offerings of foods and flowers as well as to show the merits and virtue of the recipients, such as scenes of serving maids and hagiographical stories. Second, worshippers hoped that the offerings could be maintained forever, so that they could continually receive blessings.

These ideas underlie the existence of mural and sculptural programs at the Shuishen Temple, where the Water God's statue in the central niche is embedded in the context of surrounding murals illustrating human offerings and divine power. Human prayers, wishes, and appeals were embodied in various visual forms within this permanent offering setting. Rain petitioning and delivery scenes were used to visually convince viewers of the tremendous power and merits of the Water God, the very reason for human worship. The merit of local deities in assisting previous emperors and providing a peaceful life were also illustrated and their cults thus promoted among human viewers. Consequently, these murals transformed the main hall where the Water God

²⁴ A close connection between the pictorial programs of temples and that of tombs could have lasted by then a couple of hundred years, or even longer. For instance, Patricia Berger has pointed out that pictorial programs of tombs were similar to those of aboveground shrines in Jiangsu 江蘇 and Shandong during the East Han dynasty (23-220), though their shared motifs and patterns served different purposes. If tomb decors were mainly used to secure the well-being of the deceased, shrine decors were centered on sacrifice with scenes of purification and merit. Patricia Berger, "Rites and Festivities in the Art of Eastern Han China: Shandong and Kiangsu Provinces," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1980, introduction.

²⁵ Chai 1997, 70.

statue is enshrined into a permanent place for him to enjoy offerings from pious prayers, and persuaded spectators that routine worship and continual devotion was the very reason they obtained rain and realized a good harvest.

The theater scene thus extends beyond its recording function and converts a one-time *zaju* performance into a lasting display. But of more importance is that Pingyang people adopted a *zaju* scene as a key component of an offering scene at a local temple and successfully incorporated it into the complex mural and sculptural programs of its temple hall. This mural is an exceptional visual record of the elevated status of drama in both local religious and secular lives. It also reflects a visual tradition closely associated with ritual theater in Shanxi. Then what was the circumstance that caused the presence of a *zaju* troupe in a local temple hall? On which occasions would drama be presented to divine and human audiences in southern Shanxi?

Drama Offerings in Village Festivals and Temple Fairs

By introducing the features of Pingyang's ritual culture and the occasions on which drama performances were offered, this section will illuminate the contribution of the particular ritual context of Pingyang to the rise of theatrical representations in Jin and Yuan art. A Jin literatus, Wang Xizhe 王希哲 (fl. early 12th cen.), once described the enthusiasm of local people in attending a grand ceremony at a local temple dedicated to the Earth Empress at Yaozhou 耀州, Shaanxi:

Two days before the middle ten-day period of the third spring month, [local people] have begun organizing music and plays to worship deities. People from near and far away meet each other unexpectedly. Those living in towns closed their markets, and those living in villages stopped their farming. The crowds all come out and gather at the temple. Yet it is unknown if they travel specially to make offerings to repay their

obligation, or merely take excursions to indulge themselves in pleasure. What made local people so involved in this ceremony?

每當季春中休前二日張樂祀神, 遠近之人不期而會, 居街坊者傾市而來, 處田里者舍農而至, 肩摩踵接, 塞與廟下。不知是報神休而專奉香火, 是縱己欲而徒為佚遊, 為何至民如此之繁伙哉?²⁶

This excerpt is clearly indicative of reality in Jin-dynasty North China: villagers put their agricultural work aside and townspeople closed their businesses; they all rushed to attend temple fairs. The entire village or town was routinely involved in the excitement of festival celebrations and theatrical amusements. Those who participated always sought grand spectacles, amusing plays, and a hilarious atmosphere from ritual theater.

Furthermore, the Jin literati knew that the public claim of commemorating the virtue and merit of deities was largely a justification for their need for entertainment and relaxation after hard work. Through its association with piety, dramatic entertainment became more acceptable in temple rituals and consequently obtained more support from sponsors.

Although this excerpt from Wang Xizhe's description of local temple ceremony mentions a prefecture in neighboring Shaanxi, it reflects the main features of Pingyang's ritual culture: thriving theatrical activities in the context of local devotion during temple fairs. This region's village theater included three basic types of performances. The first type is represented by an acting troupe procession in which a team of beloved clowns and popular characters performed dances or paraded on streets to exorcize ghosts. The second type includes various *daqu* plays performed by a dance team at a fixed location, such as an offering hall or on a stage platform, to amuse deities. The third type includes dramatic performances, such as *yuanben* and *zaju*, which gradually replaced *daqu* plays as the

²⁶ This stele that was erected in 1205 and entitled "Yaozhou Sanyuanxian Jingshang shenquangu Houtu miao ji (耀州三原縣荆山神泉谷后土廟記)". For full text, see Wang Chang 王昶 (1724-1806) comp., *Jinshi cuibian* 金石萃編 (c. 1805, reprinted in 1964), *juan* 158, vol. 4, 3010b.

major theatrical offerings in rural ceremonies during the Jin dynasty. Compared to the other performance forms, drama was the most sophisticated, including more plots and narratives into its performance. In fact, Pingyang's ritual theater featured the immediate integration of *zaju* drama, soon after this new performing art form was introduced from Kaifeng.²⁷

If local ritual convention and entertainment formed the foundation of Pingyang's village theater, the introduction of *zaju* drama from Kaifeng was the catalyst that further contributed to its popularity. As Guo Jianshe points out, once drama moved out of urban entertainment quarters and into village temple fairs, it depended less on its original audience of petty urbanites and rich merchants. It was instead now welcomed by a wider public of country folk, who used temple fairs and village festivals as major occasions to amuse themselves and socialize with one another during Jin and Yuan periods.²⁸

The wide distribution and constant construction of popular and folk temples also indicates a deeply-rooted system of village theaters and festival celebrations in Jin and Yuan Pingyang. Although the local gazetteer records that Daoism and Buddhism had strong influences in Pingyang, the presence of innumerable folk temples overshadowed

²⁷ Steve Tillis' discussion of the relationship between drama and ritual is very helpful to understanding these terms. See Steve Tillis, *Rethinking Folk Drama* (London: Greenwood Press, 1999), 12-21.

Also, I am aware of the debate over the origin of *zaju* drama. For instance, Huang Zhusan believed that *zaju* developed in rural and urban areas of Shanxi as an indigenous performing art form. For more information, see the appendix. I do not deny that there were dramatic activities in rural and urban areas in Shanxi. But *zaju* drama, a new performing art form first developed in entertainment districts, was most likely introduced from Kaifeng to village theaters in Shanxi. As discussed in Chapter Three, archaeological discoveries of theatrical representations in tombs have shown the possible transmission routes of *zaju*, though this process only took a very short time.

²⁸ The rise of Yuan drama had its roots in local pride and interest in cultural and historical heritage, as evidenced by the adaptation of many local tales and legends as dramatic performances. Guo Jianshe 郭建設, "Song Yuan xiqu ruogan wenti shilun 宋元戲曲若干問題試論," *Zhongyuan wenwu* 中原文物 no. 4 (1990): 28-34.

the institutionalized temples there.²⁹ Almost every village and community had its own temples dedicated to popular or folk deities in charge of different aspects of human life.³⁰ Some of these temples were state-sanctioned regional branches for popular deities, while most were only for locally recognized deities.³¹ Unlike the institutionalized Buddhist and Daoist temples, these local temples hosted most of the festival celebrations and popular dramatic performances in Jin and Yuan Pingyang.

Every year Pingyang people offered theatrical performance at these temples in numerous rituals derived from ancient traditions. According to the *Rite of the Zhou* (*Zhou li* 周禮), the major rites of *yu* 雩, *la* 臘, and *nuo* 儺 had been conducted for different

²⁹ The Daoist Quanzhen Sect's regional headquarters in Shanxi, the Yongle Temple, was located in Ruicheng county. It was built under the supervision of Song Defang 宋德方, one of the eighteen senior disciples of Qiu Chuji 丘處機, the founder of the Quanzhen Sect. Song's successor, Pan Dezhong 潘德冲, another disciple of Qiu Chuji, also took office at the Yongle Temple and organized the printing of the Daoist canon in Pingyang. Buddhism also maintained its presence in the vast area of Pingyang. The *Gazetteer of Pingyang Prefecture* (Pingyang fuzhi 平陽府志), offers a detailed record of local Buddhist and Daoist temples, as well as officially-recognized popular temples. But from surviving stele inscriptions and architectural remains, we know there were many folk temples that were never recorded in official histories or local gazetteers. See the *Pingyang fuzhi* (printed in 1708), *juan* 10 (popular temples), 163-172; *juan* 33 (Buddhist and Daoist temples), 759-768.

³⁰ For instance, there was worship of deities in charge of rain and agriculture, such as the Water God and the King of Cattle and Horses at the local level, as well as the Earth Goddess and Emperor Chengtang at the regional level. There were also popular deities for human fertility and fortune, such as Empress Nüwa and Prefect Cui (Cui fujun 崔府君). Feng Junjie grouped these local deities and spirits of pre-modern Shanxi into five categories. They include deities of nature, such as the god of a mountain or flower; animistic deities, such as the god of the bull and the spirit of the fox; deities of objects such as door guardians, stoves and wells; deities with human appearance such as the Big Brother or a fairy lady; and deities of professions such as the ancestral master of carpentry and the king of medicines. See Feng 2002, 216-220. It is worth noting here that another classification was made by Valerie Hansen in her study of the Huzhou Pantheon of the Song, including traditional and commoner gods; Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian gods; generic gods (city and earth gods, dragon kings); animal and nature gods; and regional gods. See Valerie Hansen, *Changing Gods in Medieval China*, 1127-1276 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 179-183, Appendix III.

³¹ The cults of the Earth Goddess and the Emperors Yao and Shun were particularly popular in southern Shanxi, because state temples dedicated to these deities, along with numerous local branches, were built there. Other popular deities, such as the Empress Nüwa, the God of Mount Tai, and Prince Guan Yu, had many local branches there too, as did some local deities such as the God of Mount Huo. Besides temples of government-sanctioned, popular and regional deities, there were many folk temples of local deities, some recognized by the government and some not.

purposes at the Zhou court. The *nuo* rite was a great exorcism applied to scare away ghosts and avoid plagues; the *la* rite was used to worship agricultural deities and pray for the harvest; and the *yu* rite was used especially to appeal for rain. The first two rites were held on certain days of the year, while the third was flexible and often conducted only when there was a serious drought.³² Additionally, people would also have drama troupes perform on special occasions such as deities' holy birthdays, important communal events, and celebrations of the beginning or completion of a construction or renovation project.³³ These festivals and ceremonies were especially important for villagers and townspeople in rural areas, considering that most country folk, unlike urban dwellers, had only temple fairs and village festivals to visit.

The seasonal *la* ceremonies (known later as *saishe* 賽社), which boomed in the secular world since the Tang, were good opportunities to enjoy spectacles, feasts, and performances locally.³⁴ Normally held twice a year in the fifth *wu* 戊 day after the first

³² Since the major purpose of a *la* was to celebrate the harvest and thank earth deities, it featured ceremonial parades, social recreation, and the making of offerings. This ceremony is distinguished from a *nuo* rite in which townsmen and villagers often wear masks and hit drums to scare away demons and exorcise ghosts. But their boundaries became blurred in later times. For more discussion of the difference between *nuo* and *la* rites in Shanxi, see Huang 1998, 226-7.

³³ Feng 2002, 332. Scholars have tried to group various theatrical activities of ritual theater. Ni Caixia divides theatrical performances for different occasions into two groups: theater for temple fairs (*miaohuixi* 廟會戲) and theater for liturgical ceremonies (*fashixi* 法事戲). But David Johnson applied a different category to ritual theater. Dramas and plays performed in seasonal festivals, such as the New Year's celebration, emphasize exorcism and spectacle; while those in liturgical *saishe* celebrations, such as deities' birthdays, highlight offering and entertainment. Ni Caixia 倪彩霞, *Daojiao yishi yu xiju biaoyan xingtai yanjiu* 道教儀式與戲劇表演型態研究 (Guangzhou: Guangdong gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 2005), 152-164; and Johnson 2009, 2-4.

³⁴ *Sai*, refers to offering sacrifices; *she*, means the Earth God. Originally associated with the *la* rite, *Saishe* later became a broader concept and referred to a variety of ceremonies and celebrations beyond the *la* rite. Its celebration sometimes combined the purposes of both *nuo* and *la* rites. During the Ming and Qing periods, a *saishe* ceremony could be held on various occasions during the year, such as the New Year's celebration, the Lantern Festival, and deities' birthdays, as well as the Middle and Lower Primordial Festivals. Liao 2003, 383.

day of the spring or autumn, it included, before planting, a requesting rite (*chunqi* 春祈) for a good harvest, and after harvesting in the autumn, a thanksgiving rite in honor of the Earth God (*qiubao* 秋報).³⁵ These ceremonies and celebrations often lasted for three days and included markets, games, theater, and feasts. They attracted people of all social strata from local villages, communities, and worship societies. Affiliated villages would take turns as sponsors, organizing residents to making contributions to the preparatory work, especially if there were not enough public funds to buy offerings or hire drama troupes. Rich households donated money and ordinary ones provided labor.

Intended to invite and entertain divine visitors, these ceremonies always included dramatic performances of different scales. The *Gazetteer of Linfen County* (*Linfen xianzhi* 臨汾縣志, re-edited in 1933) clearly describes the inclusion of theater in local *saishe*:

The *she* sacrifices are held twice annually, in summer and autumn. The majority of them include theater for entertainment. Depending on the size of the village or community, the theatrical performances can be held at grand or lesser scales. It is said that they are offered to thank deities.

歲時社祭，夏秋兩舉，率多演劇為樂。隨其村聚大小，隆瘦有差，蓋有報賽之遺雲。³⁶

The scale (grand or modest) of the temple stage and the repertoire of the theatrical performance were, more or less, a reflection of the financial and social capacity of the sponsoring villages, and a gauge of their devotion as well. Thus local villages would

³⁵ In addition to the twenty-four agricultural festivals that divided the year, a *tiangan* 天干 (heavenly stems) system was often used to count days, with ten days in a cycle. The fifth *wu* day equals the forty-fifth day. During the Ming and Qing periods, the dates of the *saishe* showed more variability depending on the place. Some places even mixed *saishe* ceremonies with other rites, such as the celebration of a local deity's birthday or a rainmaking festival.

³⁶ *Linfen xianzhi* 臨汾縣志 (1933 edition), vol. 1, *juan* 2, 14.

compete and try their best to invite troupes to present new plays and organize a rich menu of performances.

The *nuo* ceremonies and its variations include New Year's celebrations and exorcist practices in which street masquerades and troupe parades provided theatrical spectacles for public amusement as well as ritual performances to ward off demons. This type of ritual reminds us of *Plays of the Lantern Festival (Dengxitu 燈戲圖)*, a silk scroll painted by Zhu Yu 朱玉 (active 1253-1258), a Southern Song court painter. This painting vividly depicts a joyous moment on the street during the Lantern Festival celebration (Figure 4.7).³⁷ On the right there is a dance team procession, which includes thirteen players in a variety of make-up, masks, costumes, and props. These players are engaged in making funny faces, clumsy acts, and humorous dances along the street to amuse viewers and chase away demons. The leader of this parade is lifting a plaque with characters that say, "Celebrate the Upper Primordial Festival and enjoy the beautiful scene (Qingshang Shangyuan meijing 慶賞上元美景)."³⁸

The characters, *qing* (celebrate 慶) and *shang* (appreciate 賞), in the plaque suggest both the ceremonial and entertainment functions of theatrical performances in a *nuo* rite. On the one hand, the parade functioned as a way to show human gratitude by

³⁷ Zhou Huabin, "Nan Song dengxi tushuo 南宋燈戲圖說," in Zhou 2003, 36-54.

³⁸ A freestanding stage background made of a lattice screen has a banner hung from its top that says, "according to the standard of the capital, farces and dances in comic forms 按京師格范舞院體諛諧." It indicates that this performance, which probably occurred in Hangzhou where the Southern Song court was located, still followed the style and form that was once fashionable in the old Song capital Kaifeng. Assuming that Pingyang inherited many customs and practices from Kaifeng, its celebration of the New Year could have been similar to the scene is this depiction.

Behind the standing screen is a musical band, including flute and drum players. A figure is standing beside the screen, as if directing the music for the procession. Two figures on the far left are lighting an oil lamp, which implies that the night's celebration has just begun. It was a long-established tradition to keep such an oil lamp burning while conducting theatrical performances on religious occasions.

celebrating the coming New Year. It thus included theatrical activities to amuse deities and liturgical plays to ward off unwelcome demons, embodying local people's enthusiastic pursuit of happiness. On the other hand, the performance was also meant for local people to amuse themselves and relax, to celebrate with family members and friends after a year of hard work. Spectacles and amusement thus became an indispensable part of *nuo* ceremonies.

The *yu* ceremonies basically related to rainmaking and worship of the Water God. In addition to temporary rites dealing with unexpected drought, there were normally two types of annual rainmaking ceremonies, held at different times of the year. In the middle of the fourth lunar month, a rain petition ceremony would be held if a serious drought had been encountered; and a thanksgiving ceremony to the Water God or dragon king would be held in the middle of the seventh lunar month. From the inscriptions at the Shuishen Temple, one can obtain further information about theatrical performances at this temple during the Yuan period. The later *Stele of Ritual Inscriptions of the Shuishen Temple* (*Shuishenmiao jidian wenbei* 水神廟祭典文碑), for instance, provides a detailed list of temple rituals held on fixed days and locations, including a couple of occasions when theater was offered.³⁹ The grandest theater performance of the year would be held at Water God's birthday celebration on the eighteenth day of the third month, for which

³⁹ Although this regulation was written in the late Ming, almost three hundred years later than the reconstruction of the Shuishen Temple's main hall, its information helps us understand the types, quantity, and cost of the sacrifices and ceremonies which were held there annually at least since the end of the Tang dynasty. In addition to theater offered for the birthday of the Water God, there were small scale performances in other festival ceremonies at the Shuishen Temple and surrounding villages, such as those for Prefect Cui's birthday (sixth day of the sixth lunar month), the Mid-Autumn Festival (fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month), the Double Nine Festival (ninth day of the ninth lunar month), and the Lower Primordial Festival (fifteenth day of the tenth lunar month). In addition, on every first day of each lunar month, participating villages would take turns conducting a smaller routine sacrifices at the Shuishen Temple. But no drama troupe was hired for these simpler ceremonies, except for a few village musicians.

sponsoring villages would hire at least twenty actors plus numerous musicians and players to perform over three days.⁴⁰

The Stele Inscription Commemorating the Reconstruction of the Mingyingwang Hall (Chongxiu mingyingwang dian zhi bei 重修明應王殿之碑) records a cheerful scene from this festival during the Yuan period. An excerpt from this stele inscription, originally dated 1319, reads as follows:

According to the old people, on every eighteenth day of the third month, when flowers are in full bloom, it is the time for people to gather together and celebrate the festival. Among visitors from distant towns or neighboring villages, the rich ride in carts or on horsebacks, and the modest walk with canes and sticks. Men bring with them their wives and children, as well as the elders and the weak. What a joyful throng! People compete with each other in offering the god wine, food, incense, and paper money to express their gratitude. The administrative units of the two canals also support the festival and sacrifices with music, plays, livestock, and money. This grand celebration lasts several days. Participants are so enjoyed and they even won't leave for home. This practice has become a local convention.

詢之故老，每歲三月中旬八日，居民以令節為期，適當群卉含英，彝倫攸敘時也。遠而城鎮，近而村落，貴者以輪蹄，下者以杖履，挈妻子與老羸而至者，可勝既哉。爭以酒肴香紙，聊答神惠。而兩渠資助樂藝牲幣獻禮，相與娛樂數日，極其厭飫，而後顧瞻戀戀猶忘歸也。此則習以為常。⁴¹

According to the inscription, this grand temple fair included continuous religious ceremonies and secular entertainment, as well as trade markets and public feasts. Sometimes co-sponsored by local government, officials, gentry, and commoners from neighboring Zhaocheng, Hongdong, and Linfen counties would all participate and celebrate for days at this and other nearby temples. It is no wonder that crowds rushed to attend this event, because this annual celebration provided a valuable opportunity for amusement, as well as temporary freedom from social and cultural restraints. Local folk

⁴⁰ Huang 1998, 194-6.

⁴¹ Here I use Jing's translation of this paragraph and the full Chinese text of this stele inscription is introduced by Liu. See Jing 2002, 123 and Liu 1957, 39-41.

could indulge themselves over days of feasting and theater, which was apparently an attraction that was not common at contemporary official or institutionalized temples.

If the Shuishen Temple mural depicts a real play that was once actually given there, for what kind of occasion would it have been performed? Although the content of this play is still unknown, the date of its performance is clear. According to the troupe's banner, the performance was given on a day in the fourth lunar month of 1324.⁴² Some dates inscribed in the main hall suggest the possibility that the performance was held particularly to commemorate the completion of reconstruction of the main hall.⁴³ If this was so, the drama troupe should have performed this play within a couple of weeks before the mural project was finished. But considering the quality and content of the murals, the artisans who painted them could not have finished all the work within a few weeks.⁴⁴ They would have had to follow a well-designed plan and finish murals on other walls first, reserving a space for the drama scene on the southeast wall.

⁴² Some scholars have discussed the reason why this theatrical performance was held at the Shuishen Temple, since this issue affects the reading of this theater scene. Jing assumes that this play was performed as the last step in a spring rainmaking ceremony, yet there is no solid evidence to prove a connection between the drama and the *yu* rite.

⁴³ Aside from this date, there are four other dates inscribed in the main hall. There is a date in the *Bei huoqu caihui dongbi ji* 北霍渠彩繪東壁記, an inscription right above the acting troupe's banner that records the north canal's participation in the mural project. Its date is the first day of the fifth lunar month (Ruibin yue 蕤賓月) of 1324, which likely refers to the time when the mural project was finished. This date is the same as another one that was inscribed in *Nani huoqu caihui xibi ji* 南霍渠彩繪西壁記 on the southwest wall. Ruibin 蕤賓 refers to it as the fifth lunar month in the traditional Chinese calendar.

It is worthwhile to note another date, the first day of the fifth lunar month at the sixth year of Yanyou 延佑 reign (1319), which was inscribed on the back of the west screen of the niche. It marks the time when the niche and statues were made. It is not known why the first day of the fifth month was chosen, but accomplishment ceremonies for both the building and the murals were held on this day. Another date is seen in the design of a painted coin in the mural. The characters on this coin mark the first year of Taiping reign (1324). Judging from these dates, it seems that the mural project was not finished until five years after the reconstruction of the main hall. Also, local people most likely sponsored this drama performance for commemorating the completion of temple construction.

⁴⁴ According to the names on walls, some twelve artisans participated in this mural project, including father and sons, as well as master and apprentices. Eight painters' names are legible in the note

There could be several reasons why local villagers would have chosen to include this *zaju* performance at the very end of the reconstruction project of this temple. The fame of the performing drama troupe in Pingyang could have convinced these local artisans to preserve the last empty space on the walls for its presence, considering its performance a particular feast for the eyes of locals, who probably seldom traveled to Pingyang to see this or any other famous acting troupe. A preferred choice for local villagers might well have been to commemorate the delightful moment when this famous troupe had actually performed for them and their deities. Yet the common occurrence of *zaju* performances within rituals and the theme of *yongweigongyang* were the primary reasons for them to include this drama scene in the mural program of this temple.

Indeed, the fundamental focus of Shanxi temple festivals was the making of offerings, of which drama had become an indispensable part.⁴⁵ *Zaju* and other dramatic performances were deeply rooted in local religious activities and continually maintained their popularity during the Jin and Yuan periods. Local people were particularly devoted to offering theater to their deities, though sometimes their practices were criticized by local officials and literati as excessive and wasteful.⁴⁶ It became the norm to offer deities

on the southeast wall (with another painter's name hardly visible), including Yuan Yancai 元彦才, his son Little Daizhao Yuan 元小待詔, and the apprentice Hao Shan 郝善. Three painters are recorded in the note on southwest wall. For all their names see Chai 1981, 91. Daizhao 待詔 (painter-in-attendance) was not, since the Jin dynasty, necessarily a designation for a court painter. It can refer to a professional painter involved in some official or imperial project, or a local artisan who dedicated himself to voluntary service at a temple. Chu Qi'en 楚啟恩, *Zhongguo bihua shi* 中國壁畫史 (Beijing: Beijing gongyi meishu chubanshe, 2000), 194.

⁴⁵ Johnson 2009, 173-4.

⁴⁶ These unrecognized rituals or excessive ceremonies, also known as *yinsi* 淫祀 (licentious or heretical rituals), were continually condemned by the government and literati officials because of their bloody sacrifices and improper rites, which were deemed contrary to orthodox Confucian ideas and state ritual codes. In his inscription (1325) for the Xuansheng Temple 宣聖廟 at Mishan 米山, Gaoping, the Yuan scholar Song Yi 宋翼 asserted that local people's licentious rituals and indulgence in theater caused

food and plays, as if their tastes were similar to those of local people. Therefore, after considering the boom in dramatic performances within folk rituals, in contrast to formal rituals held at institutionalized temples of the Jin and Yuan, we now better understand the artistic and cultural significance of the presence of a drama scene in this popular Shuishen Temple.

Between Divine and Mundane: Representations of Theater at Folk Temples

In addition to the mural scene at the Shuishen Temple, some theatrical representations in stone carving or relief have survived at other temples in Pingyang. A common trait of those representations found to date is their exclusive occurrence at folk temples. Although the tradition of illustrating performance scenes existed previously at Buddhist and other institutionalized temples, it apparently found a new venue at folk temples once drama was introduced into ritual theater in southern Shanxi.

An incense burner-like piece of limestone is probably one of the earliest examples showing the use of *zaju* representations in Pingyang temples (Figure 4.8, hereafter the Puxian piece).⁴⁷ This piece sits next to the altar in the main hall of the Temple of Empress Nüwa (Wahuangmiao 媧皇廟) at Hexi 河西 village in Puxian 蒲縣 county, Shanxi. Six *zaju* players are carved on simulated lotus petals around the exterior of a top

sighs and worries among sages (“歲呢淫祀而嬉優伶”). Another stele inscription (1320) at the Yayue Temple 亞岳廟 in Changzhi, Li Tianlu 李天祿 criticized the vulgar activities in ritual theater and ceremonial customs that transcended official norms (“巫洗優樂雜然而前...乖禮越分”). See *Shanyou shike congbian* 山右石刻叢編 (reprinted in 1988), *juan* 33, vol. 6, 13a; *juan* 32, vol. 5, 4a.

⁴⁷ This piece is composed of three parts: a base; a pillar; and a basin. The base was square in shape, with four sprouting legs and a dome-shaped top decorated with reversed lotus pedals. The pillar is a column, 50 cm in height, carved with two dragons playing with a ball. A bowl-like vessel with an octagonal base rests on the column. The interior is empty and full of incense ashes, while its exterior is decorated with two rows of lotus petals.

basin, with decorative patterns of flowers and child figures inserted between.⁴⁸ These players echo one another, as if marching along the street, with their steps suggesting a rhythmic dynamic (Figure 4.9).⁴⁹ Carved in refined, fluid lines, the details of these actor figures are fully represented, especially their appearance and costumes. Such details suggest that these figures are not amateur players from a local village, but professional actors from another place. Similar to Zhongduxiao's troupe performing at the Shuishen Temple, this troupe was also probably invited to play at the Nüwa Temple, which is situated in a small village in mountains, far from the closest town. In fact, the majority of villages in Jin and Yuan Pingyang had only a few amateur musicians and players. When these villages needed to organize a grand ceremony, they often had to hire professional actors from nearby towns or itinerant family troupes.

A stone piece, which was discovered at another Nüwa Temple at Shangzhangduan 上張端 village in Hongdong county, enables scholars to further understand the

⁴⁸ Since the temple where this piece is located has none of the original building left, only Qing dynasty reconstructions, scholars can only speculate as to its date by comparing the artistic style of its carving with those of other dated pieces. These figures differ from their counterparts in late Jin tombs, which feature unpolished and plain styles carved in simple, straight lines. Yan Baoquan suggests that, though its exact date is unknown, this carved piece was made in the late Northern Song, but I personally believe that it is more reasonable to date it to the early Jin. Yan Baoquan 延保全, "Shanxi Puxian Song zaju shike de xinfaxian yu Hedong diqu Song zaju de liuxing 山西蒲縣宋雜劇石刻的新發現與河東地區宋雜劇的流行," in Che 2005, 281-3.

⁴⁹ The first figure is a player with a flute, marching as if his steps were following the music. He is probably a *base* 把色 role, in charge of setting the musical rhythm of the performance. The second and third figures are the Comic Duo. The former is a whispering *fujing* actor, with flowers inserted to his cloth hat. The *fumo* actor's body is bent forward; he is lifting a bat-like prop, looking back towards the *fujing* actor. A child, probably a girl, wearing a flimsy undergarment covering her stomach, turns at her waist and bends her legs. She carries two plums in each hand, echoing her companion, a boy carrying a stick of lotus flower. He twists his naked body and lifts his foot. Between them is an actor of the *yixin* role, who carries a fan in his left hand above his shoulder. Next comes the *moni* actor who carries a stick with a bent end in his right hand and lifts a corner of his robe with his left hand. The last actor, in the *zhuanggu* role, is sandwiched between petals of peonies and chrysanthemums. He holds a plaque in his hands as if politely asking the actor of the *moni* role to do something.

decoration on the limestone altarpiece in Puxian.⁵⁰ This new piece, with a height of 112cm, is similar to the Puxian piece in both form and decoration. Its basin is decorated with two registers of lotus petal patterns: eleven in the upper row and twelve on the lower. An inscription carved on its octagonal-shaped pillar says that villagers of Shangzhangduan made this *caipen* 財盆 in the year of 1058. They promised that offerings would be provided continuously in the hope that all members of the community would have no mishaps, but only good fortune.⁵¹

The name of this stone piece, *caipen*, is important to understanding its function as well as the symbolism of its decoration. *Caipen* literally means “basin of fortune”, indicating that this vessel was used to collect donations to the Empress Nüwa, whose worship was very popular in Shanxi.⁵² Local people believed that this deity was the creator of human beings and regarded her as the goddess of harvest and fertility. Some elders recalled that this kind of altar piece was not used as an incense burner, but as a vessel to burn offerings of private items in a traditional ceremony.⁵³ Considering the

⁵⁰ Yan Baoquan 延保全, “Puxian wohuangmiao Song zaju shidiao xiangtai dingming ji niandai panding de yige pangzheng 蒲縣媧皇廟宋雜劇石雕香台訂名及年代判定的一個旁證,” *Zhonghua xiqu* 中華戲曲 vol. 31 (2004): 25-31.

⁵¹ “維晉州汾西縣佃平鄉張端村邑眾等，於嘉佑三年歲次戊戌□四月六日，建造財盆一座。伏以□□人世須□愍心伏願□□，以後村閭添吉，老小無災，田蚕□倍，養□惠心，更願聖帝萬歲，帝王千秋，雨順風調。邑眾建造財盆永為供養... 應赦財施主，同增福利，王丕乃刊名。” Yan 2004, 27.

⁵² The main temple of the Empress Nüwa in southern Shanxi is situated at Hocun 霍村 village in Zhaocheng county, with other two smaller branch temples at Shangzhangduan village in Hongdong and Hexi village in Puxian. These three Nüwang temples are located within a range of 30 km of one another.

⁵³ During the tenth day of the third lunar month, which was supposed to be the birthday of Empress Nüwang, children under the age of twelve all went to the temple for a special ceremony, wearing straw triangles around their necks. After worshipping and praying, they would burn their necklaces in the *caipen*, thus becoming immune from illness and trouble and blessed with good health and great fortune. This might be a later practice; no one knows exactly how it was used during the Jin and Yuan dynasties. *Ibid.*, 31.

function of this piece as a vehicle for making offerings, its decoration with players implies that these figures had ceremonial roles in local rituals. Within the context of Nüwa worship, one can speculate on the implications of juxtaposing drama actors with children and other auspicious symbols. These actor figures were not merely performing for the amusement of the deity, but were also messengers carrying human wishes and appeals. They corresponded to the portrayal of children with flowers, which were linked to fertility worship. Particularly, the child with plums symbolizes the birth of girls of beauty, while the child with the lotus blossom symbolizes the birth of boys with promising futures.⁵⁴ Similar to its counterpart at the Shuishen Temple, the drama scene here at the Nüwa Temple was also presented with motifs symbolizing human appeals.

When Pingyang people adapted their folk rituals by introducing dramas into their ceremonies, they also introduced theatrical representations into local temples as a way of displaying the human pursuit of happiness and wishes for divine blessings. The images of drama actors are not only pleasant to the human eye and convey a holiday atmosphere, but also carry messages to deities as did other auspicious motifs. In other words, if dramas had mystical power and symbolic importance in the view of local people for exorcizing ghosts, delighting deities, and sending human appeals for good fortune, drama actors could be viewed as spirit-mediums between the divine and secular worlds.⁵⁵ In his

⁵⁴ The symbolic meanings of these motifs correspond to the Chinese phrases “meisheng qianjin 梅(美)生千金” and “liansheng guizi 蓮(連)生貴子”. Yan 2005, 282. For decorative themes and motifs of children in Chinese art, see Ann B. Wicks ed., *Children in Chinese Art* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002).

⁵⁵ Barbara Ward discussed the role of drama players in traditional Chinese society, see her article “Not Merely Players: Drama, Art and Ritual in Traditional China,” *Man* 14.1 (1978), 32-33. Liu Liming also introduced private troupes and street players in classical theater as well as the use of drama in popular religious activities during the Song dynasty. Liu Liming 劉黎明, *Songdai minjian wushu yanjiu* 宋代民間巫術研究 (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 2004), 364-6.

study of ritual dramas, David Johnson proposes that theater and ritual fused in middle-period China, noting that not only were they performed in the same religious settings, but also that the performers often acted as religious priests.⁵⁶

This dual identity of drama actors was implied in the depiction of drama players in a set of Water and Land paintings (*Shuilu hua* 水陸畫) at the Monastery of Preserving Tranquility (*Baoningsi* 保寧寺) in Youyu 右玉 county, Shanxi. Probably one of the few sets of paintings bestowed by the Ming court to local temples in 1460, this set was used in the Buddhist *shuilu* retreat, or the purification fast for the spirits and souls of all water and lands.⁵⁷

The fifty-eighth image in the right sequence (Figure 4.10), entitled “all sorcerers and witches, actors and players (*yiqie wushi shenü sanyue lingguan zu* 一切巫師神女散樂伶官族),” portrays members of a family acting troupe giving itinerant performances.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ David Johnson ed., *Ritual Opera, Operatic Ritual* (Berkeley: Chinese Popular Culture Project, 1989), 29-31.

⁵⁷ *Shuilu* painting is a genre of religious painting in form of hanging scrolls or murals. People used them to decorate places where Buddhist Water and Land retreats were held. For a discussion of *Shuilu* rites, please see David Edward’s introduction in Edward L. Davis, *Society and the Supernatural in Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 236-41.

Among the surviving scrolls of Water and Land Paintings, the *Baoningsi* set is both the best preserved and the highest quality. This set includes 136 scrolls, most of them measuring 120 cm by 62 cm and dating to the early Ming. It is believed that the Ming court granted this set to the Baoning Monastery in order to purge the souls of soldiers killed in battle and to pray for peace on the borderland. Except for the central altarpieces of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Arhats, the rest of the scrolls are numbered in right and left sequences, with about sixty scrolls on each side. They were displayed on the two sides of a hall during an annual three-day Buddhist retreat beginning on the eighteenth day of the fourth lunar month.

To summon these spirits and souls, this set includes scrolls depicting the deceased of all professions and social status, as well as those who died unfortunately and accidentally due to famine, war, injury, illness, and other disasters. These scrolls are now persevered at the Shanxi Provincial Museum in Taiyuan, Shanxi. See the introduction in Shanxi sheng bowuguan 山西省博物館, *Baoningsi Mingdai shuiluhua* 寶寧寺明代水陸畫 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1988).

⁵⁸ A family-based traveling troupe normally consisted of less than ten persons, including a master couple, their relatives and apprentices. They spent most of the year performing in different towns and villages. See Tanaka 2002, 116; Shanxisheng bowuguan 1988, pl. 179.

Of special interest is that this image mixes mundane and spiritual realms: there are heavenly warriors, witches, and actors in a procession ascending together into the clouds, which probably signifies a purgatory rite for the salvation of unattended spirits and lonely souls. This company with heavenly figures and religious personal clearly demonstrates the dual role of actors in village theater in pre-modern China. Although this image dates to the fifteenth century, it reminds us of similar practices in Jin and Yuan Pingyang, where players who entertained audiences in entertainment districts also amused deities and dispelled ghosts in village ceremonies and temple fairs.⁵⁹ Unlike professional actors stationed in urban entertainment districts, itinerant troupe actors and market players who often traveled throughout rural areas were particularly likely to be hired as specialists in communicating with deities and exorcising ghosts. To some extent, they took on the roles of shamans and witches in both theatrical rites and ritual performances.⁶⁰

Admittedly, this Puxian piece carved with a *zaju* representation is stylistically derived from earlier Buddhist sutra pillars, both in its decorative pattern of reversed lotus petals and in its subject of performing figures.⁶¹ The performances that frequently

⁵⁹ Tanaka observed that these categories followed the *Fundamental Principles of Supreme Pure and Numinous Treasures* (*Shangqing lingbao dafa* 上清靈寶大法). In this book, Jin Yunzhong 金允中 (active. 2nd half of 13th cen.) introduced twenty-four categories of the deceased, including those of *lingren yuebu* 伶人樂部 (professional actors and musicians) and *luqi shiyi* 路歧市藝 (street performers and market players). Tanaka 2002, 70. It is notable that another image in the left sequence numbered the fifty-seventh, entitled “various professions and careers of all classes in the past (*wanggu jiuliu baijia zhushi yishu zhong* 往古九流百家諸士藝術眾), depicts professional actors in urban entertainment quarters (Figure 4.11). These actors were in the company of professionals and scholars in the secular world. The fact that actors were included in these two different categories probably reflects their dual roles in connecting the human and divine worlds, depending on the occasion and the audience.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 118.

⁶¹ Many Buddhist buildings were decorated with carvings or images of musicians and dancers during the Tang, Song, Liao, and Jin periods. For example, images of dancers and musicians are carved on the sides of a Tang-dynasty octagonal stone base in the Shuanlin monastery 雙林寺 at Mentougou 門頭溝 in Beijing (Figure 4.12). Similar images are also seen on the surface of a Liao-dynasty pagoda (1057) at the

occurred at Buddhist monasteries often included a variety of musical and theatrical activities, reflecting Buddhism's significant contribution to the development of early Chinese theater. During the Northern and Southern Dynasties (386-589), monks had begun to invite comic and acrobatic players to amuse temple visitors and attract donors.⁶² This tradition reached its heyday during the Sui and Tang periods, and many Buddhist monasteries in capital cities, such as Chang'an 長安 (modern Xi'an), had their own *xichang* 戲場, or theatrical performance grounds, where monks provided secular talks of transformation texts (*bianwen* 變文) and other amusement performances.⁶³ These Buddhist monasteries, to some extent, functioned both as entertainment grounds and marketplaces, where urban residents crowded to watch popular plays and buy miscellaneous goods.⁶⁴ Their role as major urban entertainment places gradually were

Baita monastery 白塔寺 in Jixian 薊縣, Hebei, and on an early Song pagoda at the Yuwang Terrace 禹王臺 in Kaifeng, Henan. There are numerous Song-dynasty examples in Shanxi, such as the performance scenes in Buddhist murals (dated 1096) of the Kaihua Monastery 開化寺 in Gaoping city and those on the surface of the stupa (dated 954) at the Dayun Monastery 大雲院 in Pingshun 平順 county (Figure 4.13). See Liu Wenfeng 劉文峰 and Jiang Dafei 江達飛, *Zhongguo xiqu wenhua tudian* 中國戲曲文化圖典 (Beijing: Zuoqia chubanshe, 2001), 40-41; Shanxi shida xiqu wenwu yanjiusuo 山西師大戲曲文物研究所, *Song Jin Yuan xiqu wenwu tulu* 宋金元戲曲文物圖錄 (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1987), pl. 32-39 and 92; and Che 2001, 200.

⁶² The *Records on Monasteries in Luoyang* (*Luoyang qielan ji* 洛陽伽藍記) records that some Buddhist monasteries in Luoyang regularly offered musical performances and secular recreation, such as the Jingyue Monastery 景樂寺 (*juan* 1, "Inside the city", no. 5); the Zongsheng Monastery 宗聖寺 (*juan* 2, "East to the city", no. 4); the Jingming Monastery 景明寺 (*juan* 3, "South to the city", no. 1); and the Wandianyu Monastery 王典御寺 (*juan* 4, "west to the city", no. 3). See Yang Xuanzhi 楊銓之 (d. 555?), *Luoyang qielan jijiaoqian* 洛陽伽藍記校箋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006).

⁶³ Qian Yi 錢易 (968-1026) mentioned in *juan* 5 of his *Nanbu xinshu* 南部新書 (*New Book of the South*) that many acrobatic performances and popular plays took place on the playgrounds (戲場 *xichang*) of Buddhist monasteries in Chang'an.

⁶⁴ Partly because the government strictly controlled entertainment in the residential and commercial wards of cities, entertainment quarters mainly developed in urban monasteries and temples during the Tang. When free marketplaces thrived in Song dynasty cities, commercial entertainment places began to flourish there too. Thus these professional entertainment quarters gradually replaced monasteries as centers of urban entertainment during the Song dynasty. There were fewer records of theatrical

replaced by the tile markets (washi 瓦市), also known as entertainers' quarters, when urban development and economic growth led to the rise of commercial entertainment districts during the tenth century.⁶⁵

A variety of musical performance scenes appeared in Buddhist art during the Tang and Song periods. Scenes from the dramatic *canjun* plays, for instance, were shown on the surface of numerous stupas and pagodas, as seen on a late-Tang stupa at the Monastery of Cloud Residence (Yunjusi 雲居寺) at Fangshan 房山 in Beijing (Figure 4.14) and on a Song pagoda (dated 965) at the Monastery of Numinous Stone (Lingshisi 靈石寺) in Huangyan 黃岩 county, Zhejiang province.⁶⁶ Although images of comic and acrobatic players occasionally appeared, no *zaju* scenes were ever found on the surfaces or inside Song-dynasty Buddhist buildings. It seems that monks excluded representations of this new performance art form from the decoration of Buddhist buildings and artifacts during the eleventh century.

Yet one can see a burgeoning of pictorial representations of musical and theatrical scenes at folk temples, which overshadowed their counterparts at Buddhist or other

entertainment in monasteries in Song Kaifeng than in Tang Chang'an. Liao Ben 廖奔 and Liu Yanjun 劉彥君, *Zhongguo xiqu shi* 中國戲曲發展史 vol.1 (Taiyuan: Shanxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 2003), 385.

⁶⁵ Yet some monasteries still functioned as public places for amusement and trade in the urban centers of the Song. The famous Buddhist Xiangguo Monastery (Xiangguosi 相國寺), for instance, routinely sponsored temple fairs and festival celebrations to attract Kaifeng visitors. DJMHL, *juan* 3, 19. Another Buddhist temple in Kaifeng, the Liujia Monastery 劉家寺, was famous for its New Year's celebrations. It is recorded in *Tales of a Man in Bottle* (*Wengzhong renyu* 甕中人語) and the *Expedition to the South* (*Nanzheng luhui* 南征錄彙) that, after occupying Kaifeng, the Jurchen requested monks of the Liujia Monastery to surrender their holiday lanterns and parade displays. They moved some of the loot back to the North, while using the rest to hold a Lantern Festival celebration in Kaifeng. They forced all surviving residents, as well as the captured Emperor Qinzong 欽宗 (r. 1126), to view this lantern show. These two accounts were collected in the *Accounts of Jingkang (1125-1127) Era* (*Jingkang bishi* 靖康稗史) (Taipei: Dahai chubanshe, 1981), 28-29; 60-61.

⁶⁶ Liu 2003, 36; Wang Zhonghe 王中河, "Zhejiang Huangyan Lingshisi ta faxian Bei Song xiju renwu zhuangdiao 浙江黃岩靈石寺塔發現北宋戲劇人物磚雕," *Wenwu* no. 2 (1989): 72-73.

institutionalized temples during the Jin and Yuan. Although we still know little about village ritual and temple fairs in Shanxi before the Song, surviving material evidence has shown that local rituals and festivals offered musical performances at least half a century before their adoption of *zaju* drama. For example, the Temple of Emperor Shun (Shundimiao 舜帝廟) at Dongquantou 東泉溝 in the remote mountains in Hongdong county, has two limestone stele bases with different performance scenes.⁶⁷ One piece shows a scene from a *daqu* performance, which includes a central dancer and four musicians (Figure 4.15a). The other piece shows a male and a female dancer, with echoing performances (Figure 4.15b).⁶⁸ From their inscriptions we know that some thirty villagers commissioned these steles in 1029 to record their pious worship and routine offerings to Emperor Shun. They probably requested local artisans to carve these performance scenes, which could have actually occurred at the temple, as thanks for divine blessings.

Covering a variety of performance forms, the surviving theatrical representations at temples in southern Shanxi not only demonstrate a gradual transition of favored decorative scenes from purely musical performances to dramatic plays, but also reflect the latest fashions and styles in local theater. Notably, a team procession of *daqu* performers, including musicians, dancers, and a team leader, is carved on a stone panel at the east side of a platform (dated 1157), right before the main hall of the Temple of Two Spirits (Erxianmiao 二仙廟) at Xilimen 西李門 village in Gaoping 高平 city, Shanxi

⁶⁷ Jin Xiaomin 金小民, "Songdai yuewu zaju beifu xianke de xinfaxian 宋代樂舞雜劇碑趺線刻的新發現," *Zhonghua xiqu* vol. 31 (2004): 32-35.

⁶⁸ Judging from these players' gestures and appearance, scholars believe that their performance included certain narrative or dramatic elements, which forecast the rise of *zaju* in the late Northern Song. *Ibid.*, 39-40.

(Figure 4.16a). The carving on the south side of this platform depicts non-Chinese dancers wearing nomadic costumes. Accompanied by the music of flutes and drums, they are performing for a general-like figure sitting on a folding chair (Figure 4.16b).⁶⁹ If these scenes record actual performances once given on this platform, it is likely that both Chinese *daqu* plays and nomadic dances were fashionable at that time and enjoyed by both local residents and Jurchen emigrants.

Readers might assume that representations of the new *zaju* form were found at folk temples as well as at institutionalized ones, but no evidence, at least none to date, shows that they occurred at Buddhist temples in Shanxi before the Ming. Considering the numerous musical performance scenes in Tang and Song Buddhist art, it is surprising that the practice of representing drama at institutionalized temples lagged behind during Jin and Yuan periods. Why did the tradition of depicting theatrical scenes at folk temples overshadow those at Buddhist temples in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Shanxi?

To solve this puzzle, one must consider possible reasons why Buddhist monasteries, as well as other institutionalized temples, might not have embraced *zaju*, a new entertainment format featuring comic narratives and dramatic plays, in their rituals and temple fairs. One reasonable explanation is provided by Feng Junjie who argues that dramatic performances could not be easily incorporated into Buddhist rites because these time-honored monastic traditions had set formats that left little space for accommodating dramatic entertainment.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Jing Lihu 景李虎, “Jindai yuewu zaju shike de xinfaxian 金代樂舞雜劇石刻的新發現,” *Wenwu* no. 12 (1991): 33-37.

⁷⁰ Feng Junjie, *Xiju yu kaogu* 戲劇與考古 (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 2002), 220 and 245.

Whether or not Feng has revealed the reason, one can still observe that, in rural areas of Shanxi, folk temples attracted the most visitors with their ritual theater and few people would go to Buddhist temples for theatrical amusement. Although monasteries could still use popular spectacles and secular storytelling to attract donors in cities, rural monasteries had lost their lead in the competition for hosting ritual theater and festival celebrations. Since there was no imperative for them to build new places to hold dramatic performances within their ceremonies and rites, Buddhist and institutionalized temples did not invest much in the construction of performance stages, especially sheltered ones, in their building complexes. Some of them might have hosted a few theatrical activities for inviting deities and delighting visitors, but the scale and duration of these performances were limited. At least there is no evidence showing that the frequency and scale of these performances made rural Buddhist temples build their own stages in Shanxi before the fifteenth century.⁷¹ Yet the innumerable folk temples provided a better environment for the development of theatrical performances in Jin and Yuan Shanxi. They enjoyed great popularity, not only because they were maintained and accessible by local masses, but also because their rituals and performances were adapted to local cultural interests and entertainment needs.

Therefore, the significance of using a theater scene in the decoration of buildings or sculpture at local temples should be understood within the distinctive ritual culture of Jin and Yuan Shanxi, which featured thriving theatrical activities at temple fairs and

⁷¹ Judging from current evidence, it seems that Buddhist monasteries began to build permanent stages in their complexes during the mid-Ming, because of the influence from folk temples. See Feng 2002, 245-7. Yet I need to admit that, compared to historical records of early entertainment and ritual theater regarding monasteries and temples in urban centers, we still know little about what was performed at monasteries and temples in the countryside.

village festivals. When performance stages were built and dramas were presented there, representations of theater, including murals, carvings, and relief sculpture, also flourished at the countless folk temples of this region, with enduring popularity throughout the Ming and Qing periods.

Temple Stages and Scripted Ritual Theater

In traditional Chinese popular belief, temples (miao 廟) were places where deities and ghosts gathered, and music (yue 樂) there helped humans maintain harmonious relations with them.⁷² If ritual performances during the Han and Tang dynasties featured music and acrobatic entertainment in offering halls, those of the Jin and Yuan featured drama performances on stage.⁷³ The inclusion of performance stages became a common characteristic of folk and popular temples in Shanxi after the Northern Song. Despite the scarcity of related historical and literary records, surviving stage remains, stele inscriptions, and ritual manuscripts serve as important source material for understanding ritual and theatrical activities within these temple complexes during the Jin and Yuan periods.

In particular, discoveries of performance stages of various styles, from affiliated terraces to independent platforms and permanently sheltered structures, have shown the

⁷² “故廟所以聚鬼神之精神，而樂所以和神人也。此前人立廟祀神之由，樂樓所建之意也。…德勝而澤深，民豈能忘其王于千百世之下哉？” A Ming-dynasty Shanxi scholar, Wang Xuan 王琰, wrote this excerpt in his *Record of the Reconstruction of the Performance Pavilion* (Chongxiu yuelou zhiji 重修樂樓之記) in 1536. This stele still sits at the Chengtang Temple at Xiajiao village in Yangcheng city. The text is also collected in Feng 2002b, 221-2.

⁷³ Liao 2003, 382.

development of theater architecture and performance forms in Pingyang temples.⁷⁴ In addition to existing offering halls, where offerings were displayed and music was played, local people added performance stages to their temples to provide an ideal place for performances over several days.⁷⁵ Although no Song-dynasty platform or stage survived in this region, inscriptions on temple stele indicate the existence of performance stages at folk temples during the eleventh century. Since then, the construction of new performance stages became fashionable when local people built new folk temples or expanded existing ones.⁷⁶

Aside from a number of stage models found in Jin tombs in Jishan and Houma, at least two Jin-dynasty stages survive in southeast Shanxi. One was built in 1183 at the Temple of the Second Brother (Erlangmiao 二郎廟) at Wangbao 王保 village in Gaoping 高平 city (Figure 4.17). The other was built in 1211 at the Temple of King Chengtang

⁷⁴ Che Wenmin, *Zhongguo shenmiao juchang* 中國神廟劇場 (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 2005), 95-101. According to historical records, the prototype for the performance platform (*lutai* 露台) appeared in the Han dynasty. During the Song dynasty, people often built *lutai* as part of popular temples for the display of offerings and presentation of performances. Their function was similar to the crescent-shaped terraces (月台) at contemporary Buddhist or Daoist temples. But they soon declined in popularity after the rise of roofed performance stages.

The only surviving Song dynasty platform stage (renovated in later dynasties) is the Jinrentai 金人台 (terrace of the bronze figures) in the Jinci religious complex. Also, in a ground plan of the Houtu Temple (carved on a stele dated to 1137), we see a square platform situated in front of the main hall. Wang Shiren 王世仁, "Ji Houtuci miaomao bei 記後土祠廟貌碑," *Kaogu* no. 5 (1963): 273-7.

⁷⁵ Feng Junjie has pointed out that Song people used more than ten names to refer to stages in stele descriptions of the time. This variety not only demonstrates their different forms and functions but also that contemporary people had varying degrees of knowledge about this new architectural form. Feng 2002, 272-277.

⁷⁶ At least three stele inscriptions record the existence of performance stages at folk temples in southern Shanxi. A performance kiosk (*wuting* 舞庭) is mentioned in a stele dated to 1020 at the Houtu Temple at Qiaoshang 橋上 village in Wanquan 萬泉 county; a performance pavilion (*wulou* 舞樓) is cited in a stele dated to 1080 at the Guandi 關帝 Temple in the town of Qinxian 沁縣 county; and a performance pavilion is mentioned in a stele dated to 1101 at the Houtu Temple in Donghe 東河 village in Pingshun 平順 county. It is also interesting to note that, though their construction served mainly as a convenience for presenting and watching dramas, all the stele inscriptions in the Houtu Temple claimed the construction of stages to be a better means of repaying deities. Che 2001, 240.

(Chengtangmiao 成湯廟) at Xiajiao 下交 village in Yangcheng 陽城 city (Figure 4.18).⁷⁷

These remains indicate that Jin people often built stages on square-shaped platforms and decorated them with carved stone panels. The roofs of typical Jin stages were supported by four wooden or stone pillars, with a triangular gable roof, or *shanhua* 山花, in the façade.⁷⁸ Their corbelled ceilings and bracket systems were no less complicated than those of typical Yuan-dynasty stages.

Accompanying the development of *zaju* performance during the early Yuan, performance stages also evolved. Stages of this period normally had a larger performance space than their Jin prototypes; thus a more sophisticated theater setting could be provided. As seen in the Shuishen Temple mural, two tapestries are used to separate the rear from the front of the stage and to provide background images for the performance. The audience's view is thus blocked from the backstage space, where actors and musicians prepared for their performances. Another feature of Yuan stages is their brick walls, either on one side or three. This addition of walls to the stage platform indicates that the theater had developed from a three-side view to a one-side view configuration, with the audience watching performances from a fixed perspective. The most developed stage (dated 1345) sits in the center of the courtyard of the Temple of the Mount Tai (Dongyuemiao 東岳廟) at Dongyang 東羊 village in Linfen. This stage has a cross-

⁷⁷ A few stages were originally built in the Jin but then significantly renovated in later dynasties, including one (dated to 1157?) at the Dongyue Temple at Yedi 冶底 village in Zezhou 澤州 county, one (unspecified date) at the Yandi 顏帝 Temple at Xiatai 下台 village in Gaoping 高平 city, one (dated in early 13th century) at the Dongyue Temple at Tuncheng 屯城 village in Yangcheng 陽城 county, and one (dated the 1150s) at the Chengtang Temple at Zecheng 澤城 village in Yangcheng county. For details, see Feng 2007, 48.

⁷⁸ The front-facing gable roof is a characteristic of Jin dynasty stages. This kind of roof also was used to decorate the entrance façade of many building complexes of the time, as shown in interior decorations of many Song, Liao, and Jin tombs.

ridged roof and walls on three sides, with both spirit and human audiences viewing from the side of the offering hall (Figure 4.19).⁷⁹

Similar to the discoveries of theatrical representations, the Jin and Yuan temple stages discovered so far were all built at temples for local and regional deities. While Buddhist monasteries had no sheltered stages, they did have terraces or platforms for temporary performance use. Compared to Buddhism, the indigenous Daoism was more accepting of theatrical performance within its rituals.⁸⁰ The Quanzhen Sect used drama as a way to disseminate its religious ideas (as discussed in Chapter Two), though there is little surviving evidence showing the performance of dramas in formal rituals at Daoist temples. The only exception is at the Yongle Temple, where a temporary stage would be assembled at the back of the Hall of the Dragon and Tiger (Longhudian 龍虎殿, dated to 1294), the gateway to the temple (Figure 4.20). When a performance was to be given, people would lay down wooden panels over the stairway to constitute the platform of a temporary stage, which would be dismantled soon after the performance was given.⁸¹ Yet such a lack of permanent stages at institutionalized temples does not indicate that theatrical performances did not take place there. Rather, it only suggests that theatrical performances within Buddhist and Daoist rites were not of comparable importance to those within folk rituals.

⁷⁹ Feng 2007, 92-98.

⁸⁰ Different religions embraced ritual theater to varying extents: Daoist priests were likely more open to drama in their formal rituals than were Buddhist monks, considering that the Quanzhen Sect utilized popular theater to spread their teachings.

⁸¹ Jing Lihu 景李虎, "Yonglegong Longhudian kaolun 永樂宮龍虎殿考論," *Zhonghua xiqu* vol. 8 (1989): 187-195 (reprinted in Jing 1996, appendix one).

Because of the important role of theater in folk rituals, performance stages received much attention from the masses and, to some extent, became the focal point of local temple complexes. Not only did individuals and families rush to participate in ceremonies and watch dramas there, but local communities and villages also competed with one another to build impressive stages and organize theater on a grand scale to show their economic power and religious devotion. A stele inscription (dated 1321) records a celebration held at the Temple of the Cattle King (Niuwangmiao 牛王廟) at Weicun 魏村 village in Linfen:

When it comes the holy birthday of the deity, people present sacrifices and perform plays to show their devotion. There carts and horses are crowded in a mist of incense smoke, with sounds of cups and plates knocking each other. People are singing and chanting on their way, and elderly women and crooked men support each other. People in endless traffic come to make offerings for a whole day.

至於清和誕辰，敬誠設供演戲，車馬駢集，香篆靄其氤氳，杯盤競其交錯，途歌俚詠，伛僂相偕，往來而不絕者，至日致祭於此也。⁸²

Interestingly, this grand celebration at Weicun village seemed not to be sufficient for local people and there was another similar celebration dedicated to the same Cattle King at the neighboring Jingcun 景村 village in Hongdong county. Two performance stages, belonging to two temples dedicated to the same god, were situated only several hundred meters away from one another! Decades of construction work on these two neighboring stages demonstrates the enthusiasm and dedication of local villagers for having their own stage (Figures 4.21 and 4.22).⁸³ But if the erection of two temples at

⁸² The excerpt is from an inscription of 1321, which was named “Niuwangmiao Yuanshi beiji 牛王廟元時碑記” and re-carved on a stele in 1898. For text and annotations, see Feng 2002b, 144-150.

⁸³ Supported by two stone pillars and a back wall, the well-preserved Weicun stage sits on a platform and faces the offering and main halls. Its construction lasted about forty years. Villagers began preparation work in 1283 but did not finish the stage until 1321. The remains of the Jingcun stage (dated to

two spiritually designated sites is reasonable, the construction of two grand stages seems somewhat excessive considering the limits of local fortunes.⁸⁴

Why did local people regard the construction of two performance stages within such close proximity as necessary? Admittedly, local villages and pious individuals of Jin and Yuan Pingyang invested much of their fortune and effort in the construction of temple stages, leaving their names inscribed on stone columns or steles. Since a grand temple stage was a desirable way of displaying local identity, wealth, and religious piety, local village alliances would compete with each other in building their own stages, no matter what the cost and effort.⁸⁵ A temple complex with a performance stage provided not only a sacred realm to connect local people with their deities, but also a social place for them to gather and entertain themselves.

The inclusion of a performance stage within the folk temple complex indicates the ceremonial significance of drama within local temple festivals and village celebrations. Since stages did not have to be built at temples, their occurrence there means that local people integrated drama into the old liturgies of temple festivals. For those common

1342) also sit opposite the main hall. Judging from its surviving stone columns, it was similar in architectural style to the Weicun stage but smaller in size. Local villagers also spent years constructing it.

⁸⁴ A local tale explains why there were two temples dedicated to the same god within such a small area. It was said that those people living at Weicun and Jingcun decided to build a branch temple for their convenience in worshipping, because it was difficult to cross the Fen River to visit the main temple of the Cattle King on the east side. When they were debating where to build this new temple, two mysterious bamboo mats flew from the direction of the main temple and landed in both Weicun and Jingcun. Thus local people built two temples in accordance with this divine sign. When I visited the Niuwang Temple at Niucun in August 2007, this local tale was introduced on an exhibition board in the main hall.

⁸⁵ Some later people even regarded construction of performance stages as an indication of their village's public image. They claimed that absence of a stage not only meant no place to perform and no way to amuse deities, but also brought shame to the village (“不為之休葺，不為戲無以演，神無以奉，抑且為一村之差也。”) The text is from the “Record of the Reconstruction of the Performance Stage” (Chongxiu xilou beiji 重修戲樓碑記, inscribed in 1879), a stele inscription still preserved at the Guandi Temple 關帝廟 at Nanchen 南陳 town in Changzi 長子 county.

villagers and townspeople, as Johnson points out, *zaju* dramas of various themes “offered precisely what traditional ritual lacked.” They brought local village cults new energy and vitality that were highly attractive when previous rural rituals had, by Song times, lost their symbolic potency.⁸⁶

The expansion of theatrical activities beyond offering halls and the upgrade of performance stages also imply changes to old patterns and practices of ritual theater in Shanxi. Fortunately, extant treatises on ritual protocols provide further information regarding the format and repertoire that developed during Jin and Yuan periods. Of most importance is the *Manuscript of Protocols in Welcoming Deities and Making Offerings in Forty Ritual Musical Modes* (Yinshen saishe lijie chuanbu sishiqu gongdiao 迎神賽社禮節傳簿四十曲宮調). This recently discovered ritual manual, also known as *Diagrams of Musical Asterism of the Zhou* (*Zhouyue xingtu* 周樂星圖), was copied in 1574 by a local ritual master named Cao 曹 in Nanshe 南舍 village, Lucheng county 潞城. His descendents, many of whom were professional geomancers, preserved this manuscript for hundreds of years, until its publication in 1986.

This instructional manual, which recorded a complete list of offering procedures and theatrical performances, was actually copied from a formal manual belonging to nearby Nanjia 南賈 village. Every three years, local officials would sponsor a grand *saishe* that would last for three days at Nanjia and organize the participation of professional musical households from the whole of Lucheng county.⁸⁷ This festival

⁸⁶ Johnson 2009, 330-2.

⁸⁷ For more details of the ritual theater, see Han Sheng 寒聲 et al. “Yinshen saishe lijie chuanbu sishiqu gongdiao chutan 迎神賽社禮節傳簿四十曲宮調初探,” *Zhonghua xiqu* vol. 3 (1987): 118-136. There is also a similar Qing-dynasty manuscript in southeast Shanxi, known as *Tangyue xingtu* 唐樂星圖

celebration at the village-alliance level would also invite professional drama troupes from other towns. Possibly because of its popularity, Nanshe village tried to simulate this ceremony and its ritual master Cao transcribed the ceremonial manual. Yet due to the grand scale and expense, Nanshe village could only afford to host a simplified, smaller celebration every five years. Sometimes its villagers had to participate in theatrical performances, if their tight budget did not allow them to hire enough professional players and musicians.⁸⁸

Although it is a Ming copy of an undated earlier version (possibly late 14th cen.), this manuscript is a critical piece for demonstrating how theater was incorporated into popular religious ritual in Yuan-dynasty Shanxi, with its specific instructions and title list of various dramas, songs, and musical modes. Beginning from the eighth day of the first month, the ritual would last three consecutive days, with the formal ceremony taking place on the second day. The ritual master would choose a different ceremonial mode each day according to the particular constellation deity who was supposed to be on duty. In total, there were twenty-eight categories of musical and theatrical performances appropriate to the characters and preferences of different deities.

This manuscript records in detail how special sessions of recitations, plays, and dramas were incorporated into each day's ceremony. According to the description in the first two parts of this manual, the ritual master was to begin with an introduction of the eight constellational deities of the Zhou dynasty. He was then to announce the granting to

(Diagrams of Musical Asterism of the Tang), see Li Tiansheng 李天生, "Tangyue xingtu jiaozhu 唐樂星圖校注," in *Zhonghua xiqu* vol. 13 (1993): 322. Also, Huang Zhusan discussed the performance of troupe plays in this *saishe*, see Huang 1998, 293-311; Tanaka Issei discussed the process and repertoire of its theatrical performances, see Tanaka 2002, 239-257.

⁸⁸ Han 1987, 56.

twenty-eight Han generals of immortal status and constellational titles, concluding with a brief recitation of a generalized version of Eastern Han history. The appendix of this ritual manual introduces performance troupe parades (ya duixi 啞隊戲) in which players previewed for the audience the spectacles and major characters of the upcoming show.⁸⁹

The third part of this manual introduces the three major sessions of each day's ceremony, which focused respectively on enticing, treating, and amusing deities. In the first session, normally held in the offering hall in the morning, different food and drink offerings were prepared and music was played to entice and welcome the descent of the deities. The next session extended over the rest of the day and featured offerings of drinks and meals of seven courses. The first three courses were presented in the early afternoon and the next four in the late afternoon. The ritual master would recite liturgical lyrics praising deities' power and merits before these meals. Then they would initiate the chorus to persuade deities to begin their first and second courses. Players would perform dances and songs of auspicious or congratulatory themes when the deities were supposed to have their first three courses.

During the next three courses, players would perform three troupe plays (*gongzhan duixi* 供盞隊戲) to amuse the deities while they were eating. Unlike the music and songs during the first three courses, these short troupe plays and farces included a variety of themes, including historical and military stories, courtroom stories and love

⁸⁹ It is notable that a procession of actors was often an important part of Medieval theater in Europe. The spectators would be informed of common knowledge and social order by this kind of public display that provided a vivid account of various deities and characters. For more information, see John R. Brown, ed. *The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 77-79.

romances, as well as spiritual and deliverance plays.⁹⁰ At the last course, the seventh one, the chorus and dance teams would perform together as the conclusion of the second session.

The last session of the day, also known as the evening theater, was moved from the offering hall to the stages (including five temporary ones in front of the village temple). Often lasting till late night, players and musicians presented three dramatic plays to the deities after their meals, including a formal troupe play (*zheng duixi* 正隊戲), a *yuanben* play, and a *zaju* drama.⁹¹ The majority of these plays and dramas were derived from historical and military stories of previous dynasties (*lishi zhengzhanxi* 歷史征戰戲), including the Sui and Tang, the Three Kingdoms, and the Eastern Han. Among several dozens of titles, there were several plays of romantic and religious tales.⁹² Since this session was independent in terms of its format and performance, it enjoyed special attention from both ritual players and audiences.

Once included in a written ritual manual, the theatrical format and repertoire became a ceremonial convention for later generations to follow. In other words, these written or printed texts legitimized and codified the incorporation of dramatic

⁹⁰ The majority of them are historical and military plays. Here I only list some plays from the other two categories, such as “Student Zhang Playing Hongliang (*Zhangsheng xi hongniang* 張生戲紅娘),” “Consort Yang Got Drunk (*Guifeizuijiu* 貴妃醉酒),” and “Five Ghosts Playing the Judge (*Wugui xipan* 伍鬼戲判).”

⁹¹ There were twenty-eight sets of plays and dramas for the choice of deities on different days. Unlike the *gongzhai duixi*, the *zheng duixi* featured extended plots. Also, if a play did not last long enough, back-up plays were added to fill up the allotted time. Longer, full-length dramas were often presented at the very end of this final session when time was no longer an issue.

⁹² Here are some plays of romantic and religious themes in this manual: “Playboys Got the Wrong Career (*Yuanben Huanmen zidi cuolishen* 院本宦門子弟上錯身),” “The Four Lords Compete in Showing off Wealth (*Zaju Si gongzi dongfu* 雜劇四公子斗富),” “Deities of the Twenty-eight Constellations Visit the Three Purities (*Zaju Ershiba su chao sanqing* 雜劇二十八宿朝三清),” and “Prince Guan Defeated Demon Chiyou (*Zaju Guangong zhan Chiyou* 雜劇關大王破蚩尤).” For more introduction, see Li 1997, 223, 126, and 148.

performances within temple rituals and village celebrations. The circulation of this and other similar manuals among ritual organizers and professional actors, ensured that theatrical performances of the same content and form would be passed on for generations.

When they treated a deity to their own favorite dramas, local people were actually manipulating a ritual format that they liked and justified their own entertainment needs as meeting those of the deities. Not only were deities' tastes adapted to that of humans, but rituals in their honor were also transformed into communal entertainment. The ritual format and procedures listed in this manual also reflect local efforts to adapt their folk ceremonies to wider audiences and possibly gain official support. They simulated offering procedures of official ceremonies and incorporated popular entertainment as well, though sometimes excessive inclusion of theatrical performances led to regulation and prohibition by local governments.⁹³

Last, but not least, the repertoire recorded in this ritual manual shows what plays were of interest to local people. Tanaka Issei has listed titles of all plays and dramas in a chart from which he generalized several features of ritual theater. He observes that the dramas listed in this manual cover a variety of themes, though the majority were about historical figures and battles, including many dramatized expository tales from the Song and Yuan dynasties.⁹⁴ Hagiographic, cultic, or exorcist plays never became a significant part of the repertoire of this ritual theater. Rather, military and historical plays maintained dominant. David Johnson further suggests that this absence of ritual and spiritual plays

⁹³ Fan Pen Chen, "Ritual Roots of the Theatrical Prohibitions of Late-Imperial China," *Asia Major* vol. 20.1 (2007): 40-43.

⁹⁴ Tanaka 2002, 250-7.

resulted from the efforts of local elite who supported opera in the hope that it would displace the bloody sacrifices and violent exorcisms. Historical-military dramas were ideal choices because they were acceptable to both gods and people, and were “serious but still entertaining”.⁹⁵

Indeed, historical and military plays were ideal choices for ritual organizers to include in their temple fairs, because both local elite and commoners welcomed their entertaining content and attractive spectacles. And yet, we should not neglect the informative and didactic aspects of dramatic performance, which were always integrated with its ritual and entertainment aspects. Nor should we ignore the role and power of commoners in formulating and utilizing their own ritual theater. If local ritual affairs promoted ideas such as the veneration of deities and respect for community norms, the dramas and plays that the masses had chosen greatly contributed to the spread of these teachings.⁹⁶

Summary

By examining the murals of the Shuishen Temple, this chapter first suggested that, instead of illustrating a specific narrative of a rainmaking ceremony for instance, these murals presented the theme of “making offerings in perpetuity”, a pictorial tradition also seen in earlier Song tombs. Echoing the rainmaking scenes that show the power and merits of the Water God, the theater scene, along with other scenes of offering food and flowers, functioned as an integrated set, creating a permanent ritual setting in the temple

⁹⁵ Johnson 2009, 331-3.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 282.

hall where this deity's statue was situated. The exclusive occurrence of this and other theatrical images at folk temples rather than at Buddhist or other institutionalized temples signifies that the subjects of *zaju* dramas constituted a new visual vocabulary in local religious art during the Jin and Yuan periods.

The charm of village theater and the significance of *zaju* representations can be best understood in the context of Pingyang's ritual culture, which featured flourishing seasonal ceremonies and enthusiastic public support, as indicated by its surviving temple stages and ritual manuscripts. By claiming to commemorate divine merits and incorporating dramatic recreation, folk rituals obtained increasing popularity among the masses. Pingyang people also successfully modified and redefined local ritual culture to embody their own love of entertainment and pursuit of happiness.

Yet we need to be aware that the use and reception of theatrical images also related to the dissemination of moral values. In addition to their ceremonial and entertainment functions, these images embodied local views and beliefs about life, society, and history. My last chapter will illustrate that Pingyang people learned to utilize illustrations of plays and dramas, perhaps as alternatives to live performances, to persuade viewers of the importance of filial piety for ensuring the prosperity of their families, as well as to inform them of correct ways to maintain the continuity of their cultures under foreign rule.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Art of Persuasion:

Family, Filial Piety, and Didactic Theater

If the entertainment and ceremonial functions of drama contributed to a deeply rooted theater culture in Pingyang, their educational and instructive functions also promoted the popularity of village theater and temple fairs among local villagers and townspeople. In this regard, the recent discovery of admonition texts from the Duan family (their tombs are discussed in Chapter Three) is of great value to our understanding of the didactic significance of theater during the Jin and early Yuan periods. These admonitions carved on two bricks clearly indicate that members of the Duan family valued morality, nutrition, and theater in that order.¹ In their views, watching drama was comparable to filial devotion and proper diet in insuring a healthy and harmonious life. Apparently, they realized the importance of popular theater for conveying important cultural knowledge, exemplifying moral preferences, and suggesting political orientation.

If this view of theater as culturally and morally essential was widespread among Pingyang people, how did they learn to use theatrical imagery to convey and reinforce cultural and moral traditions in their daily life? What was the role of the masses in promoting the pictorial depiction of *zaju* drama during the Jin and Yuan periods? This chapter examines theatrical images that survive in tombs and in the decorative arts to explore these questions. In particular, a case study of the mural program of Dong Hai's

¹ Duan Dengke 段登科, a descendant of the Duan family, still preserves these bricks today. His family used to live at Macun, where the Duan lineage has lived since the Song dynasty. These bricks have similar dimensions, roughly 32.7 x 32 x 5.9 cm. In order to protect the access to their recipes, only the rubbing of the front side of one brick has been published. See Tian and Li 2005, 13-15.

tomb shows a typical use of theatrical pictures by Pingyang families for instructive and didactic purposes. It indicates that local people enjoyed illustrations of drama and fiction and viewed them as an indispensable part of their daily life and afterlife. In fact, this became a distinctive feature of the visual culture in Jin and Yuan Shanxi.

Drama and the Duan Family Admonitions

Among the countless material remains that are still preserved in local households today, two inscribed bricks (dated early 13th cen.) deserve more scholarly attention. Carved with medicinal recipes and family admonitions, these square bricks provide crucial information about local culture and beliefs at Jin and Yuan Pingyang. According to the inscription on one of them, a member of the Duan family in Jishan commissioned their making in order to preserve valuable family recipes for dietary soups during a period of social turmoil at the end of the Jin dynasty (Figure 5.1a).² Numerous medicinal recipes and diagrams were carved on four bricks to be preserved by his two sons. Two of them survive today, including one carved with two family admonitions. The first asserts three types of proper behavior for the Duan family and reads: “ ‘Duan Ancestor’s Admonition of Good Behavior’: Filial piety maintains family, food nourishes life, and drama sustains the spirit 段祖善銘: 孝養家, 食養身, 戲養神”. On the other side of the

² Here is a brief translation of the main text on the brick surface (For the text, see Figure 5.1a): “According to words of [our] father, our recent ancestor Duan Xian once wrote a one-volume dietary manuscript entitled *Recipes of the Guantong Soup* 貫通食補湯方. As early as during the reign of Emperor Taizong (r. 976-997) of the Northern Song, Duan Xian helped others, cured illnesses, saved lives, and elongated life. His name was well known even by females and children hundreds of miles away. However, it was not anticipated that the manuscript of the *Guantong Soup* would become *bait*, i.e., something that would attract the acquisitive attention of alien regimes. The government tried to demand it and the barbarians attempted to loot it. It was difficult to keep the manuscript safe, thus some recipes were selected and carved into four bricks. They were given to the two sons of the Duan family to be preserved by later generations.”

brick is carved a second admonition which reads “ ‘Duan Ancestor’s Admonition of Ethics’: Be amicable to family members, be friendly to neighbors, and be generous to others 段祖倫銘: 和家, 睦鄰, 容人” (Figure 5.1b). Echoing one another, these admonitions show how the Duan family tried to maintain harmonious relations within its lineage, with its neighbors, and within its local society.³

Given the historical and cultural context of the time, the term “xi 戲” in the phrase “xi yang shen 戲養神” most likely means *zaju* drama, a newly arisen form in the late Northern Song, along with *zhugongdiao* and other drama forms that had been fashioned in southern Shanxi. How was “xi” able to entertain the human spirit and why did the Duan family believe so? Did their ideas relate to particular social and cultural

³ Tian 2005, 14. My translation of the first admonition is tentative, because the term “yangshen 養神” is ambiguous. It can be understood as “the spirits or deities,” but I translate it as “human spirit” for the following reasons:

First, this doctor family cared about the nutrition of body and cultivation of mind, two concepts always paired in traditional China. According to the *Hanyu dacidian* 漢語大辭典, “yangshen” means to preserve or cultivate the spirit of a person. It is one of the three major concepts in Daoism and traditional Chinese medicine, including yangjing 養精 (preserve vigor), yangqi 養氣 (conserve energy), and yangshen 養神 (cultivate spirit). Yangshen is the ultimate status of Daoist self-cultivation and medical exercise. For instance, it is said that the essence of acupuncture therapy is to preserve the spirit rather than merely cure the illness (“yongzhen zhiyao, wuwang yangshen 用針之要, 無忘養神”) in the *Inner Canon of Huangdi: Grand Basis* (*Huangdi neijing taisu* 黃帝內經太素, reprinted in 1962), *juan* 19, vol. 2, 261.

Although “yangshen” also refers to the worship of ghosts and spirits, as seen in “jingzai yangshen 敬在養神” in the *Chronicle of Zuo: The Thirteenth Year of Duke Cheng’s Reign* (*Zuozhuan. Chenggong shisannian* 左傳. 成公十三年). See *Hanyu dacidian* (Beijing: Hanyu dacidian chubanshe, 2001), vol. 12, 527. But this expression was rarely used in traditional culture since Chinese people wanted to show their respect to deities and thus avoided using the less reverent term “yang 養 (bring up, feed).” They preferred more respectful terms, such as “gong 供 (worship)” or “jing 敬 (revere),” when talking to deities.

Second, it seems the Duan family put different priorities in these phrases: they always put “family” in the first row and then went to things with less priority. In other words, the family considered the virtue of filial piety first and then proper nourishment. Once family and life were secure, they pursued mental and intellectual cultivation through theater. It will be a little abrupt to bring out “the spirits” at the end (the deities should instead take the first place before the family).

Third, since the admonition’s title is “Duan Zu Shan Ming 段祖善銘,” its phrase should be expanded into “shanxi yangshen 善戲養神”. The translation of “good at using drama to sustain *the human spirit*” makes more sense than “good at presenting drama to sustain *the spirits*.”

Therefore, “yangshen” likely refers to cultivation of the human spirit, and “xiyangshen” is best translated as “drama sustains the spirit” in this admonition.

circumstances in Jin and Yuan Pingyang? In fact, this admonition phrase references two different aspects of theater, i.e., its entertainment and didactic functions. On the one hand, it emphasizes *zaju* drama as a normal, effective means of social recreation. Most people needed to amuse their minds and relax their bodies after a year of heavy labor—the very reason they rushed to see theater at festival ceremonies and temple fairs. On the other hand, the masses, especially those who could not read, could use theater to cultivate their intellect and moral behavior. In the views of members of this family, theater apparently had become an important means of maintaining social cohesion and keeping human life in compliance with the rules of nature.

A Yuan literati official, Hu Zhiyu, explained why *zaju* drama mattered to the public by pinpointing both these entertainment and didactic functions. He particularly noted that *zaju* performance was welcomed by audiences of all social strata because it could effectively portray various aspects of society and issues of human life. A *zaju* might address issues that the elite cared about, such as “the gain and loss of government policies and court politics.” It covers things in mundane concerns as well, such as “everyday stories among family members and their friends in villages and towns.” It also includes “the personalities of different figures and characteristics of various professions, as well as the varied customs and languages of different places.”⁴ If Hu's remarks represent a literati view of drama's capacity to cultivate mentality, the Duan family admonitions enable us for the first time to directly hear this voice from a local family.

⁴ “...樂者與政通，而伎劇亦隨時尚而變。近代教坊院本之外，再變而為雜劇。既謂之雜，上則朝廷君臣政治之得失，下則閭里市井父子兄弟夫婦朋友之厚薄，以致醫藥卜筮釋道商賈之人情物性，殊方異域風俗語言之不同。無一物不得其情，不窮其態...” ZSDQJ, *juan* 8, 56b-57a.

It is impossible to know when the Duan family ancestor passed down these admonitions to his descendents, but the inscription specifically says that both the local government and the Mongol invaders demanded this family's secret medicinal recipes, speaking exactly to the social reality of the last two decades of the Jin dynasty. Only three years after he founded the Mongol Empire in 1206, Genghis Khan sent out troops to invade Jin territory.⁵ The Jurchens lost Pingyang and most areas of Shanxi in 1222, and their last outpost there, the Hezhong prefecture, in 1231.⁶ These constant wars brought tremendous suffering and social disorder to the people of Pingyang. To save these valuable family assets, the Duan family carved these recipe texts into bricks that could not be destroyed by fire or rot away.⁷ For the descendents of this family, which possibly included local doctors and peasants with certain property and land, these family admonitions were essential resources for maintaining the culture and continuity of the lineage during such periods of social turmoil.⁸

The idea of valuing theater links together the many fragmented visual and material records of Pingyang theater, especially those found in intact mortuary contexts.

⁵ *Yuanshi* 1: 6-7.

⁶ SXTS, vol. 4, 228-235. Also see "Biography of Hu Tianzuo 胡天祚", *Jinshi* 118: 887; *Yuanshi* 1: 8-9. The Mongol army attacked many regions of Shanxi and occupied Taiyuan and Pingyang in 1218. Although the Jurchen strongly resisted Mongol invasions and took back Pingyang and other towns in 1219, their resistance quickly weakened during the following years.

⁷ It is worthwhile to speculate on the reasons the Duan family sons chose brick rather than more durable stone to record the most important contents of their family manuscript, along with ancestral admonitions. Obviously, both brick and stone are more durable than paper or silk, and can be buried underground. But a brick tile is cheaper and easier to make than a stone stele, and not too heavy to carry around. Given that the Duan family members might have wanted to preserve family resources in a hurry, their choice of brick as a medium makes sense.

⁸ Tian 2005, 17-19. Thus representations of filial piety in pictorial or sculptural programs of the tombs suggest its importance in maintaining family lineage. If they hoped to be covered by the everlasting protection of their ancestors, descendants needed to comply with ancestral instructions and maintain their filial piety for generations.

Notably, the ancestor who had these family admonitions inscribed, Duan Xian 段先, was the granduncle of Duan Ji (the occupant of tomb no.7) and was probably also buried in the family cemetery at Macun in Jishan.⁹ Given that several sets of representations of *zaju* performance have been discovered in this family cemetery, this inscription demonstrates that members of this family really cared about both the ritual and the didactic functions of theater. The frequent discoveries of *zaju* scenes in local tombs also indicates that the idea about the importance of theater was not exclusive to the Duan family, but was prevalent in Pingyang under the influence of popular religion and Quanzhen Daoism during the early thirteenth century. Thus, by examining these material remains in tombs, we can determine the distinctive tradition of moral and religious teachings that were articulated through theatrical imagery, as well as what such images might have meant within the local cultural traditions of Pingyang.

Does the Duan family's appreciation for theater represent a newly rising social force in Jin and Yuan societies? In her article introducing the archaeological remains of Jin art, Susan Bush has suggested that those mortuary objects from Jin tombs in southern Shanxi, especially those theatrical figurines at Houma, reflect a developing "bourgeois culture" in towns and villages of this region.¹⁰ Her view is open to discussion, but we do observe in these remains the rise of a new social force and the changes it brought to the material culture of Jin and Yuan China. So far we have discussed several family cemeteries and numerous individual tombs. Although their chambers are in small size, they all are decorated, though to different extents of elaboration, with painted or carved

⁹ *Ibid.*, 12 and 14.

¹⁰ Susan Bush, "Archaeological Remains of the Chin Dynasty," *Bulletin of Sung-Yuan Studies* 17 (1981): 27.

brick tiles. Some have inscriptions about the lives of their occupants and the property of their families which suggest that these tombs belong to peasants and merchants in similar economic and social positions.

The brick tomb of Dong Hai (discussed in Chapter Three), for instance, is the largest in the Dong family cemetery.¹¹ Eleven family members of three generations rest together in this double-chambered tomb built in 1196. Engraved on the left column of the entrance to its rear chamber, a tax record provides key information regarding the land and possessions of this family that enabled its members to build what at the time was a well-decorated brick tomb.¹² The inscription notes, in a voice of obvious complaint, that this family had to hand in 400 *dan* 石 of grain in a certain year, which was far beyond their means. Based on the tax ratio recorded in Jin official history, scholars were able to reconstruct the land holdings of this family. It was thus revealed that, by Song-Jin standards, the Dong family was a typical third-class residence household (*sandeng zhuhu* 三等主户) of at least four male adults along with their wives and children with about 100 *mu* of land and some livestock.¹³ Apparently, the Dong family led a well-to-do peasant

¹¹ As introduced earlier in Chapter Three, twenty tombs have been found and eight have been excavated in this Dong family cemetery since 1960s. Tomb no.101, which was buried in 1173, is the earliest tomb of this cemetery. It belonged to Dong Wan, a senior member of this lineage. His grand nephew, Dong Hai, was buried together with his sons and grandsons in tomb no. 102, about 20 meters southwest of Dong Wan's tomb. The Dong brothers belonged to a later generation and their tombs, dated 1210, were found about 30 meters southeast of Dong Wan's tomb. Although there were no inscriptions indicating the identity of the occupants of the nearby tombs such as no. 65H4M102 and 104, it seems that the location of individual tombs relates to their occupants' position within the family lineage. Detailed archaeological reports of Dong Hai's tomb is in *Wenwu shijie* no.4 (1997): 28-40.

¹² Houma 1997, 33.

¹³ Yang Fudou and Yang Jiyun discussed this issue in detail. If each *mu* 畝 of land needed to provide 15 *dan* of grain, then this family's share of 400 *dan* means that it owned about 27 *mu* of segmented land (*qutian* 區田). According to "Register of Food and Goods (Shihuozi 食貨志)" in the *Jinshi*, a peasant who owned 100 *mu* of land was required to plant 30 *mu* of *qutian*. The record in the inscription thus indicates that Dong Hai's family owned about 90-100 *mu* of land. In the *Songshi*, those peasants who had their own land were called "resident households" (*zhuhu* 主戶). They were divided into five grades based

life but suffered heavy government taxes and levies. As shown by tomb inscriptions in Shanxi, local families often complained about heavy taxes and levies. The above-mentioned Lucheng tomb, in which a drama scene is displayed on the south wall, has an inscription on its east wall that records this family's hardship in 1135. A serious drought that lasted two years caused prices to soar, but the government tax was still heavy. This situation became worse due to the harsh policy of Prefect Yang.¹⁴

In addition, an inscription in Madame Zhang's tomb also records that this large family had thirty-five persons, six oxen, one horse, one mule, and one hundred goats (discussed in Chapter Two). Her sons all had been married and had their own families, and they still lived with their parents. The number of male adults and livestock of this family does not necessarily indicate its wealth was comparable to that of a landlord. In fact, this family had tens of members to feed and none of them could live a luxurious life. Families of this kind were not unusual in Jin and Yuan Shanxi. It was a custom in traditional China that sons would live together and not divide the family land and property, as long as their parents were still alive. Yet we should not ignore that this way of living was sometimes necessary in certain difficult circumstances, when family members had to stay together, cooperate in work, and share their resources. By this means, Madame Zhang's husband could gather support from their sons to rebury her in a

on the size of their land holdings, with those owning 50-100 *mu* belonging to the third grade. During the Song period, a *mu* roughly equals to 650 square meters and a *dan* is about 59.2 kilograms. See Yang 1997, 75-77.

¹⁴ "The government tax and levy are very heavy, because a hundred thousand troops are stationed in Luzhou in 1135. Prefect Yang made every resident live a hard life. The heavy drought has lasted two years, making rice cost 1000 money, wheat 800 money, and millet 500 money. Our village was assigned to submit 31 iron cooking pots [for the army] and transport them to the prefecture. 乙卯歲，潞州屯兵十萬，差配甚多。楊上□坐知州，人名難過。大旱二年，米一千，麥八百，粟五百。本村著鐵鍋三十一個，赴本州納。" It is believed that a *dan* of rice was sold at 500-2000 coins during the twelfth century. Changzhi 2003, 43.

decent brick tomb.¹⁵ Thus, the elaborate decoration of local tombs did not necessarily indicate that their occupants were wealthy, but displayed the filial devotion and collective power of their sons and daughters, who were often willing to pool their money and labor, sometimes even spending all their combined savings or taking loans to rebury their parents in upgraded tombs.

It is reasonable to consider that the Dong, Zhang, and Duan families all belonged to the same social class, which mostly consisted of well-to-do peasants or affluent venders in the urban and rural areas. To refer to families of this kind in Song-Yuan society, some scholars have proposed the concept of *fuzuhu* 富足户 (well-to-do households).¹⁶ This concept is crucial to understanding local households in thirteenth-century Pingyang. Because of their vulnerable position in the society, members of these families had to work diligently to support themselves and meet the challenges of everyday life. Yet countless of them also devoted themselves to the construction of temple stages and brick tombs.¹⁷ Compared to poor tenants and homeless people, they

¹⁵ Yan 2003, 7.

¹⁶ Gu Gengyou has speculated about the living standards and properties of a third-class peasant household of the Northern Song: it normally consisted of ten persons and owned land of 100 *mu*. Also known as *fuzuhu*, this kind of family would have a little extra savings during harvest years. Together with those in towns and cities, these well-to-do families constituted part of the middle class of Song and Jin societies. In addition, it should be noted that, while these well-to-do families did have their own lands and certain other properties, most of them had no social or political privileges. Some might have been assigned duties as village heads, but they all had heavy levy and tax burdens from the state. Yet these families without privileges played a critical role in maintaining social order and developing local culture. See Gu Gengyou 谷更有, *Tang Song guojia yu xiangcun shehui* 唐宋國家與鄉村社會 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2006), 170-2.

¹⁷ A similar concept, *fumin* 富民 (rich people), was proposed by Lin Wenxun 林文勳. Lin believes that the top three classes of residence households constituted this class in Song society. Apparently, this concept is broader than that of *fuzuhu* and includes more affluent people. Lin Wenxun and Gu Gengyou, *Tang Song xiangcun shehui lilian yu jiceng kongzhi* 唐宋鄉村社會力量與基層控制 (Kunming: Yunnan daxue chubanshe, 2005), 40-41.

also had more access to cultural and artistic products and had significantly contributed to the development of popular culture and religion of the time.

As exemplified by the Dong and the Duan families that have stayed in their own villages for centuries, local families with the same surname often preferred to live together in the same location so that they could pool resources and knowledge. Although the majority of their members were peasants, a few were doctors, scribes, musicians, craftsmen, or government clerks who were willing to use their literacy or professional skills for the benefit of the rest of the family as well as for neighbors in their community.¹⁸ Family members also maintained close bonds in local religious and cultural affairs. They regularly made offerings to their deities and ancestors, wishing to obtain their blessings for continued prosperity. They also paid close attention to teaching both literacy and morality to their children, in the hope that this would help the next generation to thrive.

Given that Jin and Yuan drama played a vital role in the formation of social cohesion and the spread of orthodox ideas, it is no surprise that local families of this kind particularly cared about theater and reminded their members of its importance for a healthy, prosperous life. Their support and love of theater contributed to the boom of drama in Shanxi, where countless plays transmitted valued notions to illiterate folk, such as family protocols, moral paragons, social hierarchy and the like. Illustrations of dramatic stories were also important. When local viewers appreciated and remembered these images, dominant social and moral views could be successfully disseminated

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 70-77.

among them. Next, a case study of Dong Hai's tomb illustrates how families of this kind used theatrical images embodied with moral teachings to instruct their descendants.

Theatrical Stories and Visual Rhetoric in Dong Hai's Tomb

As the closing section of Chapter Three explained, the name of the *qingyintang* in the front chamber of Dong Hai's tomb implies that this tomb functioned as an underground family shrine, in which Dong family descendants presented offerings of food and drama to their ancestors to appeal for their blessings. In addition to this ceremonial setting, the decorative program of this tomb also features pictorial reliefs with didactic functions on its walls, which combined moral teaching with theatrical entertainment. Different from Dong Ming's tomb in the same cemetery and the Duan family tombs at Macun, Dong Hai's tomb has no *zaju* actors on a miniature stage in its decorative program. Neither does it have inscriptions of theatrical texts on its chamber walls. It instead has several illustrations of battle scenes that are derived from contemporary fiction and drama.¹⁹

At first glance, these battle scenes, which display horsemen in battle or pursuit postures, appear to be a commonplace sort of decoration, comparable to similar motifs that frequently decorate the lattice doors, wooden panels, and standing screens of traditional buildings in Shanxi. However, when we examine these images more closely and compare their subject matter with the extant repertoire of Jin and Yuan theater, we

¹⁹ Several Houma tombs have relief tiles of battle scenes, including the burials of the Dong brothers, and tombs no. 102 and 65H4M102. Excavators originally took these scenes to be generic decorations with an exorcist function, but they now have begun to identify them as particular historic story scenes. In the case of Dong Hai's tomb, Yang Fudou has identified the two stories about Yuchi Gong (discussed below). His study greatly helped my research. See Houma 1997, 35-40.

find that they are, in fact, scenes from popular plays and fiction of the time. The specific identification of these battle scenes and their implications suggests that members of the Dong family purposefully incorporated these images into the pictorial program of this tomb in order to convey particular moral messages.

For instance, flanking the central scene on the north wall of the rear chamber, which presents the tomb occupants banqueting, the two corner scenes constitute an episode in the story of Yuchi Gong 尉遲恭 (585-658), a famous Tang general (Figures 5.2 and 5.3). This episode depicts Yuchi Gong bravely saving Li Shimin 李世民 (also known as Prince Qin 秦王, r. 626-649), the soon-to-be founder of the Tang dynasty (618-907), in a battlefield emergency at Yukeyuan 榆窠園 near Luoyang. It happened that Li Shimin did not bring enough bodyguards on a battlefield visit, and an enemy general, Shan Xiongxing 單雄信, took this as an opportunity to launch a sudden attack. After learning that Shan meant to kill Prince Qin, Yuchi Gong rushed to save his master, even though there was no time to put on his full armor and gather all of his weapons. Yet he successfully grabbed Shan's lance and defeated his opponent with only a single iron staff.²⁰ Characteristics of different figures, such as the ferocity of Shan, the bravery of Yuchi, and the confidence of Prince Qin, are vividly presented via elaborate depiction of their appearance.

Some illustrations of the same episode survive as decorations on everyday objects. For instance, a Cizhou pillow displays this story in a similar manner, though its figures are less elaborately rendered than those on the brick tiles from this tomb (Figure

²⁰ The story is included in the *Romance of Sui and Tang Heroes* (Sui Tang yanyi 隋唐演義). See Chen Ruheng 陳汝衡 ed. *Shuo Tang* 說唐 (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), 50: 227.

5.4). In fact, this episode enjoyed popularity in Shanxi for a couple of centuries and even spread south after the Mongols conquered all of China. It appeared in the decoration of a few extant Yuan blue-and-white vases that were possibly owned by elite families. The best example is seen on a beautiful vase of elaborate decoration, where the same episode is skillfully depicted around the vessel (Figure 5.5). On one segment of this piece, Shan Xiongxing defeats Tang general Duan Zhixian 段志賢, who is leading other soldiers in a withdrawal. On the opposite surface, Prince Li Shimin is calmly waiting for rescue, while Yuchi has just arrived and is ready to engage with Shan Xiongxin.

If this pair of images on the north wall of Dong Hai's tomb depicts imperial loyalty, filial piety is the subject of the images on the two central lattice doors on the east wall (Figure 5.6). The young rider wielding his double staffs and the elderly figure next to him are Baolin 寶林 and his father Yuchi (Figure 5.7). These panels present the dramatic moment when Yuchi Gong was unexpectedly reunited with his lost son, who had eventually turned against his stepfather and followed Yuchi to serve Li Shimin.²¹ Yuchi and Baolin, father and son, then assisted the Tang regime to defeat other rebel armies. By displaying this second Yuchi episode, these relief tiles add new meanings to the didactic program of this tomb—the virtue of obedience to the father above all others and the merit of assisting dynastic founders.

The two battle scenes on the south wall show stories about another famous Tang general Qin Qiong 秦瓊 (?-638) (Figure 5.8). The scene on the left, in which a rider using

²¹ Some twenty years before, when he surrendered to the Tang, Yuchi had to leave his family behind in the “rebel army”, which fought Prince Qin's troops for the throne of China. Liu Jizhen 劉季真, an enemy of Prince Qin, took Yuchi's wife and adopted his three-year old son, Baolin. Then, Yuchi and his son met on the battlefield, fighting each other as enemies. Persuaded by his mother and friend, Baolin reunited with his biological father, Yuchi, and helped the Tang army capture his stepfather, Liu Jizhen. For the related Yuan drama, see Li 1997, 102.

two iron sticks is confronting another rider who is lifting his long sword, depicts the moment when Qin Qiong fought with the crown prince Yang Guang 楊廣 (r. 604-618) to save Li Yuan 李淵 (r. 618-626), father of Li Shimin (Figure 5.9a).²² Like the valiant Yuchi, Qin saved the future founder of the Tang dynasty; and they were each also pursued in battle. As seen in the scene on the right, depicting an episode of Qin's flight from Sui (589-618) territory, Qin has no intention of fighting back while being chased by an elderly figure wielding a long sword (Figure 5.9b).²³ Interestingly, Qin Qiong and Yuchi Gong became popular door gods after the Tang dynasty.²⁴ During the New Year's celebration, villagers and townspeople would display their paired images on the doors of their houses to ward off ghosts and evil powers.²⁵

Obviously, the Dong family purposefully selected these scenes from a variety of plays about historical heroes from the Sui and Tang dynasties that enjoyed great popularity in Jin and Yuan theater. The extant repertoire of Jin and Yuan *zaju* includes several famous plays about both Yuchi Gong and Qin Qiong, including *Take over the*

²² Because of some personal disputes, Yang Guang and his hangers-on pretended to be bandits attacking Li Yuan on his way back to Taiyuan. At the very moment when Yang was about to kill Li Yuan, Qin happened to pass by and helped Li defeat Yang. Qin Qiong's heroic action changed the course of Chinese history, because the man he saved would soon overthrow the Sui dynasty. *Shuo Tang*, 4: 14-17.

²³ His foster father, Yang Lin 楊林, a Prince of the Sui, was angry about Qin's betrayal and tried to stop him at the Tongguan 潼關 pass. He thus sent Wei Wentong 魏文通, a valiant Sui general, to catch Qin on his way over to the side of the Tang. For the story, see *Shuo Tang*, 26: 123.

²⁴ Mary C. Fong has suggested that Yuchi and Qin had been a popular pair of door gods during the Song and Jin periods. See her article "Wu Daozi's Legacy in the Popular Door Gods (*Menshen*) Qin Shubao and Yuchi Gong," *Archives of Asian Art* 42 (1989): 6-8. Interestingly, these two famous Tang generals even have their official biographies in the same chapter when the *History of the Tang* was written. See Liu Xu's 劉昫 *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 (The original history of the Tang, preface dated 945), 68: 1997-2003; Ou Yangxiu's 歐陽修 *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (The new history of the Tang, preface dated 1060), 89: 2422-4 and 2426-7.

²⁵ Rather than placing their portraits side-by-side on the chamber wall, craftsmen of Dong Hai's tomb purposefully incorporated these two figures' images into story scenes that were dedicated to exorcist and didactic purposes in the tomb space.

Lance with a Single Staff (*Danbian duoshuo* 單鞭奪槊), *Smartly Plotting Qin Shubao to Surrender* (*Zhixiang Qin Shubao* 智降秦叔寶), and *Elder Yuchi Meet Little Yuchi* (*Yuchi fuzi xiangren* 尉遲父子相認).²⁶ Once viewing the scenes carved on the walls, spectators of the time would immediately recognize these familiar episodes from popular theater and identify their major characters. Both Yuchi's and Qin's characters still frequently appear today as protagonists in regional operas, with the former made up with a red face and the latter with a white face.

If the first set of scenes in Dong Hai's tomb highlights Yuchi's valor and loyalty because he strived to save his master without considering his own safety, the second set of scenes then illustrates the appropriate moral choice of following one's father and serving the dynastic founder. Similarly, the two sets of Qin Qiong's images highlight the virtue and merit of this loyal and brave general who contributed greatly to the foundation of the Tang dynasty. What message, then, does this pictorial ensemble want to convey? The answer becomes apparent if the viewer turns to an outing scene on the west wall where Dong Hai is closely followed by his son (Figure 5.10). Its theme echoes those of the battle scenes on other walls: As the son wholeheartedly follows his father, so the generals faithfully assist their ruler. Subordinates serving their masters, and sons obeying their fathers, signify two important concepts that shaped kinship and bureaucracy, two

²⁶ Li 1997, 76, 118, and 102. Yuchi Jingde's stories and plays were more popular than those of Qin Qiong in Yuan and Ming dynasty Shanxi. As local native, Yuchi was the protagonist in several Yuan dramas, such as Shang Zhongxian's 尚仲賢 *Grabbing the Lance Thrice* (*Sanduoshuo* 三奪槊), Yang Zi's 楊梓 *Jingde not Acknowledge his Elder Age* (*Jingde bufu lao* 敬德不服老), and Beat Shan Xiongxing with a Staff (*Bianda Shan Xiongxing* 鞭打單雄信). For introduction of contents and versions of these dramas, see Li 1997, 39, 71, and 119.

pillars of traditional Chinese society.²⁷ Exposed to multiple plays about these individuals, local people were able to read the layered meanings of imperial loyalty, social hierarchy, and filial devotion. The use of visual rhetoric, such as repetition and correspondence, further reinforces these moral themes.

At this point, we can speculate on the reasons why the Dong family incorporated didactic elements into battle scenes in the tomb space and why they cared about providing these moral teachings. In the view of Duan family members, the decorative program of their tombs probably served two functions. On the one hand, it functioned as a powerful vehicle to persuade and instruct living family members in moral conduct. Younger generations should support senior ones, and descendants should venerate their ancestors. All members were required to obey these basic ethical values, which were essential to maintaining solidarity and culture.²⁸ On the other hand, by displaying dramas featuring filial devotion, the interior decorative program of the tomb helped the living convince their ancestors of their virtue and obedience, so that they would, in return, receive enough ancestral blessings to ensure family prosperity.²⁹ The frequency of scenes from filial piety stories in Song and Jin tombs also suggests that the people of the time believed that deeds of filial devotion could constitute a link between ancestors and

²⁷ Stephen F. Teiser, "Introduction: The Spirits of Chinese religion," in *Religions of Asia in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 317.

²⁸ Teiser 2002, 318.

²⁹ Keith Knapp has noticed that historical texts of filial devotion stories during the Six Dynasties more often highlighted divine mirages or spiritual blessings than actual devotional activities. A possible reason for literati emphasis on the relationship between miracles and virtue is that they believed in the mysterious power of a virtue, assuming that extreme filial piety would touch the heaven and the earth (xiaoti zhizhi, tongyu shenming 孝悌之至, 通於神明). See Keith N. Knapp, *Selfless Offspring: Filial Children and Social Order in Medieval China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), 82-88.

offspring and, eventually, assist communication between the realms of the living and the dead.³⁰

Thus, an analysis of the arrangement of these theatrical scenes in Dong Hai's tomb serves as a starting point to understanding the local idea about the importance of filial piety and theater in Pingyang, as reflected in the Duan family admonition text. Its pictorial program that features assembled illustrations of historical plays also indicates the shared function of tomb space and family shrine in the views of Pingyang people. As I have noted earlier, local tomb chambers were probably viewed as a counterpart to aboveground family shrines. These shrines had multiple functions in traditional Chinese society: Descendants of a prosperous lineage would regularly gather there to make offerings and appeal for ancestral blessings, and their children would receive lessons there in Confucian classics and ethics. Theater and ceremonies also took place within the family shrine to execute communicative, ritual, and didactic functions.³¹ Viewed in this context, the Dong family tombs are reminiscent of Han-dynasty family shrines of a thousand years earlier, and those in later Imperial China as well, replicating their combined ritual and educational functions underground.³² So are the Duan family tombs,

³⁰ Deng Fei 鄧菲, "Guanyu Song Jin muzang zhong xiaoxingtu de sikao 關於宋金墓葬中孝行圖的思考," *Zhongyuan wenwu* no. 4 (2009): 75-81.

³¹ There is no Jin and Yuan family shrines, but plenty of Ming and Qing family shrines survive in Shanxi.

³² A good example of the Han shrine is the Wuliang Shrine. Wu Hung conducted an important iconographic study of this shrine's pictorial program on its ceilings, gables, and walls, which represent the heavenly and human realms respectively. He particularly discusses the pictorial narratives that promote the *Three Bonds* of virtuous men and women, which convey didactic messages to the descendants of the Wu family. See Wu 1989, 167-185.

In addition, there were many family shrines in South China during the Ming and Qing periods. For instance, Ling Jian did a systematic study of the administration and functions of local family shrines in Shunde 順德 city, Guangdong 廣東. He particularly emphasized that local lineages cared much about the associated ritual and educational activities held at their family shrines. See Ling Jian 凌建, *Shunde citang wenhua chutan* 順德祠堂文化初探 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 2008).

such as Macun tombs no. 1, 2, and 4, which also have ensembles of scenes depicting dramas and images from filial piety stories in their chambers.

In addition, a thriving village theater culture initiated a new artistic trend in Jin and Yuan society, in which local folk developed a preference for viewing various theatrical images with potential for religious and moral instruction. They also experimented with different pictorial forms and styles of visual rhetoric to effectively use these images to fulfill cultural and social needs. Of particular interest are the fifty-seven clay figurines in Macun tomb no. 4, which represent characters from the Twenty-Four Stories of Filial Piety. They are to date the only set of three-dimensional figure groups of this theme discovered in tombs. These figurines, in their various postures and appearances, vividly represent story scenes as if the paragons themselves were performing along the corridor around the tomb chamber.³³ Artisans were inspired to assemble these figurines and create dramatic effects within this simulated family shrine because of their own experience of watching similar plays. Given that viewers could more vividly receive these stories than their traditional representations either in text or in pictures, these figurines signify an innovation by contemporary artisans and their non-elite customers. Consequently, theatrical imagery became a powerful vehicle for the penetration of religious and moral ideas into every aspect of local society. Its prevalence also reflects the rise of secular art and the collective accomplishments of Pingyang people in formulating a visual culture that was distinctively their own.

³³ Yang Fudong gave a detailed introduction of the complete set of Twenty-four Filial Piety Stories in Macun tomb no. 4. See Yang 1997, 72-74.

Moral Instruction and Theatrical Images in Jin-Yuan Pictorial Arts

Despite the fact that some romantic and entertaining plays might convey ideas that contrast with orthodox values, most historical and military plays revealed historical orientations and promoted social ethics in Jin and Yuan Shanxi. The repertoire of the Lucheng ritual manuscript (discussed in Chapter Four) indicates three major thematic categories of didactic plays in village or ritual theater.³⁴ The first category covers plays illuminating the historical patterns of dynastic cycles and the necessity for assisting sage rulers, such as “Four Generals Surrendered to the Tang (Si Ma tou Tang 四馬投唐)” and “The Inauguration of King Yao and Shun (Yao Shun dengji 堯舜登基).” The play “Si Ma tou Tang” is about how Li Shimin successfully recruited brave generals from different rebel armies and finally founded the Tang.³⁵ Plays about the virtue and merits of legendary King Yao and King Shun were also popular in Pingyang since Pingyang is believed to be the hometown of King Yao. These plays informed its illiterate audience of historical patterns and the destined success/failure of some heroes.

The second category includes dramas that promote loyal and righteous officials and condemn treacherous ones, such as “The Orphan of the Zhao Family (Zhaosi guer 趙氏孤兒)” and “Crossing Five Passes and Killing Six Generals (Guo wuguan zhan liujiang 過五關斬六將).”³⁶ In the first play Cheng Ying 程嬰 (active early 6th cen. BCE), a

³⁴ For the list of drama titles, see Han 1987, 72-108. Here I only provide a brief categorization. There are plays with other themes; and a play can also cover several themes. It is also noteworthy that Evelyn Rawski has called for further study of the popular reception of famous plays and heroes in the context of material conditions and the social environment. The plays listed in this manuscript provide a valuable resource for such a study. See David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski eds. *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 411-2.

³⁵ There is a Yuan drama of the same title, as recorded in Li 1997, 119.

³⁶ For related Yuan dramas, see YQSSZ, 169-180 and Li 1997, 81-2.

righteous doctor in the Jin State (modern Shanxi and Hebei), sacrificed his own son to save his master Zhao Dun's 趙盾 son. Later, he helped this young man avenge his parents' death and eventually saved the state. As a paragon of loyalty, Guan Yu refused Cao Cao's temptation and threat and took a journey of a thousand miles to reunite with his brother, Liu Bei 劉備. Plays of the third category either praise filial paragons and virtuous figures or show the karma of wrongful deeds, such as "The Sixth Son of the Yang Family Sue to the Imperial Court (Yang Liulang gao yuzhuang 楊六郎告御狀) and "The Deity Kills a Rebellious Son (Shen shachu nizi 神殺忤逆子)".³⁷ Helped by the righteous Prince Zhao, General Yang Liulang 楊六郎 finally killed the treacherous Pan Renmei 潘仁美 and avenged his father and brothers, whose lives were taken by the Khitan army because of Pan's cowardice and betrayal. The plot of the second example is not clear, but the title shows its theme clearly.

With his investigation of temple murals and oracles, Wolfram Eberhard has demonstrated the instructive function of popular theater in China. Popular tales and historical plays in a variety of mediums were thereby made familiar to those unable to read historical and ethical teachings for themselves.³⁸ A similar function was reported in Glynne Wickham's study of the theater in Medieval Europe which proposed that peasants who could not read or write were not completely cut off from the intellectual and social ideas of the educated elite. With a sense of community and ideas about hierarchy as binding forces within villages and towns, local peasants were exposed to a common body

³⁷ A related Yuan drama is recorded in Li 1997, 124-5.

³⁸ Eberhard 1978, 191.

of knowledge via the preaching and illustrations from priests. Similar to religious pictures and sculpture, dramas and their representations functioned as an alternative means to distinguish paragons and define morality, as well as to teach virtue and reveal related miracles.³⁹

In fact, pictorial arts in Pingyang helped to extend the influence of didactic theater in a durable manner. The frequent use of instructive pictures and performance served as a shared educational process among the masses. Extant visual evidence demonstrates that theatrical pictures with didactic teachings, even those about righteous remonstrators and loyal officials, were welcomed by the masses of Pingyang. For instance, the admonition story of Zhu Yun 朱雲 was popular in both the performing arts and the pictorial arts during the Jin and Yuan periods. The surviving Southern Song painting, *Breaking the Balustrade* (Zhejiantu 折檻圖), depicts an intense moment in Zhu Yun's story when this upright official admonishes Han Emperor Chengdi (r. 33-7 BCE), the same emperor as in the stories of Ban Ji and Zhao Feiyan in the *Four Beauties* (Figure 5.11).⁴⁰

Julia Murray has suggested that multiple copies of this painting were made to the court, providing good advice or warnings for viewers there to adjust and rectify government conduct. Their patrons were very likely rulers and high officials who could

³⁹ Wickham 1987, 109-111.

⁴⁰ The pictorial composition strengthens the intense atmosphere of the scene. In contrast to leisure activities that typically occur in a peaceful and elegant garden setting, a remonstrance that risks the life of the admonisher is in progress. The two protagonists, Zhu and the emperor, form two poles of the image. On the left, Zhu Yu is struggling to hold the balustrade and refusing to leave, while two imperial guards are pulling him away. The emperor Chengdi is sitting in his chair and angrily staring at Zhu from the other side. He just ordered Zhu's execution, because Zhu had remonstrated him for his favoring of Zhang Yu 張禹, an unworthy and malicious man who caused disorder at the court. Next to the emperor stands Zhang, who has lowered his head to cover his pleasure over the punishment of his political opponent. Yet Xingqin Ji, another upright senior official, bravely steps forward to dissuade the emperor and spare Zhu's life.

read and understand the layers of allusions in pictorial admonitions of this kind.⁴¹ In other words, such didactic images reminded the reigning emperors of the importance of accepting corrective advice and applying benevolent policy. They also informed officials of paragons who performed their duties even at the risk of their life. We should not forget, however, that images with similar themes also circulated outside the court. They were reminiscent of associated popular plays in secular world. In particular, the popularity of these pictures in various mediums and quality prompts us to consider the identity of their viewers. Namely, images of righteous admonitions were not exclusively viewed by the elite. Commoners also used them to decorate their vessels and homes, so as to meet both their need for visual pleasure and for moral persuasion in daily life, as exemplified by a Cizhou-pillow decoration that links to the silk painting about Zhu Yu's remonstrance (Figure 5.12).⁴² By viewing such plays and pictures in everyday life, villagers and townspeople could not only commemorate the faith and merits of these virtuous paragons but, like official and imperial viewers, rectify their attitudes and conduct as a result.

It is also noteworthy that numerous popular didactic plays in Shanxi were derived from local tales and figures, as exemplified by the play about Yu Rang 豫讓 (active the 450s BCE), who constantly sought vengeance for his murdered master Zhi Bo 智伯, lord of the Jin state.⁴³ Like the above-mentioned orphan story of the Zhao family, this story

⁴¹ Julia K. Murray, *Mirror of Morality: Chinese Narrative Illustration and Confucian Ideology* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2007), 85-86.

⁴² In this Cizhou ceramic pillow decoration, Zhu Yun is kneeling before the emperor while another official is making a petition for him. It does not have the dramatic effect shown in the silk painting.

⁴³ This scene depicts Yu's last failed assassination attempt, when he is wielding a sword in front of a bridge and approaching Zhao Xiangzi 趙襄子. Zhao is one of the three lords of the Jin state who killed Zhi Bo and divided his territory. In order to hide his identity to access to Zhao, Yu used paint to disfigure his face and ate hot charcoal to change his voice. Though he made several attempts to assassinate Zhao,

was supposed to occur in the Jin state during the Spring and Autumn period (770-476 BCE) too. Because of its close cultural and historical associations with Shanxi, locals frequently performed this story about loyalist martyrs. The Yuan playwright, Yang Zi 楊梓, further adapted it into a famous drama, entitled *Yu Rang Swallow Hot Charcoal* (*Yu Rang tuntan* 豫讓吞炭). Similar to Zhu Yu's story, this story was not only converted into popular dramas, but was also widely depicted on Cizhou ceramic pillows (Figure 5.13).⁴⁴ These plays and their illustrations celebrate the righteousness of court officials and the feudal loyalty of subjects who would fulfill their duties and assist their rulers at the cost of their own life.

More notably, perhaps, didactic theater and its representations greatly promoted the virtue of filial piety within Jin and Yuan society. Compared to those of loyal officials and martyrs, images of filial piety particularly thrived in secular art of Shanxi, as demonstrated by archaeological finds there. This is partly because non-Chinese dynasties did not discard Chinese morality but promoted and utilized it as a vehicle to solidify their own regimes.⁴⁵ And yet, the rise of Quanzhen sect should be counted as another major factor that boosted the popularity of filial piety and associated dramas in Jin and Yuan

each time, Zhao was generous enough to free him. We know the tragic end of the story—Yu failed again and was caught by the guards. Realizing that he could not fulfill his vow to avenge his master, Yu requested one of Zhao's coats, which he cut into pieces, representing his killing of Zhao. Then he committed suicide to follow his master. For centuries, local people commemorated Yu's martyred loyalty. See Li 1997, 71.

⁴⁴ Several museums have collected Cizhou pillows decorated with this story, such as the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco and the Handan Municipal Museum, Hebei.

⁴⁵ For instance, it is recorded in "Register One of Selection 選舉誌一: "凡人之行莫大於孝廉，今已有舉孝廉之法，及民有才能德行者令縣官薦之。" *Jinshi* 51: 377a. Jurchen emperors propagated the local ideal of filial piety in order to secure the hierarchy of their own regimes, promoting a strong connection between filial piety and imperial loyalty. They also used demonstration of filial piety and harmonious family relations as important criteria for promoting reliable and incorruptible officials.

Pingyang. This Daoist sect incorporated filial devotion to parents in its teachings, despite simultaneous promotion of leaving one's family to become a hermit.⁴⁶ As mentioned earlier, the Quanzhen founder, Wang Zhe, particularly promoted the Confucian *Classic of Filial Piety* to his followers. Another Quanzhen leader, Qiu Chuji, also persuaded China's Mongol conquerors to support filial piety as a means of controlling the masses and solidifying their empire.⁴⁷ Given that Pingyang was one major base of the Quanzhen sect, local priests should have made their best efforts to promote filial piety in their preaching and local theater.

As indicated by the Duan family admonitions, being filial to parents and ancestors was an essential moral conduct to maintain the fortune and the solidarity of a family. Similarly, this kind of veneration was key to maintaining the social and political hierarchy upon which the stability of the state depended. Because of the social turbulences and political changes brought by both the Jurchens and the Mongols, Pingyang people found it imperative to emphasize domestic devotion as a means of maintaining the solidarity and continuity of their families. They thus favored pictorial and theatrical representations of stories of filial sons and virtuous paragons in their daily life and even brought them into afterlife.⁴⁸ Although most dramas about filial devotion have been lost, countless images of filial paragons surviving in mortuary art still indicate the popularity of this important theme in contemporary theater.

⁴⁶ Ren 2001, 683.

⁴⁷ Ren 2001, 675-7. To some extent, Quanzhen priests functioned as agents for the Jurchen and Mongol rulers to keep cultural control over the masses and to maintain social order and peace in local societies of their occupied territories.

⁴⁸ Archaeological discoveries of representations of filial piety stories in Jin and Yuan tombs outnumbered those of other dynasties in the Central Plains. The prevalence of filial piety ideas was unprecedented before among non-elite people.

It is worthwhile to note the stories of Zhao Xiaozong 趙孝宗 and of Bao Shan 鮑山, because they both were adapted into Yuan dramas and rendered in a variety of art forms as well, as exemplified by clay figurines in the Macun tombs, Jishan, and murals in the Weicun tomb, Changzhi.⁴⁹ The figurines and relief tiles of Zhao's story show Zhao and his brother contending to sacrifice themselves in order to save the other, with their virtue touching the famished bandit leader who planned to eat one of them (Figures 5.14 and 5.15). Figurines of Bao's story show him begging a soldier on horseback to free him and his mother. Moved by this demonstration of filial devotion, the soldier finally does free them (Figures 5.16). Accompanied by expository text on the left, the mural version of this episode shows Bao carrying his mother in a basket on his back to flee the rebel army (Figure 5.17). The same episode is rendered slightly differently on a Jin-dynasty Cizhou-ware pillow (Figure 5.18). Apparently, these stories had already been quite popular through theater and pictorial arts and the illiterate masses had no problem to recognize them during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

In fact, local people connected the fate of families with the peace of the state and wished to assume their proper roles and duties within their families and communities. Four large characters on a background of stamped "fish-roe" patterns on a Cizhou-ware pillow, which read "home and country in everlasting peace (jiaguo yong'an 家國永安)", demonstrate that this concept had been popular during the Northern Song (Figure 5.19).⁵⁰ Echoing the above-mentioned Duan family admonition, this inscription dated 1071 clearly shows that Pingyang people inherited this idea and embodied it in their decoration

⁴⁹ Changzhi 2009, 59-64.

⁵⁰ Mino 1980, 244.

of everyday objects and tombs.⁵¹ Although these local folk had less opportunities to consider issues of loyalty and martyrdom than did literati elite, they still made their own effort to preserve a peaceful society when political and social changes often occurred. A combination of moral education, pictorial arts, and theater entertainment thus became a useful means for locals to instruct themselves and their offspring, in the hope to maintain the continuity of their culture, stabilize the foundation of their society, and remain resonance with nature.

Pingyang people indeed managed to extend the influence of didactic theater and spread moral values and social ethics through various spectacles and pictures.⁵² This region was by no means the only place where the masses explored the didactic function of theatrical imagery in this way, but its rich pictorial documents create a window through which we can observe and analyze a visual culture that otherwise has been buried in the debris of time. A study of Pingyang's material thereby enables us not only to closely examine local life and traditions in Shanxi, but also to achieve a nuanced

⁵¹ Prompted by the Song emperor, Shenzong 神宗 (r. 1068-1085), the minister, Wang Anshi 王安石, initiated a series of reforms in 1068, in order to increase government income and build a strong army to resist invasion by northern nomadic people. The idea conveyed on this pillow probably relates to the hope of the masses to see their state strong and their society peaceful.

⁵² Pingyang's materials convincingly show that theater and its various representations perfectly served local needs for recreation, education, and ritual during the twelfth century. Qing scholar, Liu Xianting 劉獻廷 (1648-1695), made a good summary for the popularity of theater in traditional China. Liu asserted that the ordinary people (xiaoren 小人) liked to sing songs and watch dramas because they partook of the spiritual nature of the *Book of Songs* 詩 and the *Classic of Music* 樂; and they favored reading fiction and listening to storytelling because they shared the spiritual nature of the *Book of History* 書 and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋. His words exactly indicate the multiple functions of theater and its imagery, through which the masses expressed and shaped their values and ideas of family and society. “余觀世之小人，未有不好唱歌看戲者，此性天中之《詩》與《樂》也；未有不看小說聽說書者，此性天中之《書》與《春秋》也...” This excerpt is from the *Miscellaneous Notes of Mr. Guangyang* (Guangyang zaji 廣陽雜記) (Taipei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1974), juan 2, 32a.

understanding of the dynamism of northern cultures and their contributions to Chinese art.

Summary

The discovery of the Duan family admonition bricks offered a unique opportunity to understand the popularity of *zaju* drama and its didactic and instructive functions in association with religious and moral teaching in Pingyang. The case study of Dong Hai's tomb indicates that local folk utilized distinctive modes of visual rhetoric to initiate viewers' theatrical experience, and displayed illustrations of historical plays to convey moral values to offspring. When they associated family with state, domestic filialness with imperial loyalty in their theater, the masses were clearly conveying their hopes for the continuity of their families and linking it to the lasting stability of their society. As shown in the extant repertoire and visual documents of Jin and Yuan theater, a large number of *zaju* dramas promoted and linked themes of filial piety, absolute obedience, and sacrifice to the throne. These plays and their illustrations transmitted cultural values and social ideas that penetrated virtually every segment of Chinese society.

Indeed, what ties these theatrical images together is the great popularity of drama in Jin and Yuan Pingyang. Countless artists and artisans integrated theatrical stories and performance scenes into the decoration of local dwellings, temples, and tombs, where a broad spectrum of such pictures fulfilled ornamental, entertainment, ceremonial, and didactic functions. In this regard, the valuable Duan family admonition stating that "Drama sustains the spirit" reminds us of the linkage among a variety of visual and textual records, as well as cultural and ritual traditions in Pingyang. In aggregate, they not

only indicate the dimensions and impact of the visual culture of early theater, but also illuminate the concerns and values of local residents, who lived in a world of thriving popular religions during a period of turbulence.

In short, it is only in Pingyang where we have obtained an invaluable opportunity to observe a widely beloved visual cultural tradition of theater, which kept flourishing in North China throughout the twelfth to the fourteenth century. This new trend altered the course of artistic and cultural development of the time, heralding the boom of regional operas and their pictorial arts during the Ming and Qing periods.⁵³ An introduction of this distinctive regional culture to wider scholarly attention thus serves to encourage further studies of Jin and Yuan visual culture, a field not fully explored thus far.

⁵³ Wang Shucun provides a large collection of popular prints of regional operas in Ming and Qing art; see his book *Zhongguo minjian nianhuashi tulu* 中國民間年畫史圖錄 (Shanghai: Renmin meishu chubanshe, 1991).



Plate I. Map of China, around 1200.

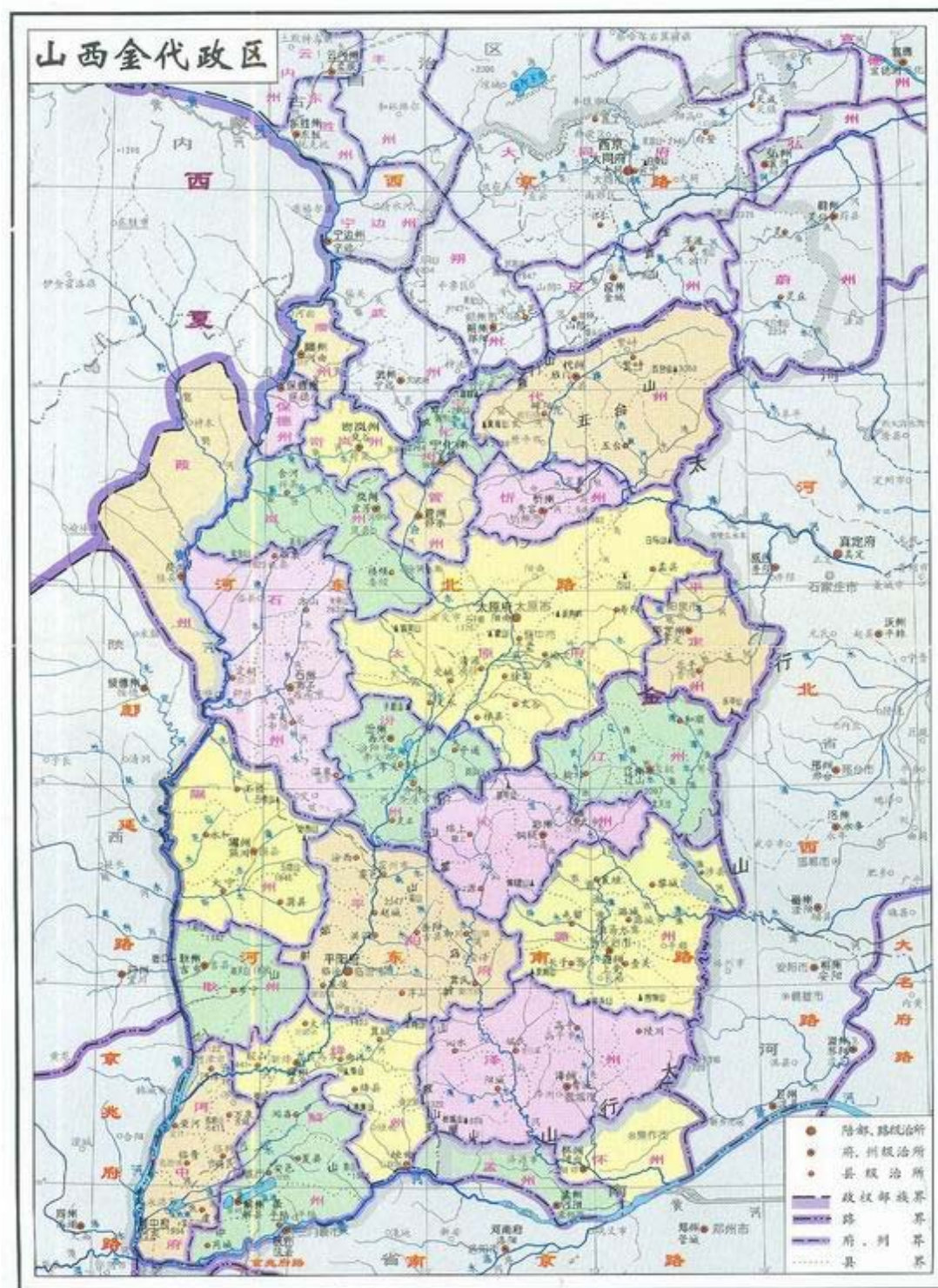


Plate II. Map of Jin-dynasty Southern Circuit of Hedong around 1200 (After Shanxi tongshi, vol. 4, pl. 3).



Figure 1.1 *Four Beauties*, dated about 1200, woodblock print, 57 x 32.5 cm, the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia (After Wang 2002, p. 81).



Figure 1.2 Liu Yuan, *Sima Yu's Dream of Su Xiaoxiao*, early 13th century, Handscroll, ink and color on silk, 29.2 x 73.6 cm, Cincinnati Art Museum, 1948.79 (After Avril 1997, pl. 28).



Figure 1.3 Female attendants in a garden, mural on the west wall of the front chamber, tomb of Prince Zhanghuai, near Xi'an, Shaanxi, dated 711, Tang dynasty (After Li 2005, 275).



Figure 1.4 *Virtuous Royal Consorts of the Zhou*, scene from a lacquer-painted wood Screen, the tomb of Sima Jinlong, dated 484, Datong, Shanxi (After McCausland 2003, p. 150).



Figure 1.5 A play introducer showing a scroll to the audience, rubbing of a brick tile from the Jiuliugou tomb, Yanshi, Henan, early 12th century.



Figure 1.6 Fragmented pages from the *Romance of the West Chamber*, a late 14th cen. edition (After West and Idema 1990, pl. 31).



Figure 1.7 Page from the *Brief Accounts of the Three Kingdoms*, 1294, printed by the Li family print shop in Jianyang, Fujian (After Chen and Ma 2000, vol. 4, 77).



Figure 1.8 The first section of the *Twenty-four Filial Piety Stories*, a Jin tomb at Weicun in Changzhi, dated 1151 (After Changzhi 2009, pl. 14-1).



Figure 1.9 An illustrated page in the format of “picture above, text below”, the *Annotations to the Venerated Book*, compiled by Liu Minzhong, Pingshui, early 13th century (After Chen and Ma 2000, vol. 4, 64).



Figure 1.10 Pingyang publisher Zhang Cunhui's preface to the *Materia Medica*, 1249 reprint of a 1116 version, Pingyang.



Figure 1.11 Illustrated introduction to the medicinal use of cormorant excrement, the *Materia Medica*, 1249, juan 19, 404b.



Figure 1.12 Illustration of the process of making sea salt, the *Materia Medica*, 1249, *juan* 4, 104b.

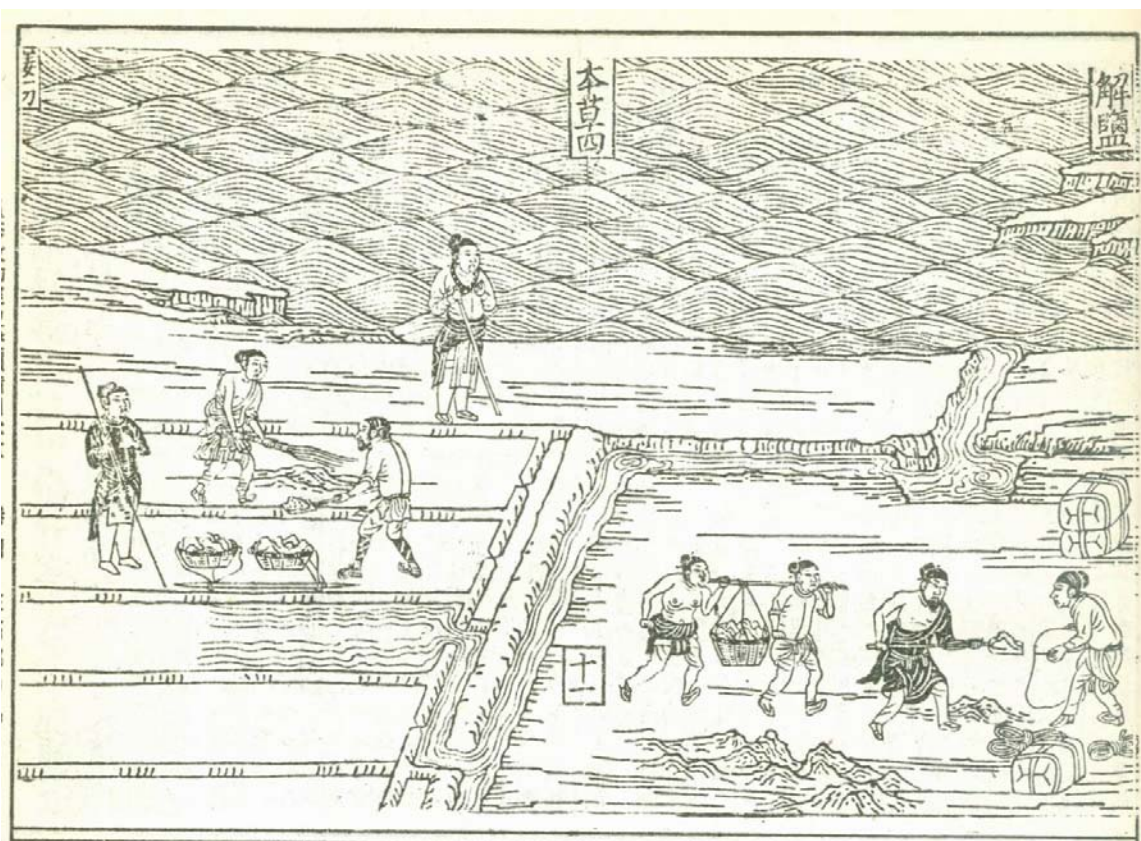


Figure 1.13 Illustration of the process of making Xie salt, the *Materia Medica*, 1249, *juan* 4, 105a.

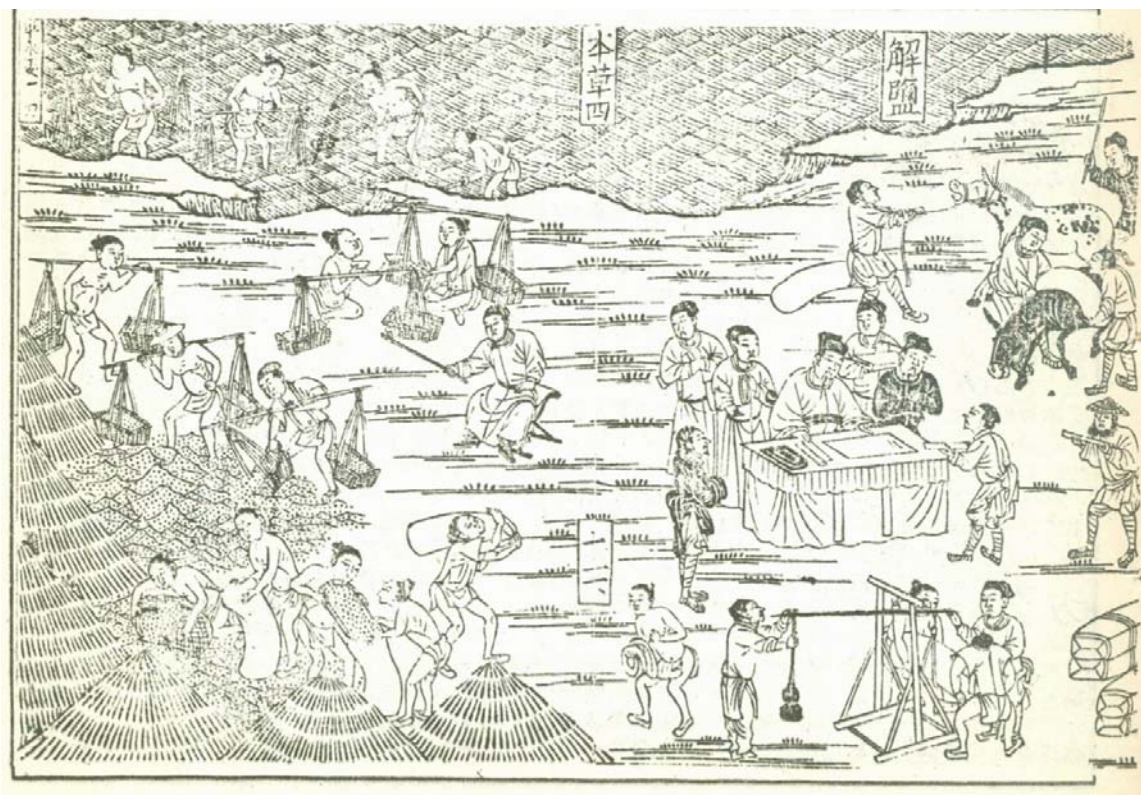


Figure 1.14 Illustration of the process of collecting Xie salt, the *Materia Medica*, 1249, *juan 4*, 105b.



Figure 1.15 *The Throne of Prince Guan*, dated about 1200, woodblock print, 60 x 31 cm, the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia (After Wang 2002, p. 91).



Figure 1.16 Frontispiece of the *Greater Sutra of the Perfection of Transcendent Wisdom*, printed 1149-1173, collection of the National Library of China, Beijing (After McCausland 2003, p. 92).



Figure 1.17 *A Gentleman and his Attendant*, dated about 1200, drawing on white hemp paper, 40 x 20.3 cm, the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia (After Piotrovsky 1996, pl. 63).



Figure 1.18 *Dongfang Shuo Steals the Peaches of Longevity*, Jin dynasty, woodblock print, 100.8 x 5.4 cm, Shaanxi Provincial Museum, Xi'an (After Wang 2002, 82)

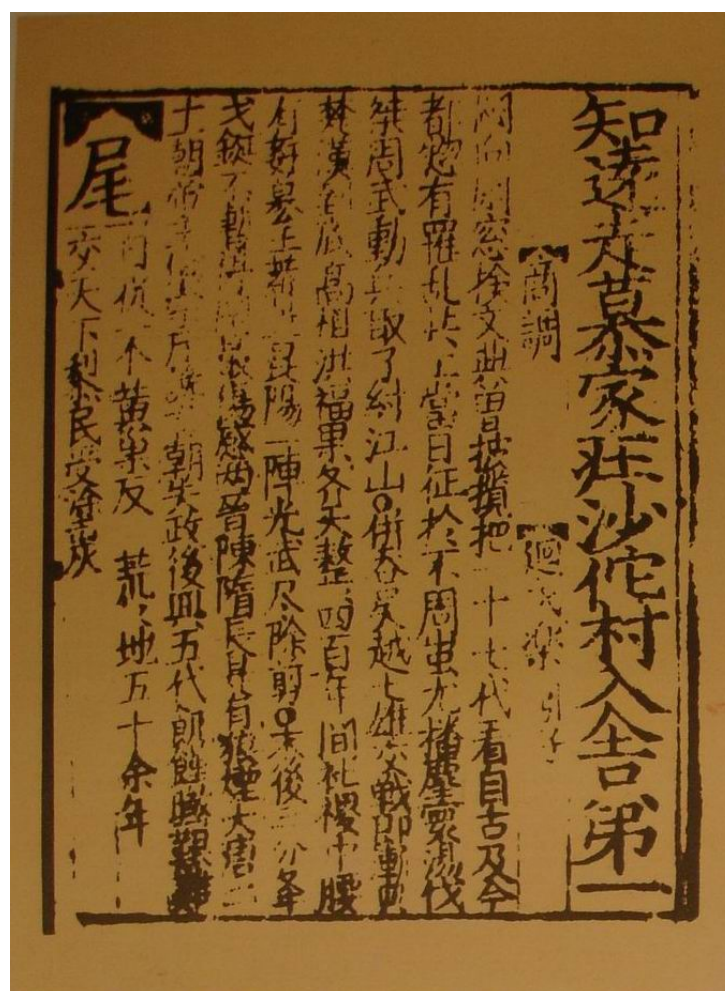


Figure 1.19 A page of the first act of the *Liuzhiyuan Zhugongdiao*, early 13th cen.
Pingyang print, National Library of China, Beijing (After Chen and Ma 2000, vol. 3, 49).

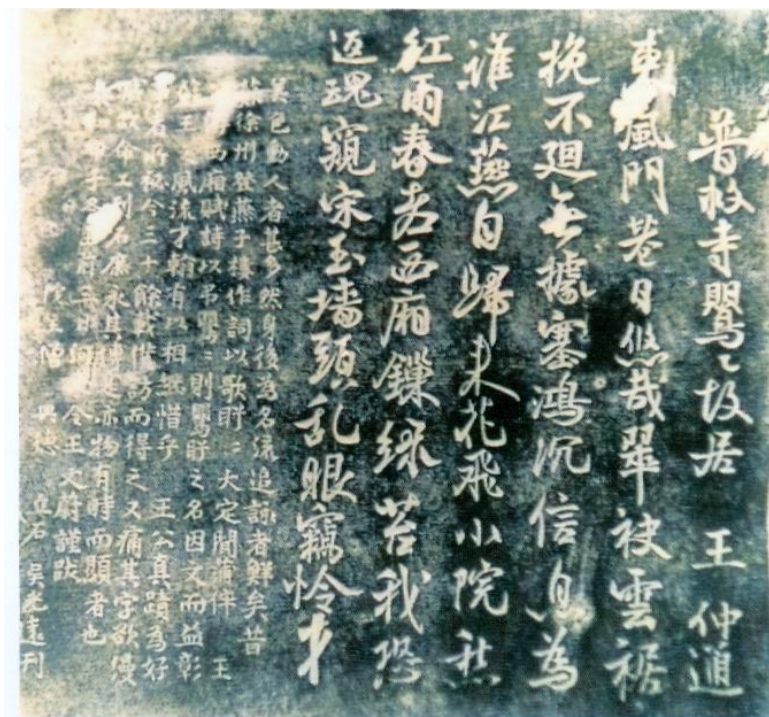


Figure 1.20 Stele inscription of a poem created by Wang Zhongtong (active 1160-1180), deputy governor of the Hezhong prefecture, in his tour to Yingying's residence in 1170, unearthed at the Pujiu Monastery, Yucheng (After Li Wenfeng 2001, 60).



Figure 1.21 A section from *Han Xizai's Night Revels*, attributed to Gu Hongzhong 顾闳中 (c. 902-970), handscroll, ink and color on silk, 12th century copy, 28.7 x 335.5 cm, National Palace Museum, Beijing.

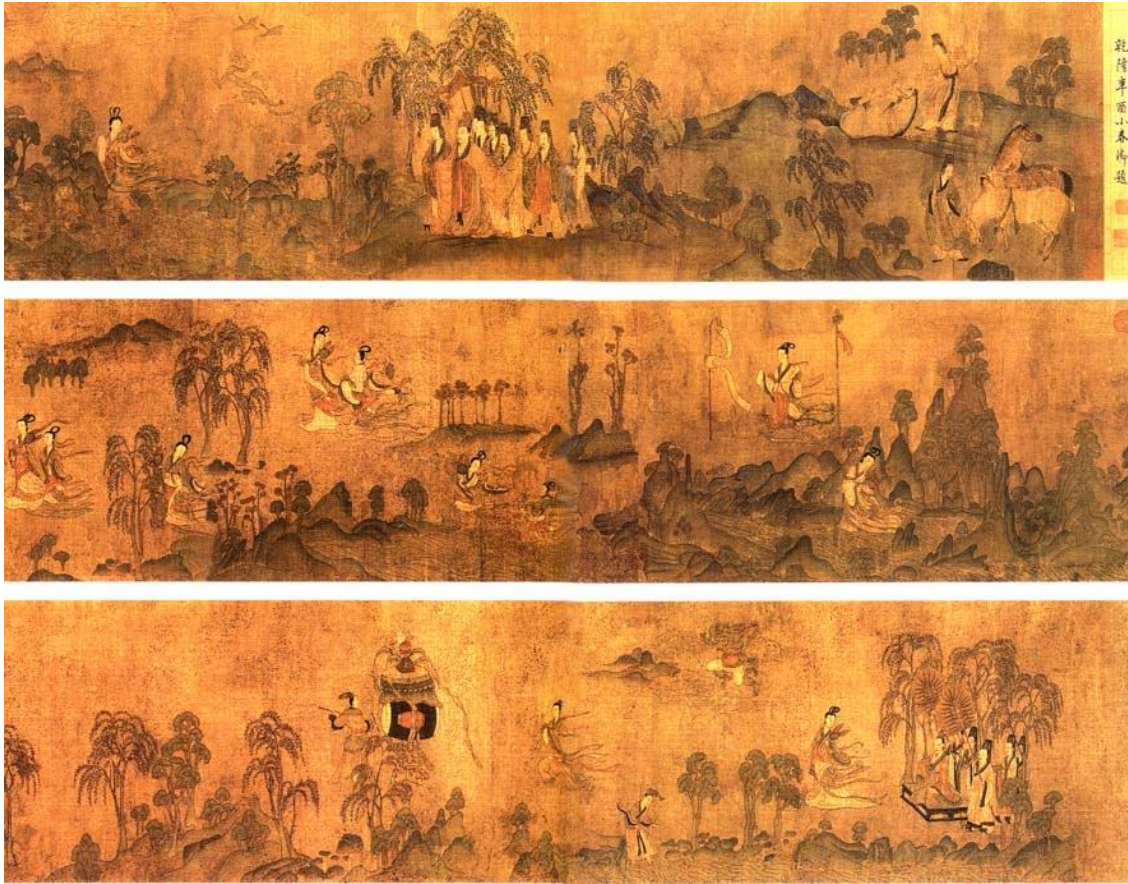


Figure 1.22 Attributed to Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (c. 344-405), *The Nymph of the Luo River*, possibly a 12th cen. copy, handscroll, ink and color on silk, 27.1 x 572.8 cm, National Palace Museum, Beijing.

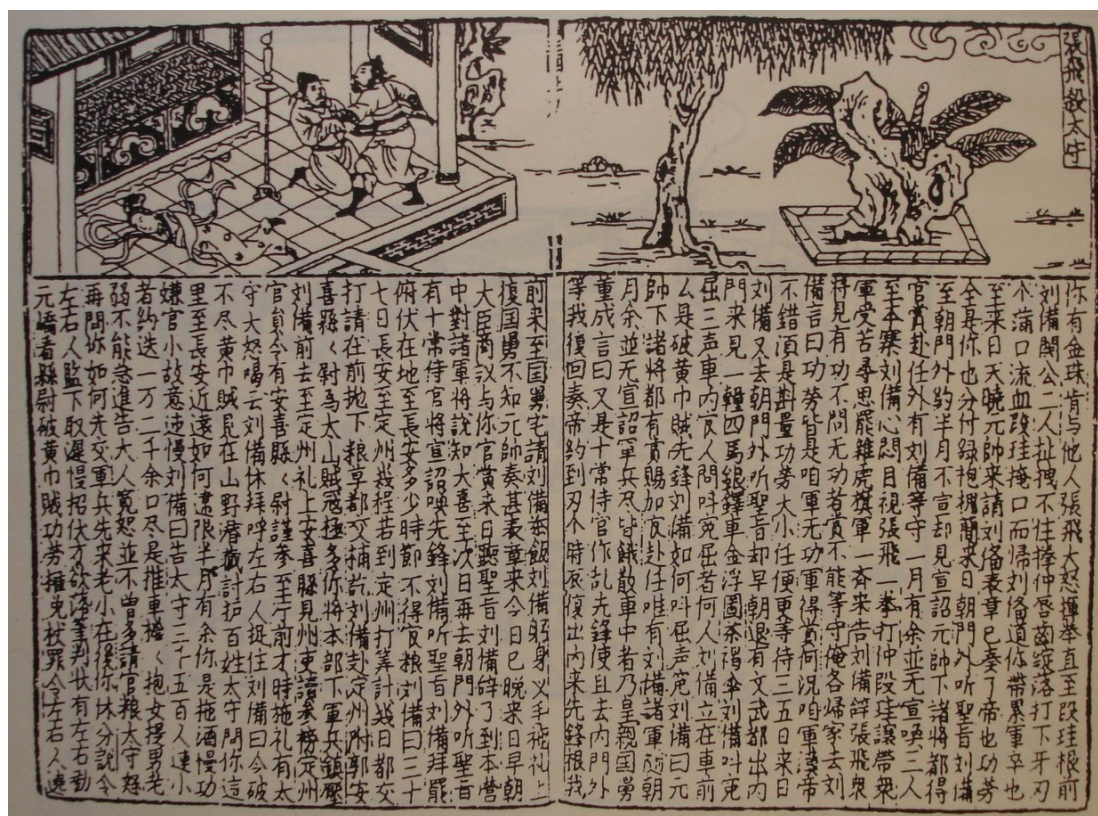


Figure 1.23 Illustrated page from the *Expository Tales of the Three Kingdoms*, 1321, Jiangyang edition (After Chen and Ma 2000, vol. 4, 92).

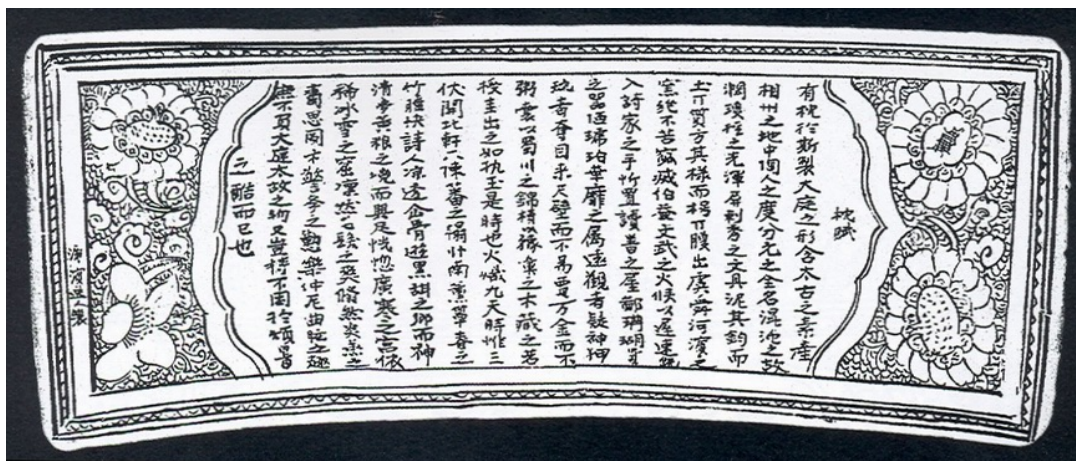


Figure 1.24 *Rhapsody of Pillow*, surface decoration of a Jin-dynasty Cizhou pillow, 42 x 15.7 x 14.4 cm (After Zhang 2000, pl. 30).



Figure 1.25 *Li Cunxiao's Killing of a Tiger*, surface decoration of a Jin-dynasty Cizhou pillow, W. 41.2 cm, the Walters Art Museum, 49.2384

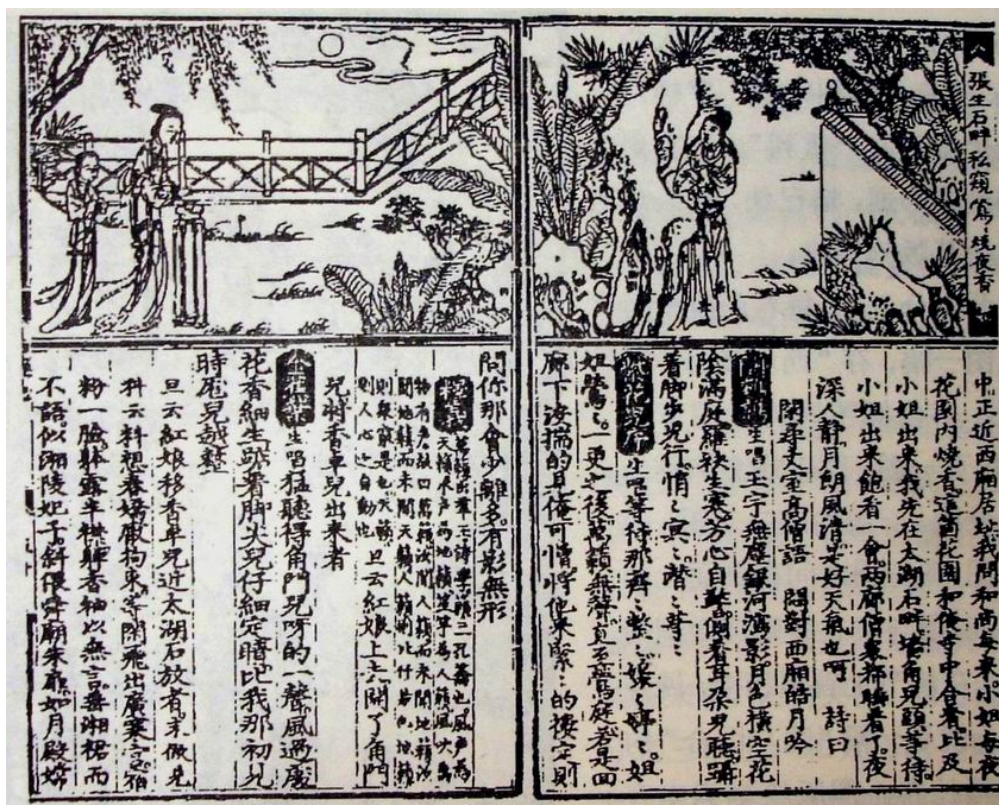


Figure 1.26 Yingying Praying with Incense, illustrated pages from the *Romance of the West Chamber*, 1498 edition printed in Beijing (After 1961 reprint, 49b-50a).



圖 670 白地鐵繪人物圖

金，磁州窯。高約 13.7 公分，徑 29.8×17.4 公分

枕面繪元稹《會真記》崔鶯鶯月夜焚香情景

Figure 1.27 Yingying Praying with Incense, surface decoration of a Jin-dynasty Cizhou pillow, 29.8 x 17.4 x 13.7 cm (After Zhongguo wenmingshi, vol. 6, 1845).



Figure 1.28 Scene of gentlemen and ladies in a garden, surface decoration of a Jin-dynasty Cizhou pillow, 39.3 x 17.8 x 15 cm (After Zhang 2000, pl. 49).



Figure 1.29 *Sima Yu's Dream of Su Xiaoxiao*, surface decoration of a Jin-dynasty Cizhou pillow, 41.5 x 17.5 x 14.5 cm (After Zhang 2000, pl. 48).



Figure 1.30 Story of Su Xiaoxiao's Dream of Qiantang, illustrated pages from the *Romance of the West Chamber*, 1498 edition printed in Beijing (After 1961 reprint, 9b and 10a).



Figure 1.31 Zhang Yu (fl. early 13th cen.), *Wenji's Return to the Han*, handscroll, color and ink on silk, 29 x 129 cm, Jilin Provincial Museum, Changchun.



Figure 1.32 *Wenji's Return to the Han* (or Zhaojun's *Departure to the North*), surface decoration of a Jin-dynasty Cizhou pillow, the British Museum, London (After Mino 1981, 144).

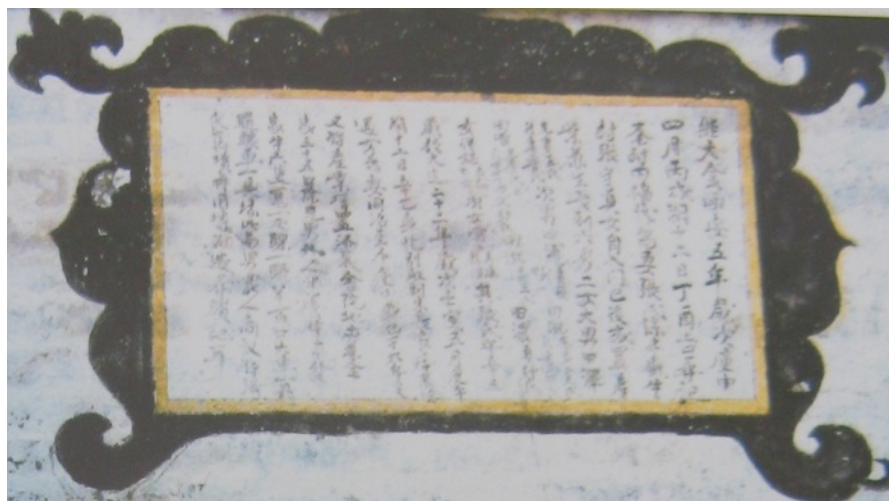


Figure 2.1 Tomb inscription on the right side of north wall, Madame Zhang's tomb at Ershui in Houma, dated 1200 (After Yang Jiyun 2003, cover back).



Figure 2.2 Aria on the north wall of Madame Zhang's tomb in Houma (After Yang Jiyun 2003, cover back).

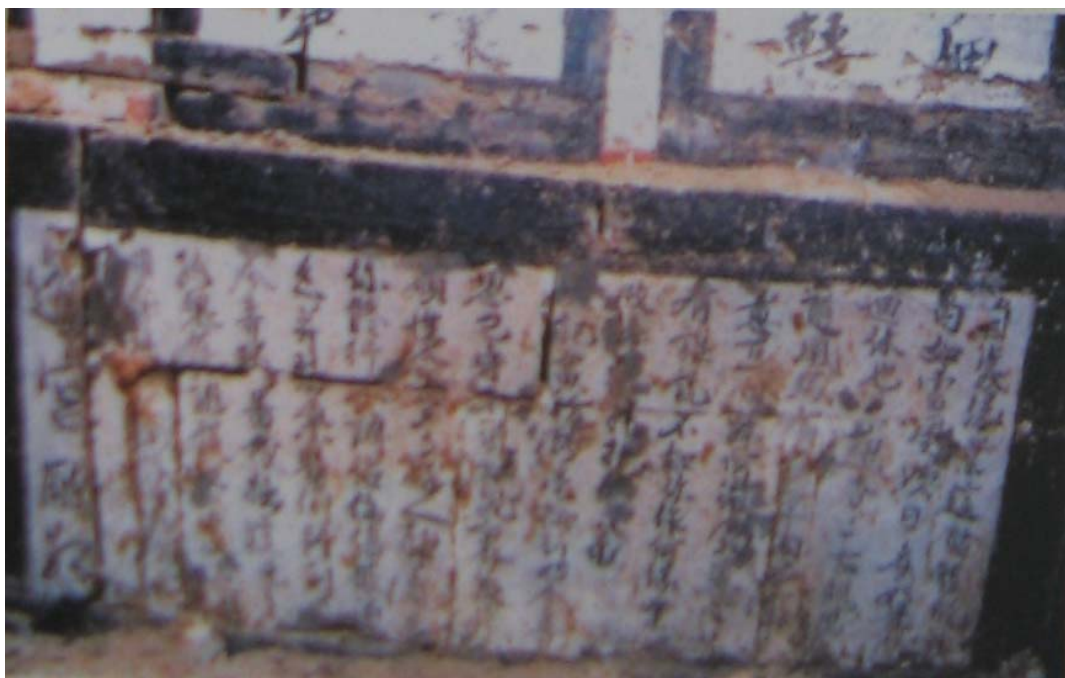


Figure 2.3 Aria on the south wall of Madame Zhang's tomb in Houma (After Yang Jiyun 2003, cover back).



Figure 2.4 Aria on the east wall of Madame Zhang's tomb in Houma (After Yang Jiyun 2003, cover back).

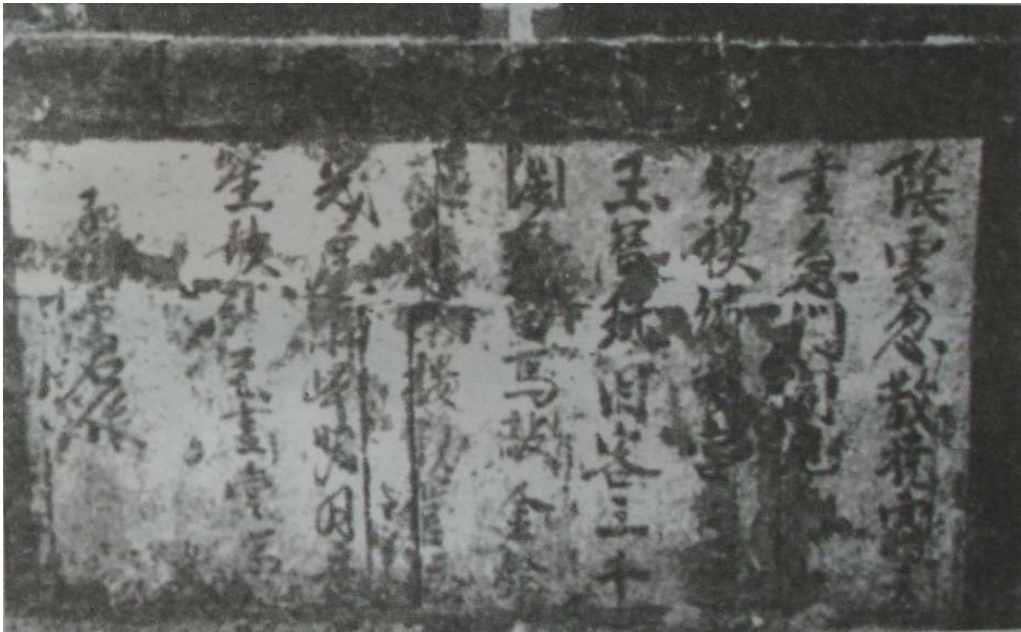


Figure 2.5 Aria on the west wall of Madame Zhang's tomb in Houma (After Yang Jiyun 2003, 2).



Figure 2.6 Relief tiles of the Eight Immortals on the ceiling of tomb no. 65H4M102 in Houma, dated around 1200, now at Shanxi Provincial Museum, Taiyuan (Photo by Fan Zhang, 09/2008).



Figure 2.7 Inscription of the ballad “Red Embroidered Shoes”, surface decoration of a Jin–dynasty Cizhou pillow, 31 x 15 x 12.5 cm (After Zhang 2001, pl. 65).



Figure 2.8 Relief tile of a battle scene performance, from tomb no. 65H4M102 at Niucun in Houma, dated around 1200, Shanxi Provincial Museum, Taiyuan (Photo by Fan Zhang, 09/2008).



Figure 2.9 Li Song (1166-1243), *The Skeleton Puppet Show*, 13th century, album leaf, ink and color on silk, 27 x 26.3 cm, Chinese National Museum of History, Beijing (After Gugong bowuyuan 2005, pl. 44).

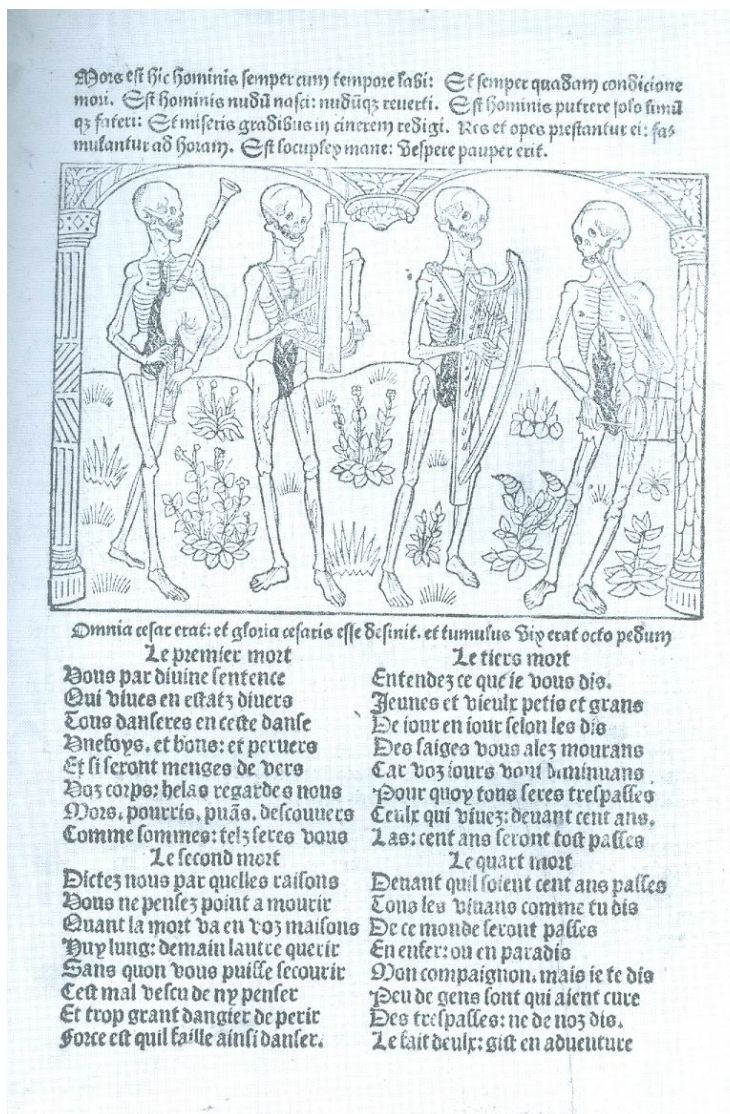


FIG. 26. *The Dance Macabre of Women* (1491): *memento mori* as dance and dramatic dialogue.

Figure 2.10 Illustration from *Dance Macabre of Women* (1491 edition) (After Peters 2000, fig. 26).



Figure 2.11 Detail of Wang Chongyang showing a painting of a skeleton to Ma Danyang and Su Buer, c. 14th century, 27th scene of Wang Zhe's story, mural from the Chongyang Hall, the Yongle Temple, Ruicheng.



Figure 2.12 A *Bamboo-Leaf Boat*, story scene decorated on a Jin-dynasty Cizhou pillow, W. 32.4 cm, H. 13.5 cm, collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

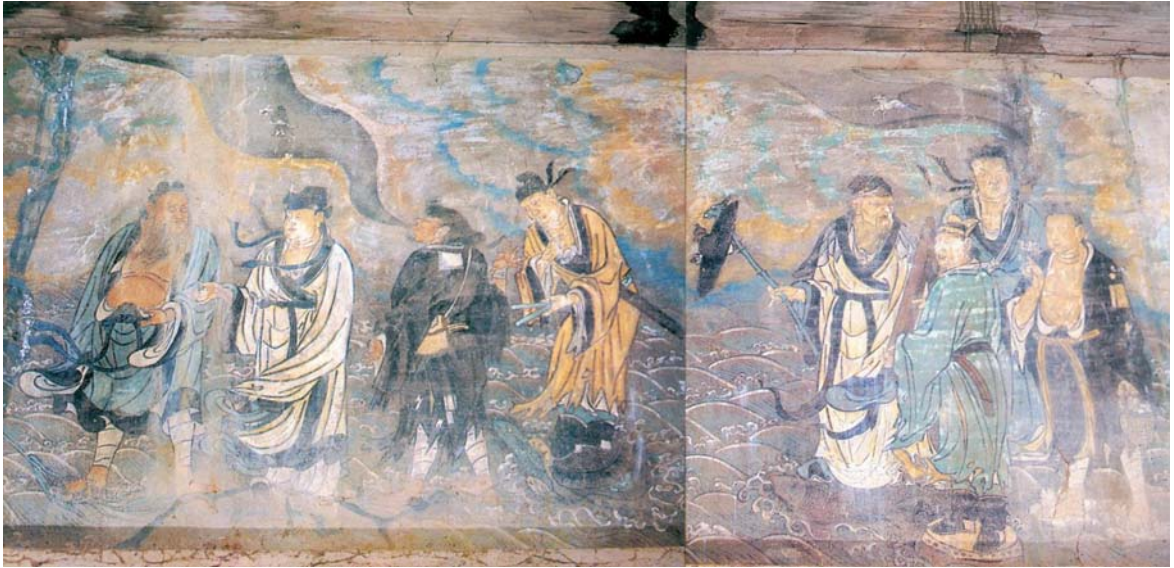


Figure 2.13 *The Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea*, panel scene from the Chunyang Hall (dated 1358), the Yongle Temple, Ruicheng, Shanxi (After Chai 1997, pl. 155).



Figure 2.14 *The Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea*, story scene decorated on a Jin-dynasty Cizhou pillow, 41.2 x 19 x 14.6 cm (After Zhang 2001, pl. 52).



Figure 3.1 North wall of Dong Ming's tomb, dated 1210, Niucun village, Houma county; the miniature stage, 101 x 65 x 18.5 cm, figures' height, 20-22 cm (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao 1999, pl. 25).



Figure 3.2 Miniature stage on the north wall, Houma tomb no. 104, dated about 1210.



Figure 3.3 Drama scenes from a Yuan tomb at Xilizhuang in Yuncheng (After Liu 2001, 77 and 78).

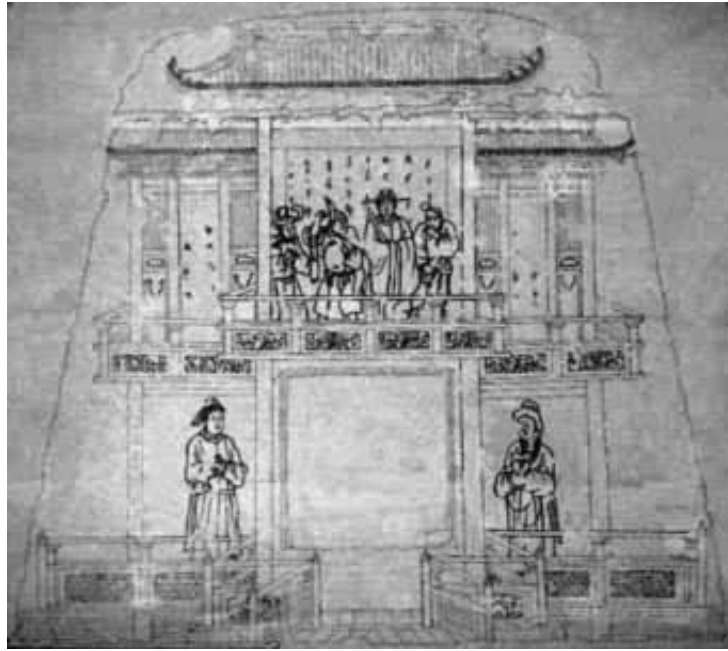


Figure 3.4 Drawing of stage pavilion carved on the front panel of Pan Dechong's stone coffin, dated 1260s, the Yongle Temple, Ruicheng.

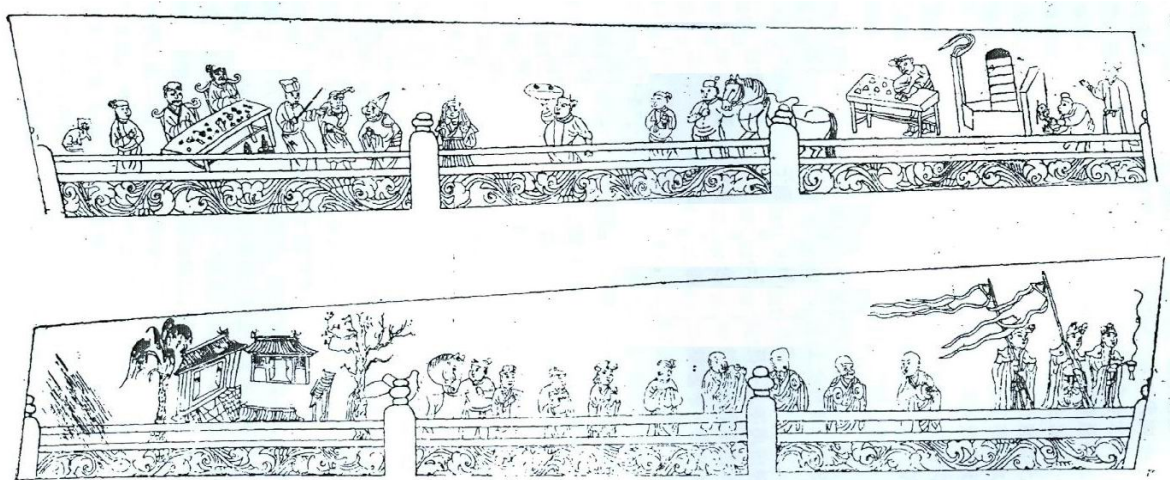


Figure 3.5 Diagrams of carvings on Zhu Sanweng's stone coffin, dated 1096, unearthed near Luoyang, Henan (After Lü 1983, 94).

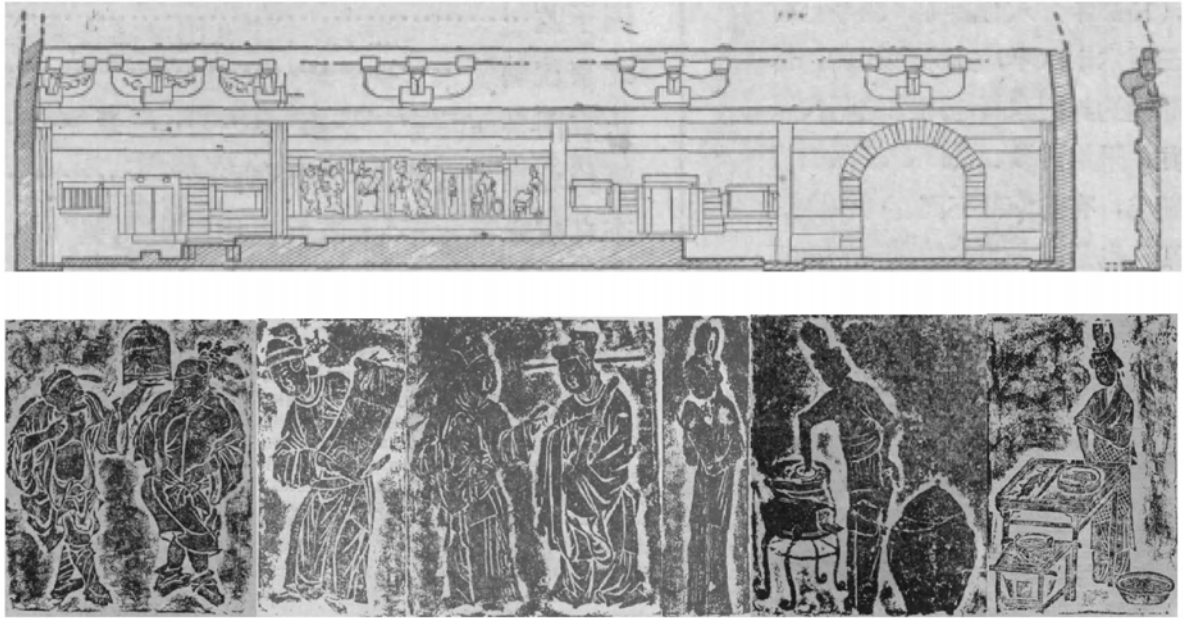


Figure 3.6 Top: Diagram of chamber interior of a Song tomb at Jiuliugou in Yanshi, Henan; Bottom: Rubbings of the brick tiles (After Dong 1959, 84-85).



Figure 3.7 Brick tile of actress Dingdusai, 28 x 8 x 3 cm, from a Northern Song tomb in Yanshi, Henan, now collected at the National Museum of China, Beijing (After Liu 2001, 37).



Figure 3.8 Rubbings of drama figures on the brick tiles, the Jin tomb at Qian dongnanwang cun, Wenxian, Henan, brick dimensions 36-38 cm by 14-17 cm (After Zhang 1983, 14).

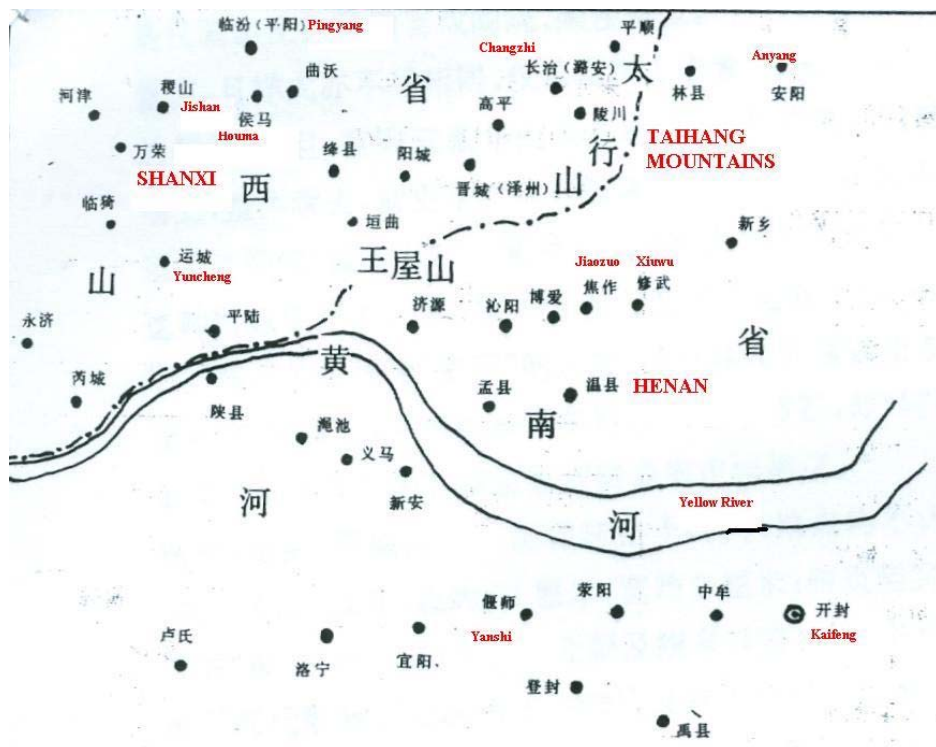


Figure 3.9 A map of northern Henan and Southern Shanxi showing distribution of Song and Jin tombs with *zaju* representations (After Yang 1992, 10).



宋 (1) 河南温县宋杂剧雕砖



金 (2) 山西侯马金代董氏墓砖俑



元 (3) 山西洪洞广胜寺明应王殿元代壁画

Figure 3.10 Comparisons of typical Song, Jin, and Yuan drama actors. From the top to bottom: 1) Drawing of the Wenxian set; dated late Northern Song; 2) Drawing of the Houma set, dated late Jin; 3) Drawing of the troupe from the mural at the Water God's Temple, Hongdong, dated middle Yuan (After Che 2005, 215).

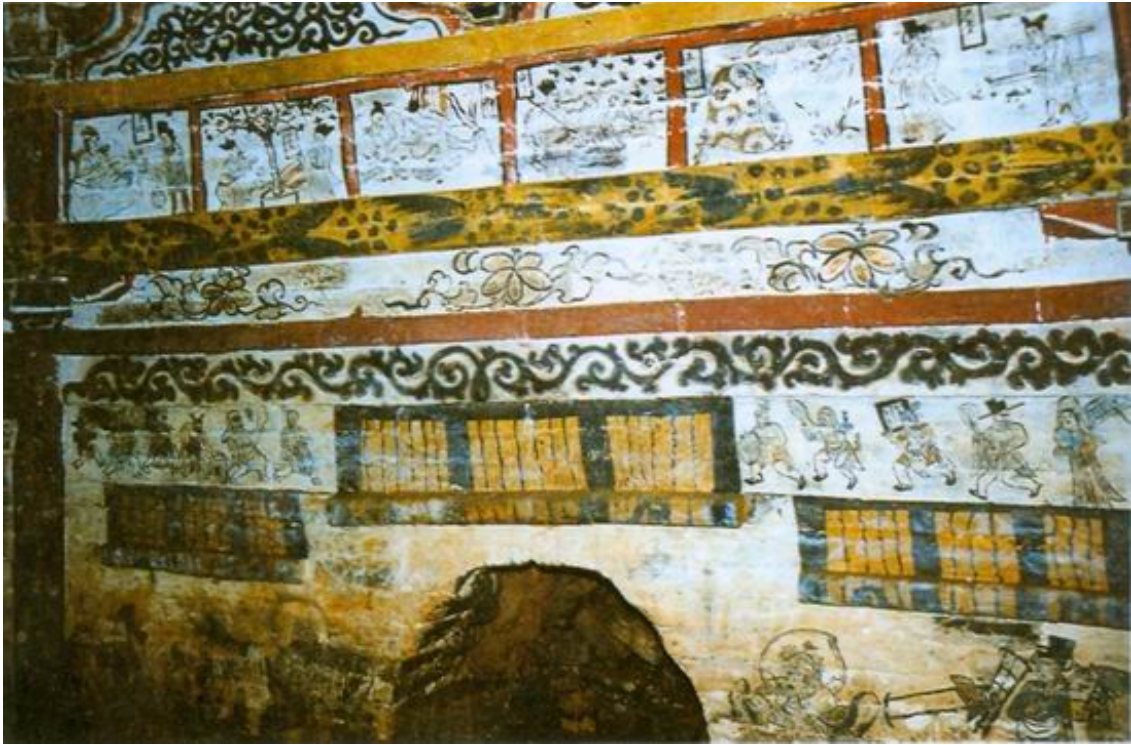


Figure 3.11 Mural of drama scenes, dated 1153, south wall of a Jin tomb at Tunliu in Changzhi, Shanxi (After Changzhi 2003, back cover).



Figure 3.12 Detail of a drama performance scene, west wall of a late Northern Song tomb at Panle in Hancheng, Shaanxi (Photo by Fan Zhang, 08/2009).



Figure 3.13 Detail of the nirvana scene, east wall of a late Northern Song tomb at Panle in Hancheng, Shaanxi (Photo by Fan Zhang, 08/2009).



Figure 3.14 Stone carvings of drama actors from Southern Song tombs at Guangyuan, Sichuan (After Liu 2001, 58, 62, 66, and 68).



Figure 3.15 Actors and musicians on stage from a Jin tomb at Jiangcun, Anyang, Henan (After Liu Wenfeng 2001, 53).

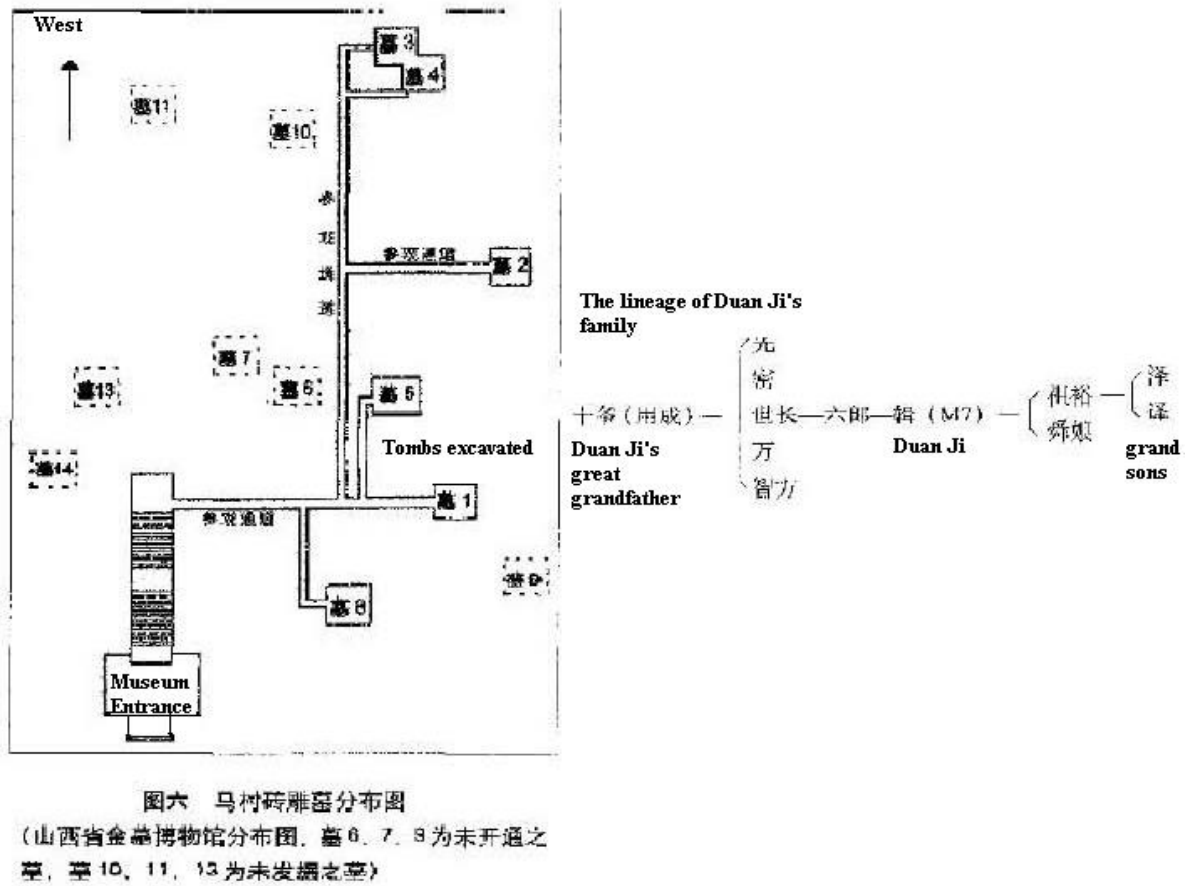


Figure 3.16 Left: Ground plan of the onsite museum of 12th-century Macun tombs, Jishan
Right: Diagram of the lineage of the Duan family (After Tian 2005, 15).



Figure 3.17 View of the south wall, Macun tomb no. 1, 2nd half of the 12th century (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 3).

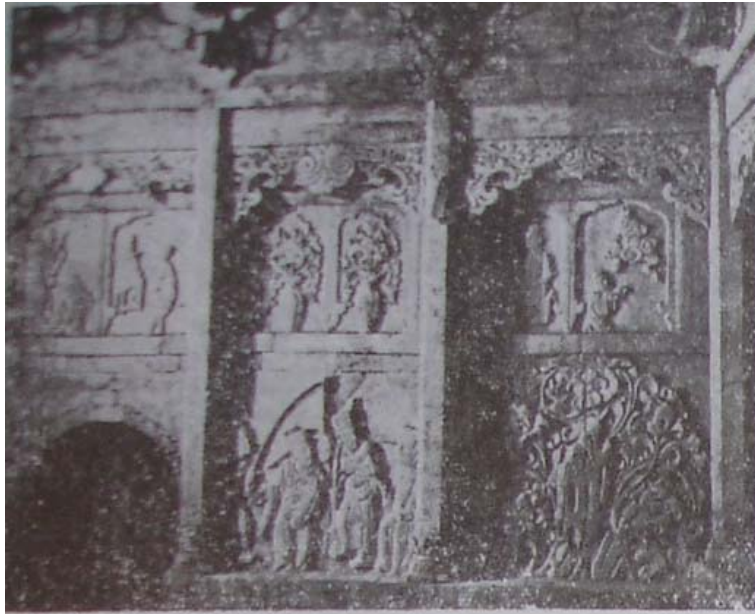


Figure 3.18 View of the south wall, Macun tomb no. 2, 2nd half of the 12th century (After Shanxi 1983, 60).



Figure 3.19 View of the south wall, Macun tomb no. 3, 2nd half of the 12th century (After Shanxi 1983, 60).



Figure 3.20 View of the south wall, Macun tomb no. 8, 2nd half of the 12th century (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 9).



Figure 3.21 View of the north wall, Macun tomb no. 8, 2nd half of the 12th century.



Figure 3.22 View of the south wall, Macun tomb no. 5, 2nd half of the 12th century (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao 1999, pl. 13).

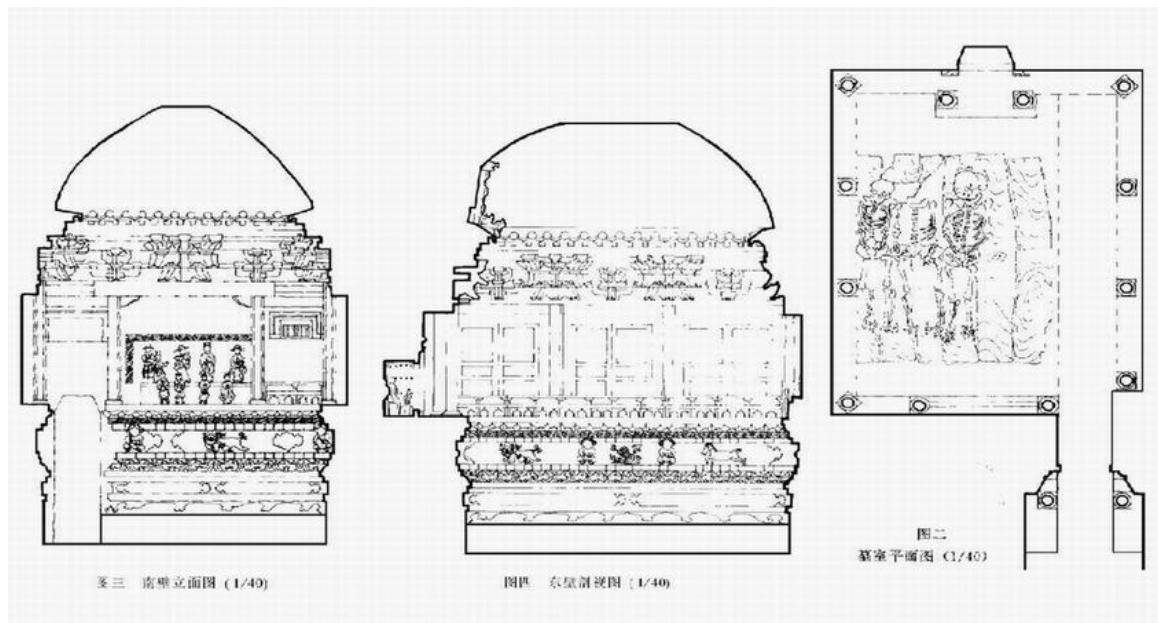


Figure 3.23a Diagrams of cross-sectional views and ground plan of the Macun tomb no. 4, 2nd half of the 12th century (After Houma 1997, 43-44).

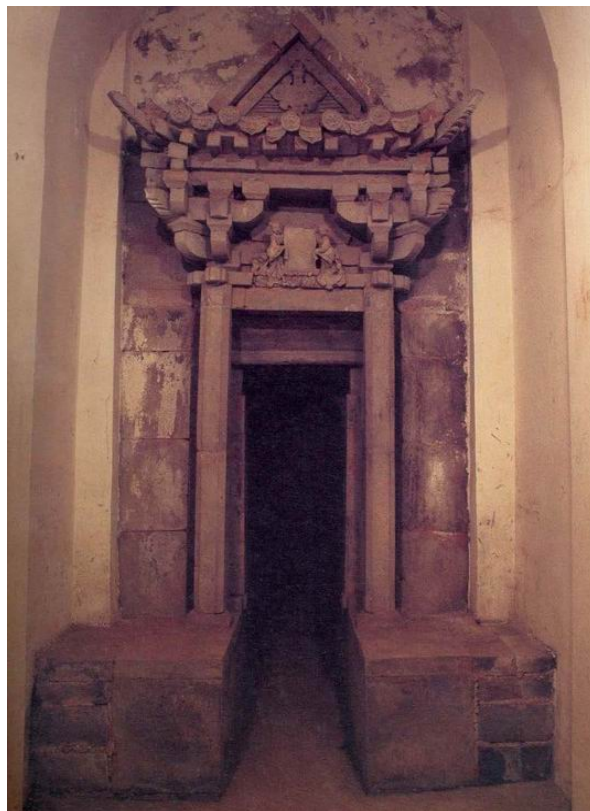


Figure 3.23b View of the entrance to Macun tomb no. 4 (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 4).

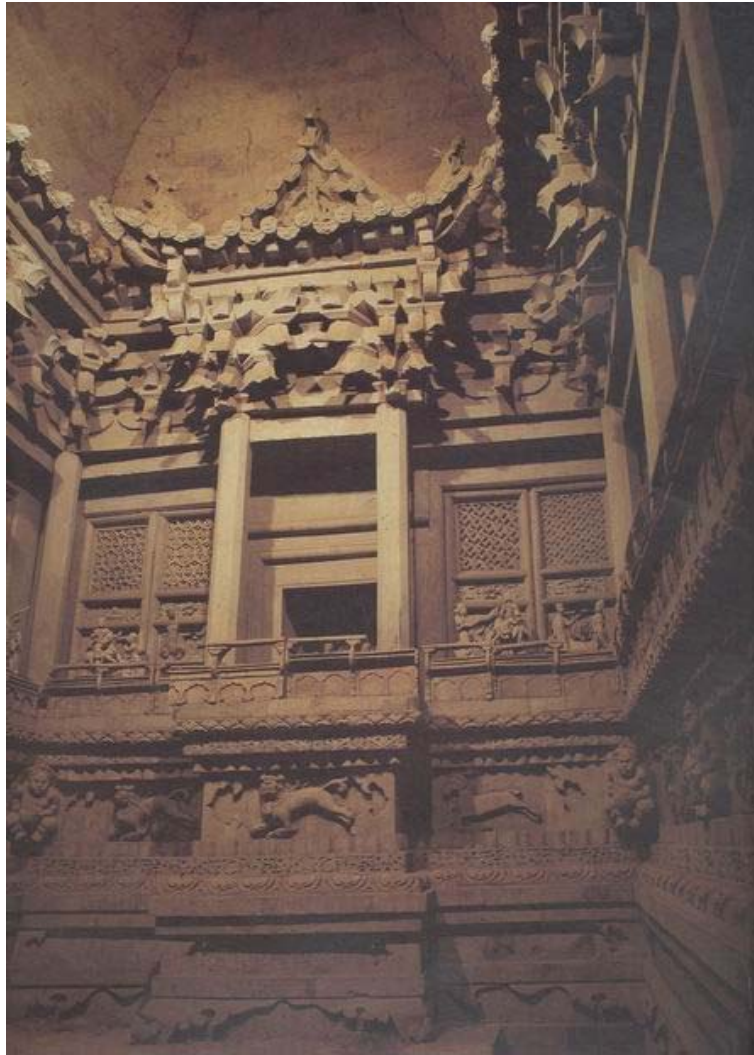


Figure 3.23c View of the north wall, Macun tomb no. 4 (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 5).



Figure 3.23d View of the south wall, Macun tomb no. 4 (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 6).

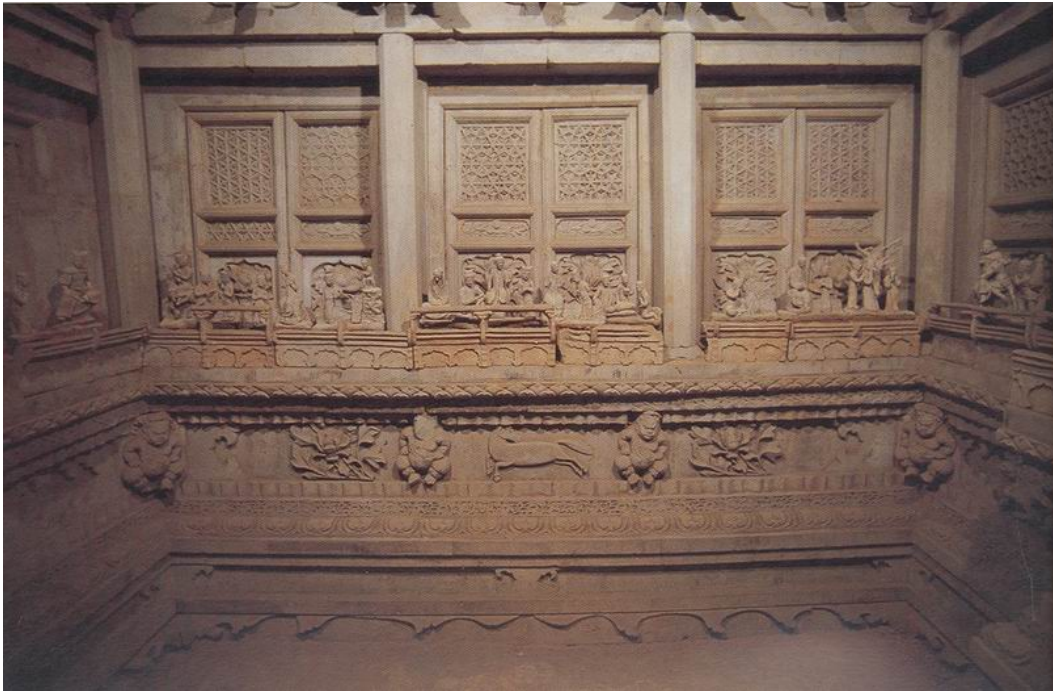


Figure 3.23e View of the west wall, Macun tomb no. 4 (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 7).



Figure 3.23f View of the east wall, Macun tomb no. 4 (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 8).

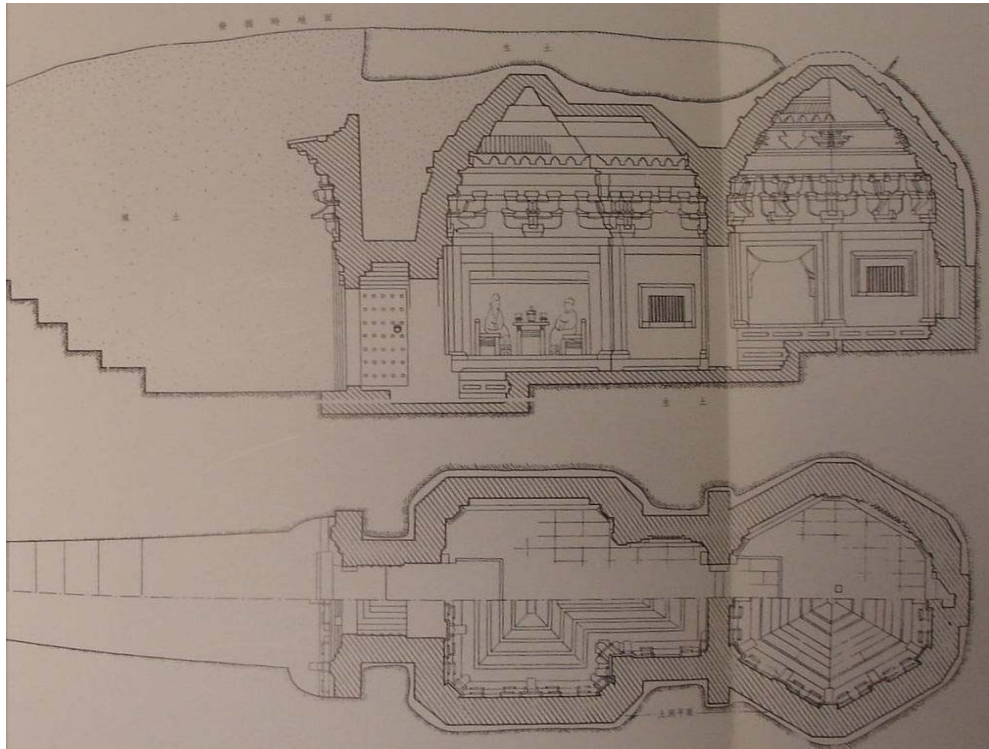


Figure 3.24 Ground plan of Baisha tomb no. 1, near Luoyang, dated around 1200 (After Su 1957, pl. 16).



Figure 3.25 *Daqu* performance on the east wall of the front chamber, Baisha tomb no. 1, dated around 1200, near Luoyang (After Su 1957, pl. 4).



Figure 3.26 Unknown artist, *Moon and Water Avalokitesvara (Guanyin)*, 12th cen., ink and color on silk, 101.5 x 59.5 cm, Buddhist painting from Karakhoto, the State Hermitage, St. Petersburg (After Piotrovsky 1996, pl. 46).



Figure 3.27 Actors and stage on the south wall of a Jin tomb at Miaopu, Jishan, 2nd half of the 12th century (After Shanxi 1983, pl. 5-4).



Figure 3.28 Actors and stage on the south wall of a Jin tomb at Zhiyaochang, Houma, Shanxi Provincial Museum, Taiyuan (Photo by Fan Zhang, 09/2008).



Figure 3.29 *Zaju* and *shehuo* performances over the entrance to the rear chamber, a Yuan tomb at Wulingzhuang in Xinjiang, Shanxi (Liu Wenfeng 2001, 63).



Figure 3.32 Altar scene on a coffin panel from a late Northern Song tomb in Baisha, Henan (After Zhongguo Huaxiangshi 2000, pl. 201).

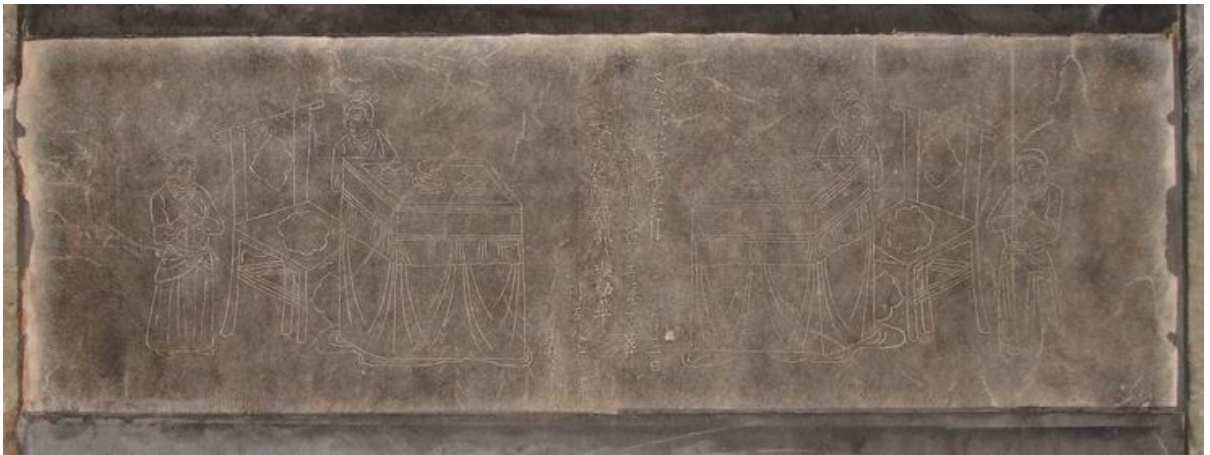


Figure 3.33 Offering scene carved on the east wall of Zou Fu's tomb, dated 1199, near Jiaozuo, now at Luoyang Ancient Art Museum, Henan (Photo by Fan Zhang, 09/2007).

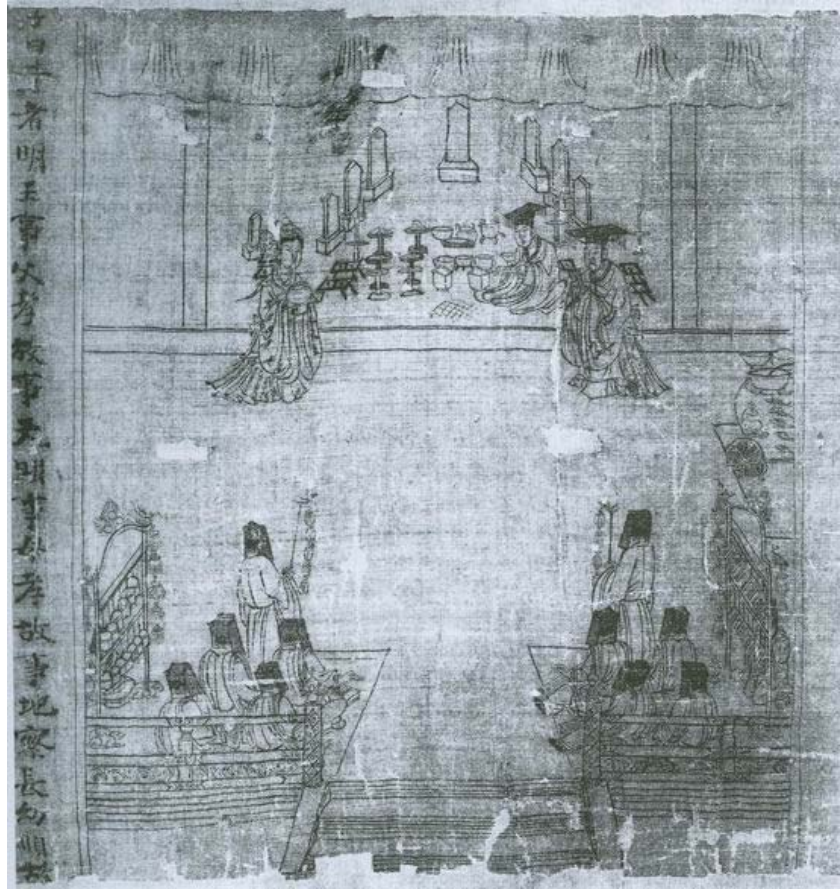


Figure 3.34 Li Gonglin (c. 1041-1106), "The Influence of Filial Piety and the Response to it", from *The Classic of Filial Piety* (c. 1085). Detail of a handscroll, ink on silk, 21.9 x 475.5 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996.479 (After McCausland2003, 186).



Figure 3.35 View of the entrance to rear chamber in Dong Hai's tomb, dated 1196, Houma (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 18).

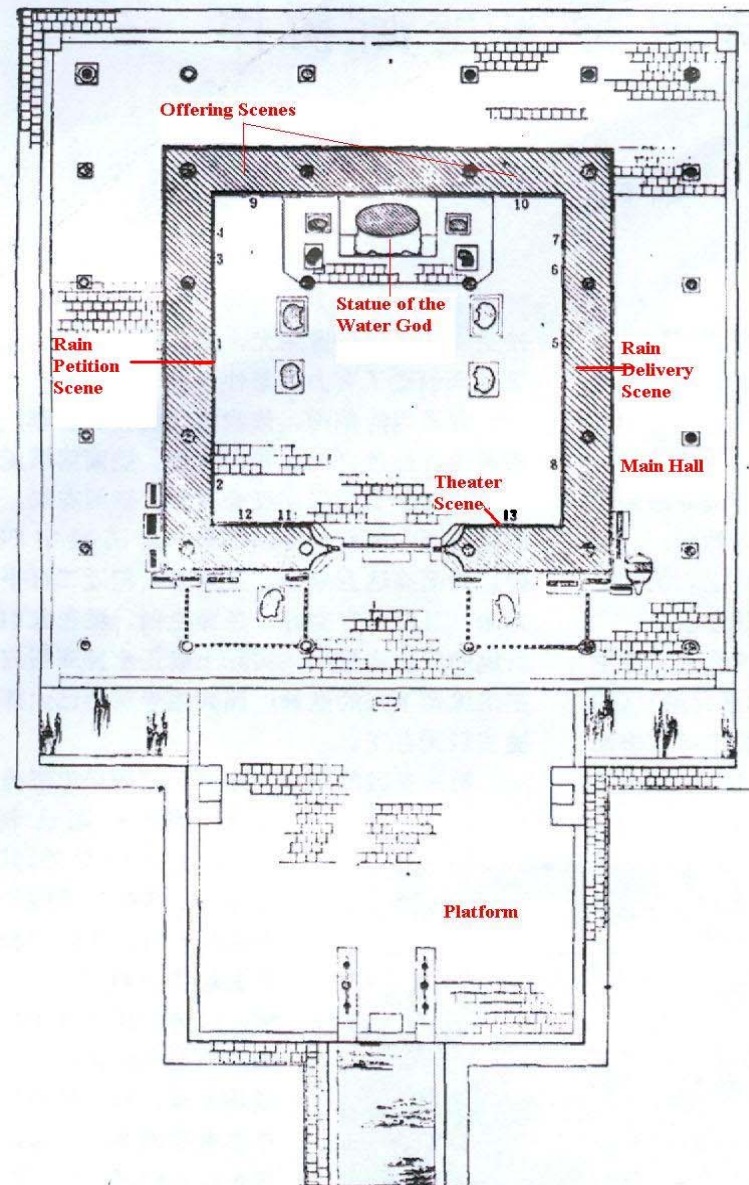


Figure 4.1 Ground plan of the main hall of the Water God's Temple, dated 1324, Hongdong, Shanxi (After Chai 1981, 87).



Figure 4.2 *Zaju* performance scene (dated 1324) on the southeast wall of the main hall, the Water God's Temple, Hongdong (After Liao 2000, pl. 2-56).



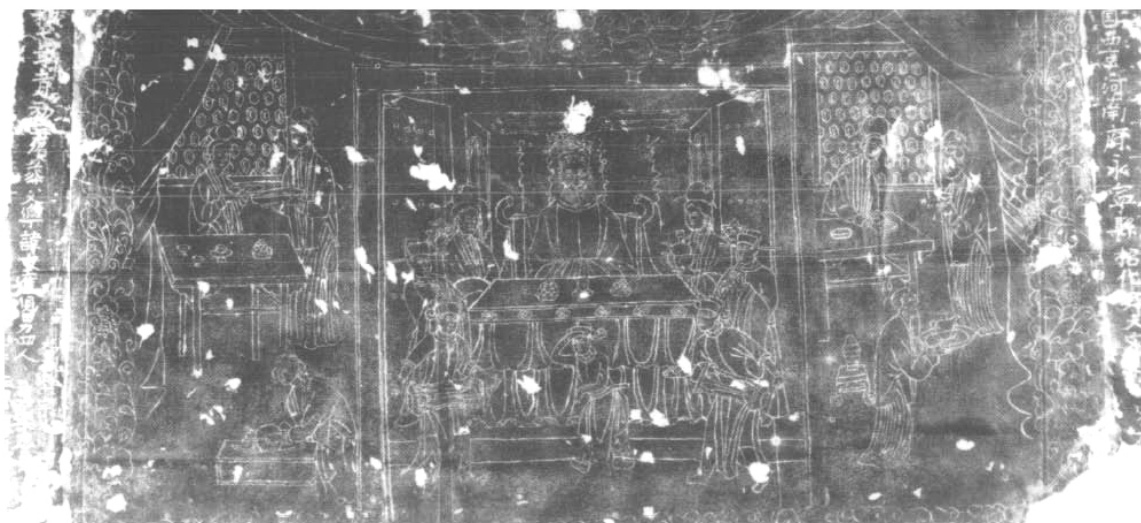
Figure 4.3 Offering scenes at the two sides of the niche (dated 1324), the main hall of the Water God's Temple, Hongdong (After Chai 1997, pl. 203 and 204).



Figure 4.4 The central niche and statues of the Water God and his attendants, the main hall of the Water God's temple, Hongdong (Photo by Fan Zhang, 09/2007).



Figure 4.5 North wall of the Northern Song tomb at Panle in Hancheng, Shaanxi
(Photo by Fan Zhang, 08/2009)



棺前档画像石拓片

Figure 4.6 Rubbing of the front panel of Yue Chongjin's stone coffin (dated 1117), H: 70 cm, Dasong village, Luoning county, Henan (After Li 1993, pl. 4).



Figure 4.7 Zhu Yu (active 1253-1258), *Lantern Festival Play*, handscroll, ink and color on silk, Private collection in Hong Kong (After Liu Wenfeng 2001, 70).



Figure 4.8 The carved stone altarpiece (dated 12th cen.) from the Wahuang Temple, Hexi village, Puxian county, Shanxi (After Che 2005, 271).



Figure 4.9 Diagram of drama actors carved on the stone altarpiece from the Wahuang Temple, Puxian (After Che 2005, 273).



Figure 4.10 Unknown artist, *Careers of All Priests and Actors* (c. 1460), 58th scroll of the right set, ink and color on silk, 120 x 62 cm, the Baoning Monastery, Youyu county, Shanxi, now collected at the Shanxi Provincial Museum, Taiyuan (After Shanxi bowuguan 1988, pl. 179).

In this procession, three heavenly warriors in front pave the way. Then comes a female witch carrying a plate on which a couple of puppets stand. A sorcerer follows her, lifting a bowl with one hand and holding a sword with the other. Two players follow them, possibly from a family troupe that gave itinerant performances in rural areas. The male player leads a monkey-like figure that carries on its shoulder a large palm fan, mocking the Monkey King in Chinese fairy tales.



Figure 4.11 Unknown artist, *Careers of All Artisans and Players* (c. 1460), 57th scroll of the left set, ink and color on silk, 120 x 62 cm, the Baoning Monastery, Youyu county, Shanxi (After Shanxi bowuguan 1988, pl. 162).



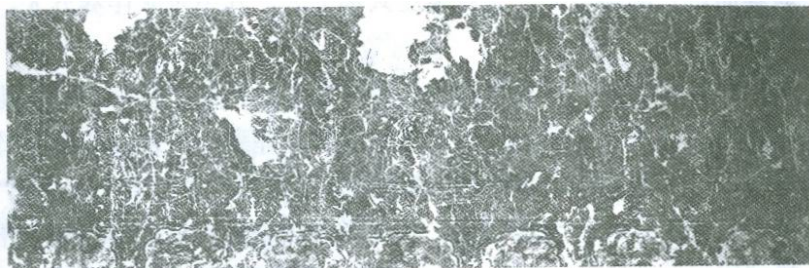
Figure 4.12 An octagonal sutra pillar decorated with a performance scene, Tang dynasty, the Shuanglin Monastery in Mentougou district, Beijing (After Liu Wenfeng 2001, 40).



Figure 4.13 Detail of a performance scene, decoration on a stupa (dated 954), the Dayun Monastery, Pingshun county, Shanxi (After Shanxi shida 1987, pl. 32).



Figure 4.14 Stone engraving of performance scene on a Tang-dynasty pagoda, the Yunju Monastery in Fangshan, Beijing (After Liu Wenfeng 2001, 40).



图二 碑趺乐舞线刻图拓片



Figure 4.15a Rubbing and diagram of a solo *daqu* performance, carved on a stele base (dated 1029), the Shundi Temple at Dongquangou in Hongdong county (After Che 2005, 341).



图三 碑趺杂剧线刻图拓片



Figure 4.15b Rubbing and diagram of a musical performance of two dancers, carved on a stele base (dated 1029), the Shundi Temple at Dongquangou in Hongdong county (After Che 2005, 343).



Figure 4.16a Diagram of a procession scene of musicians and dancers (dated 1157), carved on the platform at the Erxian Temple, Xilimen, Gaoping city (After Liao 2000, 60).



Figure 4.16b Diagram of a performance scene of non-Chinese musicians and dancers (dated 1157), carved on the platform at the Erxian Temple, Xilimen, Gaoping city (After Liao 2000, 61).



Figure 4. 17 A Jin-dynasty performance stage (dated 1183) at the Erlang Temple, Wangbao village, Gaoping city (Photo by Fan Zhang, 09/2007).



Figure 4.18 View of the front and the side of a Jin-dynasty stage (dated 1211) at the Chengtang Temple, Xiajiao village, Yangcheng city (After Feng 2008, 62).



Figure 4. 19 A Yuan-dynasty stage (dated 1345) at the Dongyue Temple, Dongyang village, Linfen county (Photo by Fan Zhang, 09/2007)

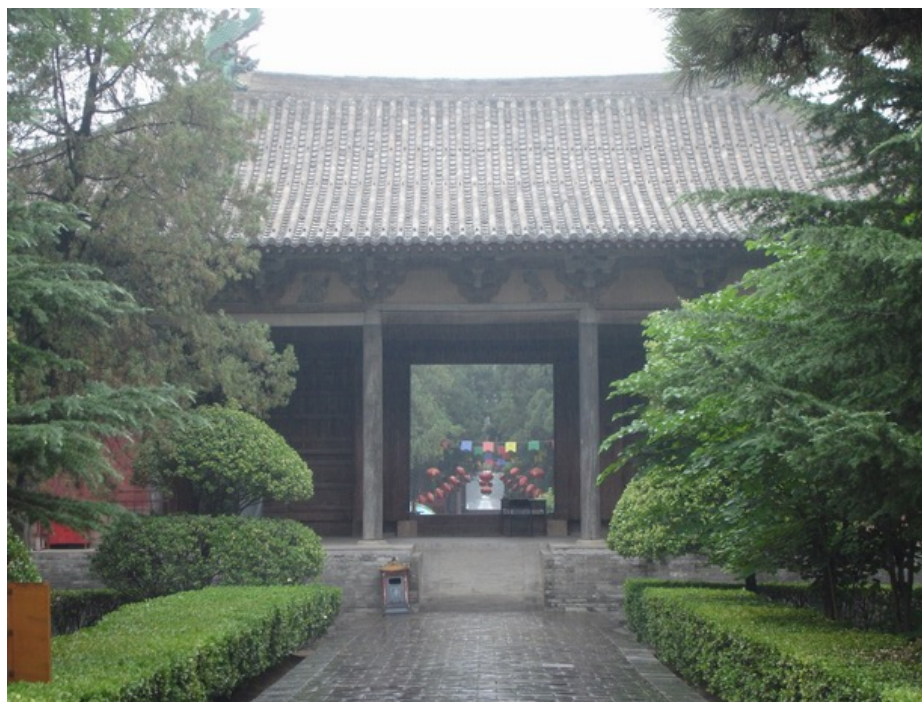


Figure 4.20 Rear view of the Longhu Hall (dated 1294) at the Yongle Temple, Ruicheng. Panels would be mounted over the stairway to set up a temporary stage in the central bay (Photo by Fan Zhang, 09/2007).



Figure 4.21 The Yuan-dynasty stage at the Niuwang Temple, Weicun village, Linfen county, construction during 1283-1321 (Photo by , 08/2009 Zhang).

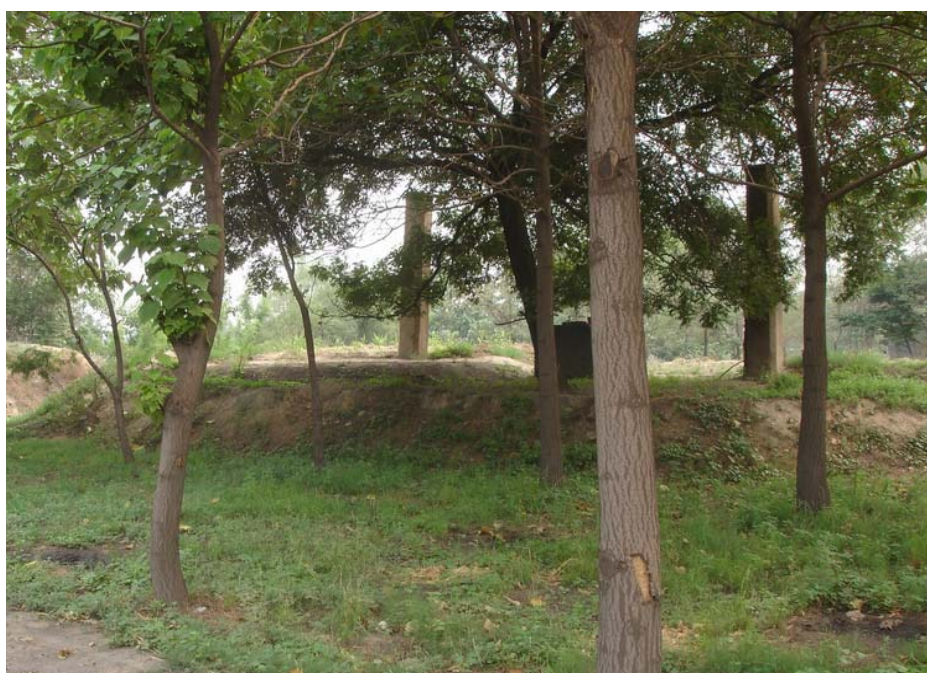
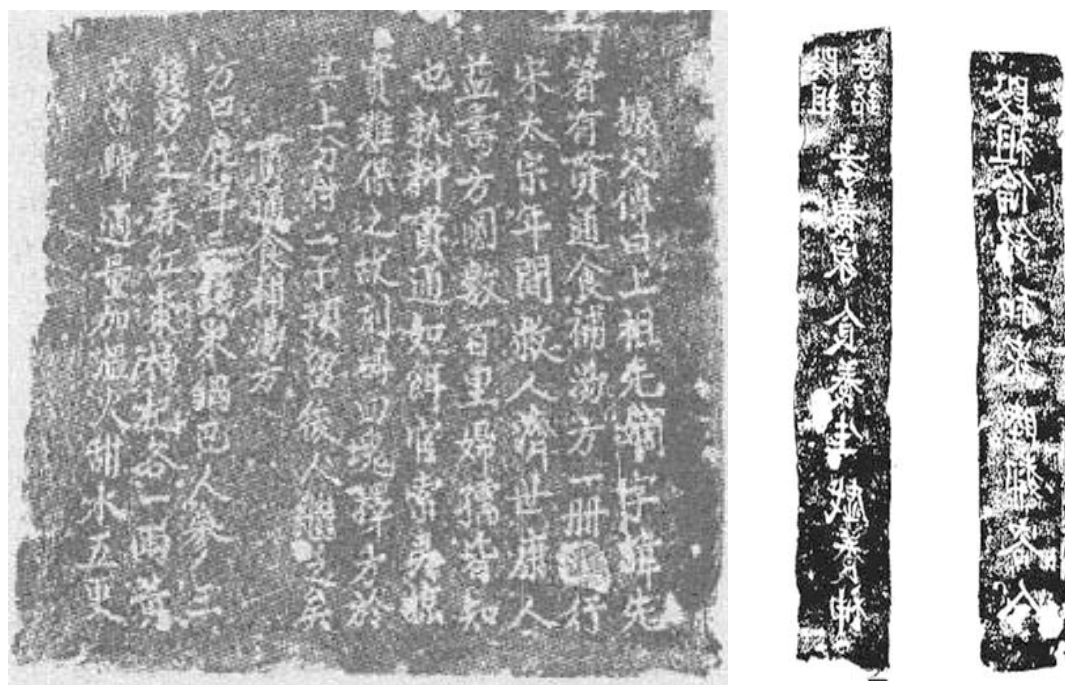


Figure 4.22 Architectural remains of a Yuan-dynasty stage (dated 1342) at the Niuwang Temple, Jingcun village, Hongdong county (Photo by Fan Zhang, 09/2007)



图三 段氏刻铭砖 I 正面铭文拓本

Figures 5.1a/b Rubbings of the surface and two sides of an inscribed brick of the Duan family (After Tian 2005, 13-14).



Figure 5.2 View of the north wall, rear chamber of Dong Hai's tomb (dated 1196), Houma (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl.22).



Figure 5.3 Details showing Yuchi Gong saving Li Shimin, north wall of the rear chamber, Dong Hai's tomb (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 323 and 324).



Figure 5. 4 The story of Yuchi Gong saving Li Shimin, surface decoration of a Jin-dynasty Cizhou pillow, 39.8 x 17.4 x 14.2 cm (After Cizhouyao cizhen, pl. 64).



Figure 5.5 Yuan blue-and-white ceramic vase showing the story of Yuchi Gong saving Li Shimin, with detail of Yuchi on the other side of the vase, H: 30 cm, 14th cen., unearthed at Hengxian county, Guangxi (After Guangxi 1993, pl. 5).



Figure 5.6 View of the east wall, rear chamber of Dong Hai's tomb (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 23).



Figure 5.7 Detail showing Baolin chasing Yuchi in a battle, from east wall of the rear chamber, Dong Hai's tomb.



Figure 5.8 View of the south wall, rear chamber of Dong Hai's tomb (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 20).



Figure 5.9a Detail showing Qin Qiong fighting with Yang Guang, from southwest wall of the rear chamber, Dong Hai's tomb (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 321).



Figure 5.9b Detail showing Wei Wentong chasing Qin Qiong, from southeast wall of the rear chamber, Dong Hai's tomb (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 322).



Figure 5.10 Dong Hai and his son on an outing, west wall of the rear chamber, Dong Hai's tomb (Photo by Fan, 09/2007).



Figure 5.11 Anonymous, *Breaking the Balustrade*, detail, ink and color on silk, Southern Song, Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk. H: 173.9 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei.



Figure 5.12 The story *Breaking the Balustrade*, surface decoration of a Cizhou pillow, dated to 13th century, L. 43.5 cm, Cincinnati Art Museum, 1950.53 (After Avril 1997, pl. 71).



Figure 5.13 Illustration of the story *Yu Rang Assassinating Zhao Xiaozhi*, surface decoration of a Jin-dynasty Cizhou pillow (Zhang 2000, pl. 55).

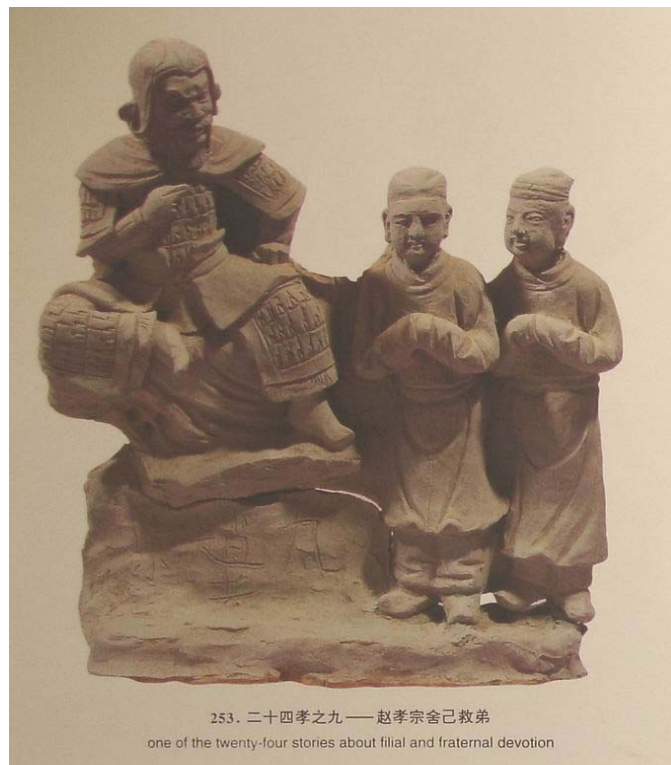


Figure 5.14 The story of Zhao Xiao saving his younger brother, clay figures from Macun tomb no. 4, Jishan, H: about 20 cm (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuanbiao, pl. 253).



Figure 5.15 The story of Zhao Xiao saving his younger brother, relief tiles on the west side of north wall, Macun tomb no. 1, Jishan (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuandiao, pl. 269).



Figure 5.16 The story of Bao Shan saving his mother, clay figures from Macun tomb no. 4, Jishan, H: about 20 cm (After Pingyang Jinmu zhuanbiao, pl. 257).



Figure 5.17 The story of Bao Shan saving his mother, mural detail from the Weicun tomb in Changzhi, Shanxi, dated 1153 (After Changzhi 2009, pl. 14-4).



Figure 5.18 The story of Bao Shan saving his mother, surface decoration of a Jin-dynasty Cizhou pillow, 31.8 x 15.1 x 11.7 cm (After Zhang 2000, pl. 63).



Figure 5.19 The “Jiaguó yong’an” pillow, early Cizhou kiln in Henan, dated 1071, British Museum of Art, London (Picture online www.picasaweb.google.com).

Appendix

The Development of *Zaju* Performance

(a) What is *Zaju*?

Zaju 雜劇 (variety plays) drama, a highly synthetic art, is a major dramatic form of performing arts in twelfth- and thirteenth-century China.¹ As a major component of the *beiqu* 北曲 (northern arias), Song-dynasty *zaju* drama mainly developed from Tang-dynasty *caijun* play 參軍戲 (adjutant play), a theatrical form combining comic plays and musical dance. Yet compared to *canjunxi*, *zaju* featured mimetic performance and plot expansion. During the Jin dynasty *zaju* further incorporated elements from the performance of *zhugongdiao* 諸宮調 (all keys and modes) medleys and *daqu* 大曲 (grand music) plays. After about a hundred years of development, *zaju* finally matured in the early Yuan. By that time it had a relatively fixed formula of performance forms, various modes of song suite, and complete role types of actors. Performed by four or five actors, a Yuan-*zaju* drama normally consisted of four acts plus a wedge (as a prologue or interlude), with narrative suite songs in each section in a certain sequence of music modes and tunes. Its plot-making was more complicated than earlier dramatic genres and the narrative song suites, mainly sung by a leading actor to extend the plots, replaced the dominant role of short farces and slapsticks in Song and Jin *zaju*.² This performing art

¹ Since the character *za* 雜 means to diverse or popular, *zaju* can refer to a variety of performance forms, comparable to the term of *baixi* 百戲 (one hundred entertainments). But here I will not use this term's broad meaning. Also, I used the term "drama" rather than "opera" to refer to *zaju* because this research mainly focuses on the early stage of this performing art during Song, Jin, and early Yuan periods. For a general introduction to Song, Jin, and Yuan theater, please see Wilt L. Idema and Stephen H. West, *Chinese Theater 1100-1450: A Source Book* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1982); Liao Ben and Liu Yanjun, *Zhongguo xiqu shi* 中國戲曲發展史 vols. 1-2 (Taiyuan: Shanxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 2003).

² William Dolby, *A History of Chinese Drama* (London: Elek Books Limited, 1976), 53-55. Shih Chung-Wen provided a detailed introduction to the themes, structure, language, and music of Yuan *zaju*

gradually declined during the Ming dynasty, when *nanxi* 南戲 (southern dramas) became in fashion and various regional operas 地方戲 (*difangxi*) marked the new era of modern theater.

Tao Zongyi's 陶宗儀 (c.1315-1405) *Notes Taken During Breaks from Ploughing* (*Nancun cuokenglu* 南村輟耕錄, preface dated 1366), one important source introducing Jin and Yuan cultural life, offers a key excerpt to understand the development of *zaju* drama at that time.

Tang had its *chuanqi* (literary tales); Song has its *xiqu* (various dramas), *changhun* (bawdy singing), and *cishuo* (prosimetric stories); Jin had its *yuanben* (farces), *zaju* (variety drama), and *zhugongdiao* (all keys and modes). *Yuanben* and *zaju* were, in fact, one and the same. In our dynasty (i.e. the Mongol Yuan dynasty) *yuanben* and *zaju* first separated to become two (different genres).

唐有傳奇，宋有戲曲、唱詞、詞說。金有院本、雜劇、諸官調等；院本、雜劇，其實一也。國朝院本、雜劇始厘而二之。³

This excerpt discusses three major dramatic performances of twelfth and thirteenth centuries: *yuanben* 院本 (institute farce), *zaju*, and *zhugongdiao*. As Tao mentioned, *yuanben* and *zaju* were the same during the Jin dynasty, having neither significant differences nor strict boundaries. As a contraction of the expression *hangyuan zhiben* 行院之本 (scripts of the entertainers' guild), *yuanben* refers to a short form of dramatic performance that features coarse and often bawdy humor. But during the Yuan, the term *zaju* came to mean exclusively a long dramatic play, while the term *yuanben* developed the specific meaning of a short comic play. In other words, a short *yuanben*

drama, see his book *The Golden Age of Chinese Drama: Yuan Tsa-chu* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

³ Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀, *Notes Taken During Breaks from Ploughing* (*Nancun Chuogeng lu* 南村輟耕錄) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), *juan* 25, 306. The translation is based on Idema's work. See Wilt Idema "Yuan-pen as a Minor Form of Dramatic Literature in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," *Chinese Literature* vol. 6.1/2 (1984): 53.

farce could be presented as an independent entertainment or as one item within a *zaju*. In addition, *yuanben* still depended on role-types of *fujing* and *fumo*, but *zaju* put more emphasis on *moni* roles.⁴ Because *zaju* of that time contained a wide variety of themes and issues, the concept of comedy is not sufficient to characterize them or fairly represent their variety.

Zhugongdiao was a genre of ballads that closely related to *zaju* and *yuanben*. It normally included four or five songs in a set, and was probably sung by a female performer accompanied by musicians. The narrative was presented in prose and poetry in the form of song sequences, with each song having a musical key different from the preceding one.⁵ *Zhugongdiao* was a major factor that promoted *zaju*'s transformation from spoken to musical drama in the late Northern Song and Jin periods.⁶ To some extent, *zhugongdiao* bridged literati lyrics and vernacular ballads, as well as theater performance and prosimetric literature.

In fact, Tao's words suggest a sudden leap from spoken to musical drama that marked the differentiation of *zaju* and *yuanben* during the Yuan, in which *zhugongdiao* had a crucial role. Performances of *zaju* and *yuanben* mainly applied dialogues and recitation in plot extension. However, after the incorporation of *zhugongdiao*, the dramatic performance featured *qu*-style musical songs in narrating stories and expressing emotion. These musical songs also changed from third-person representational style to first-person presentational style.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 54-56.

⁵ Wilt Idema, "Performance and Construction of the Chu-Kung-Tiao," *Journal of Oriental Studies* vol. 16 no.1/2 (1978): 63-64.

⁶ Stephen H. West, *Vaudeville and Narrative: Aspects of Chin Theater* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1977), 44.

(b) *Zaju*'s Performance Forms and Role Types

The earliest and most frequently quoted excerpt was from Guanpu Naideweng's 灌圃耐得翁 *Records of the Splendors of the Capital* (*Ducheng jishi* 都城紀勝, preface dated 1235). It introduces performance form and role types of Song *zaju* this way:

In *zaju* the *moni* (actor-director) is senior, and there are always four or five actors in a performance. They first perform a section of the usual, familiar things, called *yanduan* (opening section), then they perform *zheng zaju* (the formal *zaju* performance), also known as the "two sections". The *moni* role directs the general settings, the *yinxi* (play introducer) role gives specific directions, the *fujing* (secondary clown) role does the fooling, and the *fumo* (secondary jester) role does the quipping. Sometimes another actor is added to play the official role. The one who plays the *qupo* (begin dancing) and *duansong* (musical send-off) with the flute is called *base* (manager of roles). In general their performances are nothing but farcical comedy about old and new, using such things as the creative basis for admonitory examples, and sometimes they cryptically convey corrective advice. Thus they are called faultless insects...

雜劇中末泥為長，每四人或五人為一場。先做尋常熟事一段，名曰艷段；次做正雜劇，通名為兩段。末泥色主張，引戲色分付，副淨色發喬，副末色打諢，又或添一人裝孤。其吹曲破斷送者，謂之把色。大抵全以故事世務為滑稽，本是鑒戒，或隱為諷諍也，故從便跳露，謂之無過虫。……⁷

This excerpt introduces that a Northern Song *zaju*, which features comic plays and dialogue, normally has two sections, including *yanduan* 艷段 and *zheng zaju* 正雜劇

⁷ Another excerpt further explains that "the *zaban*, also named *niuyuanzi* or *bahe*, is actually *zaju*'s *sanduan* section. During the time the (Northern Song) court was in Bianjing, village yokels and country bumpkins would rarely venture into the city, so (actors) would compose this skit. Most of them would dress up as old villagers of Shandong or Hebei to provide laughs. 雜扮或名雜班，又名紐元子，又謂之拔和，乃雜劇之散段。在京師時，村人罕得入城，遂撰此端。多是借裝為山東、河北村叟，以資笑。今之打和鼓、撚哨子、散耍皆是也。" Although these excerpts probably introduce the *zaju* performance in the Southern Song capital Lin'an, they are still a reliable account of Jin *zaju* during the 12th century. See DCJS, 96-97. In the *Mengliang lu* 夢梁錄 (Records of a Millet Dream), written in 1270s, Wu Zimu 吳自牧 copied them with minor changes in his introduction of Southern Song *zaju*. *Ibid.*, *juan* 20, 308-9. The *zaban*, also named *niuyuanzi* or *bahe*, is actually *zaju*'s *sanduan* section. I give the translation in reference to that of Stephen West. See West 1981, 446-7.

.⁸ A *sanduan* 散段 section might be added after the *zheng zaju* since the thirteenth century. Among the five role types of Song-Jin *zaju*, the clown duo are the major roles, who often have strange dresses and makeup to present awkward appearances. The role of *fujing* 副淨 (secondary clown) is supposed to *faqiao* 發喬, or play silly tricks and funny looks to initiate the comedy. The *fumo* 副末 (secondary jester) role will be responsible for *fahun* 發譚, by responding with humorous words to silly tricks or comic activities of the *fujing*. The role of *yinxi* 引戲 (play introducer) often performs dances or introduces plots to initiate the following performances. The role of *moni* 末泥 (actor-director) will direct other actors' movements and assign their plays. Sometimes the role of *zhuanggu* 裝孤 (role of an official) will be added.⁹

⁸ This excerpt does not specifically mention that *zaban* is the last section of a *zaju* performance. It is worth noting that Xu Pingfang's proposal of the three-section *zaju* is not accurate. Xu combined records of *zaju* and *zaban* together, though they were separate in the original text of the DCJS. Based on his reading of the Yanshi tiles, Xu Pingfang proposed the *yinxi* led the *yanduan*, the *moni* and *zhuanggu* led the *zheng zaju*, and clown duo led the *sanduan*. This influential view among archaeologists has now been proved faulty by historians of theater, and thus readers should be careful while reading previous archaeological report relating to theatrical representations. In fact, *zaju* and *zaban* were different performances forms during the Northern Song and early Jin. Possibly in late Jin and Southern Song, *zaban* was incorporated into *zaju* as a kind of after-performance section. Also, *yanduan* is performed by a couple of actors instead of the sole *yixin* actor. For more information, see Xu Pingfang, "Songdai de zaju diaozhuan 宋代的雜劇雕磚," *Wenwn* no. 5 (1960): 40; Liao 2003, 172-3.

⁹ Although Naideweng's brief introduction clearly explains *zaju*'s performance sections and role types, it does not explain the origin of the Clown Duo (*fujing* and *fumo*), the major actors of a Song *zaju*. This issue was supplemented by Tao Zongyi's words on the *yuanben* troupe, which reads, "in *yuanben* there are five people. One is called the *fujing*, whom was previously called the *canjun* 參軍 (adjutant role); one is called the *fumo*, whom was previously called *canggu* 蒼鶻 (Grey Hawk). A hawk can strike a bird, the *mo* can strike the *fujing*—thus the name comes." NCCGL, *juan* 25, 306. Also see Idema 1984, 53.

Also, we know little about the *zhuanggu* role from theatrical records and the ambiguity of this term thus leads to different understandings of this role's appearance and function. First, the name of this role type remained the same in Yuan *zaju*, but its meaning changed. In addition to officials, *gu* 孤 could refer to those rich merchants or local gentry without official positions during the Song periods. *Zhuanggu*, which was literally translated as "pretending to be a *gu* role," could also refer to actors costumed as rich or aged gentlemen. During the Yuan and Ming dynasties, *zhuanggu* seemed only to mean actors costumed to be officials. Thus it is reasonable to understand why Zhu Quan 朱權 of the Ming dynasty, rather than mentioning *gu*'s other implications, only defined in his *Formulary of the Correct Sounds of an Era of Peace* (*Taihe zhengyin pu* 太和正音譜) the role of *zhuanggu* as "*dangchang zhuangguan zhe*", or actors

In addition to historical descriptions of *zaju*'s performances and role types, we also know from surviving theatrical plays how an entertainment theater provided *zaju* performance in urban centers. For instance, a famous *sanqu* 散曲 song suite, titled "The Country Bumpkin Knows Nothing of the Theater (Zhuangjia bushi goulán 莊家不識勾欄)," written by Du Shanfu 杜善夫 (c. 1190-1270) around 1250, describes a villager's story when he watched a *zaju* performance in the city.

(Tune of *Shua Haier* 耍孩兒, coda six) I saw a man backing his hands on a fat-pillared door, in a loud voice calling "please, please..." He said "for latecomers it would be filled, no place to sit," and yelled "the first half of the show is a *yuanben* called Diaofengyue (flirting), and the second half *yaomo* is Actor *Liu Shuahe*." In a louder voice he cried, "So good it is over before you know it, worth a hard-won cheer."... (Coda four) A girl did several turns, before long leading out the troupe. Among them was a *yangrenhuo* (good-for-nothing), wrapped in a black turban, the top stuck through with a brush. Full-face limed, streaked with black, thus I knew how he got along. Head to toe, his whole body, was covered by a cotton-flowered robe. (Coda three) He intoned poems and lyrics for a while, then spoke prose and sang, not too bad, either. All things he talked of, all the same; lots of flowery words and clever phrases to remember. When it approached the end, the *mo* role introduced (the following play), then lowered his head and slapped his feet. The *cuan* part was finished, the *yaobo* (second half) about to be played. (Coda two) One was *Zhang taigong* (Squire Zhang), the other changed to *xiao erke* (Brother Little Two). Walking, walking, they said they were on their way to town. Seeing a young girl standing under a shade, the old man bent his mind to strategies, scheming to have her to wife. Brother Two was sent off to arrange the union. All she wanted was beans or grain, wheat and rice; did she ask for gauze or silk, satin or cotton?...

[六煞]见一个人手撑着椽做的门，高声的叫“请请”，道“迟来的满了无处停坐”。说道“前截儿院本调风月，背后么末敷演刘耍和”。高声叫：“赶散易得，难得的妆合”...[四煞]一个女孩儿转了几遭，不多时引出一伙。中间里一个央人货，裹着枚皂头巾顶门上插一管笔，满脸石灰更着些黑道儿抹。知他待是如何过？浑身上下，则穿领花布直裰[三煞]念了会诗共词，说了会赋与歌，无差错。唇天口地无高下，巧语花言记许多。临绝末道了，低头撮脚，爨罢将么拨[三煞]念了会诗共词，说了会赋与歌，无差错。唇天口地无高下，巧语花言记许多。临绝末道了，低头撮脚，爨罢将么拨[二煞]一个妆做张太公，他改做小二哥，行行行说向城中

costumed as official on stage. Second, actors of other role types could play the role of *zhuanggu*. Since the *moni* type could perform multiple roles, a female *moni* role played the character of the costumed official in the mural of the Shuishen temple.

过。见个年少的妇女向帘儿下立，那老子用意铺谋待取做老婆。教小二哥相说合，但要的豆谷米麦，问甚布绢纱罗...¹⁰

This record probably is the most detailed description of a *zaju* performance, which was watched by a villager with no experience of visiting an urban entertainment district. Coda four and three compose a *cuan* performance, which is suited to the *yanduan*. In this section, the villager saw a *yixin* role, performed by the girl, danced and sung before the *yanduan* performance. The clown duo then amused the audience with their funny play and makeup, and finally a *mo* role wrapped up the play. The term *yaobo* 么撥, which probably refers to a *zheng zaju* (formal *zaju* drama) that consists of two plays, including the farce *Diaofengyue* 調風月 and the drama *Liu Shuahe* 劉耍和. Coda two mentions that same actors played new characters in this *yuanben* performance, featuring a comic story of an elder man pursuing a girl to be his wife. Regrettably, the performance of the second play *Liu Shuahe* is not described in this song suite, since the story ends suddenly because the villager hurried to the restroom.

Based on visual evidence of *zaju* representations found in Song, Jin, and Yuan tombs, scholars have studied role types of *zaju* actors. Zhou Yibai's still influential study is among the earliest attempts to identify role types of Jin *zaju*.¹¹ He carefully observed clothing and gestures of the five clay figures from the Houma tomb and tried to match these representations with some ten types of actor roles in historical records. Also with the reference to the mural of the Shuishen temple, Zhou suggested that the actor figures

¹⁰ West translated "*linjue modao le* 臨絕末道了" as "when it approached the end, he spoke," but Zhou Yibai believes it means "the *mo* role is coming to spoke at the end." Here I follow Zhou Yibai's interpretation. *Modao* 末道 is the abbreviation of "*modao jiamen* 末道家門", which means the *mo* role giving an introduction to the next play. See West 1981, 450; and Zhou Yibai, "Houma Dongshimu zhong wuge zhuangyong de yanjiu 侯馬董氏墓中五個磚俑的研究," *Wenwu* no. 10 (1959): 52.

¹¹ Zhou 1959, 50-52.

of the Houma set, from left to right, represented role types of *zhuangu*, *jieji* 捷譏 (or *fumo*), *moni*, *yinxi*, and *fujing*.¹²

Zhou's conclusion was unquestioned in the following decades and many historians and archaeologists directly borrowed his identification of role types when introducing early drama in China. But it should be noted that, when Zhou conducted his study of role types, he could probably only rely on the visual evidence of the Houma figures and that of the Shuishenmiao mural.¹³ When more and more representations of Song and Jin *zaju* actors were found and reported in the following decades, his identification of *zhuanggu* and *fumo* roles cannot be reasonably applied to many cases. For instance, from a brick carving found in Huanqu, Shanxi, two actors, probably the clown duo, are carved on the same brick, with the other three actors on individual bricks.¹⁴ If following Zhou's identification, these two roles should be *zhuanggu* and *fumo*. But it is hard to explain why these two roles, instead of the clown duo, were carved on the same brick. Liao Ben, another historian of theater, has noticed this problem when he studied role types of Song and Jin *zaju* by comparing the Yanshi and Wenxian sets,

¹² Since the leading actor Zhongduxiu played the central official-like figure in the mural of the Shuishen temple, Zhou believed that the central official-like figure of the Houma set should be a *moni* role. Since this central figure is the only official-like actor in the troupe, Zhou had to suggest another actor as the *zhuanggu* role. Zhou thus interpreted that "*zhuanggu*" did not necessary mean a costumed official. Instead, it could be the figure at the far left of the Houma set, who pretends to be a rich male with bare chest. Zhou further identify the second one from the left is the *jieji* role, who wares like a clerk. The character of the *fujing* role is the whistling figure at the far right. He wares a short robe, the bottom part of which is decorated with a design of a cluster of flower. Next to the *fujing* figure is the *yinxi* role, who is played by a female in a dance pose, with her body twisted and knees bent. She is holding a fan-like prop in her right hand. *Ibid.*, 51.

¹³ Although the Yanshi set had been discovered in April 1958, both Liu and Zhou did not mention a word regarding these representations. Considering that these scholars rushed to the site of the Houma tomb only a month after its discovery in January 1959, it is most likely that the Yanshi set was not yet known to these scholars when they wrote their articles on the Houma figures.

¹⁴ Liu 2001, 42.

which were both found in northern Henan. Liao's different identification reflects his doubt concerning Zhou's idea of *zhuanggu* and *moni* roles, while admitting that it is difficult to distinguish one from the other in Jin *zaju*.¹⁵

(c) Understanding Representations of *Zaju* Performance

Although my research mainly refers to the Chinese character for drama, *xi* 戲, as *zaju* performances, it also means “game” and “play.”¹⁶ Because *xi* refers to virtually any entertainment—acrobatics, sports, jests, dramas, or children's amusements—its pictorial representations could include a wide of range of forms and subjects. It is always difficult to trace the origins of individual subjects or define the scope of theatrical scenes in Chinese art, but drama scenes most likely developed from earlier performance scenes, which have been found in tombs dated as early as the Eastern Zhou period (770-221 BCE).¹⁷ These performance scenes, including musical activities and sports entertainments, could have both amusement and ritual implications in Chinese mortuary arts.¹⁸

¹⁵ If we apply characteristics of role types summarized in Zhou's study of the Houma set to identify the Wenxian set, the roles of these figures should be, from left to right, *jieji* (*fumo*), *moni*, *yinxi*, *fujing*, and *zhuanggu*. However, Liao Ben, did not follow Zhou's idea of the *zhuanggu* role and propose that the roles of the Wenxian set are instead *moni*, *zhuanggu*, *yinxi*, *fujing*, and *fumo*. He also compared the Wenxian set with the Yanshi set to strengthen his conclusion.

¹⁶ Dolby 1976, 3-4.

¹⁷ Illustrated histories of Chinese theater often begin with performance scenes of the prehistoric period, such as images of dancers in the rock art of Guangxi 廣西 and decorations of dancers on pottery vessels of Gansu 甘肅. Scholars also believe that performance scenes had occurred occasionally in mortuary art by the Eastern Zhou period (770-221 BCE). For instance, some dancing figures with exotic costumes, decorated on the surface of a zither, were found in tomb no. 1 of the Chu State burials (c. 4th cen. BCE) at Changtaiguan 長台關 in Xinyang 信陽. See Liao 2000, 1-15; and Liu 2001, 1-21.

¹⁸ During the Eastern Han period (25-220), musicians and dancers were frequently represented in entertainment scenes in the forms of stone carvings and clay figures. It is hard to say that all performance

The most celebrated theater scene of Pingyang is the mural (dated 1324) at the Shuishen Temple in Ruicheng. This reliable visual record of the performance and actors of Yuan *zaju* has attracted special scholarly attention, because the fragmented literary and historical texts on early Chinese theater cannot provide historians of theater a detailed picture of the actual performance on stage. Both Liu Nianzi and Zhou Yibai employed this wall painting to study performance form and actor types of Yuan *zaju*.¹⁹ But we now know that the lack of sufficient visual data of early drama delayed scholarly recognition of the close connection between Yuan drama and earlier Song and Jin drama. Similar to other scholars, they were not sure how significantly *zaju* changed over time as well as to what extent this painted theater scene related to the earlier Song and later Ming *zaju* respectively. Assumingly, Liu and Zhou felt more comfortable only referring to Yuan and Ming sources, particularly when they could rely only on this sole pictorial record, which was almost the only reliable and specific *zaju* scene until the 1950s when new visual evidence of theater became available as a result of archaeological excavations.

From this perspective, one can better understand the significance of discoveries of theatrical representations in Song and Jin tombs for the studies of early drama. These discoveries, such as a set of Song *zaju* actors found in the Jiuliugou tomb in Yanshi and a set of Jin *zaju* actors in Dong Ming's tomb in Houma, provided crucial evidence in

images were entertainment-oriented, since some images, such as mythical creatures and witch-like figures in dancing poses, were probably depicted for exorcist purposes.

¹⁹ In the early 1957 Liu studied this mural to introduce features of Yuan *zaju*'s performance. Immediately following his research, Zhou further described costumes, props, and make-ups of these actor figures and suggested that the female figure at the center is the leading *mo* actor. Because Liu and Zhou assumed this mural as an accurate record of a specific drama, they both tried to identify the content of the play and names of individual characters, though their conclusions were invalidated by recent knowledge. See Liu Nianzi's 1957 article collected in his *Xiqu wenwu congkao* 戲曲文物叢考 (Beijing: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe, 1986) and Zhou Yibai, "Houma Dongshimu zhong wuge zhuangyong de yanjiu 侯馬董氏墓中五個磚俑的研究," *Wenwu* no. 1 (1959): 29-31.

scholarly research on role types and performance forms.²⁰ Scholars were thus able to examine these brick tiles and carvings that represent different *zaju* roles, which are distinguished from one another by costumes, gestures, props, and make-up. These representations not only provided vivid visual data of early *zaju* during the Song and Jin periods, but also reminded scholars of the similarities between these Song and Jin representations and their counterpart in the Shuishenmiao mural. Indeed, no scholar had previously realized that it was more appropriate to use records of role types in earlier Song and Jin sources in their studies of the Yuan *zaju* scene in Shuishenmiao mural. Later, scholars such as Liu and Zhou tried to find scattered Song records of role types and descriptions of actors' performances, and soon were able to find important references in textual sources.

Among those scholars who immediately updated their knowledge of early drama based on these new discoveries, Liu Nianzi is the first person who pointed out the new visual evidence clearly indicated continuity between Jin *zaju* and Yuan *zaju*. By comparing the mural from the Shuishen temple and the figures from the Houma tomb, Liu proposed that the continuity between Jin and Yuan *zaju* was clearly indicated by visual evidence. Liu further asserted that the importance of Pingyang's theatrical material in demonstrating the continuous development of northern drama.²¹ This proposal is groundbreaking in the study of Pingyang's material remains, because it not only predicted the rich theatrical materials that would come into light there in the next few

²⁰ Dong 1959, 84-85; Houma gongzuozhan 1959, 50-55.

²¹ Che 2005, 58-60.

decades, but also reminded many scholars of the need to examine scattered evidence within Pingyang's distinctive cultural context.

The awareness of the continuity of *zaju* performance during the Song, Jin, and Yuan dynasties also helps scholars to revise some previous studies of theatrical representations, such as the mural of the Shuishen temple. Supported by archaeologically excavated visual records, Zhou Huabin proposed that the use of theatrical terms relating to Song and Jin *zaju* would be more appropriate than the sole use of later Yuan and Ming terms to identify actors' role types in this mural.²² Thus he applied some earlier terms of Song *zaju* to identify role types of this Yuan mural and revised some conclusions made by his father Zhou Yibai decades ago regarding the development of Yuan *zaju*. Other scholars also made and revised their identifications with the help of a bigger sample of representations, which in turn complicated as well as enriched the process of role identification.

(d) The Rise of *Zaju* in Pingyang

Soon after the fall of the Northern Song, *zaju* thrived in ritual theater and village festivals in the vast rural areas of North China. However, early Chinese and Japanese scholars usually neglect the early development of drama in rural area and put their attention only on Yuan drama in urban centers. They mainly treated *zaju* as a literary form and studied its authorship and spectatorship, assuming that the participation of Chinese literati led to the heyday of vernacular drama and literature, when classical

²² Zhou Huabin, "Guangshengsi Zhongduxiu xiqu bihua xikao 廣勝寺忠都秀戲曲壁畫新考," in Che Wenmin eds. *Pingyang Song Jin Yuan xiqu wenwu yanjiu* 平陽宋金元戲曲文物研究 (Yanbian: Yanbian daxue chubanshe, 2005), 210-2.

literature lost much of its social and political value under the Mongol rule. In a classical study of Jin and Yuan *zaju* drama, for instance, the famous Chinese scholar Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877-1927) emphasized that the major role of the literati in nurturing this theatrical form to its heyday and introduced many renowned playwrights who lived in Pingyang.²³ The famous Japanese scholar Yoshikawa Kojiro accepted Wang's points and further proposed that Mongols forced scholars to withdraw from political pursuit and to dedicate themselves into vernacular literature.²⁴ Since those belles-letters were no longer directed toward the acquisition of either political or social status, they obtained the freedom to explore non-traditional forms of literature.

Western scholars of the 1960s and 1970s basically followed ideas of traditional Chinese and Japanese scholarship on Song and Yuan theater. Since *zaju* was mostly viewed as an urban entertainment heavily influenced by the literati, they gave their major attention to theater and literati playwrights in capital cities of the time. Based on historical records, such as Zhong Sicheng's 鍾嗣成 *Register of Ghosts* 錄鬼簿 (*Lugui bu*, preface dated 1330), J. I. Crump's highlights the literati and the Mongol's contribution under Khublai Khan's rule.²⁵ William Dolby treated Yuan drama as an elite art and

²³ Wang believed that the corrupt examination system and the expanding influence of government clerks in the early Yuan society are the two major stimuli of the sudden upsurge of literati interest in drama. The Mongols further drove literati into the unusual pursuit of drama because of their discrimination towards traditional literati learning. Wang Guowei, *Song Yuan xiqu shi* 宋元戲曲史 (Beijing: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe, 1957), 82-91.

²⁴ See introduction in Yoshikawa Kojiro, *Gen zatsugeki kenkyu* 元雜劇研究 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1948). As a complementary to Yoshikawa's research on literati authorship of drama, Aoki Mararu further examined the spectators of drama. He suggested that Yuan drama thrived under the Mongol patronage, because the Mongols promoted music and drama for intense pleasure. To cater to the crude taste of the nomadic audience, playwrights thus wrote dramas in the vernacular tongue. See West 1981, 440-4.

²⁵ James I. Crump, *Chinese Theater in the Days of Kublai Khan* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1980), 5-9 and 30.

discussed famous actors and playwrights in the theater world.²⁶ Wilt Idema also suggests that, because of the Mongol ignorance of traditional culture and abolishment of civil service examinations, more literati become involved in writing plays and fictions and developed a strong interest in vernacular literature and popular theater.²⁷ In the introductory book on Song and Yuan theater coauthored by Wilt Idema and Stephen West, they mainly used historical records on entertainment districts of Kaifeng and Hangzhou to introduce the early development of theater in Song and Yuan cities.²⁸ These studies and views are important in understanding the development of Yuan drama, but we should not neglect the ritual aspect of Yuan drama and its development among the non-elite majority in the vast rural areas.

It was not until the 1970s that scholars began to revise their views with more accessibility to archaeological and literary data of early theater. Stephen West made a groundbreaking study by questioning two major assumptions of Yuan *zaju* drama. He argued that Mongols were not responsible for the rise of drama through their disposition of the literati or patronage of drama. Also, it was not literati brought drama to its height, because they mainly transformed drama from a pure, matured performing art into a written literature as a suitable mode of their literary expression. In fact, the dramatic tradition had its deep roots in the market places and temple grounds beyond major urban

²⁶ Dolby 1976, 60-70; also see his chapter on Yuan drama in Colin Mackerras, *Chinese Theater: From its Origins to the Present Day* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1983), 33-57.

²⁷ Wilt L. Idema, "Some Remarks and Speculations Concerning P'ing-Hua," in his *Chinese Vernacular Fiction: The Formative Period* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), introduction.

²⁸ In addition to institutional entertainment and social status of actors in capital cities, this book used textual and material evidence from provincial areas to discuss regional theater centers. Yet it still did not go further to explore the roots of popular drama and the popularity of village theater in the vast rural areas of Jin and Yuan North China. Wilt L. Idema and Stephen H. West, *Chinese Theater 1100-1450: A Source Book* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1982), 83-91, 95 and 142.

centers. West thus proposed to use more archaeological evidence from towns and villages in Henan and Shanxi to examine *zaju* drama both as a popular entertainment tradition and as a ritual tradition.²⁹

Some Chinese scholars also realized that, besides the elite world of letters, *zaju* drama also had its root among the illiterate masses in the vast rural areas during the Jin and Yuan periods. With its rich material and textual remains, Pingyang was an ideal place for them to study the intertwined roots of vernacular drama and popular religion. In particular, Liu Nianzhi and Ding Mingyi both called for, and themselves conducted as well, investigations of indigenous development of southern Shanxi theater in local ritual conventions.³⁰ Huang Zhusan insisted that, even though *zaju* was probably introduced from Kaifeng to Pingyang, the indigenous ritual traditions of using dances and plays in Pingyang were essential for the rise of *zaju* drama there. The incorporation of entertainment *zaju* into local ritual theater served the very needs of local people.³¹ With the help of abundant data from historical records, archaeological excavations, and ethnographical surveys, more and more scholars have begun to explore the development of *zaju* drama in village and ritual theater as well as its interactions with local cultural and religious traditions.

²⁹ West 1981, 454-56.

³⁰ See Liu Nianzhi, "Cong jianguo hou faxian de yixie wenwu kan Yuan zaju zai Pingyang diqu de fazhan 從建國後發現的一些文物看金元雜劇在平陽地區的發展," *Wenwu* no.3 (1973): 58-64, Ding 1972, 47-56.

³¹ Huang 1998, 43-46.

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