

Temple, Marketplace, Teahouse and Schoolroom: Local Settings and Social Contexts of Prosimetric Texts in Chinese Popular Traditions

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Room S202, Schillerstr. 6, 04109 Leipzig, Germany

Conveners: Roland Altenburger, Philip Clart, Vincent Durand-Dastès

Sponsor: Confucius Institute Leipzig

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ABSTRACTS

How Much Humiliation Can a Schoolteacher Bear? ‘Lü Mengzheng Teaching’ and Related Texts in the Youth Book, Big Drum and Wooden Clapper Repertories

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Lü Mengzheng 呂蒙正 (946-1011) was a celebrated scholar-official of the Northern Song who served as chief councilor three times, after he had passed the palace examination as *primus* (*zhuangyuan* 狀元) in 977. Prior to reaching such supreme success in life, however, he had experienced extreme hardships. Brought up by his divorced and sent-away mother in Luoyang, at least according to legend, he lived in some kind of cave dwelling, perhaps at a monastery, where he studied hard, while living on begging alms. In Yuan and Ming drama, episodes from his early life in extreme poverty and suffering from social discrimination, but also showing promise of a brilliant future, were elaborated on stage (Wang, C. K. 1984). The story of Lü Mengzheng became a paradigmatic rags-to-riches narrative that appealed to young examination scholars to remain upright and focus on learning also in dire straits.

While Lü Mengzheng biographically is not known to have been teaching elementary school, there nevertheless are at least two different versions of a prosimetric narrative in late-Qing to early-Republican Youth Book (*zidishu* 子弟書) and Big Drum (*dagu* 大鼓) repertories entitled ‘Lü Mengzheng Teaching’ (*Lü Mengzheng jiaoxue* 呂蒙正教學). These texts tell about how Lü, in great distress, takes up a teaching position the conditions of which, however, turn out to be so shabby and humiliating that he ultimately decides to walk out of it and rather to suffer from hunger and poverty. And indeed, the following year he passes the palace examination with distinction. The main body of the text, in its two different versions, points out, in careful detail and with sarcastic delight, the degrading material employment conditions a poor schoolteacher had to endure.

This theme is better known from a sketch in the Wooden Clapper (*bangzi* 梆子) style, entitled ‘Schoolmaster He Teaching’ (*He xiansheng jiaoshu* 和先生教書), that has also been preserved in a number of late-Qing and early-Republican editions. This text must have been derived from an earlier sketch, erroneously entitled ‘Riot in the Classroom’ (*Nao guan* 鬧館) and spuriously attributed to the famous early-Qing author Pu Songling 蒲松齡 (1640-1715) (cf. Lu, Z. 2014). The present paper proposes a study of the versions of ‘Lü Mengzheng Teaching’ and their comparison to ‘Schoolmaster He Teaching’ and its predecessors.

Dizang Stories in the Funerary *baojuan* Storytelling in Changshu, Jiangsu

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Areas around Changshu city in Jiangsu remain one of few places in China, where storytelling aimed at the salvation of dead souls survived until now. At present funerary and memorial services in private houses remain important occasions for *baojuan* storytelling in Changshu

(locally known as “telling scriptures” -- *jiangjing*), which is carried out by professional performers – “masters of telling scriptures”. Their history can be traced back to the late 19th – early 20th century. These assemblies have quite rich repertoire, as they usually last for around eight hours, and several subjects related to popular Buddhist deities and characters appear on these occasions. Several narratives performed there can be traced back to baojuan texts of the 17th-19th century, though they appear in Changshu in the local modified versions.

The present article discusses special features of *Dizang Baojuan* that is usually recited at the beginning of each funerary and memorial assembly (held on the thirty-fifth day after a person’s death) in comparison with the similar woodblock-printed texts of the Qing dynasty. There are several versions of Dizang’s hagiography that are used in Changshu depending on special circumstances of religious assemblies. Many of them do not have Buddhist canonical origins, but represent the interpretation of this deity in Chinese popular literature of the late imperial period. Present research demonstrates the transformation and domestication of the figure of Dizang, a Buddhist savior of the dead in Chinese Buddhism, in the folk ritual environment of Lower Yangzi region. It mainly uses materials that the author obtained during his fieldwork in Changshu.

Late Qing and Republican Prosimetric Works on the Exploits of Han Xiangzi 韓湘子

Philip Clart
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This paper offers a survey of Qing and Republican period prosimetric versions of the Han Xiangzi story, including but not limited to such texts as the *Han xian baozhuan* 韓仙寶傳 (a.k.a. *Baihe zhuan* 白鶴傳), the *Han Xiangzi jiudu Wengong daoqing* 韓湘子九度文公道情 (lithographic ed., Minguo?), and *Huitu Han Xiangzi zhuan* 繪圖韓湘子傳 (lithographic ed., Minguo?). Building on earlier work, I will compare the arrangement of key plot elements and explore possible intertextual linkages among them.

Inside and Outside the Temple: Beijing Temple Activities and Folk Culture in *zidishu* of the Qing Dynasty

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Zidishu 子弟书 (‘youth book’) is a prosimetric genre that was popular in the bannerment society of the Beijing area during the Qing dynasty. Some of its texts, such as *Lingguanmiao* 灵官庙, *Xu Lingguanmiao* 续灵官庙, *Guang Huguosi* 逛护国寺, *Biyunsi* 碧云寺 and *Kuoda nainai ting shan hui xi* 阔大奶奶听善会戏, involved local temples and related cultural activities. Some of these items describe the lively scenes of temple fairs in Beijing, where they were also being sold as either prints or manuscripts. Some of these descriptions provide

important source material on folk-cultural practices in the Capital. They also include descriptions of charity performances in the temples of Beijing. For instance, the text entitled *Biyunsi* describes the changes in the Biyun Temple in the course of a renovation. Its meticulous descriptions have considerable historical and documentary value. Moreover, charity performances in the temples are also being described, such as in the text entitled *Kuoda nainai ting shan hui xi*, which is about a bannerwoman who visits a temple to watch a play performed as a non-commercial charitable activity. It tells something about folk charity activities at temples. Finally, the two works focusing on the Lingguan Temple even denounce lewd behavior and immoral acts at the temple and expose their basic incompatibility with the religious solemnity of the place. Employing techniques of literary irony, they dramatize these tensions.

What's in a Name? Female Voices of Slander and Protest in the *Li Cuilian Borrowing a Corpse to Be Reborn* Ballad and *Baojuan*

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The somewhat mysterious story of “Liu Quan bringing the melons to Hell” appears in literary history as a very short and ancillary episode of the *Xiyou ji* cycle, been told in the space of a few lines in chapter 12 of the 16th century edition: when resurrected Taizong looks for a messenger to deliver to Hell the melons he promised to give the Judges of Hades, Liu Quan volunteers: after a quarrel, his wife has committed suicide, and he longs to see her again, dead or alive. Both spouses will be eventually resurrected as a reward for Liu Quan’s successful mission.

As all the episodes directly or indirectly linked with Tang Taizong’s descent to Hell, the story has been developed and replicated in many format of the performing genres (plays, prosimetric texts, ballads), especially the ones linked to religious celebrations. It is also a common theme in religious art (Ten kings painting). Thus, we may find Precious scrolls and other prosimetric texts about it from Gansu to Yunnan, from Beijing to Jiangsu.

After briefly listing the different existing version of the story, our paper will focus on two very different avatars of the tale in late Imperial *baojuan* 寶卷: Western Gansu’s *Liu Quan jin gua baojuan* 劉全進瓜寶卷 and Northern Jiangsu’s *Cuilian baojuan* 翠蓮寶卷. The first *baojuan*, a rather short texts, focuses clearly on Liu Quan as its main character and has as a major theme the quest for the melon (in wintery northern China) and their delivery to Hell, ending by a praise of the text “Repaying the loan for life”. The Jiangsu *baojuan*, by contrast, does not care much for the melon story, and has Li Cuilian, Liu Quan’s wife, as its main protagonist, spending a fascinating amount of narrative retracing the circumstances of her tragic forced suicide in the first part of the story. We even have from the same area a ritual ballad called *Tang Chan* 唐忤 were the death of Cuilian occupies no less than 50 pages in a modern published version.

After commenting and trying to explain this long suicide scene (could the text have been possibly used in funerals of suicides?), we’ll try to bring into the discussion a puzzling intertextual element: it has been long noted that the melon story’s female protagonist has the same name as the defiant bride in the prosimetric 16th century text *Kuaizui Li Cuilian* 快嘴李

翠蓮. In the Jiangsu *baojuan*, however, not only Cuilian, but also another character carrying a name not unknown in vernacular literature, Granny Wang (Wang po 王婆) appears on stage: both may be characterized as two sides of conventional feminine voice in vernacular literature: as Wang represents the clownish and evil “long tongue” slanderer (it is she who will succeed in having the too innocent Cuilian’s husband distrust his wife), Cuilian’s voice allows us to hear, not the funny bride’s complaints, but the sorrow of the virtuous and betrayed wife, expressing both rage for her fate and love for her doomed children.

The Precious Scroll on the Red Gauze (*Hongluo baojuan*): Issues of Authorship and Audience

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The *Precious Scroll on the Red Gauze* (*Hongluo baijuan* 紅羅寶卷) has as one of the earliest narrative precious scrolls attracted the attention of senior scholars in the field such as Ma Xisha and Che Xilun. Following a summary of the contents, this paper will discuss the formal elements of the text and look into the history of the text, offering a hypothetical reconstruction of the development of the text that resulted in the preserved printed edition of the Ming dynasty. The final section of the paper will discuss issues of authorship and audience, arguing that the contemporary fate of the genre as “folk literature” may be very misleading in understanding the audience of text in late-imperial China of the Ming.

‘A Plaint to Heaven’ in local literary anthologies from rural Shandong

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Wentian ci 問天詞 (‘A Plaint to Heaven’; in some versions *Hentian ci* 恨天詞) is a prosimetric work from Shandong which has been attributed variously to Pu Songling (1640-1715) and to his grandson Pu Lide 蒲立憲 (1683-1750). While containing many references to the classical literary tradition, the drum lyric employs a lively vernacular to expound on Heaven’s injustices from the course of history to the events of the mundane life. In Zichuan county in rural Shandong, the native place of Pu Songling, the work circulated in manuscript anthologies which often also contained two other vernacular works attributed to Pu, *Churi ji qiongshen wen* 除日祭窮神文 (Plea on the last day of the year to the Deity of Impoverishment) and *Qiongshen da wen* 窮神答文 (Reply by the Deity of Impoverishment), as well as texts on the subject of impoverished schoolmasters. This paper examines these texts together with the manuscript anthologies which contained them, with glimpses into a world of local literary transmission, where lower-level literati were readers, copyists, and transmitters of a lively culture of vernacular writing.

现存最早道情<云门传>与山东地方社会》 (*Yun-men Zhuan: The Earliest Extant Daoqing and Its Shandong Social Contexts*)

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The Ming block-printed version of *Yun-men Zhuan* (云门传) is the earliest *Daoqing* (道情) in existence. Its stylistic features have been preliminarily studied in Patrick Hanan's pioneering research in 1973. This article will explore the regional contexts in which the text was formed—Yunmen Mountain, Qingzhou (青州), Shandong Province, as well as the relationship between the prosimetric and verse narrative and its social contexts, from the dimensions of geographical names, Taoist temples, medical books and verses that appear in *Yun-men Zhuan*.

First, the story of Li Qing (李清) has been recorded in *Ji-yi Ji* (集异记) early in the Tang Dynasty. Based on this, *Yun-men Zhuan* expanded the narrative, especially adding elements concerning Shandong local society, such as geographic environment, Taoist temples and so on. The locale where the story took place—Yunmen Mountain has already become a well-known *grotto-heavens* and blessed sites (洞天福地) from the 6th Century A.D.. The geographical features of Yunmen Mountain that described in *Yun-men Zhuan* can be compared with records in the extant *local gazetteers* of Qingzhou. The latter part of *Yun-men Zhuan* records in detail the tragic experience of the Li Qing family during the period of Wang Shichong's occupation of Qingzhou, Li Qing's opposition to Emperor Gaozong's Fengshan offerings (封禅) in Mt. Taishan, and his ascent to become an immortal in the reign of Emperor Xuanzong. These new plots in *Yun-men Zhuan* reflect the collective memory of Qingzhou local society for the history of the Tang Dynasty.

Second, in *Yun-men Zhuan*, Li Qing received a medical book from an immortal entitled *Daguan Bencao* (大观本草), also known as "this book is block-printed in Shandong Province". *Daguan Bencao* is an important medical literature work which compiled by TANG Shen-wei (唐慎微) in Northern Song Dynasty. After its publication in Kaifeng during the Daguan Period (1107-1110), there was another edition in Pingyang, Shanxi Province. But in Ming Dynasty, the most widespread version was the one that republished in the fourth year of Chenghua 成化四年(1468) by Yuan Jie, governor of Shandong Province. Later, Shandong government repeatedly reprinted this edition until the sixth year of Longqing 隆庆六年(1572). By tracing the history of *Daguan Bencao*, we can not only judge the date of the completion of *Yun-men Zhuan*, but also explore the prosperity of commercial medicine fairs in Qingzhou during Ming Dynasty through Li Qing's experience as a doctor in Qingzhou.

Third, Shandong was the place where the Complete Perfection school of *Daoism* (全真教) was founded in the Yuan Dynasty. Wang Chongyang (王重阳) and his disciples created a large number of Taoist words to facilitate the preaching to the public. The traces of Quanzhen Taoism in *Yun-men Zhuan* are not obvious, but the verses in it used a lot of ten-syllable verse (十字词), showing the stylistic features of *Daoqing* in Yuan and Ming Dynasties. Tune titles in *Yun-men Zhuan* such as *Yin jiao si* (银搅丝) are new variants of five watches of the night (五更道情) that appeared in the Ming Dynasty, which has a

background of Quanzhen Taoism and was collected in anthologies of Yuan Dynasty such as *Yuefu Qunzhu* (乐府群珠).

在 Patrick Hanan 先驱性的研究之中，作为现存最早道情的明刻本《云门传》的文体特点已经得到初步的研究。本文将从《云门传》中的地名、道观、医书、韵文等等维度，去探讨《云门传》文本生成环境——山东青州云门山以及道情这种说唱文学与地方社会的关系。

一、李清故事早在唐代《集异记》中已有记载，《云门传》在此基础上扩大了叙事，尤其大大地增加关于山东地方社会的叙事元素（地理环境、道观）。故事的发生地——云门山，是一个在六朝时期即已闻名的洞天福地，《云门传》描述的云门山地理特征，可与现存的青州地方志进行对比阅读。《云门传》后半部分详细记载李清家族在王世充占领青州时期的悲惨遭遇，以及李清反对唐高宗在泰山封禅、在唐玄宗时期飞升成仙，这些《云门传》新增的情节，反映了青州地方社会对于唐代历史的集体记忆。

二、《云门传》中，李清获得仙人馈赠的医书名为《大观本草》，又称“此书刻在山东”。《大观本草》是唐慎微编纂于北宋末期的本草学重要文献，北宋大观年间在开封刊刻之后，又有山西平阳刊本，但进入明代，此书最为广泛传播的版本是成化四年(1468年)山东巡抚原杰的重刊本，后来的山东官衙屡次重刊这一山东刻本，直至隆庆六年(1572年)。追溯《大观本草》的刊刻历史，不仅可以据此判断《云门传》的成书年代，而且结合李清在青州的行医经历，可以看到明代青州地方社会的商业“药市”之发达。

三、山东是元代全真道教创立之地，王重阳及其弟子创作了大量的道教词，以利于向大众传道。《云门传》中的全真道教痕迹并不明显，但其韵文大量使用【十字词】，呈现出元明时期“道情”的文体特征。《云门传》使用的【银搅丝】等词牌，是《乐府群珠》等元代曲集所收全真道教背景的【五更道情】在明代的新变体。

Draft Schedule

Time	Event	Name
09:00-09:15	Opening	Altenburger, Clart, Durand-Dastès
09:15-10:00	The Precious Scroll on the Red Gauze (<i>Hongluo baojuan</i> 紅羅寶卷): Issues of Authorship and Audience	Idema
10:00-10:45	Dizang Stories in the Funerary <i>baojuan</i> Storytelling in Changshu, Jiangsu	Berezkin
10:45-11:00	Tea/coffee break	
11:00-11:45	What's in a Name? Female Voices of Slander and Protest in the <i>Li Cuilian Borrowing a Corpse to Be Reborn</i> Ballad and <i>Baojuan</i>	Durand-Dastès

11:45-12:30	Late Qing and Republican Prosimetric Works on the Exploits of Han Xiangzi 韓湘子	Clart
12:30-14:00	Lunch break	
14:00-14:45	Inside and Outside the Temple: Beijing Temple Activities and Folk Culture in <i>zidishu</i> of the Qing Dynasty	Cui
14:45-15:30	How Much Humiliation Can a Schoolteacher Bear? 'Lü Mengzheng Teaching' and Related Texts in the Youth Book, Big Drum, and Wooden Clapper Repertories	Altenburger
15:30-16:00	Tea/coffee break	
16:00-16:45	'A Plaint to Heaven' in Local Literary Anthologies from Rural Shandong	Lu
16:45-17:30	现存最早道情<云门传>与山东地方社会》(<i>Yunmen Zhuan: The Earliest Extant Daoqing and Its Shandong Social Contexts</i>)	Wu
17:30-18:30	Final discussion	Altenburger, Clart, Durand-Dastès
19:00	Dinner	