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ZAISHENG YUAN AND MENG LIJUN:
PERFORMANCE, CONTEXT, AND FORM OF TWO TANCI

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
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* * * * *

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To My Parents:

Rev. George E. Bender and Pauline Ella (Pike) Bender
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Nature and Purpose of Study

_Zaisheng yuan_ (Love Reincarnate) is a story set in the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368) about Meng Lijun, a young woman who achieves a high position in the imperial court by posing as a male. Authored by Chen Duansheng (1751-1796), an elite 18th century woman from the Lower Yangzi region, the text is written in a prosimetric form called _tanci_. The story of Meng Lijun has been adapted into drama, prose, local styles of professional storytelling, and printed versions of oral performances. A recent adaptation, in a style of professional storytelling known as Suzhou _tanci_, is _Meng Lijun_, also called _Huali yuan_. Written in the early 1960s by a group of performers led by Pan Boying, this orally performed adaptation was revived after the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), and versions of it are currently being performed by members of the Suzhou Storytelling Troupe. The textual basis of this study are episodes from the original _ZSY_ and the adaptation, _Meng Lijun_, which relate the marriage of the disguised Meng Lijun to her former servant/friend, Su Yingxue.
The theoretical method applied in this study is derived from what has come to be known as the "performance school" of folkloristics (described below), a body of theory stressing context, the process of performance, individual performers, and particular audiences (Fine 1984). Although this approach, which has also been described as the "ethnography of speaking" (Bauman and Sherzer 1974, rpt. 1989), was developed largely through examining non-Western traditions of oral performance, relatively little use of its theories have been made in the study of Chinese folklore and popular culture.

The present dissertation is then, in part, a first step in exploring the use of the theoretical tools of the "performance school" in the context of Chinese oral and oral-related (Foley 1991) literature. The focus of inquiry will be what Dell Hymes (1974), a major theorist of the performance approach, has described as the "ways of speaking," which consist of what Richard Bauman (1977), has called the "means of communication," or the frames, registers, and keying devices which "interact" (Tannen 1993b:22) in the communication of a narrative. The works of John Miles Foley, particularly his conception of "immanent art" (1991), also phrased as "traditional referentiality," complement the performance approach and contribute significantly to the theoretical orientation of this dissertation.
Limon and Young (1986:446), in examining the shortcomings or lack of fulfillment in purpose of the performance school of folkloristics, have noted a near dearth of studies that "extend beyond the situated speech event to other levels of the social context." Thus, the present thesis is also an attempt to contribute to the overall goals of the performance school by examining the two types of tanci as socially situated on several levels.

Specifically, by establishing a number of contextual frames for each type of tanci, this study will address issues concerning relations between expressive form, context, and social meaning (Bauman 1977, 1989; Limon and Young 1986; Tannen 1993b; Foley 1991). Since issues of social position and gender are prominent in the episodes under study, a major focus in the analysis is the construction, utilization, and perception of status and gender on the levels of story, author or performer, and audience (Tannen 1993a).

Basic questions in the study include: In what ways are these written texts and performances situated in the cultures that produce and sustain them? How are these "ways of speaking" identified and described both emically and in more general morphological classifications? What are the textures (see below) constituting the means of communication (Dundes 1964:23)? How do the frames and registers interact in the respective texts? How are cultural schemas on the
level of the narrative -- particularly those of gender and status -- enhanced or created by use of certain frames and registers available to the author or storytellers? In what ways can our understanding of these traditional styles of Chinese narrative -- both written and orally performed -- be enhanced by use of these interpretive theories employed?

To varying degrees, the dissertation also concerns issues specific to the study of Chinese literature and performance. As is well known, a great deal of Chinese fiction since the Ming dynasty has been written using frames of the "storyteller's manner" (Idema 1974:69-72) or the "simulated context" of a professional storytelling situation (Hanan 1977:87-92). Examining fictional written narratives in comparison with contextualized oral performance may lead to new perceptions about the nature and use of these frames in Chinese vernacular literature and the rhetorical relations, if any, to living traditions of professional storytelling.®

The forthright adaptation of stories between written forms literary and orally performed ones is a common and continuing phenomena in Chinese expressive genres.® The thesis provides insights into the present strategies of adapting a written text for oral presentation in a specific performance tradition.® These insights may in turn contribute to more general understandings of questions concerning the inter-relation between text and performance.
(or vice versa) in the Chinese and other contexts. Of especial value in understanding this process in present-day Suzhou storytelling are the insights provided by contemporary performers into how they manipulate both the story and the means of communication in shifting performance contexts. The authorial comments framing certain portions of ZSV add a unique dimension to that text, as well.

The image of Suzhou tanci -- and that of a related art, pinghua\(^1\) -- figure strongly in constructions of local and regional identities in the Lower Yangzi region (for theory, see Webber [1991:29-55] and Shuman [1993a:356-359]). As will be elaborated below, although the storytelling arts (collectively called pingtan\(^2\)) of Suzhou and contiguous areas are perceived locally to be declining in popularity, images of these arts are frequently utilized in tourism and other contexts as iconic symbols of a local identity (Hodes 1991:3). By presenting an analysis of an episode performed in Suzhou dialect (as well as a transcription in a newly created romanization of that dialect), the study of the relatively unexplored world of local dialect (or "topolect" [Mair, et.al. 1990:10]) literature in China is advanced.\(^3\)

Finally, issues of translation -- whether between persons in the fieldwork process or between registers of performance and writing -- are integral to a study involving differing languages/dialects and communicative channels.
B. The Genres Called Tanci

The term tanci has historically been used in China to describe a number of works which, from a contemporary Western perspective, would be adequately diverse in form to be considered distinct genres. This has created persistent difficulties in classification for Western-trained scholars (Bender 1984; Sung 1988:33; Hodes 1991:29-32; Sung 1993:3-7). These works were not studied by modern Chinese intellectuals until the mid-1930s, well after the May Fourth period, when other forms of traditional vernacular fiction were being explored for their use in the construction of a Chinese nationalism. Several Chinese scholars of the 1930s and later have presented classification systems, though no agreement has been reached on terminology (Li 1936, rpt. 1957; A Ying 1937; Zheng 1938, rpt. 1987; Zhao 1937; Hu 1957; Tan and Tan 1981; Zhou 1983).

Drawing to some extent from earlier commentators, Zheng Zhenduo (1938, rpt. 1987:348-383) distinguishes at least five styles -- or genres -- of narrative called tanci, basing his divisions on form (varying line stress, content, dialect) and the gender of the alleged authors/audiences. His categories include those written in Mandarin (guoyin tanci) concerning history (such as Nianshiyi shi (The Twenty One Histories), and so-called "women's tanci" (nu tanci) (such as Tian yu hua [Heaven Rains Flowers], ZSY, and Bi
sheng hua (Flowers from the Brush]). The other major

category is dialect (tuyin) tanci (such as Zhenzhu ta (Pearl

Pagoda) and San xiao vinyuan [Romance of the Three Smiles]),

that have demonstrable links with orally performed tanci.\textsuperscript{17}

He briefly discusses form and gives examples of each type.

Considering the lengthy historical period in which the
term tanci has been in use and the relatively isolated local
cultures of southeast China, it is not surprising that
numerous styles or genres could have developed and
appropriated the same or a similar name.\textsuperscript{18} Attempts to
construct the "evolution" of prosimetric narrative in China
begin by most accounts with the Tang dynasty "transformation
texts" (bianwen), a term describing several forms of
prosimetric narrative used as medium for Buddhist and
secular stories.\textsuperscript{19} For example, Zhao (1982b:4) sees a
generic progression of prosimetric narrative from bianwen to
zhugongdiao ("medley" [Mair 1989:90]), to tanci, recognizing
a complex system of development and influence. Zhou
(1983:5-6), however, has tended not to stress the bianwen
link, noting that there are too many gaps in knowledge to
prove any relevant relations to such a distant source.

The exact derivation and metamorphosis of the term
tanci in all its contexts is probably impossible to
determine, given the time span and ephemeral nature of
source materials. What is important to recognize is that
the term has been used to identify a number of styles of
prosimetric narratives which differ significantly in content, structure, mode of communication, dialect, authorship, and audience appeal, and yet share a very general prosimetric form that has been historically assumed to be similar by at least some Chinese audiences.20

C. The Performance-centered Approach
1. Orally Performed Texts

A large part of this dissertation deals with orally performed narrative, namely, a form of storytelling called Suzhou tanci. Moreover, as noted above, questions involving both oral and written mediums of communication are inescapable in a study of Chinese vernacular narrative. Bauman (1977, 1986, 1992) and other performance-oriented folklorists treat performances as parts of larger cultural processes, and regard them as reflexive (self-referential), meaningful activity. A major point of the performance school of folkloristics is the stress on looking at performance as situated in a given performance context, thereby gaining fuller understanding of the meaning inherent in the performance and, in turn, the situation (in the largest sense, a particular culture) in which it is performed. As Bauman (1992:44) has recently described it, performance is:

... a specially marked mode of action, one that sets up or represents a special interpretive frame within which the act of communication is to be understood. In this sense of performance, the act of communication is
put on display . . . and opened up for scrutiny by an audience. Performance thus calls forth special attention to and heightened awareness of the act of communication and gives license to the audience to regard it and the performer with special intensity.

Focusing on the relation between performer and audience, Bauman (1977:11) further suggests that performance involves competence, evaluation, and enhancement. Thus, "performance as a mode of spoken verbal communication consists in the assumption to an audience for a display of communicative competence," that competence being "knowledge and ability to speak in socially appropriate ways." In turn, the audience sees the performance "as being subject to evaluation for the way it is done, for the relative skill and effectiveness of the performer's display of competence." Finally, a performer's act of expression is "marked as available for enhancement of experience, through the present enjoyment of the intrinsic qualities of the act of expression itself." These three aspects of performance are interdependent.

Another important aspect of the performance school, shared with the ethnography of communication approach (Saville-Troike: 1982), is the stress on ethnographic method as a means of providing context, and in particular the treatment of performances not just as isolated "texts" but as items meaningful in specific cultural situations which must be examined as rigorously as the texts themselves.
A major exponent of the performance school, Ben-Amos (1992:111), describes the ethnographic method as extending "the goal of systematic description of the tale to its telling, exploring narration in society and culture." This method of holistic morphological analysis takes storyteller, performance, and context as its basic units of attention. These concepts ground "the narrative tradition of a culture in the verbal activity of its individual members and its social institutions." Ben-Amos describes the role of the individual storyteller as that of being a "vehicle for the articulation of a narrative tradition," and observes that an individual is involved in the processes of innovation, presentation, transformation, continuity, and demise of an item or tradition of oral narrative. He notes that storytellers differ in age, gender, and "verbal proficiency," and that both "tales and tellings are dependent on these variables." Moreover, factors with the potential of affecting these phenomena include "personal temperament and experience." Importantly, too, is his observation that while researchers have often focused on the "most proficient narrators in a community," the ethnographic approach "in principle" includes "exploration of storytelling by community members who have not received, and perhaps rightly so, any public recognition of their art."^{23}

Finally, a focus on the storyteller implies that although aesthetic standards and cultural values may be
shared, individual narrators may possess different styles, themes, vocabularies, and rhythms, as is the case with writers in societies that are literate (1992:112).

Summing up the goals of the ethnographic method (while suggesting the dynamic -- rather than static -- nature of tradition) being evolved by performance-centered folklorists, Ben-Amos (1992:112) states:

. . . The ethnographic approach particularizes the narrative tradition of a society, describing the general notion of tales of a nation (such as "Japanese tales" or "Zuni tales") as a system of narratives that are dependent not only on shared aesthetics, common cultural values, social-historical experiences, and a common stock of themes and figures but even more so on individual narrators, their verbal proficiency, their performances, and the social institutions in which societies enable them to tell stories.

Though using slightly different terminology, the method is similar, at least in spirit, to what Bauman has described in Story, Performance, Event (1986:6). By focusing at once on narration and interpretation he theorizes an:

. . . integrated framework that comprehends narrated event and narrative event within a unified frame of reference. The narrated event, as one dimension of a story's meaning, evoked by formal verbal means in the narrative text, is in this respect emergent in performance, whatever the external status of the narrated event may be, whether it in some sense "actually occurred" or is narratively constructed by participants out of cultural knowledge of how events are -- or are not, or may be -- constituted in social life. Thus, we can comprehend narrated event as well as narrative event within our overall concern with the interplay between given available resources and patterns of narrative performance.
Bauman earlier made claims for the necessity of paying attention to the process he terms "emergence," calling for a reconceptualization of the notion of "text," as first suggested by Lord (1960), in the study of oral performance. He suggests that the idea that "completely novel and completely fixed texts represent the poles of an ideal continuum." Between these conceptual extremes "lies the range of emergent text structures to be found in empirical performance." Attention given to factors which contribute to the "to the emergent quality of the oral literary text" may "bring about a major reconceptualization of the nature of the text," by "freeing it from the apparent fixity it assumes when abstracted from performance and placed on the written page," and framing it within an analytical context which "focuses on the very source of the empirical relationship between art and society" (1977:39-40).

While the merits of employing theories of the performance school to approach performance in China may be readily apparent, use of those theories to examine a written text such as ZSY not normally subject to what Hymes has called "full performance" (discussed below) may appear more problematic. Use of the performance theories in concert with certain of Foley's ideas on oral and orally-related art make that application more inviting.25
Foley's (1991) approach to meaning and reception of oral and orally-related art (that is, literary works which in various ways have a clear or assumed link to oral tradition, such as the Homeric epics) includes the concept of "immanent art" or "traditional referentiality." Foley (1991:7) explains the concept:

Traditional referentiality, then, entails the invoking of a context that is enormously larger and more echoic than the text itself, that brings the lifeblood of generations of poems and performances to the individual performance or text. Each element in that phraseology or narrative thematics stands not simply for that singular instance but for the plurality and multiformality that are beyond the reach of textualization.

Taking up the subject of the relationship between traditional referentiality and meaning, he continues that:

From the perspective of traditional context, these elements are foci for meaning, still points in the exchange of meaning between an always impinging tradition and the momentary and nominal fossilization of a text or a version. Even when the process becomes one of making oral-derived texts, the traditional phraseology and narrative patterns continue to provide ways for the poet to convey meaning, to tap the traditional reservoir.

Foley calls the process of "generating meaning" "metonymy," a concept useful in conceptualizing oral and oral-related works not only in terms of textual form and structure, but also in terms of reception and meaning by traditional audiences. Clarifying his usage of the concept of metonymy, he states that the process designates,

... a mode of signification wherein the part stands for the whole. It is this aspect of traditional art that may be understood as "conventional," as long as one realizes that in this case the convention allows for much more than a present, one-to-one allusiveness;
in this case we are speaking about a situation in which a text or version is enriched by an unspoken context that dwarfs the textual artifact, in which the experience is filled out -- and made traditional -- by what the conventionality attracts to itself from that context. The phrase or scene or tale as a whole commands its meanings by synecdoche.

His basic notion is that "traditional structures convey traditional meanings" (Foley 1991:36-37). In other words, such texts have "inferred" meanings based on "horizons of expectations" (using Iser's term) of the traditional audiences, which differ in nature from the notion of "conferred" meanings inherent in the valuing and interpretation of written texts in non-traditional contexts, which in Foley's sense means the sort of modern writing which values a single creative voice and artistic innovation. Foley stresses that audiences of traditional oral performance (or related written works) must display "fluency in cognitive categories" (1991:55) to apprehend (or even come close to apprehending) the meanings in such performances or texts. Unlike many modern critics of written literature, Foley claims that there are "boundaries of interpretation" which, if crossed will result in "dysfunction," or misreading (Foley 1991:54).^{26}

2. Written Texts, Performance, and Chinese Vernacular Fiction

The development of the modern study of folklore in literature has a long tradition, which includes scholarship
on written epic traditions, printed ballads, jokes, stories, and other phenomena which were perceived to have oral precedents. In recent years, with the widening of boundaries as to what constitutes folklore and to what areas of inquiry folkloric studies may be pressed, the project of examining representations of the process of folkloric communication in written literature has expanded.

In the case of Chinese literature, this attention to written texts as representations or simulations of oral performance is especially inviting. In his discussion of the textual contexts of Chinese vernacular fiction, Hanan (1973:21) has noted that:

The contexts which the vernacular fiction has in common are significant. Apart from language . . . and genre, the important contexts are those of the narrator and reader and the situation in which the fiction is communicated from one to the other. All the vernacular fiction is represented as being told by a generalized narrator to a generalized audience. Since neither narrator nor audience has individual features, both seem, in broad terms, constant throughout the whole history of vernacular fiction. And the context of situation in which they metaphorically meet is, in broad terms, constant too; it represents, at one remove or another, the situation of oral storytelling.

Hanan's basic approach to the notion of context is similar to the socio-linguistic inspired discourse of the "performance" or "contextual" school of folkloristics and is quite congruent with ideas in the works of Hymes and Bauman. One difference, in the case of written materials, is that the "performance context" is a construction created (or more likely borrowed) by an author for use in a work of
fictional writing rather than the real-life context of an actual storytelling performance. Such constructions, however, may be regarded as "orally-related" in Foley's sense, due to the "traditional refentiality" of such works.

Idema (1974:69-72) has specifically addressed the question of the historical influence of professional storytelling on Chinese vernacular fiction of the late imperial period. Rather than attempting to verify an early, common root in oral tradition, Idema believes that written fictional works of the late period belatedly appropriated aspects of the "storyteller's manner," adopting certain rhetorical techniques of performance that could translate into print. He concludes that "we are not in a position to explain the typical features of traditional Chinese fiction as a literary form by its origin in professional storytelling." Suggesting that "authors and compilers often looked to professional storytelling for inspiration, both in regard to materials and rhetorical formulas" he qualifies the claims with the observation that professional storytelling was "but one of many factors that helped shape the traditional novel."

The rhetorical characteristics of the written tradition employing the "storyteller's manner" include the framing of chapters by formulaic openings and closings, inclusion of poems and parallel prose in the text, the author speaking in the role of a professional storyteller, etc. He explains
that the formal characteristics that constitute the "storyteller's manner" that appear in vernacular fiction "gradually made their belated appearance [in fiction] in the first three quarters of the 16th century", long after the supposed origins of vernacular fiction from storytellers' promptbooks.

From Idema's observations it is clear that in drawing on performance traditions the authors of Chinese vernacular fiction were influenced by a tradition of referentiality which they shared (at whatever remove) with the professional oral storytellers.

The same situation seems to prevail with the types of written tanci. While the relationship between works such as ZSY and actual traditions of performance is unclear, certain of the devices of the prose works mentioned above appear in tanci texts (as will be shown in Chapter II) and the overall prosimetric form has many analogues in both oral and orally-related Chinese narrative traditions. Relations between written tanci in local dialects -- the subject of Modes' (1991) excellent study on the Three Smiles Romance (San xiao yinyuan) -- is much clearer. In individual cases there may be direct links between oral performance traditions and published texts. Aspects of both of these situations will be touched on in the ensuing chapters.

The importance of the script or libretto in Chinese oral performance -- whether in storytelling or opera -- is
also of relevance in this study, as writing, either in the form of notes or skeletal scripts have for generations been of importance to many professional acting troupes and storytellers and most middle-aged or younger performers of these arts today rely heavily on scripts, as will be explained in Chapter IV.32

D. "Ways of Speaking" in Two Types of Tanci

As noted above, the focus of this study will be on the "ways of speaking" (or, as termed below, the "styles") used in two types of tanci.33 The "communicative means" making up these "ways of speaking" include the entire range of linguistic and para-linguistic frames and registers by which the stories are told (Bauman 1977:10). Dundes' term "textures" will be useful in describing these communicative registers (Dundes 1964; Toelken 1969, rpt. 1971; Oxford 1991:115-116).

I will be interested not only in identifying and describing the frames and registers making up these "ways of speaking," but will observe how they interact with one another, in one case in the mode of the written text and in the other, in the mode of an adaptation created for use in actual performance.34 As Tannen (1993b:22) has noted, "Any speech event represents the overlapping and intertwining of many relations concerning the context as well as the content of communication."
Turning attention to the theories of Dell Hymes, the following paragraphs review some of the basic concepts constituting his notion of "ways of speaking" relevant to this study. These include his ideas on linguistic styles, verbal means, genres, and context.

In his discussion of style as constituting "ways of speaking," Hymes (1974, rpt. 1989:433-434) has suggested that the notion of "speech community" (in the sense of a community of speakers) should initially be considered a "set of styles." Here "style" is used in its root sense as "a way or mode of doing something." He suggests that the term be used "neutrally, generally" to indicate "any way or mode, all ways and modes" of speaking.

Elaborating, on the concept of speech styles, Hymes describes a "significant speech style" as one that "can be recognized, and used, outside its defining context." This can be done "by persons or in places other than those with which its typical meaning is associated," or it may be "constrasted with relation to the persons and places with one or more other styles." He thus claims that while, "one may determine styles associated with castes, classes, ethnic groups, regions, formality, oratory, sermons, and the like," it is important to notice how the "use of these styles, or of quotations or selections, or stereotypes of them," are employed "to convey meanings by, to, and about other persons and situations." In specific situations speech styles are
defined firstly "in terms of a group," yet may too be the style for particular situations, or "the style, in fact or aspiration, of certain other persons, certain genres or parts of genres," and so forth.

In discussing the organized use of "verbal means" Hymes groups them as stylistic modes and stylistic structures (1974, rpt. 1989:441). The former grouping is described as "a set of modifications entailed in consistent use of the voice in a certain way, as in singing, intoning, chanting, declaiming, etc." He adds that, "Modifications of the visual form of speech, in writing and printing, go here as well." The latter grouping is described as

. . . verbal forms organized in terms of one or more defining principles of recurrence and/or development. They have, so to speak, a beginning and an end, and a pattern to what comes between. What are often called 'minor genres' belong here: riddles, proverbs, prayers, but also minimal verse forms, such as the couplet, and such things as greetings and farewells, where those have conventional organization.

Continuing his discussion of genre, Hymes (1974, rpt. 1989:443) describes what is entailed by the term and suggests elements constituting performance which have been appropriated by Bauman:

Genres, whether minimal or complex, are not in themselves the 'doing' of a genre, that is, are not in themselves acts, events, performances. They can occur as whole events, or in various relationships to whole events. The structure of an event may encompass preliminaries and aftermaths, may allow for only partial use of a genre, or even just an allusion to it, and so forth.
Speaking of certain concepts that Bauman has utilized, Hymes discusses performances and genres in terms of "full performance":

And I want to consider performances as relationships to genres, such that one can say of a performance that its materials (genres) were reported, described, run through, illustrated, quoted, enacted. Full performance I want to consider as involving the acceptance of responsibility to perform, to do the thing with acceptance of being evaluated.

He further offers the distinctions of fixed genres (such as those dealt with in this dissertation) and full performance (as in specific performances of Suzhou tanci) (1974, rpt. 1989:445).

In his definition of the "ways of speaking," Hymes notes two aspects, both of which are cross-cultural: Means of speech, which he describes as "comprising the features that enter into styles, as well as the styles themselves," and the critical notion of "speech economy," or the contexts of usage.35

In the case of the literary tanci version of ZSY, the registers constituting the "ways of speaking" include the lyric forms of "regulated verse" (shi) and "lyric meters" (ci), brief prose passages, and occasional speeches and interior monologues by characters. Direct authorial comment begins and ends several chapters of the narrative and occasionally appears within the narration.

In the orally performed tanci the story is communicated by means of a half dozen emically named speech registers
spoken and sung in two distinct dialect registers. These registers include the speech of the performers as themselves, as omniscient narrators, and as characters. Specially keyed registers create mediums for speech, inner monologues, "mind reading," and narrative comments. Certain aspects of singing, in concert with the music of stringed instruments, kinesics, and onomatopoeic sounds, are part of the para-linguistic registers contributing to the polyphony of performance.  

What is of crucial importance is that the use of "texture/mode" as a means of describing a genre, and differing from other systems of classifications based on structure, myth archetype, theme, or function (Toelken 1969, rpt. 1971:157-158), is a basic component of Chinese systems of generic classification. As elaborated in Chapter IV, the terms used to describe performed tanci (whether employed by the storytellers or Chinese commentators) are texture-based: shuo (speaking), tan (musical accompaniment), chang (singing), and xue (joking). Structure and content, though given in descriptions of the art, are not part of basic definitions, though context sometimes may be. Even the term tanci ("plucking lyrics" in Sung's [1988] rendering) is descriptive of textures, as is that ubiquitous term in Chinese prose fictive narrative, xiaoshuo, which literally means "little talk."
Indeed, the primacy of "texture" in describing Chinese fictive genres is already implicit in the terminology adopted by Idema and Hanan, who, as noted, respectively, use the terms "storyteller's manner" and "simulated context" (of oral performance) to describe the essential style of Chinese xiaoshuo. The implications for realizing this stress on textures (and in this study, voice registers in particular), may lead to conclusions similar in fact and/or spirit to the one that Toelken arrived at in his study of Navaho narrative, that a significant part of the meaning "resides in their texture, not their structure, and that excessive attention to structure and stated content may actually stand in the way of seeing those subtle moral implications and cultural patterns which seem to be the . . . main reason for telling the story" (1969, rpt. 1971:156). In other words, how a story is told is as important as the content, and in some sense, inseparable from it.39

E. Approaching Status and Gender
1. Framing and Schema

The complex and intricate means of communication employed by the author of ZSY and performers of Meng Lijun create mediums of expression not only for stories, but for social and esthetic ideas important to the communities in which they are appreciated (Dundes:1971; Bauman 1977; Limon and Young 1986). As mediums of social continuity and ethnic
identity, these narrative arts, in their own situations and capacities, express concepts shared by their audiences (Webber 1991:29-55; Shuman 1993). In the case of the ZSY and Meng Lijun, the central narrative motif of both of these stories concern social constructions of status and gender.

Tannen (1993b:14-15), in a discussion of framing (which treats concepts similar to that of "schemas" discussed below) raises the concept of expectations (similar to Foley's usage above) inherent in both "interactive frames" of interpretation (in the sense of "what activity is being engaged in, how speakers mean what they say" — such as joking or fighting [Tannen and Wallat 1993:60]) and in "knowledge schemas" ("a person's expectations about people, objects, events and settings in the world, as distinguished from alignments being negotiated in a particular interaction" [1993:60]):

The emphasis on expectation seems to corroborate a nearly self-evident truth: in order to function in the world, people cannot treat each new person, object, or event as unique and separate. The only way we can make sense of the world is to see the connections between things, and between present things and things we have experienced before or heard about. These vital connections are learned as we grow up and live in a given culture. As soon as we measure a new perception against what we know of the world from prior experience, we are dealing with expectations.40

Kertzer (1988:81), in a chapter entitled "The Ritual Construction of Political Reality," provides further insight into cognitive processes inherent in the category of schemas which he terms "social schemas," which are the "abstract
symbolic systems that structure our cognition of the social world." When we place individuals into categories presumed to share certain important characteristics, it is then not necessary to "attend to all possible features of each individual encounter." Since we are thus encouraged to treat people as categories, then our social interaction becomes "heavily conditioned by the symbols of social identity that people employ" as "these symbols are used for social categorization." Becoming more concrete, the author states that:

In the extreme case, where people wear uniforms that symbolically trumpet one principle of categorization as particularly appropriate, they are especially likely to be dealt with as members of the well-defined category and have only certain features of their identity attended to, or even assumed, and the rest ignored. Once internalized, schemas exert a powerful influence on our perceptions and judgements. So strong is the power of schemas we hold that our perceptions are likely to be bent in the direction that makes them conform best with the schema.

The episodes from Meng Lijun's story involve the wedding process at a very high level of the Chinese state. The main players exhibit themselves as the newly selected zhuanqyuan (the scholar ranking first in the imperial examinations) and the daughter of a high minister. The match has imperial sanction. In carrying out the roles they have perfidiously assumed, both the disguised Meng Lijun, masquerading as a male, and her former companion/servant, Su Yingxue, must convincingly construct images of status and gender -- which include both interactive frames and
knowledge schemas expected by the audience. As will be seen in later chapters, the manipulation of these expectations by both women are central to the success of their guises, and contribute to the irony of their mutual revelations in the bridal suite.

2. Status and Talk

Since the episodes in the bridal suite feature large percentages of represented speech (i.e. the author/performers are representing the speech of their characters), it is appropriate to discuss the possibility of the influence of gender on speaking.

Of particular relevance are Tannen's ideas concerning social power, speech, and gender, suggesting that several time-honored assumptions about language use by the respective genders be re-examined in light of context of usage. In "The Relativity of Linguistic Strategies: Rethinking Power and Solidarity in Gender and Dominance" (1993a) Tannen suggests that "one cannot locate the source of domination, or any interpersonal intention or effect, in linguistic strategies such as interruption, volubility, silence, and topic raising . . ." Moreover, as some have claimed, one "cannot locate the source of women's powerlessness in such linguistic strategies as indirectness, taciturnity, silence and, tag questions . . ." This is so because "the same linguistic means can be used for
different, even opposite purposes and can have different, even opposite, effects in different contexts. Therefore, "a strategy that seems, or is, intended to dominate may in another context or in the mouth of another speaker be intended or used to establish connection." Similarly, a strategy that seems, or is, intended to create connection can in another context or in the mouth of another speaker be intended or used to establish dominance.

In presenting her arguments, Tannen draws on concepts of the relationships between power and solidarity. Rather than finding them mutually exclusive, she claims that the opposite is true (1993a:167):

Any show of solidarity necessarily entails power, in that the requirement of similarity and closeness limits freedom and independence. At the same time, any show of power entails solidarity by involving participants in relation to each other. This creates a closeness that can be contrasted with the distance of individuals who have no relation to each other at all.

She continues with the ideas that linguistic strategies can be both ambiguous and polysemous and thus in and of themselves cannot "create dominance or powerlessness." The "meaning" of a particular linguistic strategy (such as indirectness or interruption) is subject to variation, "depending at least on context, the conversational styles of the participants, and the interaction of participant's styles and strategies." (1993a:173)

She concludes that "Attempts to understand what goes on between women and men in conversation are muddled by the
ambiguity of power and solidarity. The same linguistic means can accomplish either, and every utterance combines elements of both. Scholars, however, like individuals in interaction, are likely to see only one and not the other.

"(1993a:184)

As will be seen in later chapters, the language mediating the relationship between Meng and Su is both ambiguous and polysemous, interactive tension revolving around their former and assumed roles in the context of a situation where negotiation over status (complicated by gender ambiguities) is crucial for immediate survival and the forming of future relationship constellations.

Important in the understanding of these interactions is Johnson's (1985:55) notion of the perception of constellations of "dominance and subordination" in particular social contexts in late imperial society. He claims that citizens "understood in their bones" the whole range of social relationships, even if an individual had only direct experience of a limited number of them.

3. Socialization and Gender Identity -- Some Cross-cultural Data

Following a common theme in Chinese vernacular fiction, gender construction in ZSY entails women dressing and passing as males. Before examining that theme in more detail, it may be useful to look at some cross-cultural data
on socialization and gender identity. While the nature of
gender in traditional China is not specifically addressed in
these sources, and it cannot be assumed that their content
is necessarily relevant to solving those issues, I believe
that they do contribute to forming a framework for
approaching the negotiations of status and gender that in my
reading do make up a significant portion of both the
original ZSY text and the Suzhou tanci adaptation.

Summarizing cross-cultural data on the socialization of
males and females, Chodorov (1971, rpt. 1993:74), drawing on
Mead, makes the claim that the use of cultural institutions
by males to enact control over women's powers and the
devaluation of "female work roles and personality" cannot be
simply attributed to some "external and conscious dread of
women," but rather should be

. . . attributed to fear of that womanly power which
has remained within men -- the bisexual components of
any man's personality. This is so threatening because
in some sense, there is no sure definition of
masculinity, no way for the little boy to know if he
has really made it, except insofar as he manages to
differentiate himself from what he somehow vaguely
defines as femininity.

Chodorov continues with a comment on American maleness
(which she suggests can be extended elsewhere), stating that
"maleness . . . is not absolutely defined, it has to be kept
and re-earned every day . . . ."46 In the Chinese case, at
least at the level of the traditional official, the sense of
maleness being "kept" and "re-earned every day" becomes
crucial in an environment when an infraction as slight as wrong advice to an emperor could result in castration or death.\textsuperscript{47} Disguised females entering that world -- even vicariously through literature -- would face the same social expectations and consequences (good or bad), as is demonstrated throughout ZSY.

Remarking on women's assumption of gender identity, Chodorov (1971, rpt. 1993:76-77) concludes that:

Sex-role ideology and socialization for these roles seem to ensure that neither boys nor girls can attain both stable identity and meaningful roles. The tragedy of woman's socialization is not that she is left unclear, as is the man, about her basic sexual identity. This identity is ascribed to her, and she does not need to prove herself or to society that she has earned it or continues to have it. Her problem is that identity is clearly devalued in the society in which she lives.

She concludes that while women should not be excused from competing for identity and acting assertively, as long as male identity rests on "proving themselves," then

... their "doing" will be a reaction to insecurity, not a creative exercise of their humanity, and woman's "being," far from being an easy and positive acceptance of self, will be a resignation to inferiority.

Eckert (1993:32-35), in a discussion of "cooperative competition" among adolescent girls, outlines two differing role/value structures for males and females and describes the styles of interaction between these structures. Basically, whereas men work outside the home and accumulate capital (or power of position, etc.) women are traditionally homebound and must accumulate "symbolic capital" in terms of
"good personhood," a quality that is inborn, and not subject to gain by competition — a sphere of activity outside the home from which women have been traditionally excluded.  

In our stories of Meng Lijun, it is Meng, passing as a male, who navigates and succeeds in the male world, accumulating the "capital" of rank and riches by passing numerous examinations and assuming responsibilities in the imperial court. At the same time, Su Yingxue survives and prospers due to her goodness, a property that, were the marriage real, would also contribute to the "symbolic capital" of the her husband and the home. Women with such symbolic capital have, of course, been widely praised in China in the genre of lienu zhuan (Records of Virtuous Women). Awareness of these two theoretical structures of being will be useful in interpreting the interaction between Meng and Su in the bridal chamber in terms of schematic expectations of gender and in the individual psychologies and resultant speech of each character in both versions of the ZYS story.

4. Gendered Voices in Late Qing Women's Fiction

In her discussion of the construction of women's voices in late imperial poetry, Robertson explores the possibilities of acquiring a "culturally gendered voice" by a "process of conscious learning," whether by men or women (1992:68). Noting that the socialization of males did not
demand them to shift from their socially gendered positions, she suggests that woman could consciously learn to "write well," employing males voices and even enabling themselves to represent their images as women from masculine perspectives. For a late imperial woman, such acts

... clearly entailed a shift in her gendered position, an internalization of the masculine position. The alternative, for a woman writer, would have been to attempt to use the masculinized language to construct voices which accommodated the experiential resources and themes of her culturally feminine social and psychological resources and themes of her culturally feminine social and psychological position, a voice to some degree capable of articulating her own desires.

This relation of women to writing will figure both in my discussion of the relation of Chen Duansheng to the text she wrote as well as to the character of Meng Lijun in her process of learning (and to some extent actually constructing) her evolving role as a male. In an essay on coding in women's cultures, Radner and Lanser (1993) suggest that persons in a position of being dominated, especially women, may explicitly or implicitly use communicative codes not available to all members of a community as differentiated by gender or status. Viewed in particular cultural contexts, instances of coding can be interpreted in terms of appropriation, juxtaposition, distraction, indirection, trivialization, and incompetence.

Assuming that a dimension of ZSY is concerned with issues of female existence in the traditional Chinese patrimony -- issues that women might have difficulty raising
in the medium of male literary exchange -- the case of Meng Lijun and the tanci genre can be examined in terms of coding. In her course of action, Meng appropriates male dress, behaviours, and roles; her public guise as a male is juxtaposed with her actuality as a female. The use of a female character in male garb may also be a kind of indirection, in which the author/intended audience (women) act out frustrated desires that would have been impossible, unreasonable, or even dangerous for a female character in "gender-appropriate" garb. The nature of the tanci form, that of endless series of similar lines and the texture of the writing may serve in part to distract the attention of "outside" readers from the messages -- potentially viewed as subversive to patriarchal rule -- which may appear in the text to competent readers. The concept of trivialization could be used to assess the position that women's tanci has "enjoyed" in Chinese literary history, for the most part even up to the present. Yet it is in that perceived trivial medium that women dared to express themselves. In terms of incompetence -- a strategy by which a dominated person exhibits incompetence rather than outright refusal -- seems less obstrusive in ZSY than the theme of competence -- at the beginning Meng Lijun is regarded as a cainu, or "female genius," already quite skilled in appropriating male-dominated cultural constructions. The theme is extended in the modern storyteller's version, performed in an era which
has seen changes in women's position and explicit use of positive women's images in political discourse.

It should be remembered that the cultural categories of voice (including coding) described above are constructions of language, and that the use of the ethnography of communication approach is thus expedient in examining these texts/contexts.

5. Cross-dressing and Marriages Between Women in Chinese Literature

The theme of cross-dressing as a differentially gendered social construction is common in Chinese literature and the motif of a woman dressing in male clothing, or nuban nanzhuang, is prominent in tanci written by women (Ch'en 1974:26-27). The act of a woman disguising herself as a male is an important one in ZSY, and of especial importance in the scene of the two women marrying.

McMahon (1994) has recently discussed examples of women dressing as males and marrying each other in the context of the caizi jiaren ("scholar-beauty") theme. Works on that theme concern romances between talented, beautiful, and elite young people played out before the backdrop of the imperial examination culture. McMahon notes that the motif of a woman dressing as a man was common in vernacular fiction -- especially caizi jiaren stories -- by the early to mid-Qing, though the theme dates to at least the Six
Dynasties Period (420-581 AD) with stories such as that of
the woman-warrior, Hua Mulan, and the tale of the lovers
the nature of women portrayed in many caizi jiaren stories:
"Able to do as well or better than the man, such a woman
often dresses as a man in order to move about more freely
than custom ordinarily allows; she goes out to get what she
wants rather than waiting for things to come to her in her
inner chambers." Though women in these stories occasionally
have problems dealing with disguising their bound feet
(McMahon 1994:235), one aspect of their ability to pass as
males it that males and females are not wholly
differentiated in appearance in the stories: "woman
impersonates man, and man resembles woman" (p. 229). Thus,
a lovely looking woman can pass as a male despite her facial
beauty.

McMahon (1994:229) characterizes the caizi jiaren
stories as being "chaste" fiction, in that unlike stories
from the late Ming, the lovers, especially the woman, remain
chaste, at least until marriage. Moreover, husbands never
take more than two wives, with the occasional exception of
taking a maid as concubine (1994:245). In cases where a
woman is disguised as a male on the wedding night, McMahon
has found a few examples of what he perceives as "light
eroticism" (239-240), in which the "lovers" caress one
another and some sexual activity is suggested.
Though the theme of cross-dressing was very common in certain types of fiction by Chen Duansheng's era, the author of ZSY appears to have been influenced directly by a collection of Ming dynasty Kunju operas entitled Si sheng yuan (Mournful Cries of the Gibbon). Written by Xu Wei (1521-1593), the collection includes a play about Hua Mulan, and one entitled Nu zhuangyuan. This latter play concerns a young woman skilled in the gentlemanly arts of the essay and zither, who dresses as a male, passes the imperial examinations, and becomes a first ranking imperial scholar (zhuangyuan). She solves an important case for the emperor, who betrothes her to the daughter of a prince. The play includes a scene of two women marrying, similar to the one in ZSY. Since Chen Duansheng mentions the work near the beginning of ZSY, I agree with Ch'en (1974:26) that it may have been an important inspiration, if not model, for the use of cross-dressing in that tanci.

Ch'en (1974:76), in her discussion of tanci by women, discusses how tanci authors developed the theme of cross-dressing in connection with the theme of marriage between women as found in Nu zhuangyuan:

It is quite likely that the authors of these T'an-tz' u works directly or indirectly adopted this theme from the play. In emphasizing women's merits, however, the authors further extended the theme. Whereas the heroine of Nu-chuang-yuan stops disguising herself as a man when she is asked to marry a woman, the heroines of these T'an-tz' u works marry women in order to continue to act as men. The heroine of Yu-lien-huan also disguises herself as a man. Although she does not take the examinations, she still marries a woman.
Though the theme of two women marrying each other appears in a variety of Chinese narrative genres exploring the *caizi jiaren* theme, it is very common in *tanci* written by women. Besides *ZSY*, examples are the early Qing dynasty pre-cursor of *ZSY*, *Yu chuan yuan*, and works following *ZSY* such as *Bi sheng hua* and *Yu jing tai* (Ch'en 1974:26). Other *tanci* with the theme from the late Qing include *Huitu divi qi nu* (first published in 1893, also known as *Shili jin dan*) and *Feng shuang fei*, published in 1899 (Tan and Tan 1981:36-38; 72-75).

The motivations behind the actions of the characters in these stories, like that of Meng Lijun who runs off in an attempt to save both her virtue and the Huangfu family, is a mixture of self-interest and filial behavior. McMahon (1994:245-246) describes the attitude as one of "rational optimism," in which the characters, following the ancient concept of *quan* ("expediency"), are "expeditiously" rebellious in the achieving of their goals (usually that of marrying their ideal mate), though basically operating within the parameters of a conservative society which stresses proper behaviour under the principles of *li* ("ritual") (1994:230).

More observations on the themes of cross-dressing and marriages between women and the implications to the construction of gender roles and entertainment value will be noted in chapter III and V.
F. Translation

"... inside or between languages, human communication equals translation." (Steiner 1975:47)

This study, whether in the dimensions of fieldwork, literary texts, or transcriptions, as well as in the presentation of findings, involves various acts of translation. In some cases, informants who might have normally spoken to a native researcher in Suzhou dialect, spoke to this researcher in Standard (Mandarin) Chinese.®° As for the texts, the "original" ZSY is written in an idiomatic language, now difficult for some readers, which mixes classical Chinese and a form of Mandarin (guanhua) used as a common language by officials throughout China before modern times. The sample performance of Suzhou tanci, presented in a stylized form of Suzhou dialect, was transcribed into a romanization system recently developed by Shi Rujie, of Suzhou University.®® Virtually all of the primary scholarly material on pingtan (with the exception of a few works on Suzhou tanci music, Tsao 1988; Pan 1988) is in Chinese and translation is necessary to make use of them in English.

One of the greatest problems involving translation in this study has been the process of transcribing live performance into print. Fine, in From Performance to Print,
notes some of the basic problems involved in the act of translating "ephemeral" oral texts into accurate written form (1984:3):

As the medium through which the folklore performance is transmitted from collector to reader, the text plays an important role in the preservation and presentation of the folklore performance. The text not only stores the performance for future studies, it re-presents the performance in another medium. Since the reader's perception of the original performance springs from the presentation contained in the text, the study of the relationship between performance and text is critical.

Searching for solutions to the difficulties of rendering live performance into print media, Fine reviews the experience of the performance school of folkloristics and offers a methodology involving the representation of speech and gestures in transcription she calls a "performance-centered text" (1984:222). Her sample text, an African-American toast, includes detailed information on the performance tradition, the particular performance event (including setting, participants, process, etc.), an analysis of instrumentalities (speech style and kinesics — with an emphasis on self-involvement with the "recreating" of the performance by the transcriber/translator), projections (the meta-language used in transcription), and finally, an example of a performance-centered text.59

In her method, and similar ones, the stress is on noticing and representing aspects of a performance left out of "text-centered" transcriptions, which usually fail to record kinesics, voice variations, and often context, thus
depriving the representation of potential meaning. Like the present study, Fine is primarily concerned with the "complexities of recording the artistic use of voice and body," though she does not take up the task of transcribing the musical dimensions of performance. In the present case such a project would require the skills of an ethnomusicologist such as Tsao (1988), who has completed a ground breaking study of the music of Suzhou tanci.  

I have presented a "non-artistic" English translation of the Suzhou tanci transcription, noting the numerous conventionalized voice registers, character roles, and gestures, and have identified passages featuring music, names of tunes, and styles of presentation. A more thorough description of the transcription/translation process and immediate performance context appears in Chapters IV and V.

Finally, the oral discourse of Suzhou tanci is primarily in Suzhou dialect. There are, however, appropriate usages in Standard Chinese to account for most of the technical expressions and indeed all modern critical matter discussing pingtan is written in Standard Chinese. Oral discussions of the arts, however, are in my experience made in Suzhou or other Wu dialects, even in scholarly settings. Since the medium of written criticism is Standard Chinese, I have employed standard Pinyin romanization for pingtan terms in the text except where no equivalent exists.
G. Conclusion

Much has been said on performance, context, genre, and meaning in this chapter and these themes will be more fully explored in ensuing ones. Chapters II and IV attempt to provide the larger social context of the respective texts, Chapters III and V concern interpretation of the texts on the level of the story and on the act of transmission.


Hereafter, Zaisheng yuan will be abbreviated as ZSY.

2. As will be explained below, the term tanci is used to describe a number of Chinese prosimetric forms of narrative. Various attempts have been made at creating an English equivalent for the term tanci (often both the written form and performed forms like Suzhou tanci discussed in Chapter IV). Hrdlickova (1965:238) prefers the native term in transliteration: "tan-tz'e." Hsia (1968:9) describes the term as meaning "romantic and domestic stories requiring singing accompanied by simple music." Hanan (1973:209) classifies the form as a type of chantefable. Stevens (1974:90) coins the term "southern story-singing." Ch'en
(1974:11) explains the term as: "T'an means to play stringed musical instruments, and tz'u means words, speeches, tales, stories, etc." Link (1981:60) notes that in the form "vernacular narrative alternates with verse" accompanied by stringed instruments. Bender (1984) employs transliterations of native terms; Ts'ao (1988) uses "Chinese southern singing-narrative." Sung (1988:9) suggests the literal translation, "plucking rhymes." Mair (1989:145.169), borrowing Schmidt's (1986) rendering, prefers "strum lyric," classifying the styles of tanci as "prosimetric." Hodes (1991:2,10) uses the term "storysinging" to describe performed tanci, and suggests "simulated songstory texts" and "performance-related" narratives, for forms of written materials in Mandarin and local dialects, respectively. Most recently, Hegel (1994:395) has introduced the rather contemptuous rendering, "doggerel to the accompaniment of plucked string instruments." Since one term is used to describe several distinct forms of narrative, misunderstandings are inevitable (see discussion below). I find terms such as "strum lyric" and "storysinging" inaccurate (instruments are plucked, not strummed; speaking, rather than singing is often cited by performers as the basic narrative feature of Suzhou tanci, etc.). I will generally employ the term tanci (and sometimes the terms "women's tanci" or "written tanci") for Chen Duansheng's ZSY and "Suzhou tanci storytelling" (or simply Suzhou tanci) for the performances of Wu dialect tanci associated with Suzhou and contiguous areas. I will refer to published works in dialect as "written dialect tanci" and with similar variants in wording. See Hodes (1991) for a thorough discussion of usages of the term by Chinese scholars. Should an English translation of the term be preferred for classroom or other non-specialist audiences, I would prefer "Suzhou chantefable" for the oral form and similar renderings for the written types of tanci (i.e. "Wu chantefable" and "women's written chantefable," etc.).

3. Chen Ruheng (1958:118-123) notes that term tanci was used to describe an early version (actually a zhugongdiaojia) of the Xixiang ji (West Wing) story, entitled Xixiang zhou tanci, and published sometime in the Jin dynasty between 1115 and 1234 A.D. Later works described by this term date as early as the Ming dynasty (Zhao 1982b:2-3; Zhou 1983:84-85; Tsao 1988:xiv-xv), though most written tanci (in all forms) which have survived are products of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911 A.D.).

4. While studies of performances and contexts have been made in recent years by some sinologists -- particularly Victor Mair (1988 and 1989; Mair, et.al. 1990:7-8) and Johnson (1990:42) -- the approaches, though sharing certain interests
in focus and even method, do not appear to be closely linked per se to the body of scholarship known as the "performance school" outlined in this thesis. (It should also be noted that this school is associated primarily with American folklorists.) Susan Blader, however, has employed the works of some of the performance theorists drawn on here -- particularly Richard Bauman and Elizabeth Fine -- in her classroom lectures on Chinese storytelling (pers. comm.). References to the "performance approach" in this study refer specifically to that body of theory associated with the "performance school" of folkloristics and does not imply other approaches involving the terms "performance" and "context."

5. Foley, in the forthcoming The Singer of Tales as Performance makes the salient link between theories of the performance school, elements of the Parry-Lord theory of oral composition, and his ideas on "traditional refentiality" presented in his work Immanent Art (1991). Prof. Foley was kind enough to allow me to preview The Singer during the final stages of this dissertation. As suggested below and in the Conclusion, Foley's syncretic theory offers possibilities for reassessing some of the troublesome questions surrounding Chinese traditions of oral and orally-related literature.

6. Bauman's works on performance, along with those of Hymes introduced below, are the primary sources of theory in this dissertation. Limon and Young review the development of the performance/contextual school of folkloristics and assess its success as a tool in cultural discovery. Tannen stresses the interactive nature of performance and contributes to the discussions of gender and status. Foley's work, as already noted, has tremendous potential for dealing with oral and orally-related works in the Chinese context, as will be explained below.

7. Deriving his terminology from sociolinguistics, Dundes (1962) distinguishes between the emic (insider or in-group) perspective on cultural phenomena and the etic (out-group or outsider) perspective.

8. Although ZSY does not make full use of the "storyteller's manner," some rhetorical features of that style of presentation are used, as described in Chapter II. In my article "The Storyteller's Aesthetics and 'Song Sigong'," I tentatively evaluate a written huaben short story using the aesthetic terminology/concepts of Suzhou professional storytellers in hopes of shedding light on emic ("insider") appreciations of Chinese literature. These criteria are briefly discussed in Chapter IV. See Hrdlickova (1965:233-235) for insights into the nature of both huaben stories and oral storytelling.
9. Johnson (1985) discusses a number of issues of literacy and orality — taking into consideration dialect differences — in his article on communication, class, and consciousness in the late imperial period.

10. Blader (1977) has written a lengthy dissertation closely comparing structure, content, characterization, and narrative technique in several versions of the Sanxia wuyi (Three Heroes and Five Gallants) story, one of which is a prosimetric "song-book" written by a 19th century storyteller and representative of some of the features of oral performance. Besides differing in focus, my study utilizes a wider range of performance theories to examine transcriptions of a live Suzhou tanci performance.

    See Blader (1983) for a study of Suzhou pinghua performer Jin Shengbo. Blader also has an unpublished manuscript concerning pinghua and other local storytelling arts.

    Though brief, Eberhard's (1970) discussion of the use of written materials in the performances of several Taiwanese storytellers offers insight into the processes of adaptation of written stories into an oral medium.

11. Aside from being a method for increasing understanding of text and performance, it in some sense places the researcher in accountability to the performers. See Yung (1976) for a description of his attempt to "reconstruct" a "lost" performance context for a Cantonese style of teahouse performance, co-operating with an aged performer and a teahouse manager and patrons.

12. Pinghua ("straight talk") is a form of Suzhou storytelling in which a single storyteller relates action tales from Chinese history (Chen 1958:133-170). There is no instrumental accompaniment and any singing is incidental. See Blader (1983) for information on pinghua performer Jin Shengbo. In rare cases two performers may participate in a storytelling form known as shuangdang pinghua ("paired pinghua"), in which two storytellers perform together. During my year of research in Suzhou I encountered only one instance of this style.

13. The term, coined in the 1950s, combines the first morphemes of "pinghua" and "tanci".

of a Suzhou tanci text translated into English, see Hensman and Kwok-Ping (1968). In that translation, the translators do not distinguish the various textural registers (except shifts between speaking and singing) that this dissertation discusses.


16. In Bender (1984), I noted that misunderstandings over the nature of the term tanci are common—especially between the written-to-be-read narratives composed in Mandarin (such as ZSY) and those in either written or oral form that used local dialects, taking the example of Qin Jiwen's written version of his orally performed Suzhou tanci. Hodes (1991) has included a very thorough discussion of the misunderstandings in her dissertation on San xiao yinvuan, placing the debate in historical perspective. Sung (1993) also discusses the "confusion" issue.

17. Previous Chinese commentators (A Ying 1937; Zhao 1937; Zhou 1983, and others) have offered differing terms to distinguish the various types of tanci, particularly those written in local dialects and in Mandarin. In Bender (1984) I discussed Zhao Jingshen's creation of the terms wenci ("literary verse") and changci ("song lyrics") to distinguish the tanci written in Mandarin such as ZSY and the tanci written in local dialects (usually Wu) such as Zhenzhu ta. Of these latter, Yamaguchi and Tadashi (1990, 1991) have made a two-part study of the Baishe zhuan (White Snake Story) and Hodes (1991) has made a comprehensive study of San xiao yinvuan. As noted, elsewhere Hodes (1991) has described this group as "performance-related," since there is certainly some sort of linkage (which probably varies considerably in nature from text to text) between these written texts and oral traditions.

There is also a body of more modern texts which date from the mid-twentieth century. While in Bender (1984) I believed that Zhao's term changci was vague enough to include these texts, Hodes (1991:264-265) firmly denies that there is any continuity between these textual forms (such as Qin Jiwen's ZSY mentioned in Chapter IV) and the older dialect tanci, considering the recent forms to be yanchuben or "scripts" used by modern performers. If tradition is considered a "dynamic process" (Handler and Linnekin 1984) rather than a static construct, then I feel there is a case to be made for considering these more modern texts (though most are now
printed in Mandarin) to be within the tradition of "performance-related" tanci despite apparent differences in the respective forms (which to some extent are due to changes in the form and reception of the oral art itself and the influence of Western printing conventions). Also, the use of written aids by performers certainly did not begin after 1949, as Hodes (1991) suggests. Though use of relatively fully written scripts may have been uncommon before the early decades of this century, certainly it was a practice used by a growing number of performers by at least the 1940s (and probably has a much earlier tradition). For one example, see an article concerning tanci performer Yang Zhenxiong which recently appeared in Shanghai xiaoshuo (Shanghai Short Stories) (Chen:1992). It discusses the influence of Yang's wife in the writing of his adaptation of the Yuan dynasty play, Xixiangji (The Story of the Western Wing), in the 1940s, which was published in the early 1980s. (I use West and Idema's [Wang 1991] translation of the play's title here.) Hrdlickova, drawing on Chinese sources, discusses written aids used by performers in Yangzhou and other places, concluding that while the transmission of stories is primarily oral, writing did figure in transmission of storytelling knowledge, depending on the educational level of the persons involved in the process (1965:232-235). Zhou, et al, ed. (1988:12-13) briefly discusses the adaptation of performance scripts into published form.

18. The earliest record of a storytelling performance with stringed instruments involving the term tanci is the oft-cited reference to a text by Tian Ruzheng dating from 1547 which includes a terse description of oral entertainments in Hangzhou (Tsao 1988:2).

19. Tsao (1988:1-4) provides an overview of theories on this development based on earlier Chinese sources. Mair (1989) contains a lengthy bibliography of international sources on bianwen -- I have employed his translation of the term. At the time of this writing Prof. Mair was preparing a paper on the historical presence of prosimetric narrative in China (pers. comm.), tentatively entitled, "The Prosimetric Form in the Chinese Tradition."


21. As will be noticed below, Bauman is indebted to Hymes (1974, rpt. 1989) for certain of these points.

22. In this usage, the term "text" refers to an item of oral performance, which may later be represented in a written transcription.
23. In this section I have drawn a number of quotes from the "communications-centered handbook" entitled Folklore, Cultural Performances, and Popular Entertainments, ed. Richard Bauman (1992). This work contains many basic aspects of the performance-centered approach written by founders in the field. It also contains useful bibliographies at the end of each chapter.


25. Foley elaborately combines his ideas of "immanent art," discussed below, with major ideas of the performance approach in forthcoming work, The Singer of Tales as Performance, mentioned above.

26. Johnson (1990:42-42) speaks of his detection of a "cultural vocabulary" in scenes depicted in Chinese folk performance and artistic material culture, stressing the need to "elucidate" this vocabulary. In an observation very similar to Foley's sense of "traditional referentiality," Johnson states, "The key point is that we are dealing with images -- remembered images, to be precise -- that do not have the usual ambiguity of images because they are embedded in a familiar 'plot' and accompanied by an entire world of words."

27. For a brief essay on early folkloric approaches to folklore materials in written texts, beginning with 19th century philology, see "Folklore and the Verbal Text" (Barrick 1989:16-17). By the mid-twentieth century, Parry and later Lord's (1960) concern with the "oral nature" of the Homeric epics, led to a study of living epic traditions in Yugoslavia, resulting in the Oral-Formulaic school of folklore scholarship. Prusek (1970), Wang (1974), Wivell (1975), Eoyang (1976), Blader (1977), Roy (1981), Mair (1989), King (1989), and others (Hanan and Idema are discussed below) have approached issues of orality and writing in the Chinese context, many drawing on Oral-Formulaic theory.

28. For my purposes here, the term folklore will be defined, following Ben-Amos (1971:3-15), as traditional, artistic communication in small groups. Here, the sense of tradition is not static, but dynamic, not an organic entity but a process involving the reinterpretation of the past in the present (see Handler and Linnabein 1984).

29. Hanan cites the source of his theoretical tools as Enkvist's essay "On defining style" in Nils Erik Enkvist, John Spencer, and Michael J. Gregory, Linguistics and Style,
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964, 1-56. Hanan's "contextual method" (1973:19-20), as derived from Enkvist, is concerned with the text as context for language features. Though in some ways similar to aspects of theories of the "performance school," Hanan has primarily utilized Enkvist for the investigation of a limited aspect of of "texture" in the process of dating traditional written huaben stories. Some aspects of Hanan's invaluable research on style-markers in fictive narrative will be utilized in Chapter II.

30. King (1989:7-9), as one example, discusses some features linking the prosimetric work, The Story of Hua Guan Suo (Hua Guan Suo zhuan) to oral tradition. Classified by Chinese researchers as a cihua ("verse story"), the work was uncovered in a woman's grave near Shanghai.

31. See also Blader (1977).

32. In my observations on the use of scripts (of any form) by professional storytellers I do not wish to confuse that issue with the relation of professional storytelling to Ming huaben stories. As has been demonstrated quite conclusively by Idema (1974), the huaben stories were not, as Lu Xun observed, "storytellers promptbooks." This does not mean, however, that some storytellers did not make use of written materials in relation (in varied ways) to performance or that some storytellers did (or do) not adapt stories for oral performance from written works such as huaben, operas, prosimetric works such as ZSY, or even modern novels. I will discuss these latter issues elsewhere in this thesis.

33. In my 1989 Master's thesis, "Suzhou Tanci: Keys to Performance," I concentrated on identifying the various metanarrative framing devices in several written versions of Suzhou tanci performances. Though the "communicative means" described in this thesis can in some sense be subsumed under the rubrics of "keying" (in the terminology of Bauman 1977) or framing devices, my intent here is to examine much more closely than previously the nature, mixing, and use of the registers of speech and writing in an actual performance, as represented by a transcription, and as rhetorical devices in the written source upon which the oral performance (and its written script) are based.

34. The term "texture" has been used by Dundes (1964) in the sense of the manner in which the story is presented. Cheryl Oxford (1991:115), in her study of "Jack Tales" told by North Carolina storyteller Ray Hicks, has drawn on Bakhtin's (1981) usage of polyphony in connection with the concept of "dialogue," noting that the ascribed lack of literary unity in some of the tales due to the narrator's intrusive comments
"are not disjunctive but instead represent a different sort of unity, one in which narrative is blended with metanarrative."

35. In an extended discussion, Hymes (1974, rpt. 1989:446) expresses dismay at the limitations of his terms. Foley (in press) has stressed the importance of Hyme's notion of communicative economy, suggesting that the effectiveness of a particular register is enhanced by the efficiency which it acts as a vehicle for meaning. Thus, in Suzhou tanci or "women's tanci" the linguistic medium, though often unsuited for other purposes, is efficient in creating meaning in those mediums in the context of both tradition and the actual performance or communicative event.

36. The translations of these terms appear in Liu (1962).

37. Since the focus of this study is on the communication of stories, music will only be considered to the extent that it is a distinguishable register of performance meaningful in a variety of ways to performers and audience members alike. For a thorough study of the basic aspects of several schools of Suzhou tanci music, see Tsao (1976;1988).

38. Another common term for Suzhou tanci is tanchang, or "plucking and singing."

39. In his discussion of entertainment and Ming huaben fiction, Wong (1981:240) commenting on Idema's concept of the "storyteller's manner" in terms of the Western concern with the search for "truth" as the goal of fiction, observes that, "But surely this important characteristic is more than a technical device; it also indicates the attitude of the author/editor toward the material he is presenting . . . what is important artistically speaking is that this method sets up an imaginary dialogue between narrator and reader, both of whom regard the story from a detached distance . . . ."

Commenting on a scene from the story of Cheng Huchen's revenge, Wong continues (p. 240): "With his detached attitude -- an integral part of the storyteller manner -- the narrator has reduced a situation fraught with the possibilities of exploration into human nature to a chuckle and a smile . . . . The point here is that the author chose this format consciously because it best serves his purposes."

40. Again, the concept of tradition being a dynamic process (rather than something static) is discussed in Handler and Linnekin (1984).

41. See Rawski (1991) for information on state weddings in the late imperial period.
42. In the case of the Suzhou tanci version of the story there are, of course, two simultaneous dimensions to this scene -- that of a "performance within a performance" (Babcock 1977) in that Meng is performing the role of a male within the narrated event (Bauman 1977), and the level of the storytellers actually performing the story for the audience. In the sense of the written tanci, the reader/audience is also aware on some level that she/he is interacting with a text, rather than participating in real events.

43. The study of the relation of gender to speech patterns in Chinese (I use the term inclusively) is still in its infancy. Among the few works on this subject are Light (1982) on some phenomena in a sub-dialect of Cantonese and Hu (1991) on the Beijing dialect. Bourgerie presented a paper entitled "Gender and Phonological Variation in Cantonese" at the 34th International Conference on Asian and African Languages in 1992.

44. See the discussion on coding in part four below. Aspects of that discussion apply to issues of gender and speech as well as to written literature.

45. See Abrahams' article "Personal Power and Social Restraint in the Definition of Folklore" (1971:16-30).

46. She derives the idea from Margaret Mead in Male and Female, 1949.

47. As Timothy Wong (pers. comm.) has pointed out, the cultural meanings of a punishment such as castration in the context of traditional China would have been different than those in the West. Taking Sima Qian as an example, Wong suggests that the punishment was more an insult to his ancestors than an individual loss of masculinity.

48. This would seem to be a dynamic similar to that of the "instrumental/expressive" dichotomy outlined by Zelditch (1955:313-315) in which the husband/father (in the case of the nuclear family) takes on the role of manipulating the external environment while the mother directs the primacy of her attention to the child, though "performs some instrumental tasks".

49. See Ebrey (1993:17-18) for problems in the use of such sources.

50. Wolf (1974:164) notes that among Chinese peasant women -- and the observation certainly obtains to some degree among the historically elite women -- "Women learn to assess moods and evaluate the consequences of their own and other's actions in the domestic setting and, having refined these skills,
continue to practice them in their interactions with people outside the domestic unit." This observation is also important in understanding the negotiations between Su and Meng in the wedding suite.

51. The subject of coding in Chinese literature, especially poetry would no doubt reveal a whole range of similar phenomena in the works of men as well as women given the nature of the Chinese state.

52. See McMahon (1994) for many examples from vernacular fiction. He notes that the nature of male-cross dressing in Chinese fiction is much different than that of female, usually involving eroticism (1994:234). Levy (1993:1993-199) gives a number of examples from life and literature of males dressing as females, even to the extent of foot-binding, a custom usually limited to women in pre-modern China. Furth (1988) gives accounts from late Ming sources on males physically changing into females and vice versa.

53. In the story of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtaí, Zhu is sent dressed as a boy to be tutored with Liang.

54. See my discussion in chapters III and V on the wedding night scene in ZSY and Meng Lijun.

55. As noted elsewhere, Hucker (1985:187) translates the term zhuangyuan as "principal graduate" of the imperial examination system (i.e., the person ranking first on the examinations). The title Nu zhuangyuan would thus be translated as "Female Principal Graduate." Throughout this dissertation I have usually simply employed the romanization, zhuangyuan.

56. See the discussion on women's tanci in Chapter II for translations.

57. In the initial stages of my fieldwork, when my listening comprehension of Suzhou dialect was nearly non-existent, a translator (usually Prof. Sun Jingyao) summarized parts of some interviews with Suzhou dialect speakers in Standard Chinese. Conversely, in some cases, informants initially had a difficult time adjusting to my own idiolect of Standard Chinese. Storyteller Cai Xiaojuan took pleasure in imitating my "unique" accent, later incorporating it into performances involving foreigners speaking Chinese.

58. Attempts to translate Suzhou dialect performances into Standard Chinese alter grammar, idiomic expressions, and other "textures." Thus, in keeping with the goals of the "performance school," I have employed a romanization (and included a sample page of the storytellers' story book) instead of translating the text into Standard Chinese.
59. Such a text is in a sense an elaborate transcription with various sorts of contextual material provided in notes or within the text. Artistic translations, for reception by general audiences, allow much more license for interpretation than performance-centered texts which aim towards creating a document that could be performed in ways similar to the original. In moving between languages such as Chinese and English, the possibility of using such texts as a base for performance becomes very problematical. I feel, however, that such texts may be -- as I hope to demonstrate below -- useful in gaining some idea of the real complexities of performance in other languages or dialects (as the case may be) in China.

60. Tsao's work, *The Music of Suzhou Tanci: Elements of the Chinese Southern Singing Narrative*, is the first major treatise of an aspect of Suzhou tanci in English. For reviews of this work see Bender (1989) and Rebolla-Sborgi (1991).

61. At a meeting of pingtan scholars (which included a number of aficionados and performers) held in Shanghai in December, 1991, most of the discussion was in Suzhou dialect. I received a tremendous laugh when I began my address in Standard Chinese by stating that my Standard was even worse than that of the elder performer sitting next to me, whose command of that linguistic medium was erratic, at best.
In accord with the emphasis on context basic to the performance approach (which, as noted in the Introduction, is being applied in this chapter to a form of written narrative), this chapter establishes a number of interpretive frames for analysis of the selection from Chen Duansheng's ZSY story presented in Chapter III. The text is situated geo-historically, socially, and generically, in a series of discussions which include: the position of elite women in the eighteenth century, tanci written by women, biographical information on the author of ZSY, textual history and plot synopsis of the work as a whole, and an investigation of the major formal features of the narrative.

A. The Jiangnan Region

Home to both Chen Duansheng, the author of ZSY, and the arts of Suzhou professional storytelling, the geo-cultural region traditionally known as Jiangnan or "South of the River" is a "major component of the Lower Yangzi macroregion" (Johnson 1993:ix). In Tang (618-907 A.D.)
times Jiangnan encompassed most of the modern provinces of Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Anhui, and the parts of Zhejiang south of the Yangzi. Gaining economic and cultural ascendancy in the Ming dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.), the area had long been noted for its high yield croplands, economic prosperity, efficient canal networks, and the magnificent cities of Hangzhou, Suzhou, Nanjing, and Yangzhou.¹

B. Elite Women in 18th Century China

Recent studies on the social position, education and literary accomplishments of Chinese women in the late imperial period have stressed issues such as shifts in women's social roles, the increase in female literacy, and the creation and use of literature by women within gendered social networks. Certain studies have also suggested the existence of social anxieties related to these increases in education and mobility of women (for example, Mann 1991:222). The conditions of this women's literary world, which was centered in the Jiangnan region, must have contributed to the nature and use of Chen Duansheng's writings and prompted the flourishing of women's tanci in the late imperial period.

The nature of women's literacy and literary endeavor in late imperial China is one of cultural boundaries between sharply defined male and female worlds. In a discussion of women's education and culture in the seventeenth and
eighteenth century Jiangnan, Dorothy Ko has stressed the "outer" and "inner" spheres of Chinese cultural life (1992).² The outer world was one dominated by males and male cultural discourse, while the "inner world of the women's quarters" was the locus of women's culture.³ Mann (1991:207-208; 214) has noted that an elite woman in the Qing period would have seldom left the sheltered women's quarters from the age of ten until marriage in her early twenties. During these years, her time would be spent in the learning of deportment, domestic skills, and ritual roles. Young women were also trained in "the arts of needlework, poetry, painting, calligraphy, and music-making," as well as in moral instruction based on the classical texts.⁴

Breaking with the stereotype of weak mother-daughter relations in Chinese culture, Ko has stressed how strong bonds between mothers and daughters were in some situations central in the transmission of women's literacy (1992:12):

... women's culture emanated from the intimate bonds between mother and daughter in the inner quarters. In elite households in the market towns of Ming-Qing Jiangnan, this intimacy was often fostered in the course of a literary education provided by the mother. Production and consumption of literature -- primarily poetry, but also dramas, novels, and letters -- were central to the creation and growth of this literate women's culture.

Ellen Widmer (1989:3), in a study of letter writing among elite women of the Jiangnan region a century before Chen Duansheng's time, claims that these women associated
across geographical and social barriers to form a sort of "loose literary network," in which they, as teachers and disciples,

... exchanged correspondence and encouraged one another's endeavors. They had male friends and patrons who regarded them with a mixture of admiration, paternalism, and unease. Their relationships show the importance of solidarity among women themselves, rather than associations centered on men, in developing female talent.

The endeavors of these women linked the secluded domestic life of the inner quarters with that of the literati salons, and the world of courtesans, merchants and professional artists.

Due in part to an erosion of occupational and class barriers which resulted in an expansion in the number and nature of women entering the marriage market, questions about the consequences of this literacy and authorship among women become prominent in the late imperial society (Mann 1991:222). In short, more women were available for elite marriages due to greater social mobility among the general population, the result of a new affluence, and broader literacy. This growth of available women resulted in an increased emphasis on women's education, especially as preparation for becoming desirable wives in an era where a breakdown of conventions threatened instability in social life.

Mann (1991:221) states that "Within the scholar class, female literacy was breaking down the walls that separated
sexes and kept women pure from the contaminating influences of the outside world." This rise in female literacy is evidenced by the market for women's instruction books (most written by men) and the participation of literate women in Buddhist sutra-reading societies and poetry classes (Mann 1992:214). Status quo acceptance in this growth in women's education was rooted in "classical injunctions requiring special preparation and training for aristocratic ladies, preferably in the ancestral hall of their descent groups" (Mann 1991:213).

Mann (1991:221) suggests, however, that anxiety over female mobility and the crossing of traditional boundaries by women (such as groups of women visiting temples on festival days, women taking sight-seeing trips, and going out with uncovered faces) created social tensions, expressed in admonitions by male scholars as to the proper place of elite women in society. These admonitions about women also served to express male discomfort over the general breakdown of social and class barriers that were happening across the board in the society.

It was in this relatively permissive and dynamic social atmosphere of the late imperial Jiangnan region that Chen Duansheng wrote her unfinished tanci, based on the work of an earlier female author. During the early nineteenth century, other women, living in a social context emerging from that described above, ultimately edited and appended
Chen's work with alternate endings and sequels. Meng Lijun, the heroine of the narrative, "crosses boundaries" by disguising herself as a male to escape an unwanted marriage, ultimately passing the imperial examinations, and assuming a high government position. On some level she may be an expression not only of women's aspirations, but of social anxieties over the changing status of women.

C. The Author of ZSY

Chen Duansheng was born in 1751 into an official's family in the town of Jiantang near Hangzhou in Zhejiang province. At least part of her youth was spent in Beijing, where her paternal grandfather (and for a time, her father), held an official position. Chen Yinge (1959:66, 71-72; Ch'en 1974:186) believed Chen began writing ZSY at about age sixteen while in the capital. She later lived for a time in a seaside town in Shandong province where her father had an official appointment. Here she wrote a large portion of the story, finishing book sixteen. Her writing ended with the death of her mother in 1770. In mourning, she evidently delayed her marriage until age twenty-three, finally a man named Fan who was over age thirty.

After three years of marriage, Fan was caught cheating on the imperial exams, and exiled to Xinjiang (Chen 1959:36). His wife died before his return. Due to her husband's disgrace, Chen Duansheng's full name was not
recorded in her family records, and information about her life and other works is scant. Chen Yinge doubts that the separation of husband and wife inspired the title of ZSY, suggesting that Chen had chosen it from one of Xu Wei's plays, long before the exile of her husband.

Chen Yinge (1959:19-20, 32-33) also raises the possibility that Chen Duansheng spent several years in Yunnan, sometime before age twenty and that book seventeen was written there. A maternal uncle was once mayor of the major city, Yunnanfu, and Chen's father was a vice-mayor in another municipality for three years during her adult life. Speculation over Chen's presence aside, her family undoubtedly had strong connections with Yunnan, and the unusual choice (considering her origins in Jiangnan) of setting the early chapters of ZSY in that southwestern province probably derives from actual family experiences there.

D. The ZSY Story
1. Texts and Origins

To date there are no extant handwritten versions of Chen Duansheng's original ZSY story (Chen 1959:92; Sung 1988:14). The earliest reported printed version dates from 1821. This version, published by the Baoningtang printing house, was edited by the woman tanci author and editor, Hou Zhi (Hou Xiangye) (1766-?). A number of
printings were made throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the most recent being the version compiled by Zhao Jingshen and Li Chongyi in 1982 (Chen 1982). Zhao based his variorum edition on five Qing editions that differ slightly in wording and content. Because of its relative ease of access, I have chosen Zhao and Li's edition as the primary text for this study.

2. Hou Zhi's Preface

Hou Zhi's preface to the text she edited is the first recorded critical commentary on the ZSY (Love Reincarnate) story (Chen 1959:91). She reveals her attitude towards the text and gives insight into the premises and methods she labored under in reworking the story and in writing later sequels. Hou considers the work as high quality popular entertainment (zha xi) with redeeming social value for "inhabitants of the women's quarters," merchants, and urbanites. It is interesting that at one point she employs the term guci, usually associated with a style of northern prosimetric narratives, as a synonym for tanci. Such crossovers of terminology further illustrate the non-standardized nature of folk literary morphology in traditional China. The text of Hou Zhi's preface, as I translate it, is as follows:

Poetry expresses feelings, history records events. Unofficial histories and tanci are written either for the purpose of expressing the regrets of former generations or out of fear that the stories will not be
recorded for future ones. Although the content [of such works] is presented in a very vernacular fashion, after being published they can continue to exist for a long time. In my youth I liked to write things and dare say that I wrote well, easily, and in an abundance, like leaves in the wind. Recently, because of poor health, I have been unwilling to put my talents into writing flowery essays. So for the last ten years I have refrained from writing them. Instead, I have put my efforts into editing guci. My medium of expression has changed; I fear only that my language cannot express my thoughts. It is similar with weaving and embroidery, where I fear the hands do not follow all the thoughts in my heart. Recently I have edited four of these stories, with Flowers on the Fancy Paper,¹² already being published. But as for Love Reincarnate, though existing in handwritten chapbooks for a number of years, it has still not been formally published. Considering the mental energy the author expended in writing it, I have only revised and abridged it, putting my efforts into retaining the major parts. I believe this story's main theme wholly concerns the affairs of Huangfu Shaohua and Meng Lijun. If not read within the bounds of loyalty, filiality, purity, and righteousness, in accord with the standards of moral conduct, then it cannot raise itself in the reader's estimation, allowing itself to be perceived it in a new light. When she [Meng Lijun] left home and travelled about high and low, she changed wholly to male garb. But later, after gaining accomplishment and achieving position, she was obliged to return to her role as a woman. Her efforts had let her obtain the highest government position, one above numerous lower ones. Yet, she still kept her love for Huangfu Shaohua like "gold and stone," like a pine or cypress, unchanging. She received the emperor's beneficence and trust, but kept her pure nature. No matter how the two families longed for her, she always retained her dignity. Lest her ruse be discovered, she could never unveil her real face. At the beginning and end she was a female and ultimately took part in a perfect marriage. This story can be seen as real, or it can be seen as false; it was the result of fated love. Telling of this situation and expressing such feelings results in righteousness and virtue; even though it is one of the miscellaneous entertainments, it is therefore not really frivolous. Though elite women can [best] appreciate a work such as this, other urbanites and merchants can also read and enjoy it. Previously, persons gave me Romance of the Jade Bracelet with the intention that I write a preface for it. I wrote a few lines and put them at the end.¹³ But the present book
cannot compare to that other one in terms of literary skill, so I have revised it and given it to the publisher. In doing so the author's intentions shall not be lost. I am unsure if inhabitants of the women's quarters will agree.

First Year of the Daoguang Emperor [1821]
Late Autumn
Master of the Scented Leaf Pavilion

In his preface to the 1982 version (pp.10-12), Zhao Jingshen chides Hou Zhi for rewriting and abridging parts of the text of the first seventeen chapters. He feels, however, that the final three books, written by Liang Desheng fifty years after Chen Duansheng's death, and appearing in all printed versions, are open for re-interpretation since Chen did not author them (Zhao 1982a:17-18). In other words, ZSY, being a text never finished by its primary author is thus free to be altered quite radically, as has been the case with its numerous versions into other Chinese expressive forms.

From another angle, Hou Zhi's preface, with its allusions to the inexpressable feelings and its stress on Meng Lijun's very proper capitulation to traditional roles (at least in Liang Desheng's ending), may indicate some sort of coding on Hou's part. This might be especially true if her observations are regarded as a sort of indirection (presented in the frame of trivialization) away from issues of power and position in the text (Radner and Lanser 1993:16-20). What some readers might have picked up on as
"subversive" messages in the text, may have escaped the censor's brush by Hou's simultaneous nod at Confucian virtue and her trivializing of the genre by describing it as entertainment. On the other hand, the theme of women dressing as males is so common in traditional fiction that Meng's exploits might not have raised concern among overseers of published writings.

3. Synopsis

Ch'en (1974) and Sung (1988) have sketched the plot of ZSY in their respective dissertations. Synopses in classical Chinese appear in Tan (1981:154-156) and in Zhao (1982a:12-14). In order to provide context for the episode concerning the marriage of two women, and to allow a more general comparison with the Suzhou storytellers' version, the outline of the plot given below stresses only the first eight chapters of the work.17

As described in later sections, ZSY opens with verses summing up the content of the first chapter, followed by comments by the author on composition and theme. The story then begins where Yu chuan yuan leaves off, with the author detailing the later reincarnations of Xie Yuhui, the Eastern Dipper Constellation (Dong Dou Xing), and Zheng Ruzhao. These characters, now inhabitants of Heaven, still have regrets over the loss of the perfect love they shared in their previous incarnations on earth when they were
husband and concubine. The celestials Wang Mu Niangniang (Empress of Heaven) and the Jade Emperor decide that, to rid the former lovers of their earthly attachments, it shall be fated that Xie shall be reincarnated on earth as Huangfu Shaohua, the son of military commander Huangfu Jing, and Zheng as Meng Lijun, the daughter of military secretary Meng Shiyuan (Ch'en 1974:194-195). Two other women in the celestial realm are to be reincarnated as Su Yingxue and Liu Yanyu, both of whom will eventually become Huangfu Shaohua's concubines.18

After this mythic frame is established, the locus of the story proper is the city of Kunming, in Yunnan province during the reign of Yuan Chengzhong in the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368 AD).19 On the night of the Mid-Autumn Festival, Huangfu Jing's wife, pregnant for twelve months, feels faint and is taken to her chamber.20 There she receives a dream visit from the female celestial in charge of sending sons (Sungzi Niangniang), and is told that she shall have extraordinary twins: a daughter, Changhua, and her "little brother" Shaohua. The years pass and, when the twins are fifteen, their parents begin a search for suitable mates, made difficult by the children's outstanding looks and talents.

The scene then shifts to the home of Military Secretary Meng Shiyuan. Meng and his wife have a son, Jialing (who is not introduced in any detail), and a daughter, the talented
and beautiful Meng Lijun. Before the latter child's birth, her mother had dreamt of a visit by a female celestial emissary, and thus knew she would have a girl. Spending her life in the women's quarters, the precocious Meng Lijun could (like any talented male child) recite verse by the age of seven and embroider and compose classical poetry by age nine.

About the same time Meng Lijun's mother conceived, the wife of a middle-ranking scholar was told in a dream by two women in green clothing that she would have a daughter, and that she must be schooled correctly in order to realize her future. The daughter was named Su Yingxue. Not long after the birth, her father died, his widow going to the Meng mansion to act as Meng Lijun's nursemaid.

As Su Yingxue grew up into a lovely, virtuous girl, she was schooled along with Meng Lijun, who by the age of sixteen, is known far and wide as a cainu -- a female genius, who has extensive knowledge of the classics and is highly skilled in the composition of classical poetry.

The story then notes the birth of the villain, Liu Kuibi, who is born into the powerful Liu family. The Liu's eldest daughter is an imperial princess, a position which bestows power and prestige on the family. By age fifteen, Liu Kuibi is handsome and talented in the martial arts, but already has a reputation as a rake. His half-sister of the
same age is Liu Yanyu, a modest beauty destined to be one of Huangfu Shaohua's future concubines.

After presenting these major characters, the story begins in earnest with a contest of arrows to win the hand of Meng Lijun. By chance, go-betweens from the Huangfu's and the Liu's arrive on the same day to make a match for their respective young gentlemen with the talented Meng Lijun. Minister Meng, not wishing to offend either party, decides to leave the decision up to a competition in which the winner takes Meng Lijun in marriage. On the day of the contest, the two young gallants arrive and are led to the garden where three targets are arranged -- a willow branch, a golden coin on a red string, and a red wedding cloak. Liu Kuibi shoots first, missing only the last of the three targets when he is distracted by a glimpse of one he thinks is Meng Lijun, sitting up in the tower where the women are viewing the contest from behind a curtain. Huangfu Shaohua, undistracted as he draws the final arrow, wins the contest and Meng Lijun's hand.

The woman who caused Liu Kuibi to miss was Su Yingxue and not Meng Lijun. Su reports Huangfu's success to Meng Lijun, who has been waiting in her chamber. Su was, however, smitten in one glance by the young Huangfu, and later dreams that she marries him. Thereafter, she believes that she will someday be his concubine and pledges herself to him.
Liu Kuibi, incensed at his loss, decides to befriend, and then kill, Huangfu Shaohua. Inviting him for an outing on Lake Kunming (along with a pair of female entertainers), Liu forces Huangfu to stay the night in his family's lakeshore mansion after a drinking bout. Luckily for Huangfu, Liu Yanyu is visited in a dream by her dead mother and stops a servant from setting fire to Huangfu's quarters. Instead, she steals into the bedchamber to warn the young gentleman, thus saving his life. There, in a place forbidden to unmarried women, Yanyu expresses her desire to marry Huangfu. After reluctantly agreeing, Huangfu escapes. Following her brother's original plot, Liu Yanyu orders a servant to burn down the pavilion in which Huangfu was sleeping.

When it is later discovered that Huangfu has escaped death, Liu Kuibi writes a letter to his father in the capital accusing the young Huangfu of cheating in the archery contest. Liu's father believes his son's lies, and waits for an opportunity to take revenge. A Korean army invades northern China and Liu advises the emperor to send the senior Huangfu against the aggressors in hopes that he will be destroyed. Instead, Huangfu Jing is captured by the Koreans, who are led by a powerful magician. The elder Liu falsely reports to the emperor that Commander Huangfu has treasonously surrendered to the enemy. The emperor then orders the Huangfu house confiscated and the family put
under arrest and brought to the capital. Though warned by a kind-hearted official, Huangfu's wife decides to submit to the imperial order, believing that her husband has been falsely charged and fearing the whole family may be executed if it disobeys.

Mother and son decide that the young Huangfu shall secretly escape to the mountains to await revenge. He soon meets a mountain-dwelling hermit from whom he learns magical martial arts secrets. On the way to the capital the Huangfu women are captured by a band of mountain bandits, led by a lovely young woman disguised as a man. She turns out to be Wei Yong'e, the daughter of one of the senior Huangfu's military comrades who is also held captive by the Koreans and whose family has also been arrested.

The Mengs are ordered by imperial command -- arranged by Liu's elder sister, the Empress -- to marry their daughter to Liu Kuibi. Meng Lijun, in cahoots with Su Yingxue, dresses as a young man and runs away from home, accompanied by her servant, Ronglan, who is dressed as a page. Meng's intention is to pass the imperial examinations, become a high official and clear the name of the Huangfu family.

Meng Lijun leaves behind a self-portrait as solace for her parents. When her escape is discovered, the Mengs beg Su Yingxue to marry in their daughter's stead. Su reluctantly agrees, but on the wedding night she curses the
Lius and hurls herself out a window into Lake Kunming. She is saved from drowning by a fairy and found floating in the lake by the wife of an imperial minister, Liang Jianbiao. Since the Liang's are without a daughter, they adopt Su Yingxue and return to the capital.

After escaping from her home, Meng Lijun is befriended by an older man who is also on his way to the capital to take the exams. He adopts her as his son and arranges for her to take the local examinations under the name Li Mingtang (also called by his style name, Li Junyu). Succeeding in a series of examinations at the imperial level, Li achieves first rank among the scholars, becoming a zhuangyuan.22 "He" is soon invited to a reception held at the home of a high minister, one Liang Jianbiao, who is of course Su Yingxue's foster father. At the reception, the eligible bachelors gather around a decorated tower in which Su Yingxue is standing. On cue, she tosses an embroidered ball towards the young men, striking Li Junyu, who by custom becomes her fiancee.23

Rather than disclose her identity, Meng Lijun decides to go through with the marriage, hoping that she can clear the Huangfu name by marrying into such a powerful family and confident that she can convince her bride not to disclose her real identity. After the marriage, in which Meng Lijun and Su Yingxue discover each other's real identities, the couple agrees to keep their mutual secrets and plan, if fate
is willing, to eventually join in a communal marriage with Huangfu Shaohua.

After saving the empress from a mysterious illness by "his" skills as a doctor, Li Junyu (Meng Lijun) rises quickly in court and soon becomes the emperor's favorite adviser, a relationship that will later lead to "his" undoing. When the Koreans again invade China, Li is placed in charge of a contest to select military personnel for a northern campaign. Hoping to lure Huangfu Shaohua out from his mountain lair, Li advises the emperor that even criminals be included, the sole criteria being military prowess and bravery.

The ruse works, drawing not only Huangfu Shaohua out of hiding, but the bandit Wei Yong'e, still disguised as a male, and his sister Changhua, now part of Wei's band. These three fugitives in disguise are given the command to lead the force against the Koreans, killing the magician and soundly routing the invading army. The three return in triumph to the capital, where the Huangfu and Wei families are exonerated and the Liu family condemned to be executed. At the last moment, however, Liu Yanyu, who had fled to a nunnery to escape an unwanted marriage and honor her pledge to Huangfu Shaohua, pleads for leniency. The executions are stayed, except that of Liu Kuibi, who is sentenced to hang himself. Losing his nerve at the very end, he is hung by the jailers.
As Ch'en (1974:208) suggests, at the point when the Huangfus have been cleared of the charges against them, there is no reason for the marriage between Huangfu Shaohua and his three fiancées not to proceed. However, with the beginning of the eighth volume, Chen Duansheng moves the plot in a new direction.

Since the Suzhou tanci storyteller's text discussed in part in Chapter III is concerned only with the action up to the military contest described above, I will only briefly summarize the rest of the story.\textsuperscript{24}

The emperor eventually grows suspicious of the new prime minister's gender, and attempts to trick the disguised Meng Lijun into removing "his" shoes, which would reveal the incriminating bound feet. Book seventeen ends with Meng debating over whether to accede to the emperor's wishes, thus forcing her to relinquish her role as a powerful male in the court. In the final three books, written as a sequel by Liang Chusheng (Desheng), Meng and Su are discovered and sentenced to death. The emperor then has a change of heart, and Meng marries Huangfu Shaohua. As was indicated early in the story, Liu Yanyu and Su Yingxue become co-wives, and all live happily ever after.\textsuperscript{25}

E. Tanci Written by Women

As noted in the Introduction, tanci written by women is one category of narratives identified by Chinese scholars
earlier in this century. Over twenty *tanci* have been attributed to women authors, dating from the late-Ming to the late-Qing dynasty (Ch'en 1974:14). These works include *Tian yu hua* (*Heaven Rains Flowers*), which dates from the late Ming dynasty and is the earliest *tanci* attributed to a woman. Later texts include *Yu chuan yuan* (*Romance of the Jade Bracelet*), *Zaisheng yuan*, *Bi sheng hua* (*Elegant Words of the Brush*), *Zaizao tian* (*Heaven Recreated*), and *Shili jin dan* (*Ten Gold Pellets*), etc.²⁶ A few texts from the late-Qing reflect themes influenced by contact with the West. These include *Hui tu nianshi shiji nu shi wenming deng* (*The Illustrated Cultural Lamp of the Women's World in the Twentieth Century*) (A Ying 1958: 170-173), and *Faguo nu yingxiong tanci* (*The French Heroine*) about a female French rebel (A Ying 1958:170-175).²⁷

A Ying (1958) divides the themes of *tanci* stories by women into two broad categories (which may overlap): a) the group of vernacular stories known as *caizi jiaren* (stories about talented scholars and gifted beauties); and b) stories about exceptional women. In the case of *ZSY*, which has aspects of both themes, the plots of the *caizi jiaren* stories may be manipulated (in some sense, inverted) to create interesting plot twists, such as in the scenes portraying marriages between two women.²⁸ As discussed in later chapters, the *caizi jiaren* motif in its original form is also pervasive in Suzhou *tanci* storytelling.²⁹
Women's *tanci* existed in printed editions (often featuring poorly cut written characters), and maybe more often, as hand-copied manuscripts circulated among female friends and relatives.\(^{30}\) It can be imagined that female authors of *tanci* learned their craft not only by reading, but in some cases by hand-copying *tanci* manuscripts.\(^{31}\) Ch'en (1974:18) points out that women often had the leisure to spend decades writing *tanci*, as in the case of *Bi sheng hua*, written over a thirty year period. If parts of a story were written and circulated among readers, it is likely that some authors incorporated reader feedback into the writing process.\(^{32}\)

There is little evidence on exactly how these texts were used by Qing dynasty women,\(^{33}\) though a passage in the second *hui* Li Hanqiu's *Guangling chao* (*The Currents of Guangling*) (quoted in Wei and Wei 1985:94) describes what may have been a common scene in the women's quarters:

...Because Third Daughter could read a little, Madame Qin bought several volumes of stories, such as *Tian yu hua* and *Zaisheng yuan*. Under the lamplight, with nothing else to do, Third Daughter would sing [the texts] as Madame Qin listened, with Aunt Huang also sitting to one side. When hearing the parts about the young man facing difficulty, the listeners would weep and cry.

This description suggests that though such *tanci* were "written to be read," in some situations that notion may have included reading aloud, either to one's self (as was common practice with many if not all Chinese literary
genres) or to an informal audience. To what extent such written texts were actually performed verbatim by professionals (if such was ever the case) has yet to be established conclusively.

F. Formal Characteristics of Chen Duansheng's ZSY

1. Introduction

Since written tanci such as ZSY were outside the bounds of classical writings, conventions of composition seem not to have been prescribed other than through example of the works themselves. Expectations of form, on the other hand, surely existed. Moreover, the form of tanci varies from work to work (Ch'en 1974:1-5). Many of these differences are manifested in the registers employed in the writing, including the syllabic composition of the narrative verse lines, the ratio of prose lines to narrative verse lines, word usage and vocabulary, rhyming, use of allusions and four character expressions, and framing devices. In this section, I will examine and reassess some of the formal features of ZSY and, in terms of form, attempt to situate the tanci by women within a range of other traditional Chinese literary genres. I will first outline the basic registers and their functions, then (beginning in section 3) examine each register in more detail.

2. Overview of the Communicative Registers
ZSY is a work of twenty books (juan), each consisting of four "chapters" (hui) (Sung 1993:18). As noted, only the first seventeen books are attributed to Chen Duansheng.

Zhao (1937; 1982a:3) has employed the terms biao, chang, and bai to describe the registers of discourse in both tanci written in Mandarin, such as ZSY, and those written in Wu dialect.35 Bai is a common term for the speech of characters in Chinese operatic texts, dramatic verse forms, as well as in written texts associated with Suzhou pingtan storytelling.36 Chang refers to singing/verse passages. According to Zhao, the biao refers to the third person and is probably best interpreted as being the register employed by an omniscient, or nearly omniscient narrator.37 Sung (1988:83) has discussed a variety of ways Chen Duansheng employs the "narrative function of the storyteller" in ZSY and has examined "Some of the many narrative techniques which heighten the dramatic tension of the story and contribute to its appeal." Her categories are: addressing the reader (direct authorial address), the manner in which characters are introduced, the "guiding" of a dramatic scene, providing interior views (thoughts of character), delaying information, and eavesdropping. Sung, however, does not distinguish among the various registers of discourse in the text, employing the nebulous term "author-narrator" to describe what she feels is the same speech register throughout.38 Here, I will offer a list of the
communicative registers used in ZSY and state their basic functions. In the ensuing sections, I will discuss the formal nature of these registers.

Drawing in part on both Zhao and Sung, I suggest that the major communicative registers and their functions employed in ZSY can be summarized as follows:

1) Narrator's self-conscious speech presented as if spoken directly to a reader by the author. This register is often used at the beginnings or ends of chapters. It may occasionally appear elsewhere in the text and there seem to be no strict rules for its use. In its initial use in Chapter I, Chen lays out her views on reincarnation as a factor in marriages of the caizi jiaren type, seeing the process as underpinning the present work. In later instances, this discourse contains information about the author's relation to her work -- when and why it is being written and difficulties in the writing process (as in books nine and seventeen). References to seasonal changes help set the mood for reading, as in the first chapter when Chen speaks of sitting by her window on a rainy autumn night beside a flickering lamp (1982:1). These self-conscious comments, as in Yu chuan yuan, are made in narrative ci verse.

2) Passages, making up the bulk of the narrative, keyed with elements similar to those found in the traditional frame (or implied frame) of "the simulated context" or "the
storyteller's manner" common in traditional prose fiction. These passages have three subdivisions, which are reflected most apparently by register shifts. These are:

a) The narrative verse lines, comprising most of the text.

b) The narrative prose lines, often keyed by gueshuo and huashuo.

c) The speech and thoughts of characters, often keyed by interjections such as aya (expressing surprise or worry) or ng (expressing surprise or consternation). Utterances may be attributed to particular characters, but there is no direct dialogue between them. The narrator's voice always mediates and often fills in action.

As will be seen in Chapter III, the voices of ZSY are very similar (on paper) to basic ones in the comparably richer performed Suzhou tanci version. How these registers actually interact in ZSY will be examined below.

3. Narrative Verse in ZSY

Two forms of verse line are used throughout ZSY. The predominant one is narrative in function, consisting of seven to ten syllables, or written characters. The second form, appearing at the beginning of each book and each chapter as a sort of preface, is that of classical shi poetry.
Various critics have attempted to describe the narrative verse line of *tanci* by terms otherwise associated with classical genres of poetry. Chen Yinge (1959:82) and Hsia Tsi-an [Xia Ji'an] (1957, 1983) claim that the narrative verse line of *ZSY* is *qiyan pailu* (Seven-Word Extended Verse). Toyoko Yoshida Ch'en (1974:5) terms the style as a type of *ci*, using three, seven, and ten syllable lines in the case of *ZSY*. Sung (1988:30-31) employs James J.Y. Liu's translation of the term *pailu*, and notes that, "The t'an-t'zu style is generally considered to be seven character pai-lu (regulated verse in a row)." She also observes that "Chen Yinge believed that *TSY [ZSY]* contained the best p'ailu of all t'an-t'zu narratives." Liu (1962:29) treats the convention of *pailu* with the explanation that, "Sometimes the middle couplets of a poem in Regulated Verse can be multiplied *ad infinitum* to form a kind of sequence known as P'ai Lu ('Regulated Verses in a Row')." It is this feature of a long series of seven syllable lines which evidently caused Chen Yinge to describe *tanci* as a form of *pailu* structure. For the purposes of this study, the term "*ci*" refers to the three, seven, and ten syllable lines making up most of the verse portion of *ZSY*, while *tanci* refers to the work as a whole. It should be noted, however, that the term *ci* is not employed as a form of *ci* poetry in the classical sense (Liu 1962:30-32; Chang 1980:1-3).
Early works of women's *tanci*, such as *Tian yu hua*, feature a seven syllable narrative verse line (Ch'en 1974:3). Later works exhibit more variation. *ZSY* employs lines with a syllable count of three or seven, or seven and ten, depending on the context (Ch'en 1974:5). (See the translation in Chapter III and Appendix A for illustrations.)

The structure of the narrative line allows the author to convey detail and unfold action readily. Rhymes used in the *ci* are relatively free. Several lines will employ the same end rhyme. Changes in rhyme tend to be determined by changes in content. Rhyme changes may be used to stress or reinforce aspects of the narration. In many cases a change in rhyme will appear after an interjection, such as "aya!" Rhymes may be very close, but not exact (taking into account possible phonetic change, influence of local dialects, and the use of "weak" rhymes). The same character may be repeated for a rhyme, a breach of form in the *shi*.

Some three-syllable groups are intended to be "spoken" rather than "sung," acting something like *chenzi* ("Padding Words") in Chinese opera or dramatic verse (Liu 1962:32; Shih 1976:121-124). An instance of this phenomenon in the selection in this study (p. 227) is "na langjun" ("that young fellow" [section 7 in the translation]). These insertions act to vary the pace of the lines, and thus affect the feelings aroused by them. Such trisyllabic
groups are often used in the context of a rhyme change and can serve to draw attention to subsequent lines. Conventionalized interjections (huyu) such as "wa" (indicating amazement or surprise) (p. 213) have similar uses, highlighting shifts in rhyme and/or content, enhancing the variety of expression. Again, such interjections involve a shift in register and are treated as "speech" rather than song.

In some cases the narrative verse lines seem close to the vocabulary and grammatical structure of vernacular speech. Moreover, each line is a separate unit, not linked strictly to other lines as in the shi. There is no strict parallelism and ping/ze tone patterns are employed very irregularly.  

4. Shi Poetry in ZSY

As noted, what the text identifies as "shi" poems appear at the beginning of each book and chapter, and occasionally in other parts of the text. Shi of eight lines are found at the beginning of each book, while quatrains begin each chapter. As an interpretive/informative frame the shi lines function to summarize the plot of the chapter in which they appear, and can be used to express authorial opinion. Such introductory shi are well-known features of huaben and other
styles of Chinese prose fiction. (See the translation in Chapter III for example of a shi in ZSY.)

Each line of the shi have seven syllables and (especially the eight line ones) exhibit features of lushi ("regulated verse") (Liu 1962:26-27) such as shoulian (head couplets), hanlian (first neck couplets), jinglian (second neck couplets), and weilian (tail couplets). Verbals and nominals must be parallel in each couplet (duichang), though the ping/ze tones must be in reverse order (dui'ou). Every second line in the eight line poem uses the same rhyme.\(^{48}\)

5. Prose Passages

The non-verse, or prose, portions of ZSY are often, though not always, framed by the stock phrases of the so-called "simulated context" or "storyteller's manner" common in Ming and Qing dynasty vernacular fiction. The two phrases which most characteristically key such narration in the text are queshuo ("Now let's talk about") and huashuo ("It is said").\(^{49}\) In ZSY, chapters often do not begin with these phrases, even where direct comment by the narrator posing as author is lacking.

For example, after the obligatory shi poem, the second chapter of book one (p. 4) begins with a speech: "Attention! Yin Liangzhen, listen to this: I am the Son-conceiving Goddess." 嗜I·尹良贞听者: 倖子娘娘是也。
Concerning the dream visit of a fertility goddess to Meng Lijun's mother, the lines are a direct continuation of the action in the previous scene presented in lines of narrative verse at the end of the first chapter: "Before her stood a goddess in the midst of multi-colored clouds, wearing a golden, phoenix coronet. The goddess stood in the clouds, her face all smiles, then lowered her head, pointing as she spoke."

The scene is completed in a few more lines of prose, then the phrase huashuo is used to introduce a shift in the action: "It is said that when Madame Sun awoke with alarm from the dream, she felt only that her abdomen ached greatly."

In general, the phrases huashuo and queshuo indicate a shift to the action within or between scenes. The occurrences of queshuo are fewer than those of huashuo, the former often used in the initial introductions of characters. For instance, on p. 1, the prose narrative begins with queshuo: "Now let's talk about (how), in the story Jade Bracelet Romance, there is only one main character, Xie Yuhui, who during the great Song dynasty achieved a high position, enjoying great wealth and riches."
This prose introduction is followed by three prose lines which often appear in transitions between prose and lyric in ZSY: "Zhen ge shi . . ." ("It's really that . . ."). This transitional phrase is then followed by forty-seven lines of ci lyrics, the next brief prose section introduced by the phrase huashuo.

Another form of non-verse in the text is, as seen in the above example, the frame of a character's speech. Speeches made by characters are presented as uttered speech or as thought. In many cases, interest is created by the interaction between these frames/registers, as is well-exemplified in the passage concerning Li Mingtang/Meng Lijun's marriage to Liang Suhua/Su Yingxue, translated in Chapter III. In one scene, Su Yingxue believes that she hears the voice of Meng Lijun's maid (p. 227; section 4 in translation, Chapter III):

(narrative verse)

... When the Young Miss heard these words, her quickened heart was alarmed.

(prose, thought)

Ava, how strange. That is Ronglan's voice. Could it really be those two? If it is Ronglan who is speaking, then the zhuangyuan is indeed Miss Meng.

(prose, narrator's voice)
While she was thinking of these matters, the drapes of her quarters rustled and a maid entered to report:

(prose, character's uttered speech) Young Miss, ya! The respected groom's men, Zhou Shen, Feng Jie, and the page Rongfa are all at the bottom of the steps, wishing to pay respects to you. They have also asked in which room the groom's possessions should be placed. I await the command of the Young Miss.

(lengthy verse passage follows)

6. Metaphor and Simile

Stock metaphors and similes are important in establishing of the ZSY registers of discourse, being bound to a number of defining cultural situations. Most relevantly, there is an extensive use of figurative language associated with marriage and the examination system, particularly in descriptions of upper-class characters and scenes involving them. Some of the allusions refer to local or national folk stories, customs, or festivals. Euphemistic metonyms are often used in referring to ceremonies or rituals making up the marriage process. Though some phrases involve hyperbole employed for purposeful effect, others seem simply to be discourse conventions.
Common in other traditional Chinese fictive genres, these stock items not only add variety to the manner in which characters are referred to (aside from actual names), but also allow for word economy. When substituted as names for persons, they take on an interpretive function, not unlike what Tannen has described as "interpretive naming" in other narrative contexts (1993a:32). In concert with other phenomena such as line structure and other aspects of texture, the phrases can also be considered to be keying devices for the various registers in which they appear in the text (Bauman 1977:17-18).

Among the numerous figurative terms for the important social institution of marriage are: kang li, "husband and wife," and yinvuan, "marriage fate". The phrase used to describe the projected co-marriage of Huangfu Shaohua to Meng Lijun, Liu Yanyu, and Su Yingxue, is termed as san fan hua, "three bouquets of flowers" (Chen 1982:213). The chamber where Liang Suhua\Su Yingxue is sequestered waiting for Li Mingtang\Meng Lijun on the day of their marriage is referred to as xianggui, "fragrant boudoir," xianjing, "fairy's dwelling place," or xiangfang, "fragrant room," which after the wedding becomes the dongfang, "bridal suite" or Nong Xiao ting -- "son-in-law's suite." This latter term (p. 212), referring to a legendary flute player, is used only because of the unusual situation of Li Mingtang
marrying into his bride's family, the reverse being the norm.

Metaphoric language associated with gentle young women of elite backgrounds and their bodies, common in traditional Chinese poetry, is used continuously throughout the narrative. Such language includes фшг, "fragrant," for a young woman (often used instead of a personal pronoun), qian jin, "thousand gold pieces," often used to refer to a daughter, and jiao e , "charming maiden," for a gentle young woman. The latter two phrases refer exclusively to unmarried young women of elite background. Chunshan, "spring mountains," for eyebrows, qiushui, "autumn water," for brimming tears, fangxin, "fragrant heart," for a young woman's sensitive feelings, sunjian, "spring bamboo shoots," for a young woman's hands, and yujing, "jade neck," for a young woman's neck. On p. 226, Su Yingxue's face is described as viduo taohua, "a single peach blossom." Though not gender-specific, the term for a foster child, such as Su Yingxue, is called a mingling (a sort of insect).

Alternate names for the position of zhuangyuan (first ranking imperial scholar) are gaoba and vinchan, "silver toad," the latter referring to the fabled toad living in the "moon palace" (changong), a term which can also be used to represent the zhuangyuan.
As will be illustrated in the interpretation in Chapter III, traditional stories are sometimes alluded to for figurative purposes.

7. Situating Tanci Among Traditional Literary Genres

Chen Yinge's assertion that *qi* lines in ZSY are basically *qiyun pailu* can be reflected upon. As noted, parallelism of syllabic tones is not stressed. Moreover, *pailu*, by convention, features an eight couplet stanza. Ma Yazhong (1992: pers. comm.) has suggested that *tanci* is closer in form and spirit to the relatively free form of narrative *gexing*, which uses five to seven characters in a line.⁵⁰ Though more refined than *tanci* and having a somewhat different line, the free nature of the form is closer to *tanci* than is *pailu*. A different conception of *tanci*'s place in the Chinese literary genres can be suggested by looking at *tanci* in terms of emic Chinese aesthetic principles, those below suggested by Ma Yazhong and drawn from traditional commentary on Chinese literature, particularly Daoist writings (1992: pers. comm.). Although Ma has identified over a dozen dialectic pairs of traditional aesthetic principles, only three will be considered here in regards to *tanci*.

Placed on a continuum of Chinese literary forms based on the polarities of the traditional concepts of *jian*
(concise elegance) and fan (verboseness), lushi, gexing, tanci, and huaben (short stories) would be thus situated:

MOST JIAN

lushi  gexing  tanci  huaben

MOST FAN

In this light, Ma feels that the formal nature of ZSY seems closer to gexing (such as the famous "Pipa Xing" by Bai Juyi), than lushi. The language is less dense and easier to read, with less effort required of the reader to "fill in the blanks."

According to Ma, the language in ZSY can also be considered on another continuum of Chinese aesthetic concepts: that of nong (concentrated richness of language) and dan (plain-ness of language). Placing xiaoshuo and bianwen on the dan extreme and various types of classical verse on the nong extreme, tanci would be situated mid-way, exhibiting fairly rich language in the sense of metaphor, classical allusion, and poetic diction. If considered within the parameters of ya (elegant, cultured) and su (vulgar, common), ZSY's language would be closer to the su extreme, though it has many ya elements, being a mixture of refined and vernacular language.

Though inductive and impressionistic, these initial observations on the formal structure and aesthetics of tanci
are presented as hypotheses for stimulating future investigation.

1. Yangzhou is considered by a number of scholars to be economically and culturally part of the Jiangnan region though it lies north of the Yangzi River (Johnson 1993:ix; Finnane 1993). See Rawski (1985) for an overview of market development, education, publishing, and various cultural activities in the entire region during the late Qing.

2. Illich (1982:105-106) speaks of the "gender divide" in vernacular (folk) culture, stressing that genres are "interwoven differently in each culture and time" and that gender specific activity is integral in pre-industrial societies.

3. Again, see Zelditch (1955) for an analogous cross-cultural example of what he terms the "instrumental/expressive" dichotomy between gender roles. For an overview of life in the women's quarters at an earlier period of history -- the Sung dynasty -- which throws light on later ages, see Ebrey (1993). Dorothy Ko has a forthcoming work on the "teachers of the inner-chambers."

4. In contrast, when a young elite male left for schooling at age ten he would begin a process of expanding his "social networks" and engaging in "broad programs of study" that would provide preparation for success in the civil service examinations and an eventual official position (Mann 1991: 207).

5. As noted below, this "earlier woman" may have been Chen's own mother.

6. Rankin (1975:40-41) gives several examples of real-life women who gained political influence and power during the late Ming and early Qing dynasties.
7. See Toyoko Yoshida Ch'en (1974) and Sung (1988) for discussions of ZSY and women's status. Ch'en (p. 36) sees the work as "a confrontation with and challenge to Confucian womanhood," while Sung (p.9) contends that the work "presents a feminist vision promoting the emancipation of women . . . in the context of Confucian society . . . ." A number of Chinese works, under the influence of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought have portrayed Meng Lijun as a progressive woman fighting within the constraints of her era who faces the moral dilemma of choosing between her female and male roles (Zhou 1990).

8. Ch'en (1974) included a basic biography of Chen Duansheng in her study on women's tanci. Sung (1988), reassessing studies on Chen Duansheng's life made by Chen Yinge, Guo Moruo and others, gives a detailed biography of the author of ZSY. In the present thesis, I have drawn on both these sources as well as Chen Yinge's Lun Zaisheng yuan (1959) and Guo (1961a,b,c).

9. See Waley-Cohen (1989) for information on banishment to Xinjiang, a practice which began in 1778.

10. Sung (1988:15) notes that a manuscript version of the text, formerly Zheng Zhenduo's personal copy, is in the Beijing Library. Sung notes a number of extant versions of the text in her discussion and includes a partial bibliography.

11. A later reprinting of that edition is said to be in the Tan Zengbi collection at Fudan University, though I have not examined the text myself.


13. The Chinese title is Yu chuan yuan, discussed elsewhere.

14. It is unclear what exactly Hou Zhi did to the received text; the changes may have been minimal.

15. Liang Desheng (also Liang Chusheng), a woman, was active in the first half of the nineteenth century and, according to Zhao Jingshen (1982a:10) completed the final three books of ZSY sometime after the writing of Hou Zhi's preface in 1821.

16. What many modern westerners would consider a "violation" of texts by re-writing is of course a common feature of the textual histories of many Chinese works of traditional fiction and may be due in part to the relation between orality and literature in the Chinese context. Timothy Wong, who is
interested in the forces shaping textual histories, has held a number of discussions with me on issues surrounding this topic.

17. Ch'en (1974:193-194) describes these first eight books as "romantic" in tone and the characters and action as stereotyped. She notes a shift to more realistic description beginning with book 9, and attributes this in part to the maturing of the author who, as noted, set aside the ultimately unfinished work several times in the course of writing it (1974:221-222). The Suzhou storytellers' version in this study, as explained in Chapter IV covers only the first eight books of ZSY.

18. The casting of major characters as incarnations of celestial immortals and/or stars is common in Chinese vernacular fiction, the classic novels Shuihu zhuan (Outlaws of the Marsh) and Honglou meng (Red Chamber Dream) being but two well-known examples.

19. Aside from the name of the emperor, other aspects of the imperial court, examination procedures, folk customs, etc., reflect those of the Qing (1644-1911 AD) dynasty throughout the text. An example is the celebration of the Mid-Autumn Festival, which in Chinese legend is actually associated with the end of Mongol rule in China.

20. In many cases wives are known only by their own family surnames throughout the work, the name given with the term shi. Ebrey (1993:xvii) translates shi as "Miss," though notes that marital status is not indicated in her usage.

21. Since Liu was following the wishes of her late mother, as expressed in the dream, her action is in a sense filial, and thus not wholly improper.

22. As noted previously, Hucker (1985:187) translates this term as "principal graduate."

23. Ch'en (1974:200) describes the custom of using the ball to select a mate as an Indian one. Embroidered balls are used in some courting practices of southwestern minority peoples such as the Zhuang of Guangxi and some Yao groups in Yunnan. I have been unable to determine the reasons for Ch'en's conclusion. The Suzhou storyteller Yuan Xiaoliang told me that the motif is so common in Suzhou tanci stories that it was left out of Pan Boying's version of ZSY.

24. Qin Jiwen's Suzhou tanci version (Qin 1981), however, covers the entire plot.
25. Qin Jiwen's Suzhou tanci version of the complete story ends with Liu and Su being married to other men of rank so as not to impinge on "socialist" morality. Zaizao tian is the story of Meng Lijun's daughter. This story, also written as a women's tanci, was being performed in the early 1990s by two young performers named Lu Shixiao and Yan Wenwu. The name of their version was called Xiao Meng Lijun (Meng Lijun's Daughter).


27. The preface to the former work criticizes the ideological backwardness of older tanci works, including ZSY, and introduces "progressive" themes on equal rights between men and women (A Ying 1958:171). One of the main characters is a young American woman who visits China.

28. As noted in Chapter I, McMahon (1994) has discussed many aspects of the caizi jiaren theme.

29. Cyril Birch, in the preface to a recent translation of Xi xiang ji (The Story of the Western Wing), has delineated the standard traits of the talented scholar and beauty character types:

   . . . The young scholar is by definition poor, quite possibly an orphan, in his early twenties, slender and pale with clear eyes and refined features. He wears a plain long gown and a close-fitting square-cut black hat -- an austere figure in contrast with the gaudily appareled rich young wastrels whose company he forsweares and whose competition he despises . . . She is no village maiden but the daughter of a gentry family, her father himself no doubt a former official of unchallenged probity and prestige. This worthy man has taken sufficient interest in her education to ensure that she has developed skills not only in needlework and allied feminine crafts but in calligraphy and painting also, and she has a pretty poetic talent that will make her a valued companion to her future husband and his guests . . . (Wang 1991:ix-x)

30. Ch'en (1974:17-18) notes that the preface of Tian vu hua states that various manuscript versions of her text (some with mistakes) circulated among her female relatives. Chen Duansheng in book seventeen of ZSY claims that her female relatives encouraged her to continue writing the story after a lapse of several years, indicating that she had already circulated parts of the unprinted manuscript. A Ying (1937, rpt. 1978) mentions that hand-copied versions were sometimes
given as gifts, sometimes with written dedications. Link (1989) provides evidence that hand-copied manuscripts, usually works of vernacular fiction that break with current ideology or morals, are still circulated among close acquaintances today.

31. Lu Gong (1986) has suggested that Chen Duansheng actually learned her craft by helping her mother write the anonymously authored *Yu chuan yuan*, to which *ZSY* is the sequel.

32. The sort of feedback might, one can only guess, be of two types: 1) suggestions based on personal preferences, and 2) suggestions based more or less on what Foley (1991) has called "traditional referentiality" -- in other words, from the perspective of how well the story satisfies traditional expectations and demands of the written tanci tradition. Indeed, on some level the two categories may be closely linked.

33. See Hayes (1985:88-89) for comments on the practice of Cantonese women gathering to listen to one of their number read or "sing" printed "ballads" in the late Qing.

34. The following discussion was heavily influenced by Prof. Ma Yazhong of Suzhou University (in Suzhou) who is an expert on Qing dynasty poetry. In particular I am indebted to him concerning the observations about the formal classification of *ZSY* and similar tanci works and his invention of the continuum of genres.

35. The terms discussed here may appear in some Wu dialect tanci and in modern performer's script books. There is considerable variation in such terms and their use in the older texts. However, the terms usually do not physically appear within tanci written in Mandarin, such as *ZSY*.

36. In his discussion of the "dramatic" verse forms of chu ("Dramatic Verse") and sanchu ("Dramatic Lyrics"), Liu (1962:32) translates bai as "Plain Speech." Liu employs capitalizations in his translations, which I have included here.

37. See Zhao (1937; rpt. 1982:43-45).

38. Sung (1993:18) sketches some of the formal features of *ZSY*, noting several of the features I discuss below.

39. I have chosen to use Booth's (1961, 1983:73) observation that the author and narrator are always separate entities, that the narrator is a creation of the author, who exists outside the text. In some cases, such as the present category, the role of narrator may be constructed to appear to be that
of the author speaking directly and intimately to the reader (1961, rpt. 1983:155), though as noted below, this initial voice shifts to a more distant one with features of the "storyteller's manner"/ "simulated context" of Idema and Hanan, respectively.

40. The feature of direct address to the reader in tanci appears in at least one other text. As noted in note 30 and elsewhere in this thesis, Lu (1986) feels that Yu chuan yuan may have been written by Chen's mother, possibly with Chen's assistance. This might account for similar features between the works.

Researching live Suzhou tanci performances, I have observed how common it is for performers to speak directly to the audience before starting the feature story (the transition to which is keyed by the rap of the storyteller's woodblock). This form of address differs from that of the storyteller acting as narrator, and is more akin to the metanarrative "authorial" comments made by Chen. While I do not suggest a direct link between this voice in ZSY and performed tanci, in both situations the author/performer is speaking in a voice that is constructed to seem more like that of their actual selves than in the strict persona of a fictional storyteller. This becomes clearer in performance when storytellers break the storytelling frame with comments about personal experience, etc. (see Chapter IV and V). The intimacy resulting from such exchanges may be important to both styles of presentation.

Though direct address of readers is not unusual in traditional Chinese fictional narratives, the comments in ZSY are unlike the huaben tradition of beginning chapters with anecdotes of varying relevance to the main story (though, as noted, these are somewhat like phenomena presently encountered in Jiangnan storytelling).

41. Liu (1962:26-29) describes Regulated Verse (lushi) as having been established in the early Tang dynasty (618-907 AD). Also known as Modern Style (jinti shi) poems, the metrical rules for Regulated verse demanded that poems be written in eight lines, that lines consist of either five or seven syllables, the same rhyme is used throughout each poem, a conventional rhyme scheme is followed, the four middle lines must form antithetical couplets, and there is a fixed tone pattern, to which "some liberty" is allowed for syllables in less important positions.

42. On the other hand, the early association of the term with music (Liu 1962:30) may account for the term being applied to written tanci if indeed there was once a connection to early performance traditions that employed music.
43. I am unaware of any studies strictly on the conventions of rhyming in these **tanci**. It would seem to be an area sorely needing further investigation, though one outside the scope of this dissertation. It would also be useful to know if **tanci** authors consulted any sort of "rhyme book" (listing words that rhyme) in the process of composition.

44. Shih (1976:121), in his study of Yuan drama, notes a number of interpretive translations of the term **chenzi**: "padding," "foil," "extra-metric," and "non-metric." In the context of Yuan drama, he claims that **chenzi** enhance "the feeling of freedom and vitality" in the lyrics.

45. In Chinese poetry, tones fall metrically into two categories, the **ping** or "Level" tone and the **ze** or "Deflected" tone (Liu 1962:21). The first category is made up of words pronounced in Classical Chinese with the **ping** or "level" tone, while words in the second category are those with the **shang** ("Rising"), **chu** ("Falling"), or **ru** ("Entering") tones. Liu gives a number of examples of various "tone patterns" in which these elements are employed.

46. In the text, the poems are prefaced with the phrase, "shi yue" ("the poem says").

47. The poems do not seemed to be derived from classical ones and should be regarded as compositions of the author or editor.

48. Due to the similarity to regulated verse, it is very likely that the rhymes in these **shi** were taken from classical "rhyme books."

49. See Hanan (1973:22) for comments on the use of such expressions in Ming short stories. In the translation in the ensuing chapter, I have rendered these phrases several different ways in English according to context.

50. Professor Ma Yazhong, an expert on Qing dynasty poetry, was a student of the classical scholar Chen Zhonglian. His work includes a study of the history of poetry in the late imperial period (Ma 1992).

51. Ma evidently feels that there is no inconsistency in comparing **tanci** to **lushi**, especially in light of Chen Yinge's assessment of form. Also, Ma thinks that, from another angle, **tanci** should be compared to **huaben**, in that both are vernacular narrative.
52. According to Ma (1992: pers. comm.) the narrative style of gexing showed a large development in the Qing dynasty. The form of ZSY differs from gexing, however, in that the same rhyme may be used in tanci for long stretches of verse, whereas shifting rhymes are more frequent in gexing. Gexing also employs a device known as dingzhen, in which one or two characters are repeated to indicate a shift in rhyme.

Ma also feels that the shi lines in ZSY are of inconsistent quality, the language tending to be fan (verbose) and the content repetitive. However, the shi lines are in general more jian (elegant) than the passages of narrative verse making up most of the text.

53. The topic of what is ya and what is su was a pervasive theme during the Forum on Chinese Vernacular Literature held in Suzhou in November of 1991. The speaker on women's tanci was Meng Meng (see Meng 1991) of Shandong University.
CHAPTER III
TRANSLATION AND ANALYSIS OF
THE "TWO WOMEN MARRY" SCENE IN ZAISHENG YUAN

A. Introduction

The social context of the work as well as features of the "means of communication" of Chen Duansheng's ZSY have been presented in Chapter II. The focus of the present chapter shifts to a scene in the story concerning the wedding night of the new zhuangyuan, Li Mingtang (the disguised Meng Lijun), and the prime minister's daughter, Liang Suhua (the disguised Su Yingxue, Meng's former maidservant). The English translation of the scene is followed by an analysis -- which draws on theories of performance introduced in Chapter I -- of the ways in which the interaction between the communicative registers of prose and verse serve in the creation of meaning in the text. Since negotiation over the roles the women will assume in their future relationship is an important theme of the episode, specific attention is given to the impact of register shifting on the construction and manipulation of images of status and gender.
B. The Translation

1. Notes on Translation Conventions

In making the English translation, a number of conventions have been adopted to represent various narrative registers: 1) The prose passages are flush with the left margin; 2) passages in verse are indented; 3) passages of represented speech of characters), whether in prose or verse, are placed in quotation marks (which do not appear in the original text); 4) passages of inner speech or thoughts are marked with apostrophes. To make them easier to handle, long passages of verse, in some instances, have been divided into shorter sections (indicated by a double space, not a number), according to content. Numbers, which mark shifts between passages in a particular register, appear in parentheses to facilitate reference.\(^1\) In a few cases (such as passages 4 and 5), shifts between "speakers" are noted, though they appear in the same primary register (in the given instance, prose).

It has been necessary in this translation to occasionally use the authorial or narrative "I," which seems to be implied in some situations but does not appear in the original. It should be understood that the use of "I" throughout the passage is merely a convenience for the English translation and not a direct rendering of an original framing device for a particular narrative voice.
The ambiguity over Meng Lijun's gender is more easily created in Chinese than English since the Chinese text does not employ gender-specific pronouns. In this translation second person forms of the pronoun "he" have been used to describe Li Mingtang (Meng Lijun) with the understanding that "he" is a woman disguised as a man. Second person pronouns have sometimes been inserted to facilitate reading comprehension.

The most difficult aspect of the translation has been the rendering of compact metaphorical expressions. Very often the original language reflects a more "literary" register than the English rendering suggests. In some instances, words have been inserted in brackets to clarify certain phrases, though in other cases a word or two has silently been added. In all, the translation is more literal than artistic, the goal being to highlight the shifts in expressive register.

2. The Immediate Story Context

In the seventeenth chapter of ZSY (Chen 1982:226-231), which appears in book five, Meng Lijun marries her former maid/companion, Su Yingxue. Both are masquerading as people they are not. Meng is pretending to be a young male scholar named Li Mingtang (or Li Junyu) who has just attained first place in the imperial examinations, becoming zhuangyuan. Su is presenting herself as Liang Suhua, the foster daughter of
Minister Liang and his wife. The hui is entitled "Li Zhuangyuan jia xie kangli (Premiere Scholar Li Falsely Marries)."

A shi poem frames the chapter, summarizing and commenting on the events of the wedding suite scene:

The poem says,

By favor of the court, chosen as zhuangyuan;
He achieves great distinction as a youth.
Yet, before assuming a post
he finds himself in fairyland,
where vistas of spring reign.
He receives a colorful engagement ball;
Heaven's offer of a fated nuptial match.
Hopeless vulgarians, lacking such fortune,
can but watch the proceedings unfold.
As silver moon rays first touch them
the pair are surprised that they have met before;
Rather than speaking of new love,
they speak instead of old sorrow.

The first two couplets allude to Li Mingtang achieving first rank in the imperial examinations. Li then attends the engagement party, mentioned in Chapter II of this dissertation, at which "he" is struck by the embroidered ball thrown by Liang Suhua (Su Yingxue), thus becoming
engaged to her. It is noted that Li is the object of envy by those unfortunates who will never have such a match. The second two couplets suggest what happens in the rest of the chapter, the fated meeting of the disguised characters, their gradual mutual recognition (which is a difficult "trial" for Meng Lijun), and the telling of their respective experiences after separating in Yunnan.

The narration of the chapter begins with several lines, in narrative verse, of direct address by the narrator (speaking as the author) to the reader. She comments about the warm spring weather and enlivening landscape around the Qingming ("Clear and Bright") festival and how she will now begin the fifth juan (p. 211).

The narrator takes up the story with a description of the construction of a decorated tower from which Liang Suhua will view her suitors at the engagement party. This event was arranged by her parents after news of Li Mingtang's success in the imperial examinations. During the reception, Liang Suhua scans the crowd below her, hoping in vain to see the face of Huangfu Shaohua, the man to whom she secretly promised herself. Viewing the assembled young males for some moments, she finally tosses a colored (cloth) ball (saiqiu), which fatefuly lands in the hands of the new zhuangyuan, Li Mingtang. Preparations are made for the marriage, gifts exchanged between each party, and a diviner engaged to select a wedding date. Among the gifts from Li
Mingtang is a piece of pearl jewelry which Liang recognizes as belonging to the Meng family, raising her suspicions about her intended mate (p. 223) and stimulating her to imagine what life might be like married to a woman (Meng Lijun) disguised as a male — creating in her a mood of excited anticipation. Finally, the day of the wedding arrives . . .

C. The Translated Text

(1) As the story goes,* the auspicious time had arrived, and all the relatives and friends had entered the study.² At that moment, incense was placed on the tables [altar] in the great hall and the bride and groom were invited to make obeisance to heaven and earth.

(2) With fairy music wavering as the flutes were blown, the two bridesmaids supported the bride's green sleeves, the nuptial couple standing shoulder to shoulder on the red carpet, surrounded by a crowd clad in silk. After bowing to heaven and earth, the beauty and talented scholar exchanged ritual bows. Afterwards, the master of ceremonies requested that the zhuangyuan and Young Miss make obeisance to the respective go-betweens. After the couple complied, they retired. The bridesmaids invited Madame Liang to come out from behind the curtain. Just see, she walked softly into
the hall, and took a seat beside Minister Liang.\textsuperscript{3} The young husband and wife then bowed before them, with phoenixes fluttering and jade pieces clinking. Master and Madame Liang stared fixedly, seeing the lovely young woman and talented young man, they were very happy. The young couple seemed just like a husband and wife; naturally compatible and without flaw. Then the seated ones both gave their blessings and urged the pair to rise; the audience with the elders was soon complete.

The pipes made intricate music; in an instant it was time to enter the bridal suite. The zhuanvyuan stepped forward to remove the veil; in one flick, the red silk parted to reveal the bride's face. Strings of pearls hung all about, so it was difficult to discern. Only half of the sweet, lovely visage was to be seen. Seeing this, the zhuanvyuan felt surprised. 'Goodness! It seems I have seen this bride somewhere before. The beautiful eyes are extremely familiar. Why?' At that moment, "he" almost forgot that "he" was in a wedding. 'Though I wish to look, I can't keep staring at her for so long.' "He" thus had to turn around and sit on the bed. The pair sat down and prepared to drink the wedding wine, the service already laid out. Miss Liang, with her "phoenix eyes," peeked at the groom.
'It's clearly the face of Miss, it's too close to be true; her cheeks seem just like peach blossoms.' She couldn't help feeling excited and happy. At the time, she felt like speaking out everything in her heart. After the couple exchanged the ritual sips of wine, the groom left, upon which the female guests entered. Everyone talked and laughed for some time before they went out of the bridal suite. Then, in the women's quarters, everyone sat down to drink. In an open-air pavilion, an opera was performed. Silken chairs, row after row, filled the great hall [where the men gathered]. For the moment, [I'll] not tell of that lively drinking scene in the front hall.  

(3) I will speak now only of Miss Liang Suhua in the bridal suite. The young lady sat among the hanging silks, her eyebrows arched, eyes beautiful. Her long sleeves were an emerald green and were embroidered with two birds; four maids were standing at her side. Suddenly she heard something; outside the dark green curtain, was a commotion. There was a ding-dang sound like the lock on a chest, and something like the sound of quilts and packets being placed on the floor. From among the commotion could be heard one voice with which she was familiar. It said repeatedly, "Quickly move to that room there. We have just arrived and don't know what
to do. We had better go ask the head maid." When the young lady heard these words, her heart raced and she fell deep into thought.

(4) 'Ava, how strange! That is Ronglan's way of speaking! Could it really be those two? If it is Ronglan speaking, then the zhuangyuan is indeed Miss Meng.' While thinking of these matters, the drapes of her quarters rustled and a maid entered to report.

(5) "Young Miss, the respected groom's men, Zhou Shen, Feng Jie, and the page Rongfa are all at the bottom of the steps, wishing to pay respects to you. They have also asked in which room the groom's possessions should be placed. I await the command of Young Miss."

(6) When Miss Suhua heard these words, her heart was both excited and happy. The way of speaking was the same, and the name similar, so this showed that Rongfa was indeed Ronglan. 'As for this present circumstance, there is certainly no question at all, it is indeed Miss Meng who has become the zhuangyuan.' At this time Miss Liang felt even more delighted, but she spoke shyly, "If I don't see them today, I'll see them later. All the things can for now be placed in the opposite room." The maid made acknowledgement, then turned and
gave word to those outside. At the order, the things were moved to the room on the right. When this was done, everyone left together in an orderly fashion. Liang Suhua waited especially to meet the groom and speak of the events after she and Meng's departure.

(7) Let's not be concerned with Miss Liang in the bridal suite, while I speak of the wedding banquet outside. The guests were making toasts; it was a vista of joy. However, Minister Meng seemed troubled. As he regarded the groom, he naturally had good feelings towards him. But when thinking of his own [lost] daughter, his heart was somewhat distressed. 'This old man is not the equal of Minister Liang. Look at him, he has found such a son-in-law — a handsome, scholarly zhuangyuan. But as for me, a contest of arrows decided my daughter's marriage; that young fellow [Huangfu Shaohua] was lovely, heroic, and cultured. But who would know that such diligent preparations would so quickly be washed away. The emperor ordered my daughter to marry Imperial Nephew Liu. This equals marrying a relative of the Emperor. But who would have known that she would be so stubborn and steadfast, switching clothes and running off alone into the world beyond. So it happened that not only did I not obtain a son-in-law, but I lost my daughter.' What, Minister
Meng? Is there nothing else in your heart you wish to tell others? 'Today I came here to join in this wedding banquet. Seeing the situation, I can think only of these heart-rending matters, and my tears want to fall.' The legal officer, Master Meng, was extremely sad. He never raised his winecup, and his face showed no merriment.

(8) The zhuangyuan secretly stole a glimpse at "his" father's face, which was saddened and troubled. Barely under control, the zhuangyuan felt as if "his" heart was crushed and as if "he" was seated on a chair of needles. "His" tears were about to fall, so "he" lowered his head and pretended to straighten "his" hat. "He" didn't dare express "his" inner feelings on "his" face, and forced "himself" to converse with others. During a break in the festivities, Minister Meng came to bid an early good night to the minister. Minister Liang graciously escorted him outside. Others still sat in the hall drinking. It was evening when the banquet finally ended, along with the women's activities. Then the father and "son-in-law" went together to the inner compartments, where Mr. Liang welcomed the younger man into the old couple's quarters. The zhuangyuan got "his" own chair and sat to the west of the older couple. A maid came forward,
offering tea. When the drapes were closed, everyone began to chat. From afar they heard the ding-dang sound of dangling jade pieces, and shadows made by candles appeared on the screen.

(9) It was Miss Liang come to bid the old couple goodnight, in accord with custom. Minister and Madame Liang both said: "You needn't." So the young lady bade them goodnight and politely withdrew. Madame Liang\(^8\) called out: "Bring candles to light the way for the son-in-law, then escort him to the bridal suite." Amid laughter, the maids at the side grasped the gold-leafed candles; Junyu\(^9\) arose, fixed "his" hat, then made a full bow. Taking "his" leave, "he" went straight to the bridal suite. The maids escorting "him" all stepped back when the party arrived at the entry, and the zhuangyuan softly stepped into the outer bridal suite through the pearled curtain. Now, the outer room was the place where the groom sat while the bride's toilet was made, right before the entrance to the inner chamber. Just look,\(^{10}\) the bridal suite was decorated just like a fairy's living quarters: tall candles aglow against a green window screen and quilts embroidered with hibiscus blossoms. This view was slightly obscured by the bed curtains and the bed itself was studded with pieces of ivory. With so many layers of
finery it was difficult to see clearly inside and only the personal maids standing at attention were in full view. Junyu slowly sat down in a chair and called to the servants to trim the wicks of the candles and bring tea. The servants bowed, then presented "him" with a cup. Li Mingtang's white hands took the tea as "he" thought to himself: 'Today, in the bridal chamber the candles glow. How can I manage this young lady? If she is kind-hearted, then all is well. I can fashion a way to tell her of my predicament, obtain her help, and for a while share one bed. But if Miss Liang's character and personality are different, then it will truly be trouble for me, Li Mingtang. If we two maidens cannot come to terms, then how can I, the present false husband be exchanged for Huangfu Shaohua? I don't know, in ages past, how a husband pitied and loved his wife. Today, I simply have no good strategy -- how can I resolve this predicament?'

(10) As Junyu sat thinking, "he" became very nervous. "He" was so sad that "his" forehead wrinkled, and "his" brows knit tight. The tea was finished, yet "he" just sat there, watching, as the layers of light illuminated the room. The servants at "his" side lowered their heads and, appearing tired, sucked in their breaths. When the second watch tolled, the sound lingered.
Thus, the zhuangyuan arose, trimmed the candle wicks and called to the bridesmaids. "It's already late. You needn't stay here waiting on us; you may retire to your rooms." All the maids responded and left. Li Zhuangyuan then shut the red door behind them and entered the bridal suite.

(11) Now I'll tell of Li Mingtang as "he" closed the door of the room, then took a candle from in front of the window and entered into the midst of the hanging embroidered curtains.¹³

(12) "He" saw only the young Miss, Liang Suhua, sitting in a chair, leaning against the bed, her head lowered, her face like a flower. On her eyebrow was a touch of emerald powder; there was light red paint on her lips and her cheeks were the color of sunset. With a somewhat bashful look, and in charming silence, she sat there clad in silks embroidered with phoenixes.¹⁴ This young maiden's face shone in beauty, truly loveable; her posture was very correct,¹⁵ and worthy of praise. Taking a glance, Junyu was taken aback. The lamp in "his" hand froze as "he" sighed in surprise:

(13) 'Oyo! How strange! I say, this face is extremely familiar. Indeed, it seems just like that of Su Yingxue.
"It's indeed odd that the face of Miss Liang appears exactly like that of Su Yingxue! To be husband and wife is everlasting, but when constantly recalling and remembering Su Yingxue, my heart is even more full of pain. It's too bad that the beautiful maiden died so cruelly; my remorse is as deep as the cold waters. Today as I suddenly regard this face my innermost heart is cut to pieces.

'A, I think Minister Liang is also Yunnanese. Could it be that when Su Yingxue jumped into the lake, she was later taken into his household?

Even if such is the case, it shouldn't be spoken of now. Presently a member of the Liang family is before me. If it really is Su Yingxue, how is it that she is marrying once more after leaping into the lake? At this time my hunch is hard to verify, and if things go awry, my disguise will be revealed.' Thinking this, Junyu laid his excitement and happiness aside. Setting down the candle, "he" then walked over to the bride. While "he" raised "his" hand from "his" sleeve and grasped her hand, "he" addressed her softly. Miss Su turned away as if it was too difficult to speak with him. Her heart was unsettled, and she was still a
little afraid. 'If perhaps it is a real male, though my body is not soiled by him, my reputation will be ruined.' Full of suspicion, she could not restrain herself. She opened her delicate mouth and emitted the tiny sounds of a maiden's voice:

(17) "Ovo, zhongyuan, this servant sees you aren't a person from the Huguang area, your accent and manner of speaking sound a little like someone from Yunnan. I beg you to reveal the secrets in your heart, honestly tell them to me, one by one.

(18) "A Yunnan accent is not so strange, but such a beautiful face and bearing are rare on this earth. So I guess that you aren't a male, but a female. Thus, you have hidden your original nature, and your speech is nothing but pretense. Hurry then and speak out all that's in your heart, all that's held back. Whatever you can't tell others, you must tell me from the start, item by item. If, zhongyuan, you don't confess, then I will go ask my parents to come, and to judge the clues that have lead me to my suspicions." After Suhua spoke, she looked at his expression. Li zhongyuan was shocked and upset, and "he" was afraid of being found out. "His" white face changed to red and "his" bright eyes grew hazy. "His" "maiden's heart" was in
disarray, and "he" was on the point of losing reason. "He" knew that "his" face was originally very beautiful, and that "his" looks couldn't fool a clever maiden's sharp, lovely eyes. 'I will use words to mend things. If she doesn't believe me, then I will beg her.' So the zhuangyuan's heart was mixed with both alarm and fear; "he" recovered his normal complexion and grasped the bride's embroidered clothes, saying:

(19) "Ava, wife how can you say such words?

(20) "I am an insignificant official who is basically just a common scholar. By chance I met my father-in-law, who raised my position in the world. One by one I received three first places in the examinations and I now have a position in the court. Were I a skirt-clad maiden, how could I dare be the son-in-law in the house of a great prime minister? What caused this to occur to you? How could the prime minister's son-in-law be a maiden in skirts?" After the zhuangyuan finished speaking, "he" laughed slightly. Miss Liang's face reddened slightly, and she seemed frozen. She again widened her eyes and stared at him. It was clearly the Miss, she couldn't have guessed wrong.' Once her mind was made up, she rose, and parted her red lips to slowly speak:
(21) "Zhuanqyuan, if will not say it outright yourself, let me say it for you. Heh, Li Zhuanqyuan, listen to my words."

(22) "This problem has arisen because the Emperor commanded you to marry. To save your virtue, you ran away to escape this calamity. You met Master Kang, and he took you in as his foster son. Relying on your knowledge and learning you gained the three positions and become an official. Let me reveal to you your true name. You were originally that elite woman of Yunnan, Meng Lijun." Miss Liang's words were not even fully spoken when the talented, scholarly Li Zhuanqyuan was nearly shocked to death. The peach-blossom cheeks immediately paled, the two willow-leaf eyebrows knitted together. In this moment of surprise and fear, the thought came to "him": 'The beautiful girl must be the resurrected Yingxue!

(23) 'Aya, yes, I will quickly reveal her real identity, too; why let her stand there railing so fiercely at me?

(24) 'If she isn't maiden Su Yingxue, then how could she know everything so clearly and in such detail? Moreover, when I dressed as a male, no one knew of it. How could Miss Liang ever know all this? This bride
must indeed be Miss Su, thus there will be no trouble, even if I tell the whole truth.' When Junyu had thought it through, "he" restrained "his" fear and misgivings. Tugging on Miss Liang's emerald sleeve, "he" began to speak out the details.¹⁶

(25) "Ava, Miss Liang, Miss Liang, didn't you say you wanted me to explain? So listen to me. The court commanded that a wedding be made with the Liu family, so the maiden of the Meng family ran off. Thus, you married in her stead. In order to preserve your own virtue along with Miss Meng, you jumped into the waters of Lake Kunming, to enter the netherworld. The Liang family [saved you and] took you in as their foster daughter, and in that way, you kept your life and were able to live in the imperial city. This is our wedding night, how can you ask me all these questions and bring up these secret matters? If you are Su Yingxue of the Su family, then I admit to being the Meng Lijun of Yunnan." When Miss Liang heard these words, she was excited and happy, yet hurt. Her delicate fingers pulled lightly on the cape's red sleeve, as she cried out in distress:

(26) "Ava, Zhuangyuan.

(27) "Now we needn't pretend with each other. This servant recognizes the master, and the master recognizes the servant
— but you should know that there is some difference between the two people's pretense. Heaven must surely pity us that we can meet again today, and tell of what happened while we were apart. Since ancient times, the walls have had ears, so we must speak softly, and not raise our voices." At the moment when the zhuangyuan heard the beautiful woman speak, "his" sorrow and joy overflowed. "His" eyebrows suddenly relaxed, and stepping forward, he quickly wrapped his red wedding cloak around the lovely maiden.

(28) "Ovo, my Maiden Su, today it is fated that we meet again.

(29) "Since my marriage destiny was decided by an arrow hitting the willow, I refused the honor of a marriage arranged by imperial command, so I painted a picture of my own face to leave as a keepsake, then dressed as a male and left home. Since I did not imagine Liu Kuibi to be a vulgar person, I recommended to my parents that you act in my stead. Who could know that in your heart you would be unwilling, and as a result would plunge into the clear waters, to give up your life. When I heard of this news on the outside, it really killed me. For I had taken a beautiful girl and in one day destroyed her life. I always thought that in this existence I would never see you again.
Who would know that today we would again be together, able to speak out the feelings we have had since parting. I really don't know why you left your old mother behind to commit suicide. Meeting again today is really too wonderful. You should speak out the truth in your heart." The zhuangyuan had spoken until the point of tears, and couldn't control them. They spilled like pearls. On hearing the words, the Young Miss's heart was about to break. Making a sorrowful sound, she put her long sleeve to her flower-like face. Pained, the zhuangyuan called to the Young Miss to speak out the thoughts of her inner heart. As the saddened Junyu sat beside her, Liang Suhua shyly and slowly spoke:

(30) "Oyo, Miss, ya:

(31) "Meeting each other today is so heart-rending. I want to completely bare my soul. From the day the arrow hit the cloak, when I saw the heroic young man, my feelings of love for him have never ceased, to the point of harming my nerves. Who would know that that very evening I had a strange dream. Among the flowers, the young man and I agreed to marry. In the dream I left determined to retain my virtue and vowed not to marry another. At whatever year you, Miss, would marry, I,
Su Yingxue would be with you together, as a member of the Huangfu household. But I never imagined I would meet with such a tragic fate. The general's family received a summons, and the entire family was finished. The imperial envoy, Qi Xiang, came as the go-between. But Miss, you wished to save yourself, wishing that I marry in your stead. I was originally unwilling to do so. But how could I endure the master's pleading and Madame's displeasure? Thus, I agreed to become a member of the Liu family. Secretly, I prepared a pair of scissors and entered the Liu doorway, intending at first to murder the Imperial Nephew. But I feared that this would result in disaster for Master's family. Thus, I rebuked him, then jumped into the lake to die. As it is, your life is spotless. How was I to know that after jumping from the tower to the water that I wouldn't expire? At the moment, there suddenly came a spirit wind which took me to the city of Guizhou. The wind had neither clouds nor mist; my body floated here and there, and when I fell to the beach I was was given new life. Fortunately, heaven sent an official's boat on which I met my foster mother, Madame Liang. After learning of my past, she took me in as her foster daughter. I accompanied her all the way until we arrived at the capital. I heard that the zhuangyuan's procession would pass this place.
Thus it was that my foster father saw that you were clearly a talented, worthy person. So they prepared the colored engagement tower.\(^18\) I didn't know about it until it was done. I thought over and over that if I was made to marry again, I would at worst simply die once more. But, that day, while napping, I had another dream. In the dream, a spirit from heaven spoke clearly to me.

(32) "Precious Miss, had I not received the spirit's words in the dream I would long since have taken my own life. What did the spirit say to me? The spirit said, 'Don't let your thoughts go wild for now and block your coming good fortune. You are just dealing with that old friend from in front of the make-up table. Eventually you will have a happy union, pre-arranged in a former life. It will be your third wedding that leads to a real marriage.'\(^19\) After the spirit spoke, he left, riding on a cloud. I awoke from the dream and, there within the bed-curtains, felt very excited and happy. I thought it would mean a chance to meet Huangfu Shaohua again, so for the time being, I listened to my parent's orders and waited for the wedding. After receiving the groom's gifts,\(^20\) I recognized a hairpin among them. I saw, moreover, that half of all the ornaments were yours. I also recalled that when I saw
your face from the lovely colored tower, I felt that your appearance was very much like that of Miss Meng. I further thought that you had planned to dress as a male, and so guessed it had to be Miss, in male disguise. So for the moment I put down the three layers of anger that had arisen in my throat. It is only tonight, sure enough, that we are able to meet and speak of endless, withheld feelings. How heart rending; so much pain! Such matters can only be kept inside, not revealed to others. And so this evening, I again meet up with this gentle Miss, in person, someone with three lifetimes of good fortune and countless blessings. Now that I have openly told you of my situation, Miss, will you please tell me yours? After leaving home, where did you go? How did you become a foster son of Mr. Kang?"

(33) When the zhuangyuan heard the whole story and the reasons for it, "he" was both gladdened and distressed, with tears falling. "His" white jade hands pulled on Su's clothes and "he" called her "Sister Ying" [thinking]: 'A person like you is truly rare. It's not easy for you to have this sort of strength of character and loyalty, you who in a dream made a marriage commitment as if it were very natural. Without verification, unexpectedly, and without regard
for your own life, you wished to honor this commitment. If you had just told me of the matter while I was still at home; I could never then have left behind the letter instructing my parents to have you marry in my stead. If not for heavenly providence saving you, then I would have unknowingly ended the life of a high-minded, loyal maiden. The world of outstanding virtuous women would certainly include you, with sighs of admiration, amazement, and joy. 21 I have but one wish -- and what would that be? That Huangfu Shaohua can become an official again someday and repay you for your benevolent behavior towards him. If you were not to meet Master Huangfu Shaohua again, then wouldn't it be disappointing to the souls in the dream? If Huangfu manages to escape death and hang on to life, the hope of the dream marriage can still be realized.'

(34) "A, Elder Sister Yingxue.

(35) "You ask me how I left home without telling anyone, I'll tell you what happened from beginning to end. Ronglan, like me, changed into male dress and we left home, just before dawn. I then changed my personal name to Junyu and my family name to Li. Now, I call Ronglan, Rongfa, "he" being my page. We two, master and servant, took to the road, traveling day and night
without rest, always very hurried and never well-rested. Rongfa fell ill from exhaustion. By the time we arrived in Guizhou, we had to stop at an inn and couldn't proceed.\textsuperscript{22} I did my best to doctor her myself, giving her medicine. But not only was Rongfa ill, we also encountered constant rains. I became a pitiful person, my spirits dashed, there in the inn.

(36) "I then met Kang Rousan, a person of Xianning county in the Huguang area. He had another name, Xin Zhen, and he was a jewelry merchant. Because of the rain, he was also stranded at that inn. He knocked on our door, and came in to visit and chat. Seeing that I was alone, he took pity on me and considered making me a foster son. As father and son, we could go on the road together, without fear of its hardships and dangers. In my state of distress, I was touched to meet a person that so cared for me; all I could do was kneel before him in the inn and accept him as my foster father. The following day the weather got better, so we whipped the animals on and headed back together to the Huguang area. In the home of Foster Father, we at last got a good rest.

(37) "The man's wife, nee Sun, had a daughter named Saijin who was still very young. Her husband had married into
the family, spending their money to buy an official position, by which he managed several shops. In addition, he was their household accountant, going by the name of Hua Jin. The Kang household was well-off. Master Kang had two concubines, named Rou Niang and De Jie. There was a little boy called Yuanlang, who was born by Rou Niang. In this household, the family lived in peace and harmony. In their home I was their foster 'son.' Master Kang was very good to me, treating me as if I were his own son. He put out money to buy me a low level governmental position, so that I was able to sit for the county exams, where I attained the first rank. My foster mother, however, was inclined to distrust people and never liked me very much. Fortunately, Foster Father was extremely fond of me. Rou Niang and De Jie took great care of me. They patched my worn clothes and made me new ones, and cooked very tasty food for me. By myself in a strange place, I had no one to rely on. So I was totally dependent on the kindness of these two aunts, and didn't feel alone. But after I passed the first level of examinations, my foster mother also became happy with me, and treated me like her own son.

(38) "Later, I went together with Saijin's husband to the capital for the exams. I must thank my benevolent
teacher, who in one day let me rise to the highest rank. Then before the colored engagement tower, I was chosen by a toss of the embroidered ball. At the time I felt a little worried. Why? Because I was concerned about later, when the wedding candles were lit. Wouldn't there be great trouble then? I never imagined that it would be you whom I would meet in the bridal suite. Old Heaven melded us together in a fake wedding. Throughout so many tiring and busy affairs, this person Meng Lijun has been able to protect her chastity, thanks also to heaven. I just hope to meet Huangfu Shaohua eventually, then report to the court. After that, I would have him reunite with his family, and then join with him in marriage. My father and mother regard you as their foster-daughter; so we two are like blood sisters. Though we will behave like husband and wife in front of others, behind their backs we will be as close as hands and feet. We will then be a couple who respect each other, and who will allow our foster parents to be happy about the match. In the future, if Master Huangfu can become an official, I can live together with you as wives of the same husband, with no distinctions at all between us. Speak not of distinguishing ranks: we are simply sisters of the same status. Now I have finished speaking out all that is in my heart. I will thus spend years together with
you." After speaking, Junyu was greatly saddened, "his" eyes dripping pearls, and "his" flower-face covered with tears.

(39) Miss Suhua, too, sighed heavily on hearing these words. With tearful eyes, she repeated over and over: "I wouldn't dare accept an equal position with you. Though today I am the prime minister's daughter, Miss, in our past relationship, I was a servant. So the boundary must be respected. Later, it was by fortune that I gained a position equal to yours. Miss, you pity me and are considerate about me to the extreme. How we address each other cannot be determined by age; so, Miss, you are senior and I am your junior. I will be the younger sister, even though by age I'm a few days older. I, Su Yingxue, will respect the previous proprieties and certainly cannot proudly and confidently be your equal. In spite of so much sorrow and hatred, we will speak no more of this matter. All that's left is happiness, and that happiness is today. We don't know by what workings of fate two acquaintances can meet again."26 As the Young Miss finished speaking, her tears dried. At these words, Li Mingtang was suddenly surprised. 'Strange, when I was in the examination quarters, I had a dream with phrases and words from the Weaving Maid.27 This time, maiden
Su also spoke the words, which are indeed the same as I had heard. Old Heaven's intention is quite clear, in allowing me to know ahead of time about this situation.'

(40) The zhuangyuan's heart naturally contained both sorrow and joy. Sitting side by side on the bed the two spoke of the various feelings and memories they experienced since their last parting. Only half the candles were left and the bell had already struck the third watch when they stood up together and, face to face removed their clothing and entered the quilts. With great happiness, Junyu said softly: "You may just take the pretense as real, as if I were actually a genuine male, for who would know why I am called 'Beautiful Gentleman'? It is already past midnight, and the light of the candles is lowering. Dear, dear, will you hurry and become husband and wife with me?" Miss Su giggled bashfully, and spoke very softly: "Miss, you shouldn't trick people anymore." After that, the two grasped hands and then prepared to sleep, the netting and the quilting smelling of orchids and musk. The pair slept on one pillow, upon which were embroidered Mandarin ducks. They were just like two lotuses blossoming from the same rootstalk. They spoke together until the fourth watch, when they began to
feel tired. Then they pulled up the covers to sleep. But in their dreams, it still seemed as if they were speaking of their feelings over their long parting. Falling asleep so late, the "spring night" seemed to them to be very short. When they got up the next morning the sun was already high and the shadows of the shrubs covered the courtyard. The husband and wife combed their hair and put on make-up in one mirror, and washed their faces together. Then slowly, step by step, they walked out the door of their room.

D. Analysis

1. Usages of the Communicative Registers

This section will discuss the usages of the various communicative registers in the above selection from ZSY and show, by example, how the interaction between these registers contributes to the creation of meaning in the text. Shifting between prose and verse is a major rhetorical feature of the text and is important for a number of reasons. Certain types of information tend to be imparted in the prose passages, which are uniformly very short throughout the scene (reflecting the tendency of the entire work). The prose passages focus reader attention on shifts in action and scene, orienting the reader in the midst of unfolding events. In other instances, the prose passages may be short speeches of various characters,
represented either in speech or inner monologue. Though brief, these speeches function to heighten reader attention by providing contrast in register texture. In one example (33-34), two brief speeches (cries of "Elder Sister") frame a long inner monologue in which Li/Meng is thinking of "his" feelings about Su Yingxue. In some instances, the prose passages serve to reiterate actions that have just been described in the verse passages. This reiteration (see the passage below concerning Li Mingtang closing the door), common in Suzhou tanci storytelling, serves, on one level, to draw attention to the shifting action in the course of shifting registers. In orally performed tanci, such reiteration often functions to aid in the transition from passages of song (the lyrics of which may not be fully understood by all audience members) to speech. This reiteration may be due to influences of oral performance on written tanci.31

In other cases, passages of the speech of characters in prose, shift, after a line or two into verse, continuing the character's speech in that register. This technique on one level provides variety in texture, and on another allows the reader (or listeners) to ease into the verse passages, which feature denser language than the prose.

This feature of prefacing passages of verse with snippets of prose is especially prominent in the inner monologues and may serve as ready signals for shifts to
inner monologue. Again, this mixture of textures may be related to oral conventions, as it is common in Suzhou tanci and other Chinese oral performance traditions to preface singing roles with a few words or lines in speech, which aid in alerting audiences to coming transitions.\(^{32}\)

Passages of ci verse make up the vast majority of the text. Verse passages provide detailed descriptions of scenes, describe character interaction, and importantly in this episode, serve as vehicles for the speech (in verse) and inner-monologues of the characters. In many instances the verse passages comment on short speeches made in prose, inserted in contrast to the verse lines. Moreover, the most emotionally moving moments are presented in verse.

A strategy inviting reader interest is that of shifting between simple narration and represented speech and inner-monologues of the characters. In the course of these interactions, there is also opportunity for the reiteration of past events, namely, the scene in which the characters respectively relate their adventures since leaving the Meng household.\(^{33}\) This reiteration of events in earlier chapters (from the point of view of the narrator) may seem redundant, yet on one level functions to remind readers of what has gone on before. More importantly, by repeating this information in great detail in the mouths of the characters (and sometimes in the inner-monologues), the narrator creates a situation in which the reader must regard
the information as personal stories of the characters. These stories take on emotional meaning as readers identify with the characters, who reconstruct and distill the events of their lives in terms of concerns and fears over their fates (Mullen 1992:269-278). As will be shown, the shifting between prose and verse passages in these sections contributes to this reconstitution of action formerly presented by the narrator, into meaningful personal narratives. In the following paragraphs, specific examples of the function and interaction of the communicative registers employed in the text are discussed.

The scene presented above in translation is set off from the other parts of that chapter by a host of discourse markers which, taken together, form a frame of narration which Hanan and Idema, in discussing the vernacular short story, have respectively called the "simulated context" of professional storytelling or the "storyteller's manner." A prose passage (1) begins the episode with an initial "Hua shuo . . . " ("As the story goes") (Chen 1982:226), marked "*" in the translation. After the bridal suite scene ends, a new phase of the story is announced by a "Que shuo . . . " ("Let's now talk about") (Chen 1982:233), marking the temporal transition to the following morning.34

At the beginning of the episode translated above, a brief prose passage sets the scene, noting participants, locale and actions which have just commenced. The register
then shifts to narrative verse, with a description of the sounds, colors, and actions associated with the several stages of making the marriage bows, in which "the lovely young woman and the talented young man" were "just like a husband and wife; naturally compatible, and without flaw" (2). As the action proceeds, the zhuangyuan steps forward to remove the veil, leaving the bride's face partially obscured. The narration shifts to the character's thoughts, as Li/Meng says to "himself" (2): "Goodness! It seems like I have seen this bride somewhere before. The beautiful eyes are extremely familiar. Why?" The narrator then supplies the comment that "he" (Li/Meng) forgot that "he" was in a wedding. This implies that in such a context, the groom does not yet have the license to gaze at the bride. This observation is strengthened by an ensuing passage of inner monologue by Li/Meng: "'Though I wish to look, I can't keep staring at her so long.'" As the couple prepare to drink the wedding wine and partake of the food, however, Liang Suhua sneaks an appropriate -- though daring -- peek at the groom. The narration then shifts to her thoughts: "'It's clearly the face of Miss, it's too close to be true; / her cheeks seem just like peach blossoms.'"

After the wine, Li Mingtang leaves "his" bride alone in the chamber and goes out to the banquet, held for the men. The female guests visit Liang Suhua for a moment, then sit chatting in the parlor. The narrator, still in the register
of narrative verse, declares that she will speak neither of
the banquet nor of the women's drinking, but will "speak now
only of Miss Liang Suhua in the bridal suite" (3).

A detailed description (3) is given of Miss Liang's
appearance as she sits with her maids at attention, waiting
for Li Mingtang to return. Outside she hears the noises of
someone moving in and hears a voice, which she identifies as
that of Meng Lijun's maid, Ronglan: "'Aya, how strange!
That is Ronglan's way of speaking! . . . '" The narrator
then reports that a maid enters. Here (5), the register
shifts briefly, the words of the speech being given in
prose. There is an immediate shift back to verse (6) as the
narrator comments on Liang's thoughts: "When Miss Suhua
heard these words, her heart was both excited and happy.
The way of speaking was the same, and the name similar, so
this showed that Rongfa was Ronglan." This passage is then
followed directly by Liang Suhua's thoughts: "'As for this
present circumstance, there is certainly no question at all,
it is indeed Miss Meng . . . '"

In passage (7) the focus shifts to the banquet and the
inner thoughts of Minister Meng. At the end of his long
inner monologue in which he mourns his fate at losing both a
potential son-in-law (such as the new zhuangyuan, Li
Mingtang) and his daughter, Meng Lijun, the narrator
directly addresses the character: "What, Minister Meng? Is
there nothing else in your heart you wish to tell others?"
Complying with this prompting, the minister continues, "'Today I came here to join in this wedding banquet. Seeing the situation, I can think only of these heart-rending matters, and my tears want to fall.'" The focus then shifts to Li/Meng's thoughts, which are only described by the narrator: "The zhuangyuan felt . . . as if he was seated on a chair of needles."

After the banquet Li Mingtang goes with Minister Liang, "his" father-in-law, to the inner compartments to visit with Madame Liang. Soon the tinkling of jade is heard and Liang Suhua arrives. Both Minister and Madame Liang speak in one voice: "You needn't." As the couple leave, Suhua going first, it is Madame Liang who orders the maids to bring candles to escort them to the bridal suite. When Li Mingtang arrives at the wedding suite he is seated in the outer room, while Liang Suhua is inside being prepared for the night. The reader is informed that the outer room is "the place where the groom sat while the bride's toilet was made, right before the entance to the inner chamber." The narrator addresses the reader directly, "Just look -- the bridal suite was decorated just like a fairy's living quarters . . ." In mid-sentence, however, the point of view shifts to that of Li Mingtang: "... tall candles aglow against a green window screen and quilts embroidered with hibiscus blooms. This view was slightly obscured by the bed curtains . . . it was difficult to see clearly inside . . ."
As Li sits alone, the readers are presented with a long inner monologue in which the new zhuangyuan thinks over how to deal with the bride, who will soon find out that her husband is a woman. Li finally dismisses the maids with a command in represented speech, then "... shut the red door behind them and entered the bridal suite (10)."

As the scene moves inside the bridal suite, the register shifts from verse to prose (11) and the action of closing the door is rephrased: "Now I'll tell of Li Mingtang as he closed the door of the room, then took a candle from in front of the window and entered into the midst of the hanging embroidered curtains." This use of rephrasing, as in this instance of the "double-door," has parallels in orally performed Suzhou tanci.39

Shifting to verse (12), the narrator adopts Li Mingtang's point of view to describe Liang Suhua passively sitting by the bed. Next follow several passages of verse and occasional prose in which Li Mingtang begins to recognize Liang Suhua as Su Yingxue. Beginning in prose (13), the inner monologue shifts to lyric, a pattern common throughout the rest of the episode:

(13) [prose] "'Oyo! How strange! I say, this face is extremely familiar. Indeed, is seems just like that of Su Yingxue.

(14) [verse] 'It's indeed odd that the face of Miss Liang appears exactly like that of Su Yingxue! ...'"
This realization, made through inner monologue, is followed by Li's attempt to hold Liang's hand. Turning away, Liang/Su thinks for a moment, then speaks out (17), suggesting that the zhuangyuan's manner of speaking "sounds a little like someone from Yunnan." Unlike in an oral performance, where the storyteller could imitate a Yunnanese or Huguang accent, the reader must take the character's word for granted.

Liang then calls for Li Mingtang to "Hurry then and speak out all that's in your heart, all that's held back." This request, made in the most intimate of settings, begins a series of references to the act of voicing inner thoughts and feelings which pervades the rest of the episode.40 Noting these self-referential utterances is important in understanding why the passage may be alluring to Chinese audiences. Not only was free speech between elite males and females normally proscribed, but speech was highly monitored in situations involving persons of unequal status.41 Truly speaking one's minds in any but a very narrow range of situations would invite catastrophe to self and family. Thus, situations in which persons attempt to evince the truth from each other reverberate with tensions surrounding verbalization in modern, real-life situations.

As the scene progresses, Li/Meng still continues in "his" efforts to deceive Su Yingxue, but the bride
ultimately takes the initiative, presenting the groom with facts about "his" own story, and declaring that if Li Mingtang won't speak out the truth, she will do it for "him" (21). Finally (27), through a weave of spoken and inner speech, combined with observations by the narrator, the deceit is clear to both parties. Beginning with a short prose passage (28) then shifting to verse (29), Meng Lijun recapitulates the events of the archery contest which initialed the fateful events of each woman. Liang responds with a lengthy speech in a similar format (30, 31), then recapitulates the action up to the day of the engagement event in the colored tower.

She then tells Meng in detail of the dream (32) in which she was visited by the spirit soon after seeing Huangfu Shaohua in the archery contest. Su quotes the spirit as informing her that, as arranged in her former existence, "It will be your third wedding that leads to a real marriage." Continuing to recapitulate information that the reader is already aware of, Su speaks of how she grew suspicious of the identity of the groom after finding the ornaments among the gifts from the groom's family.

Finally, she states emotionally that "It is only tonight, sure enough, that we are able to meet and speak of endless withheld feelings (32)." Whereafter she asks a series of questions to elicit information (again, that which the reader already knows) about what happened to Meng Lijun.
The reply is a long narration by Meng Lijun about her adventures on the way to the capital (35-38).\textsuperscript{42} Considerable time is spent on the happenings in the Kang household, discussed in greater detail below. Again, the information being summarized is already known to the reader and the majority of it is given in narrative verse. After discussing their respective social ranks, the narrator completes the episode (40), allowing each character one more speech as the pair speak intimately under the quilts. Li/Meng playfully asks if "his" bride-to-be will, "hurry and become husband and wife with me?" The response being, "Miss, you shouldn't trick people anymore." The scene ends with a very intricate description, all in verse conveyed in the narrator's voice, in which the senses of smell, touch, and sight are evoked. Over and over again reference is made to their intimate speech, which continued even in their dreams: "But in their dreams, it still seemed as if they were speaking of their feelings over their long parting."

Though still in the \textit{ci} register, the night-time scene shifts to late morning. The couple arises, make their toilet together, and walk out of the marriage suite door, into another realm.

In sum, the episode has employed a mixture of narrative registers and strategies. Of basic importance is the omniscient voice of the narrator, framed by the stock phrases of the "storyteller's manner." Register shifts are
commonly made from prose to lyric, the lyric passages dominating for both descriptions and speeches. There is significant use of inner speech, represented speech, and interjections such as aya (discussed below). Speeches are sometimes elicited by questions from other characters or even the narrator. In two instances (2, 9) the narrator invites the reader to observe the scene with her ("Just see"), then directs her (our) gaze into the wedding suite, shifting mid-sentence to a character's point of view. On one occasion, shifting between scenes is facilitated by the technique of rephrasing the action of a door being closed.

Significant use is made of information that is already known to the audience, but is reemployed to create suspense and psychological tension in the delaying of the final recognition. The words of the spirit quoted by Su Yingxue (32) are an example of the technique of reported speech, quite common in ZSY.43

E. Performance of Schemas of Status and Gender

To keep from being "discredited" (Goffman 1963:73-91) by the discovery that she is a female, Meng Lijun attempts to pass as a male of increasingly high social status by donning gender-specific clothing, assuming a variety of male roles, employing patterns of speech, movement, and attitude associated with elite males.44 If her perfidious attempt at "boundary crossing" (Mann 1991:222) fails, she would not be
able to restore the name of the Huangfu family and realize her marriage destiny. She also runs the great risk of destroying herself and her entire family.

Examining the interaction of the communicative registers used in conveying the episode in light of the constructions of gender and class will reveal, in part, how psychological tension is evoked in the reader by the manipulation of social expectations of behavior. In the course of their deceptions, both Meng and Su have changed social positions. By an outward shift in gender, the "gifted maiden" Meng Lijun is able to enter the examination process and become the zhuangyuan, Li Mingtang. This position allows her to appropriate male culture and the resulting power at even greater social heights. Su Yingxue shifts her identity to that of Liang Suhua, a high minister's daughter. Her climb on the social ladder is aided by fate, with a pragmatic blend of subservience and assertiveness (Wolf 1974). To different extents each must learn the performance of new languages and modes of behavior for the deceptive roles they have assumed.

Gender role distinctions and differences are apparent in the first scenes of the episode. The pair both bow together before Su's parents -- an unusual act in that females usually married into the male household. Once in the marriage suite, it is the groom, Li Mingtang who steps
forward to remove the veil, "in one flick," from Liang Suhua's face (2).

In the same scene, though Li feels it is improper to stare for long at the bride, Liang/Su must conform to an even more rigid regimen of propriety than the groom, using her shapely "phoenix eyes" only to peek at "him." Doing so, she decides that the groom's face seems feminine: "'It's clearly the face of Miss, it's too close to be true; her cheeks seem just like peach blossoms.'" Her emotions in a bind, she does not know whether to be "shocked or happy," though she does feel like "speaking out everything in her heart," a theme, as noted, that runs throughout the episode.

Interjections, which Key (1975:35) claims can have masculine or feminine associations, are frequent in the speeches throughout the episode, many of which begin with mild expressions of surprise such as "aya" or "oyo." On one level such expressions seem to contribute to enlivening the narrative. Though I do no more than suggest it here, the high frequency of these interjections throughout the entire story might be considered in light of gender of the main characters, author(s), and intended audience.

After a glimpse at the bride, Li Mingtang then leaves for the banquet, where the men eat and drink, while the women chat and drink in the women's quarters. Thus, both groups involve themselves in conventional gender-specific
behavior, representing two very different spheres of traditional Chinese life. The juxtaposition of these scenes -- and the irony of Li/Meng's attendance at the male banquet, could be interpreted as an instance of coding, carrying messages of dissatisfaction with the confined life of the women's quarters (Radner and Lanser 1993:13).

In the banquet scene (8), the disguised Meng Lijun is so moved by the sight of her despairing father, to whom "he" cannot speak, that "his tears were about to fall, so 'he' pretended to lower 'his' head, and straighten 'his' hat. 'He' didn't dare express 'his' inner torments . . ." These gestures, made to cover a "feminine" response in a situation where Meng fears being discredited, reinforce her image as a male through bodily movements and are part of her strategy in the attempt to "pass" as a male (Goffman 1963:73-91). Key (1975:111-112) notes that there is a tendency for males to tilt the head forward in certain contexts, while females tend to tilt to the side. Though such kinesics can be culturally-bound, some traits, Key suggests, seem to be cross-cultural. At any rate, the impression given in the text is that Meng Lijun is appropriating rather sophisticated male movements into her deception. Moreover, she overcomes her filial impulses by forcing herself to talk with the other guests, indicating her competency in speaking in a social context dominated wholly by males.
The young married couple again (9) bow to the parents as they bid them good night, underlining the fact that the two are not "on their own" but very much bound to the rules of propriety within a large family and the larger social order. The maids act as servants throughout the episode, always nearby and on call. They bring candles and tea and eventually stand unwillingly at attention (10). Though offering service and company, their presence implicitly regulates the bride's behavior (9), even at her bedside, and they are not dismissed until Li enters the bridal suite.49

As Li enters (12), he sees the bride in a stylized feminine posture, "sitting in a chair, leaning against the bed, her head lowered, her face like a flower," with make-up applied in a gender-coded manner: "On her eyebrow was a touch of emerald powder; there was light red paint on her lips and her cheeks were the color of sunset. With a somewhat bashful look, and in charming silence, she sat there clad in silks embroidered with phoenixes."50 It is probably a cultural preference that this posture "worthy of praise" and face of the beauty, "truly loveable," are selected for description over physical traits likely to be noticed in western descriptions of voluptuous brides. The phoenix (feng), of course, is a familiar symbol for the feminine in China.

The dialogue, consisting of both inner monologues and verbalized speeches, that constitutes the rest of the
episode have what Key (1975:35-36) describes as an "antiphonal" structure. What is of interest is that the presentation gives approximately equal space to both speakers. Key would argue that it is males who usually speak, that "Men do not sit quietly and listen to women talk." Granting that cultural differences exist, such a statement is probably in general true of traditional elite Chinese culture in which women were expected to defer to males of rank, despite pronouncements by mid-Qing scholars on male and female equality (Mann 1991:207-212). If so, then the passage takes on a somewhat ironic effect in that while Meng Lijun is playing the role of an elite male, as a woman she is also familiar with the roles of listening in her actual gender/status group.

Another aspect of the antiphonal dialogue between the two is that it provides a vehicle for establishing the positive identity of each woman. It is necessary for each to clear up the misrepresentations they have made to the other, recalling past roles and suggesting new ones. As Li Mingtang declares (20), still attempting to further the deception, "... Were I a skirt-clad maiden, how could I dare be the son-in-law in the house of a great prime minister?" Goffman (1963:62-72) has stressed the need for the construction of "biographies" in the process of misrepresentation. Here, the women must create narratives about themselves which will prove to the other they are who
they are. First, however, Liang Suhua assertively provides Li/Meng with details of "his" past, beginning with the escape from the marriage to Liu Kuibi (22):

"To save your virtue you ran away to escape this calamity. You met Master Kang, and he took you in as his foster son. Relying on your knowledge and learning, you gained the three positions and become an official. Let me reveal to you your true name."

Li Mingtang, realizing that the jig is up -- and relieved that Liang seems to really be Su Yingxue -- replies with similar details of Su's past (25):

... The court commanded that a wedding be made with the Liu family, so the maiden of the Meng family ran off. Thus, you married in her stead. In order to preserve your own virtue along with Miss Meng, you jumped into the waters of Lake Kunming, to enter the netherworld. The Liang family [saved you and] took you in as their foster daughter, and in that way, you kept your life and were able to live in the imperial city.

Su then calls on Li/Meng to tell "his" story, to "tell of what happened while we were apart" (27). Upon hearing her request, the zhuangyuan envelopes Su in a red cloak and proceeds to apologize for creating circumstances in which Su
would be forced to marry Liu Kuibi (29): "When I heard of this news on the outside, it really killed me. For I had taken a beautiful girl and in one day destroyed her life." Li/Meng then suggests they each tell their stories, maneuvering Su to speak first. Yingxue relates the major incidents in her experience: her marriage to Liu, her attempt at suicide, her rescue by and adoption by Madame Liang, and the preparations for her latest marriage. She then shifts her attention to the matter of Huangfu Shaohua and the dream of her engagement to him, as well as her feelings of anger over the arranged marriage to the new zhuangyuan. She then implores Li/Meng to tell "his" own story of leaving home and becoming a foster "son" of Mr. Kang.

Li/Meng prefices "his" story by addressing Liang/Su as "Elder Sister" (35) with continued apologies for the Liu wedding and praise for her virtuous conduct in light of her "engagement" to Huangfu Shaohua. Li/Meng also expressed the hope that someday Liang/Su's "dream marriage can be realized." "He" then tells "his" story after leaving home, going into detail about meeting Mr. Kang in the inn, being taken in as a foster son, and finally taken to Kang's home, where a position in the examination hall is obtained for "him" with bribes.

The structure of the Kang household, an extended family, is described in great detail. There is emphasis on
the good relations among the women of the household, particularly between the two concubines Rou Niang and De Niang who care for the new family member. The narrator also notes the stereotypical attitude of Kang's wife towards the new mouth to feed in the family -- one of suspicion (until "he" passes the county examinations). This ideal picture of a husband sharing a home with awife and two concubines is almost a foreshadowing of the household eventually to be occupied by Huangfu Shaohua, Meng Lijun (who eventually becomes head wife), Su Yingxue, and Liu Yanyu in the ending to ZSY supplied by Liang Desheng -- though Liu Yanyu's engagement to Huangfu is unknown to either Meng or Su at this time.

Once identities are established and autobiographies updated, what Johnson calls "the structure of subordination and dominance" must be negotiated and finalized (1985:52-57; Mann 1991:219-220; Watson 1991). Not only must they agree on roles in their present "marriage," but more importantly on roles each will adopt (or at least promise to) as wife/concubine to Huangfu Shaohua. As Liang Suhua says (27), right at the point where they first reveal themselves to each other, "Now we needn't pretend with each other. This servant recognizes the master, and the master recognizes the servant . . ." References to status appear throughout the personal narratives -- particularly Liang/Su's claim that she is already engaged to Huangfu -- a
claim Li/Meng must deal with in order to succeed in "his" charade. At the end of "his" personal narrative (38), the topic of status is explicitly broached by Li/Meng:

My father and mother regard you as their foster daughter; so we two are like blood sisters . . . In the future, if Master Huangfu can become an official, I can live together with you as wives of the same husband, with no distinction at all between us. Speak not of distinguishing ranks; we are simply sisters of the same height.

Meng's polite offer of equal status is properly (in the context of the times) turned down by Su with the explanation (39) that:

I wouldn't dare accept an equal position with you. Though today I am the prime minister's daughter, Miss, in our past relationship, I was a servant. So the boundary must be respected. Later, it was by fortune that I gained a position equal to yours . . . I will be the younger sister, even though by age I'm a few days older.

Satisfied with this response, Meng Lijun does not raise the subject of rank again, implying that her original position is properly left intact.

In the final passage (40) the "husband and wife" "face to face removed their clothing and entered the quilts,"
sharing the same bed and pillow together. The setting of
the marriage bed, the prior images of Li/Meng clad in male
clothing and Su Yingxue in female robes, and the delicate
description of the couple speaking softly and intimately
through the night with clasped hands within the scented
netting combine to create a sensuous, albeit ambiguous,
scene of the wedding night. The references to the orchids
and musk perfume, the mandarin ducks on the pillows, the
phrase "like two lotuses blossoming from the same
rootstalk," and the term "spring night," are all symbols of
traditional heterosexual marriage. Their inclusion here
helps create a playful irony, as does Li Mingtang's
suggestion to his bride Liang Suhua that, "You may just take
the pretense as real, as if I were actually a genuine male,
for who would know why I am called 'Beautiful Gentleman'?
It is already past midnight . . . dear, will you hurry and
become husband and wife with me?" Su answers with a bashful
giggle, softly replying: "Miss, you shouldn't trick people
anymore." Thus, the scene ends by re-invoking the patterns
of gender and status construction in a setting where fears
over uncertainties of identity have just been de-fused
through the use of antiphonal narratives given
problematically on an equal or near equal plane. This
sharing of the conversational "floor" (Edelsky 1993) between
persons with differing -- and in this case ambiguous --
status in a hierarchy of power relations characteristic of
Chinese society, suggests what Tannen (1993a) has pointed out is a certain intimate solidarity within unequal power relations. Each side knows clearly their place in the former scheme of things, but in this unusual situation with so much at stake, the ambiguity of their positions must be clearly -- if only temporarily -- demarcated, for there is no place in the system for permanent equality.⁵³
1. The Guangxu (Second Year) version of the story (c. 1877),
stored in the Suzhou University Library (book number 703609),
can be taken as one example of a Qing dynasty text. Published
by the Shidetang Printing House, the print is arranged in
vertical columns read from right to left. The overall
physical quality of the work is rather poor, possibly
indicating a low-budget printing -- though it is better than
that in some other editions. The Chinese graphs are artlessly
cut and of varying sizes. The crude illustrations of eight
of the main characters, which appear at the beginning of the
book may have been copied from an earlier edition. No
punctuation is used in the text, except spaces which separate
the lines of verse (in seven- or three-character groups). The
preface by Hou Zhi (in a cursive print style) is of somewhat
better quality and again, may have been based on, or perhaps
reproduced from, another edition. Each of the twenty volumes
is 110 mm by 170 mm and number about one hundred pages each.

2. The "As the story goes," or "Huashuo," is typical of the
"storyteller's manner," popular in late Qing vernacular
fiction, as discussed in the first chapter.

3. This is an instance (see below) where a common rhetorical
feature of traditional vernacular fiction ("Just see . . .")
helps the author reach out to the reader, drawing attention
to the present action.

4. It is not clear exactly who was watching the opera. If
it was held in a garden pavilion, the women could possibly
observe it from the balcony of the women's quarters, while the
men could watch from below.

5. The phrase "on the right" is important, in that it seems
to be spoken from a narrative perspective outside the story.
On the level of the story there is no clear situatedness of
the rooms nor have the readers previously been given any
direct comment about the rooms.

6. Again, the male pronouns in this passage refer to Meng
Lijun/Li Mingtang.

7. It seems that Minister Liang, his wife, and Li Mingtang
went to the old couples' room at about the same time, though
Madame Liang is not mentioned until the following line.
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8. Literally "Jing Shi," or "of the Jing lineage," referring to her own family name.

9. Li Junyu, or Li Mingtang/Meng Lijun.

10. "Just look" (dan jian) is a literal rendering of a common phrase in the "storyteller's manner."

11. In this description of the room, the narrator calls for the reader to look through Li Mingtang's eyes to view the partially secluded wedding suite through the open door.

12. Li Mingtang/Meng Lijun is still operating on the thesis that she will clear the Huangfu family name and marry Shaohua.

13. This passage begins with, "The story goes that . . ." or "Huashuo . . ." [which I have rendered differently here than elsewhere], a marker of the "storyteller's manner" discussed in Chapter II.

14. The phoenix motif is, of course, a symbol of the feminine in Chinese culture.

15. Literally fengliu, a term having many different meanings in different contexts. Here it seems to mean something like "knowingly suitable".

16. In these sentences, the word xi, or "fine, intricate, detailed," has been translated as "detail." As noted elsewhere, the idea of xi is important in Jiangnan culture.

17. Guizhou is presently the name of a province in southwest China.

18. The building of the tower (cailou), as mentioned above, is also a metaphor for marriage.

19. The words of the spirit-voice refer to the false marriages of Su Yingxue to Liu Kuibi, Li Mingtang, and finally her "real" marriage to Huangfu Shaohua, which also involves Meng Lijun and Liu Yanyu. Despite what some commentators (Guo 1961c; Zhou Liang 1990) have suggested, it appears that Chen Duansheng did indeed plan for Meng Lijun to participate in the co-marriage and this was not simply an idea concocted by the women who completed the work, Liang Desheng and Hou Zhi.

20. The groom's side of the marriage contract customarily sent a series of gifts.

21. I have translated lienu, outstandingly chaste women recorded in official Chinese histories, as "virtuous women."
22. Needing rest from the hardships of travel then stopping in an inn where evil or fortuitous events take place is a common theme in Suzhou tanci, as well as in some vernacular stories.

23. The idea of a man marrying into a woman's family, which happened occasionally in some regions of China, is played on in the storyteller's version in Chapter V.

24. The concubines, respectively, are called "Gentle Wife" and "Virtuous Sister."

25. The lowest rung on the ladder to officialdom is xiucai, which Meng attained at the county level.

26. The negotiation over status is described here, as well as in Chapter V (in the context of the storytellers' version).

27. The story of the Cowherd from earth and the Weaving Maid from the heavens, who are united on a bridge of magpies once each summer, is a famous and widespread Chinese folktale.

28. The "Lijun" of Meng Lijun literally means "Beautiful Gentleman."

29. Flower imagery (Van Gulik 1961:275, 277) is sometimes associated with female genitalia in traditional Chinese expressive media.

30. The phrase "hao si lianhua pingdi sheng" is similar to the common simile pingdilian, "twin lotus flowers on one stalk," which means a devoted married couple.

31. As noted earlier, the relation of written tanci to any known styles of oral storytelling are not clear.

32. In performances of Suzhou tanci, for instance, performers also signal shifts between speaking and singing by picking up their instruments.

33. This sort of reiteration is very common in Suzhou tanci and related storytelling genres, as well as Chinese vernacular fiction.

34. Though the framing devices in this chapter, especially the beginning couplets suggesting the themes to be developed, are available for reading (as is the entire text), the reader can choose how much she wishes to read in a particular sitting (as Poe (1978) noted in "Philosophy of Composition"), aided by transitions in the text which provide convenient opportunities for cessation or resumption of reading. (A rhetorical effect of these pauses is to increase anticipation, enticing the
reader to continue.) This differs from the situation of live storytelling performance where such transitions provide the performers with opportunities to continue or halt their narration.

35. Note that in the storyteller's version only the "harmonious meal" is eaten in the wedding suite.

36. Do to lack of punctuation, this passage can alternately be interpreted as being spoken by the narrator.

37. This sort of very short speech is similar to passages of dialogue in Zhongzhouyun (a form of "official's dialect" described in the next chapter) in the storyteller's version which are generally very short.

38. In the Suzhou storyteller's version, Yuan inserts a long digression about how women past and present use make-up.

39. In performed Suzhou tanci there is great stress on the completion of actions -- especially the shutting of doors, replacing the lids to tea cups, and even replacing the tops of the wooden buckets used as bed-pans in traditional Jiangnan homes. These actions are often described then rephrased in various ways at junctures between scenes. This technique may aid listeners in following the lengthy and often complicated plots.

In my fieldwork, I have observed that examples of "closing actions" are often given by storytellers or pingtan aficionados to illustrate the concept of xi (elaborate detail), an important aesthetic concept in storytelling and in Jiangnan expressive culture, and specifically in Suzhou storytelling (Zuo 1982:84). If a performer forgets to have a character complete one of these actions, he or she will certainly be reminded of it by listeners at break time -- a good performer may well turn such an oversight into a joke later in the narration.

40. In the analysis section of Chapter V I have included references to Chinese attitudes towards speaking out inner feelings in the presence of others.

41. Van Gulik (1961:248-249, for example) cites numerous Confucianist proscriptions against male and female conversation.

42. The placement of this sub-narrative at this point in the rising action seems to build suspense by delaying the action. It is thus similar to the inserted narratives used in a similar part of the plot in Yuan Xiaoliang's performance (see Chapter V).
43. See Babcock (1977) for the metanarrative function of such speech.

44. Goffman's notion of becoming discredited is basically that the projection of self presented to the world becomes undermined in any variety of ways.

45. Mann (1991:209), in reviewing the works of mid-Qing commentators on the nature of marriage and the roles of women in society as represented in the classics, claims that:

On careful reading, then, the Li chi could be interpreted to emphasize distinctions and difference more than hierarchy, dominance, or submission. A proper marriage was arranged and celebrated to underscore gender differences and to emphasize the complementary and separate responsibilities of man and woman in the conjugal relationship. Marriage was the primary social bond demonstrating "righteousness," or "propriety" (i), of each distinctive human role. Like all primary relationships, marriage required deference and submission (wives are to husbands as sons are to fathers and subjects to rulers). But the Li chi stressed that husband and wife interact in harmony, and it implied that a filial son would learn how to establish a warm and responsible relationship with his father, not by observing his mother's deference, but by watching his parent's loving interaction . . . ."

46. The opera performance, as noted, may be available for viewing by both groups if viewed by the women from a balcony in the women's quarters. In other words, though the locus of viewing/reception might differ, the performance in the pavilion may have been available to both gender groups for appreciation.

47. Mann (1991:205), commenting on the "conversations" of male writers in the Mid-Qing on women's roles in society, notes that "Like the Victorians, mid-Ch'ing writers valorized the woman's role as wife, manager, and guardian of the 'inner apartments.' In fixing the place of wives in the domestic sphere, they also sought to fix the fluidity of social change that threatened to erode the boundaries defining their own respectability. In questioning classical conventions, they simultaneously reasserted those same conventions." Chen Duansheng, despite presenting characters that "cross boundaries" and "discredit the moral code for women" (see Ch'en 1974:24-243;Ch'en 1959:63-64), at least implicitly reaffirms some conventions of the traditional order, including co-marriages.

49. This instance of Chen Duansheng's sensitivity to the servants coded (Radner and Lanser 1993) weariness while standing at attention might suggest that, unlike some elite women of the period, she regarded these people as "human" (Mann 1991:22). This presence of the servants is utilized more fully in the storyteller's version, with Su Yingxue's threats to call the servants if Meng Lijun further misbehaves.

50. Use of make-up, especially facial powder, by males was common during certain periods in traditional China, though fell out of favor by the late imperial period except among certain entertainers (Hinsch 1993:55). During my stay in Suzhou, I observed that it was common for bridegrooms in the Jiangnan region to wear rouge and lipstick as part of the wedding costume.

51. See note Mann's quote in the note above. Among the dozens of storytellers I interviewed in Suzhou and surrounding areas in 1991-1992, in each case of a gender-mixed pair, the male would dominate the conversations. Moreover, the male would invariably be the shangshou or lead storyteller in a performance. Women take the shangshou role only when they perform with other women.

52. See Van Gulik (1961:48, 109, 163, 274, 302) and Hinsch (1993) for comments on the nature of what Van Gulik terms "Sapphism" among traditional Chinese women. While it would not be difficult to give a reading to this scene in terms of a homosexual dimension — thus extending the possibilities for manipulating the frames of gender-coding — information on that aspect of life in the women's quarters is still scant and inconclusive enough to prevent more than raising the possibility of such a phenomena in this scene here.

53. There may be other interpretations of the wedding night activities. The various symbols and descriptions of the interactions in bed may have coded "feminist messages" — as might the entire work — that would have been more apparent to contemporary women readers. See Chapter V for additional comments.
CHAPTER IV
SUZHOU TANCI AND
THE MODERN MENG LIJUN

This chapter begins the second section of the dissertation concerning the orally performed art of Suzhou tanci. Like chapters II and III, the underpinning of this and the following chapter are the theories of performance folkloristics, relevant to oral and orally-related performances and texts, outlined in Chapter I. The present chapter provides contextual information on the Meng Lijun story and introduces the art of Suzhou tanci storytelling, stressing the registers of communication. For comparison with the ZSY story, there is also an outline of the entire plot of the performance version. The next chapter (Chapter V) consists of a translation/interpretation of a Suzhou tanci version of the "Two Women Marry" episode.

A. Socio-historical Context of the Modern Meng Lijun.

The historical center of Suzhou tanci is the ancient city of Suzhou (Soochow), located northeast of Hangzhou on the Grand Canal, about an hour by train from modern Shanghai. Suzhou was the capital of the Wu Kingdom in the fifth century B.C. and remained an important political,
in importance with the rise of Shanghai during the late 19th century. Known as a pleasure center famous for its beautiful women, the Suzhou area produced a disproportionately large number of high-ranking scholars in the late imperial period, and was a favorite haunt of literati in the Ming and Qing dynasties.¹

The Suzhou dialect is in the Wu branch of the Chinese language family. As of the late 1980s there were nearly eighty million speakers of Wu dialects (Ramsey 1987:87), and approximately 1,820,000 speakers of Suzhou dialect (Ye 1988:2). In the Jiangnan region, Suzhou dialect is often described by both men and women as being ruan (soft), and sometimes said to sound sweetest when spoken by women. Accents of male speakers are sometimes characterized as effeminate, even by native speakers. A common saying in Suzhou is that, "A Suzhou couple fighting speak more softly than a Ningbo couple whispering sweet-nothings to each other."² Suzhou dialect has nine speech tones, including the entering tone (ru sheng). Pronunciation, grammar, placement of question particles, and lexicon differ markedly from Mandarin.³

Professional storytelling is woven into the fabric of traditional culture which helps form Suzhou's unique identity in the modern world. Other aspects of traditional culture associated with Suzhou and, in some cases, the entire Jiangnan region include unique public and private
architecture, house furnishings, pastimes, foodways, and certain industries rooted in the ancient past. These markers of traditional culture -- with which storytelling is associated by locals -- are variously employed in creating images of the city for outsiders, particularly tourists.

The nexus of the material objects utilized in the creation of images of Suzhou as an ancient, scenic city is the old part of town, where several of the remaining storyhouses are found. This area was once surrounded by a rectangular wall and is still criss-crossed with the canals that are emblematic of the region. Along these narrow waterways are the common white-washed walls of homes with black, tiled roofs (Xu, et.al. 1991). Pagodas, gardens, and temples are found throughout the pre-modern confines of the city, and in the surrounding hills.

Despite the ravages of political turmoil during the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s, many of the older Suzhou homes are still furnished with red mahogany tables and chairs, often decorated with carvings in vegetable motifs (Xu, et.al. 1991:136-74). Doors and windows of some older homes often have screens in geometrical patterns of interlocking wood. Post and lintel construction is typical of the older homes, which are made of wood, stone, and brick, and covered with black roof tiles. Most of these homes feature a faded white exterior and a dimly lit
interior (Xu, et. al. 1991:85-98). Doorways of homes of the very wealthy once featured stone carvings of scenes out of classical literature (Xu, et.al. 1991:127-30). Architecture in the high-rise modern housing projects (especially common in the suburbs) contrasts sharply with the traditional styles.

Processing cotton and silk have long been important regional industries, and the city is known for its fine cloth. Embroidery was once a common pastime among women, and some in rural areas still practice it both for home use and for the tourist market. Traditional pastimes, for those with the leisure to enjoy them, include tea drinking in teahouses located in the many public gardens, flower potting, penjing (bonsai), painting, and calligraphy. Shops filled with antiques still hold material reminders of Suzhou's rich cultural past, enjoyed today by locals and tourists alike.

Suzhou cuisine, made famous in the recent story Meishijia (Gourmet), by Lu Wenfu, is sweet and bland, hot sauce being a rarity. Common foods today include clear soups of boiled ham hock, numerous glutinous rice snacks, paddy eel noodles, and the special local delicacy, beef tripe (niu bai ye). In the spring the markets fill with fresh bamboo shoots. A local delicacy, found usually in rural areas, is boiled swan eggs (shidan), with the nearly formed embryo inside.
Today in Suzhou, the storytelling art of *tanci* is associated with this intricately woven web of traditional images, textures, tastes, sounds, smells, and movements.

B. The Genre of Suzhou *Tanci*: History, Form, Context, and Performance

1. Introduction

In this section, I will briefly introduce aspects of the art of Suzhou *tanci*, basing my discussion in part on early and contemporary written accounts and largely on interviews with storytellers, fans, and scholars held during my field research conducted between 1991 and 1992. It is my intention to present a brief, multi-faceted ethnography situating *tanci* within the dynamic social processes of contemporary Wu culture.

2. Definition and History

Many attempts have been made since 1949 to categorize and "define" the various performing arts in China. Drawing in part on storytellers' traditional conceptions of their art, Zuo (1981:1) has written:

*Pingtan* is a style of local *guyi* in Suzhou, categorized as *pinghua* and *tanci*. *Pinghua*, also known as *dashu* (big story), is speaking without singing. *Tanci*, also called *xiaoshu* (little story), has both speaking and singing roles. As for being a local style of *guyi*, Suzhou dialect is the basic language of performance.

During an interview in Shanghai in 1992, the innovative 85 year old performer of the *tanci* story *Tixiao yinyuan* (Fate in Laughter and Tears), Yao Yinmei, told this researcher that *tanci* involves the four aspects of speaking (*shuo*), humor (*xue*), instrumental playing (*tan*), and singing (*chang*). He explained that it is called *xiaoshu* or "small story" because it involves smaller, more intimate settings than *pinghua*, or "big story" (*dashu*), which depicts battles, etc.

Suzhou *tanci* belongs to a family of related styles of local dialect storytelling which have at one time or another had some degree of currency in the Yangzi delta. These include styles which are today identified emically as Suzhou *tanci*, Yangzhou *xuanci* (in recent years also called Yangzhou *tanci*), and Hangzhou *nanci*. Of these various styles of storytelling combining speech and instrumentally accompanied song, Suzhou *tanci* is by far the most vital, with Yangzhou *tanci* trailing a distant second. Like Suzhou *tanci*, some of these styles have associated written genres.

The history of modern Suzhou *tanci* is intertwined with that of styles of *pinghua* and local opera (Chen 1958:133–
218; Zuo 1981:122-132; Zhou 1988:1-25). The performing arts having had the greatest impact on Suzhou *tanci* -- and not necessarily in this order -- include Yangzhou *xuanci*, Yangzhou *pinghua*, Suzhou *pinghua*, Kunju opera, and Beijing opera (*Jingju*). In turn, the Yangzhou arts have been influenced by Suzhou storytelling.\(^{11}\)

In the following paragraphs I will present a general description of Suzhou *tanci* as it is performed today, introducing contexts of performance, patronage, co-existent performance genres, performers and their training, audience and reception, form and style of presentation (including the registers of speaking, singing, and gestures), and music.

3. Pre-1949 Contexts of Performance

Before 1949, Suzhou *tanci* was performed in a number of performance contexts,\(^{12}\) some of which are similar to current situations (Zuo 1981:112-121; Zhou 1988:160-169). The earliest locations for performances were in marketplaces or temple fairs. Open air performances (often by less-accomplished storytellers) in such contexts continued into the mid-twentieth century.

By the late 19th century, many storytellers worked on a commission basis in *chaguan* (teahouses) which offered a variety of entertainments. In the early decades of this century *shuchang* (storyhouses), establishments that existed primarily for the telling of stories, became common.\(^{13}\) In
the late Qing and early Republican period, shuchang generally featured male performers, though some houses featured only women. Mixed gender couples seldom performed together before the late 1920s, the form becoming common only in the 1930s.\textsuperscript{14}

Another performance context was the tanhui, in which storytellers were invited to perform for a specified period of time (ranging from one day to several weeks) in a private home or other institution.\textsuperscript{15}

Huishu or shuhui were gatherings held at the end of the year in which, over a period of days, a number of storytellers told their best episodes. Since many storytellers moved about most of the year, these events gave them a chance to view each other's performances and size up new talents who might qualify for guild membership (Bender 1992:1-2).\textsuperscript{16}

In the 1930s, radio broadcasts of pingtan became popular, creating a vehicle for the rapid popularization of tanci among a vast audience of Wu dialect speakers. Innovative talents such as Jiang Yuequan used the Shanghai airwaves to introduce new styles of singing and music to urban audiences, swiftly gaining fame via the new medium.\textsuperscript{17}

4. Post-1949 Contexts of Performance

Today, the contexts of Suzhou tanci are growing, despite the perceived decline of interest in the art.
Traditional storyhouse performances, described in detail below, are given on a daily basis in hundreds of storyhouses in the Wu speaking area.\textsuperscript{16}

Depending on their fame, troupe standing, and connections, performers may also have opportunities to perform at \textit{zhaodai yangu}, special performances given at receptions for businesses, banquets, and local government functions. These occasions are similar to the old \textit{tanghui} performances, though performers demand to be treated with respect and will usually not perform while guests are actually eating, as was once the custom.

Some tourist spots, such as Suzhou Street in the Summer Palace in Beijing and the Wangshi Yuan (Master of Nets Garden) in Suzhou, regularly feature performances of the short opening ballads (described below), called \textit{kaipian}.

Select performers in the Suzhou and Shanghai troupes and accomplished amateur performers are sometimes invited by various organizations to sing \textit{kaipian} and relate episodes of famous stories.\textsuperscript{19}

\textit{Huishu} (sometimes \textit{shuhui}), now sponsored by various troupes and nominally overseen by local cultural bureaus, are still contexts in which professional or amateur performers gather to compete and show off their skills in performing their favorite set pieces. They are held at the end of the year and in early spring, often for a variety of occasions.\textsuperscript{20} Special \textit{huishu} may also be held to honor
performers, particularly older ones. Contests, such as the Suzhou Pingtan Troupe Great Prize Contest, in which younger professionals tell abridged twenty minute episodes have been held sporadically since the early 1980s. Radio shows, featuring taped performances of accomplished storytellers, are aired in Shanghai, Suzhou, and Wuxi. Only retired performers allow entire stories (lasting two or more weeks) to be taped, though shorter selections (contest performances, etc.) of younger performers are played regularly.

Pingtan performances are occasionally aired on Shanghai and Changshu television stations, though rarely in Suzhou. At least two television dramas featuring tanci artists were filmed in the 1980's. The first pingtan music video was issued in 1992. Dozens of tape-recordings of well-known performers are available at music counters in stores in Suzhou, Shanghai, and other regional cities.

5. Contemporary Story Houses

The sixteen story houses in the Jiangnan region which I visited during my fieldwork differed in terms of age, size, upkeep, structure, management, reputation, and audience. Possibly the oldest house in continuous use is the Puyuan Storyhouse (Puyuan shuchang), located in the small town of Puyuan in northern Zhejiang Province. Under the fourth generation of management by the Yang family, the house is
over ninety years old. In Suzhou there are presently five story houses, down from over a dozen in the early 1980s. The Guangyu shuchang (Guangyu Story House) is one of two storyhouses run by the Suzhou Pingtan Troupe, the other being the Heping shuchang in the eastern side of the city. The largest storyhouse in Suzhou is the Suzhou shuchang. A small, plain, storyhouse exists in the Cultural Palace in the Nanmen district.

The only story house on the cultural bureau register is the Shaomao tingshu chang (Official's Hat Story Hall), located near the Guangqianjie district in a Qing dynasty mansion once the local headquarters for Taiping rebel commanders. This story house, shaped roughly like an ancient official's hat, has an arching tile roof supported by carved mahogany beams. It became a story house only in recent decades and doubles as a meeting place for older performers who gather early in the morning to drink tea and chat. Most storytellers who perform there are young unestablished performers, older ones nearing retirement, or getihu (privately employed) performers from rural areas. The admission price is the lowest in Suzhou, and, for that reason, few ambitious performers wish to perform there. Most audience members are older males of mixed urban backgrounds. Tanci performances, featuring retired or amateur performers, are also held regularly in several cultural centers throughout the city.
The Guangyu Story House was the site of my first taping of the Meng Lijun story. It is located on a side street in the old quarter of the city near the bustling Guanqian Street. Nearby is a square with several movie theaters, famous restaurants, a large department store, and the Suzhou Storyhouse. The Ming dynasty Daoist temple, Xuan Miao Guan, is a short walk away.

Located in an older building, the Guangyu Story House stands directly across from a grain store. Outside the house are signs advertising the daily video-taped films and the featured pingtan performers. Inside is a small lobby in which guests purchase tickets (one yuan each), seeds and other small snacks, and receive a glass holding a serving of dry green tea leaves (hot water is supplied in thermos bottles on tiny tables between seats). On the walls of the lobby are samples of calligraphy from powerful tanci supporters in the central government, such as Chen Yun and Hu Qiaomu, alongside ancient carved inscriptions.

The storytelling room holds approximately 120 guests. The seating area is a long narrow rectangle in which padded chairs are arranged with two narrow aisles running from back to front. The stage is approximately two and a half feet high and about twelve feet across. A screen decorated with court ladies stands in back of the storytellers' table and chairs. There is a microphone in front of each chair and loudspeakers on each side of the stage which performers
enter from a small ante-room on stage left. There is air-conditioning in summer, and thus smoking is not allowed, a source of displeasure to some guests.

Though the majority of listeners are men, more women attend the Guangyu than any other story house in Suzhou. They number sometimes as high as eighteen or twenty (or about a fifth of the audience).^®

Upstairs are the offices of the Suzhou Pingtan Troupe, quarters for the visiting performers (a small bedroom with cooking facilities), and a small, troupe-run hotel.

The most prestigious story house in the Jiangnan region is the Xiangyin Shuyuan, run by the Shanghai Municipal Pingtan Troupe in downtown Shanghai.^® Audiences are comprised of a high proportion of "hardcore" fans, overseas Chinese, and performers from other professions (such as film actors) who wish to observe pingtan to improve their own skills. There is usually a high percentage of women in the audience. It is a difficult house for performers to gain booking due to the high standards of the enthusiastic crowd; thus younger performers seldom appear there.

Xiangyin has the most unusual schedule of any storyhouse today. Two pairs of tanci performers are booked for a period of about three months. Each pair performs one hour per day, the same episode repeated each day for a week at a time. Due to the prestige of the house, which seats only eighty persons, and in an effort to allow more persons
a chance to enjoy the art, audience members must make advance reservations and can attend no more than one performance a week. Like the Guangyu Story House in Suzhou, Xiangyin has air-conditioning and does not allow smoking — additional benefits for performers tired of the hot, humid summers and the smoke-clouded rooms of the average storyhouse.

A rural story house in the village of Changqiao near Suzhou is typical of rural establishments. The house is in the village cultural bureau. Tickets are taken at a table by the door in a large ante-room where tea for the guests is boiled behind a low cement wall. Card players fill the tables in this room. The story room holds nearly two hundred guests, the overflow sitting on benches and stools in the rear. The stage is a low, wide wooden platform behind which hangs a large faded landscape painting. Unlike some rural story houses, there are microphones and speakers. The audience members are usually all male, ranging in age from the late twenties to extreme old age, with most being around fifty. They are mostly farmers and factory workers, some of them out of work. On rainy days, which performers love, the place is filled with farmers who do not wish to work the fields.

6. Patronage and Finances
As early as the reign of Qianlong in the Qing dynasty (1736-1796), storytellers in Suzhou were organized into guilds. The most famous of these was the Guangyu gongsuo ("Brilliant Abundance Guild"), started in 1776 by the famous performer Wang Zhoushi (Chen 1958:180-181; Zhou 1983:44-45; Hrdlickova 1965; Tsao 1988). The function of the guilds was to give the profession an official status and to protect the economic situation of its members by exerting control over regional teahouses and later over story houses. The organization also worked as a kind of cooperative for member performers, who until the 1940s were all male. After a court battle with the conservative Guangyushe over genderly mixed performances, the Puyushe ("Universal Abundance Guild"), which ran a school for performers of both sexes, was chartered in 1935 (Yi 1988:218). After 1949, the old guilds were disbanded and performers (including those who were not guild members) were reorganized into pingtan troupes or more general guyi performing arts troupes. The Shanghai shi pingtan tuan (Shanghai Municipal Pingtan Troupe) was established in 1951, followed by Suzhou shi pingtan tuan (Suzhou Municipal Pingtan Storytelling Troupe), organized in 1951-52. Troupes were established at provincial, county, and municipal levels throughout the Wu speaking areas of the Lower Yangzi delta (Zhou, et. al., ed. 1988:293-337).
Presently, troupes normally help members arrange performance engagements, distribute earnings, provide retirement benefits, organize meetings and events, and act as an in-house vehicle for government propaganda. Though post-liberation troupes once supplied members with regular salaries and other benefits, by the late 1980s and early 1990s troupes were working out their own economic systems and doing away with the "iron rice-bowl" of previous decades.³⁵

As of early 1992, the Suzhou troupe consisted of over sixty members, about half of them in retirement. Fifteen percent of an active performer's earnings were garnered by the troupe (though this was lowered to ten percent in July, 1992), and used towards retirement benefits (for those already retired!) and other expenses. Performers and troupe representatives attempt to negotiate for daily minimum salaries with individual storyhouses, performers receiving a cut of ticket sales (usually twenty percent) above that amount.³⁶ Thus, there is incentive for the performers to do well, as the daily minimum is about 35 yuan for the better pairs of performers. In general, however, performers do not regard their salaries as high, especially when travel and food expenses are taken into account.³⁷ Occasionally story houses provide meals. Lodging, though often poor, is free.

Since neither of the Suzhou troupe's two story houses could survive on proceeds from pingtan performances alone,
videos are shown daily, largely to audiences of idle young males. The guesthouse behind the Guangyu Story House is also a source of troupe income. Plans were in the works in mid-1992 to expand the troupe's money-making activities. Thus, the troupe is primarily self-supporting, though local government funding and funding from private interests, such as factories, is sometimes obtained when sponsorship for special activities (for instance, the Fortieth Anniversary of the Suzhou Pingtan Troupe held in late 1991) is needed. Besides a troupe leader (presently Gong Huasheng), there are several vice-leaders, including pinghua performer Zhou Minghua, a Party secretary, an accountant, and several office staff, nearly all of whom (including the Party secretary) were once active storytellers. Most of the lobby and maintenance help are middle-aged females.38

7. Competing Performance Genres

A brief review of prominent forms of traditional and modern entertainment available in Suzhou will help situate pingtan within the context of local performance genres and lend insight into the nature of audiences. Live performances of traditional performing arts include Kunju opera (performed very occasionally by the Suzhou Kunju troupe and visiting regional troupes), Yueju (Shaoxing Opera), usually from troupes in Zhejiang province, Peking Opera (Jingju) (performed by visiting professional troupes
and local amateur performances). These performances are attended by mixed audiences, though older guests predominate. Huaju (modern spoken drama, performed by the Suzhou Huaju Tuan), and song and dance troupe variety shows are occasionally performed and attract a somewhat younger crowd than the traditional genres. It is not uncommon for factories or other work units to make free or discounted tickets available to their workers to any of the above types of performance, as well as some pingtan performances.

Several restaurants in the downtown area have karaoke singing facilities, which attract mostly young people, and there are three large movie theaters near the Suzhou Story House which cater to mixed audiences. As noted, videos are shown daily in several storyhouses in Suzhou to audiences of young males. Radio (another medium for pingtan) and television have large audiences.

8. Performers and Their Training

Performers once came to the trade of storytelling by following family tradition, out of personal interest, or from economic necessity. Better performers were members of guilds, enjoying the title of xiansheng ("master" -- a term more dignified than that shifu, or "craftsman"), and made considerable amounts of money. However, the profession has long been associated with the jianghu ("itinerant entertainers") trades of fortunetelling, quack
medicine, animal shows, gymnastics, martial arts, and other performances given in marketplaces and temple fairs by persons of sometimes dubious repute. After 1949, the status of performers of traditional performing arts was officially raised from one of debasement to one of respected artists.

Nevertheless, this researcher has heard comments that pingtan performers kao zuiba chifan ("depend on their mouths to eat"), implying that those who live by speaking and singing skills are somehow less genuine than ordinary working people. Xizi, a derogatory term traditionally applied to Chinese opera performers, is still occasionally heard as an impolite reference to pingtan performers.

Popular stereotypes of storytellers include the idea that performers are sexually freer than "normal" people, though some storytellers are of the opinion that, as a whole, they are "not nearly as bad" as Chinese opera singers.

Despite lingering prejudices against their occupational group, pingtan performers are often promoted as bearers of traditional Jiangnan culture. Tanci performers are often invited to participate in variety shows (by various sponsors) featuring local forms of song and dance. In some contexts they are explicitly utilized to promote regional identity. Thus, the traditional ambivalence of fondness and lack of respect for popular entertainers is still evident in Suzhou.
Media promotion of pingtan personalities is multi-channeled. Local and regional newspapers often carry news items on the activities of performers. One radio show in Shanghai regularly features interviews with storytellers. The lives of the more famous tanci performers are subject to great scrutiny by fans (and other performers), and gossip abounds.

In the past, a prospective student — often only a youngster — would hold a special bai shi (literally, "reverencing a master") ceremony to officially apprentice with a master. The student had to proffer a fee and sometimes lived in the master's home as a sort of servant. A young storyteller might take several masters, some officially, some unofficially. Whatever the case, there was great competition to find reputable masters and improve one's art and income. If one could not afford a master, the only alternative was to toushu (steal stories). In this manner, a youngster would listen outside (or if lucky, inside) a story house and remember the story, practicing it later on his or her own.

After the establishment of official schools in the 1950s, the old master/apprentice relationship was modified, though not wholly abandoned. The bai shi ceremony ended by the 1960s when the whole pingtan world was turned upside down by the Cultural Revolution. As early as the Anti-Rightest Movement in 1957, some performers had been singled
out as reactionary and imprisoned. Pingtan performances on revolutionary themes, sometimes with large groups of performers on stage at once, were typical of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Performers who were still considered politically fit to teach were addressed by students as "aunt" or "uncle," rather than as "master."

In the early 1980s, on a wave of enthusiasm over the revival of pingtan, the Suzhou Pingtan School reopened. A new building was constructed in 1986 with encouragement from Chen Yun. In the present regimen, students are trained for three years in the classroom, learning the rudiments of singing, playing the pipa-lute and sanxian-banio, and speaking. Students memorize scripts, then perform portions of them in class during tests. Music is taught using a combination of basic western music theory and traditional methods. The curriculum includes a number of courses on subjects such as Chinese literature, history, and politics, leading to a zhongzhuan (junior college) diploma. After completing coursework, students are assigned to apprentice with an established master for three to six months, usually "receiving" the master's story. During the apprenticeship, the student sits in on each performance, then is gradually asked to take part. Students are often asked to sing kaipian before actually performing parts of the story.

Before beginning the apprenticeship, the student participates in a bai shi ceremony sponsored by the school.
In the early and mid-1980s, this was often a group ceremony involving several students and masters. However, in recent years the tendency has been towards individual ceremonies, since some students must now find their own masters. The school typically helps defray some of the costs for the bai shi banquet. Performers wishing to take another master later in their careers, either to improve artistically or to increase social connections, are responsible for paying for the ceremony, which may cost hundreds or even thousands of yuan, depending on the requirements of the master.\textsuperscript{50}

In the Suzhou troupe today, only one performer age thirty or younger was trained in a traditional manner outside the Pingtan School.\textsuperscript{51} Due to a decline in interest in the guyi arts among young people, few students in the late-1980s and early-1990s have been recruited to the Pingtan school from Suzhou. Almost all come from small towns and rural areas in the Wu dialect area, and nearly all require preliminary training in the standard Suzhou dialect of speech.\textsuperscript{52} Reasons why students audition for the school include a general interest in performing, the promise of a zhongzhuan diploma, and the possibility of an urban residency permit. Students sign a contract by which they agree to return to their own local troupes (if their area has one), though such agreements are not always honored. Few younger students have a good understanding of pingtan before enrollment, and many now change professions after
graduation, despite the fact that some troupes have residency requirements of up to six years which can be broken only by payments of sums of up to several thousand yuan.

Amateur (or "avocational," cf. Mark [1990]) storytellers (piaoyou) regularly perform at factories, old folks homes, and sometimes hold huishu gatherings in story houses. A number of very active amateurs hold regular meetings in Suzhou, Shanghai, Wuxi, and Changzhou. Some of the oldest and most beautifully crafted musical instruments are in the hands of amateurs.53

9. Audiences

Audiences for live tanci vary according to the performance situation. Attendance depends on a combination of factors including site, weather and season, day of the week, time of the performances, rural or urban setting, reputation and competence of the performers, ticket price, availability of competing attractions (including other tanci performances), comfort level of the story house or theater, and, in some cases, advertising or dialect region.54

Daily audiences in urban story houses often consist of a mixture of middle-aged to elderly male and female guests.55 Except for the Xiangyin Shuyuan, where often half the audience is female, the ratio is seldom more than five to one in favor of males. The usual reason given for this
is that "women have more housework." Of the half dozen middle-aged women I spoke with in the Guangyu Story House audience during the two week performance of Meng Lijun, and at performances of other stories in the Shamao Story House (where most guests were between the ages of forty and sixty-five), all reported that regular attendance at a story house was a pastime they had adopted after retirement. One woman stated that she had had little interest in storytelling before, but that it gave her something to do each day. Some older women said they had enjoyed it as children, and several younger women said older relatives introduced them to it. Most of the men I talked with also became interested in pingtan when taken to performances as children. A few older people occasionally bring grandchildren to listen.

Sunday afternoon sessions, which usually draw the largest crowds, are sometimes attended by teenage girls and boys, though usually only at the best story houses in Suzhou. Most houses have regulars who come each day, rain or shine. The regulars know each other and in some houses, such as the one in the Cultural Palace in south Suzhou and the Shamao Story House, guests gather each morning to play cards and chat. Some listeners carry books and magazines to performances, but they usually do not read while a performer is present. While Suzhou audiences consist mostly of retired office and shop personnel, factory workers, and teachers (sometimes university level) occasionally attend.
Some audiences also include young traveling businessmen and persons whom might be called "in-group deviants." Men and women in this latter class seem -- from my observations -- to have emotional or mental problems. 57

A main requirement of any audience member is sufficient free time to attend afternoon performances. Another is enough income to afford daily performances which, in early 1992 in Suzhou, cost from a low of four mao to a high of one yuan.

Though audiences are usually of average or above-education, many performers (and pingtan scholars and audience members) speak of a decline not only in the quality of performers, but of audiences as well. Many performers claim that fewer and fewer people come to listen to "art" (yishu), and more and more come just to listen to the story. Thus, storytellers in the late 1980s and early 1990s have been faced with a situation in which the older well-known stories are regarded as boring by many of their listeners, forcing the development of new stories, drawn usually from vernacular literature or simply invented, following traditional themes. Another audience complaint is that the pace of the stories is too slow, that more action and less of the detail that has traditionally been so characteristic of tanci is desired.

These attitudes towards freshness in repertoire and speed have probably been influenced by the quickening pace
of life in modern China and the different sense of performance time introduced by television, videos, and movies. Also, the lengthy interruptions in performance in the years since the Anti-Rightist Movement of the late 1950s and the Cultural Revolution disrupted the natural training of audience members and performers alike. Another factor affecting lack of audience interest is the transparent restrictions still in force on what performers can say. Controversial performers such as Wu Junyu were silenced as early as the late 1950s. In the early 1980s, Yang Zijiang, a former capitalist turned pinghua storyteller, was forbidden to perform for several years after his story about the Emperor Qianlong -- laden with remarks on the contemporary political situation -- drew huge crowds in Wuxi. References to politics and sex have been continually repressed by cultural bureaus at all levels, creating a situation in which performers and audience members alike participate in the monitoring of what is said during a performance.

Performers feel that rural audience members do not like excessive singing and that they prefer more humor and action than the urban audiences. During my recording of a version of Meng Lijun at the Changqiao story house, the xiashou (assistant performer), Wang Jin, had to leave early one day in order to participate in a pop song contest in Suzhou, forty minutes away by bus. Alone on the shutai
(storytelling stage), the lead performer (shanshou), Yuan Xiaoliang, turned the table around lengthwise (as in dandang tanci or pinghua, see below) and lay his sanxian-banjo before him, never touching it for the entire forty minute episode. He felt that he would not inflict unappreciated singing on the audience since the performance was already compromised by Wang's early departure. Accordingly, he dropped all the songs from the episode and put on an especially energetic performance, larded with numerous jokes. He later explained that this strategy to please the audience was wholly intentional.

The widest audiences for tanci performances are among radio and TV listeners. Though I was unable to obtain exact figures on audience size, there are approximately eighty million Wu speakers in southeast China and, as noted, pingtan radio programs are played daily. Zhou Jie'an, the radio show host in Shanghai, estimates his regular audience to be in the millions and claims to receive numerous requests each week to play tapes of particular tanci performances. Though it can be assumed that most of the radio audience is made up of older persons, it is not unusual to see young and middle-aged shop clerks in Suzhou listening to tanci. Because of the afternoon hours, it is impossible for most employed persons to attend daily story house performances. Radio, of course, is free, and can be enjoyed at home since the visual element is not as crucial
in tanci as in opera. It is said that in some Suzhou neighborhoods one can ride down a street on bicycle and hear a whole performance on the radios playing through the open windows. This is not far from the truth.

Devoted tanci fans have formed at least two organizations in Shanghai and Suzhou. These fans, or shumi ("story aficionados") among whom are a few former professional storytellers, regard Suzhou tanci as a major interest in their lives. Though many of them do not regularly visit story houses, performers are aware of the more ardent among them. When such a fan attends three performances in a row, performers feel very much appreciated.\textsuperscript{60} Such fans are said to attend for the appreciation of the "art," not just to listen to the story. Shanghai is home to many tanci fans, and a number of performers I interviewed felt that Shanghai audiences in general understand more about tanci than those in other places and are more reqing (warmly enthusiastic), especially to well-established performers, than audiences elsewhere.\textsuperscript{61}

Many fans have huge collections of taped performances, both audiotape and increasingly, videotape.\textsuperscript{62} Some collect photographs and signatures of tanci celebrities and sometimes send gifts of calligraphy (usually wishes of success) and even food to favorite performers. At a meeting of pingtan fans held in a Shanghai recreation hall in April of 1992, participants joined in contests to guess the names
of performers, tunes, and stories from brief selections played on a tape-recorder. Guest appearances were made by two well-known older performers, and short performances were given by two younger ones. About one thousand photographs of events and performers were on display in the lobby.

10. Governmental and Scholarly Dimensions in China

Modeling its approach to art and literature on experiences in the Soviet Union and the wartime stronghold of the Chinese communists, Yan'an, the new leaders of China brought the traditional gui story telling arts under the umbrella of government control. As noted above, the old guilds were abolished and performers were assigned to cultural troupes.

In Jiangsu province, pingtan is overseen on the provincial level by the cultural bureau in Nanjing and locally by the Suzhou City Cultural Bureau. In Suzhou, Zhou Liang, head of the cultural bureau for decades, is probably the best known and most influential figure, being a scholar of pingtan history as well as an official. In Shanghai, Wu Zongxi (who uses the pen-name, Zuo Xian), an extremely influential local official, has long been active in the Shanghai cultural bureau and has produced a number of theoretical works on the pingtan arts. Pingtan troupes, like other official organs in China, have party secretaries and regularly organize political study for members.
Scholarship on *tanci* began in the twenties and thirties with writings by scholars such as Zhao Jingshen, Zhang Yuanshui, Chen Ruheng, Li Jiarui, and A Ying (Tsao 1988:xv; Hodes 1991:36-71). A substantial amount of literature of a scholarly and semi-scholarly nature has been written about *pingtan*, and *tanci* in particular, since 1949. Outstanding among authors of these works are the above-mentioned Zhou Liang and Zuo Xian (see Bibliography). These writings include works on history, aesthetics, collections of shorter articles, and introductions to basics of *pingtan*. In 1988, *Pingtan zhishi shouche* (*Pingtan information Handbook*) was published, edited by Zhou Liang. This semi-scholarly work consists of entries on form, history, biographies of performers, texts, etc., and includes lists of current story houses. The annual journal *Pingtan yishu* (*Pingtan Storytelling Arts*), published since 1982, features articles by researchers, performers, and fans.

A number of traditionally performed stories have been published in book form since the early eighties, often rendered into standard Chinese and otherwise edited for a wide reading audience. In some cases the editing for proper political content has been highly noticeable.65

Meetings of *pingtan* scholars, such as the *Pingtan yishu lilun yanjiu guohui* [*The Pingtan Arts Theory Study Meeting*] held in Shanghai in 1992, provide forums of interaction between researchers, officials, performers, and serious fans.
in the entire Wu cultural area. The Shanghai Pingtan Troupe has an archive of pingtan recordings and texts. The Suzhou Pingtan yanjiu shi (Suzhou Pingtan Research Center), located in the Suzhou Opera Museum, also has an archive.

11. Repertoire

Stories are called shu (literally "books," though the term seems to mean "stories"). The designation is sometimes applied to episodes which are usually known as hui. Zhou, et al, ed. (1988:150-152) lists 68 titles of tanci stories which have been performed in the last 150 years. Following categories devised in the fifties, the list is divided into three categories: chuantong shu (traditional stories), defined as any story performed before 1949; erlei shu (second category stories), stories on traditional themes created/performe after 1949; and xiandai ticai (contemporary subjects), or works dealing with contemporary society. Stories in the first category dating from at least as early as the nineteenth century include Zhenzhu ta (The Pearl Pagoda), Yu qingting (The Jade Dragonfly), Baishe zhuan (The Legend of the White Snake), Miao Jinfeng (Engraved Gold Phoenix), Wopao (The Japanese Cloak), San xiao yinyuan (Three Smiles), Luo jin shan (Dropping the Gold Fan), Shuang zhu feng (Matching Pearl Phoenixes), and Shuang jin ding (Pair of Gold Vessels). Stories made popular in the earlier half of the twentieth century include Yang Naiwu
yu Xiao Baicai (Yang Naiwu and Xiao Baicai), Ti xiao yinyuan (Fate in Laughter and Tears), and Xi xiang ji (The Story of the West Wing). Qin Jiwen's version of Zaisheng yuan, developed in the forties, is considered a traditional story since it appeared before 1949.

In 1962, Standing Party Committee member Chen Yun was so impressed by Pan Boying's version of Meng Lijun that he called it the "zhuangyuan (the best) of the second type stories" (Chen:1983). Other second category stories include Mei hua meng (Plum Blossom Dream), Qin Xianglian, Liang Shanbo yu Zhu Yingtai (Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai), Pipa ji, (The Story of the Lute), Hudie bei (Butterfly Quilt), Fei Long zhuang (The Legend of Flying Dragon), and Xiao Meng Lijun (Young Meng Lijun). Many other stories have been adapted from older stories or written from scratch on traditional themes and performed throughout the 1980s. Some, such as Xiao Meng Lijun (based on the written tanci Zaizao tian), do not appear in Zhou's bibliography.66

Stories in the third category, usually of comparatively short length, include Jiu long kou (Nine Dragon Mouth), Xiao Danqu zhi si (The Death of Xiao Dangui), Hongse zhe zhongzi (The Red Sprouts).67 These stories often have an explicit political dimension. Xiao Danqu zhi si concerns an undercover Red agent in the thirties who at one point must masquerade as a traditional opera singer.
Most tanci stories follow the traditional caizi jiaren love story theme (discussed in Chapter I), though a few, such as Ti xiao yinyuan, adapted from Zhang Henshui's famous novel (serialized 1927-1930) have more modern settings or depart variously from traditional themes.

There are hundreds of kaipian, the short ballads sung before the beginning of the main story in story houses and often sung in other performance contexts (particularly zhaodai yanqu) discussed above. Kaipian exist either as lyrical ballads complete in themselves, or as excerpts from longer stories. An example of the first type is "Du Shiniang," dating from the 1930s, which concerns the courtesan in the story by that name in the collections known as the Sanyan, edited by Feng Menglong in the late Ming dynasty. Another famous kaipian is "Who on earth has no mother?" (Shijie, nage meiyou niangqin?), based on a scene in Jiang Yueqin's version of The Jade Dragonfly which he performed from the thirties until the early sixties.

12. Types of Episodes

Episodes are described emically as being either guanzi shu (climactic episode) or nongtang shu (elaboration episode) (Zhou, et. al., ed. 1988:136-137). Guanzi shu are episodes in which there is a great deal of rising action and excitement (Tsao 1988:11). Performers speak of shangle da guanzi -- beginning a rise in action that will result in a
"big" climax.\textsuperscript{71} Since \textit{tanci} performances move in a wave-like action over the two-week engagement, a typical story will have a number of small and large \textit{guanzi}, or climaxes. In contrast to the \textit{guanzi shu}, the \textit{nongtang shu} are characterized by detail and numerous inserted narratives (and often humor), rather than action. The first episode of an engagement is usually a \textit{nongtang shu}, in which scenes are set and characters introduced. An especially well-crafted \textit{nongtang shu} is sometimes termed a \textit{pengjing shu}, or "bonsai episode" (Gong 1982; Fang 1986:32-33), reflecting the idea that while some \textit{nongtang shu} include many elements which function on one level to pass time, others may be true masterpieces of entertainment.\textsuperscript{72} The division between \textit{nongtang shu} and \textit{guanzi shu} is not always clear-cut, and particular episodes of a given story may have elements of both. Also, the first episode of the day may be a \textit{nongtang shu}; yet the second may be the start of a \textit{guanzi}.\textsuperscript{73}

13. Varieties of Presentation

Most \textit{tanci} storytellers today perform as a unit of two (\textit{shuangdang}), usually a male lead (\textit{shangshou}, literally "upper-hand") and a female assistant (\textit{xiashou}, or "lower-hand") (Chen 1958:172). Pairs of men, once the rule seventy years ago, are uncommon today, though pairs of women are on the increase, largely due to a lack of younger male performers.\textsuperscript{74} A few men and women perform singly (\textit{dandang}),
and, in some situations, three storytellers (*sange dang*), or even more, may perform together.\(^7^5\)

Modifications in the manner in which *tanci* stories are presented have taken place over time, especially in the last hundred or so years. Most male performers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century performed singly, playing the *sanxian*-banjo, though some male performers also had another male (often a brother) to accompany them on the *pipa*-lute. During the 1920s (there seems to be no exact record of the first instance), some male storytellers began performing with their wives or daughters, who took the role of assistant on the *pipa*.\(^7^6\) Duos or even trios may have originally been more common among female performers.\(^7^7\)

Both the single and paired *tanci* form have strengths and weaknesses.\(^7^8\) In *dandang*, the single performer is in complete control of the story, and, in the words of performer Yuan Xiaoliang, "can take it anywhere he likes." However, the musical appeal of *shuangdang* *tanci*, with the mixture of the *sanxian*-banjo and *pipa*-lute music, is greater than that of the *sanxian*-banjo alone.\(^7^9\) *Shuangdang* performers must work together, the *shangshou* literally "leading the way" and the *xiashou* following his or her cues. Thus, the *shuangdang* performers are more reliant on written scripts (despite the ability to improvise when necessary) than *dandang* performers, as it is easy to "get lost" if cues are not met. *Shuangdang* performers speak of "tossing" (diu)
the story back and forth between them, and in rehearsal, they concentrate on the lyrical passages and those points where the roles of character and narrator are exchanged between them. In shuangdang it is usually the lead who does most of the narration, though the narrator's role may sometimes be taken up by the xiashou, who usually plays female roles and roles of minor characters. According to Cai Xiaojuan, a good xiashou should be poised, attentive and if necessary, able to help out the lead if he or she gets lost or confused.

The shuangdang form is most popular in the performing of changpian tanci (full-length tanci), the stories told daily in story houses. In the past, most long-form tanci stories took up to three months to tell, two episodes comprising a two hour set told each day. Since the late 1970s, the length has been cut to two weeks, though occasionally performances may run up to a month.

In the post-1949 period, when official governing organs called for increased experimentation in form, a new style called zhongpian tanci (middle-length tanci) was developed. Performances last about three hours. Each group is called a sange dang (three-person group) and performs for about one hour. The form is attributed by Gong Huasheng to former leader of the Suzhou Pingtan Troupe, Pan Boying. Stories may be written just for this form or adapted from long-form stories to be performed by up to three trios of
storytellers, usually in the context of a theater or as a special performance in a story house.\textsuperscript{82} A short form (duanpian) which lasts less than an hour has also been popular since 1949. It is featured at contests and special performances and may include any number of performers.

14. A Typical Performance

A typical contemporary performance in the Guangyu Story House in Suzhou proceeds as follows:

Audience members gather in the story house beginning about one o'clock in the afternoon.\textsuperscript{83} These so-called "guests" (keren) buy tickets at the window in the ante-room (specific seats can be requested, if available). At the door to the story room, a middle-aged woman gives each guest a glass with a pinch of green tea leaves in the bottom. Music, sometimes Chinese opera, sometimes pop, is played over the loudspeakers beginning about 1:15. Guests chat with friends, or sit alone on the padded seats. Small tables stand among the rows of seats on which staff place thermos bottles. According to common practice, the glasses are first filled halfway with hot water, then the tea is allowed to steep until all the dry leaves settle to the bottom. The glass is then filled to the top and left to continue steeping.\textsuperscript{84}

At about 1:30 a young male worker comes out onto the stage or shutai to check the microphones.\textsuperscript{85} He also fills
the performers' teapot and glasses with hot water. Before the crowd arrives, some performers place their own instruments on the performing table, and rest a second pair of instruments against the sides of their chairs; in some cases, workers perform the duty.

At 1:45, a buzzer sounds backstage, and the performers enter from stage right and take their seats -- the shangshou on stage left, and the xiashou on stage right. They settle themselves in their chairs, briefly adjust the microphones (conscientious performers will have done this earlier in the afternoon) and check to be certain that the second set of instruments is leaning steadily and is properly in reach. They will often place their feet correctly upon the footblocks and pick up the instruments on the table, briefly tuning them (too much time spent on tuning, however, is considered distracting by some guests).

The shangshou will then greet the audience and engage in mild patter, sometimes announcing coming attractions (such as the singing of a famous kaipian) or apologizing for some lack in the performers' behavior (such as ending one minute too early the day before, or having a noticeable cold, or explaining why the pair must leave the engagement before the contract expires). Or he/she may simply state the name of the kaipian that will open the performance. This number is sung by either the shangshou or the xiashou, though both play their instruments. During the kaipian,
the performers often make minor adjustments to their instruments.

After the singing, which may last up to fifteen minutes, the performers pause for a few moments, breaking contact with the audience. They sip water, arrange their fans and handkerchiefs on the table, or continue to fine-tune their instruments. According to Yuan Xiaoliang, this pause is intentional, allowing both the audience and the performers to compose themselves and shift mentally to the main story. During this time, some performers also count the number of guests. Yuan (as previously noted) does so in groups of five, the process taking less than a minute. Over the two week period, audience attendance is an index of how well the performers are doing.

After the pause, the shangshou lightly raps the tiny woodblock known as the xingmu on the table, an act which announces the beginning of the main story and focuses audience attention on the performer. He then takes up the main narrative by addressing the audience, often accompanying his or her initial words with hand gestures. A formulaic recapitulation of the story as told thus far is given first. The shangshou narrates the action, often accompanied by hand gestures and manipulations of the eyes and face. As the occasion warrants, the performer assumes the roles of various characters, using the stylized voice registers (explained elsewhere), movements, and when needed,
employs a fan or handkerchief. The narration may shift occasionally to the xiashou, who does his or her part in characterization. In some episodes, depending on the attitudes and skills of the performers, the xiashou may take up a large percentage of the narration and character utterances.

When singing roles are performed, the storytellers gracefully pick up their instruments just before a speaking role ends, and smoothly shift into song.

Performers not engaged in a speaking or singing role are expected to appear passively attentive, sitting poised and motionless. Slouching or a distracted gaze reflects badly on both performers. Occasional sips of water, a wipe across the brow with a handkerchief, or a low cough, are overlooked by both audience and fellow performer. If the cigarette smoke is too thick, a performer may, while in character, waft the fumes away with a fan. A similar strategy is used for flies, if ignoring them fails.

Some performers (especially older ones) not trained in the standard regimen of the Pingtan School may display idiosyncratic movements, which sometimes promote rather than distract from audience interest. For instance, one older storyteller who performed in Suzhou in early 1992 dangled both his hands in front of his chest as he spoke, rather than resting his left hand on the table.
Generally, the first segment of the performance is longer than the second. Many performers take a break after sixty or seventy minutes. During this ten-minute intermission, performers leave the stage. Many or most audience members go to the restroom, exchanging opinions about the performance while on the way.

Backstage the performers rest, consult script books if necessary, and discuss how the story is developing and what might be added, cut, or retained in the next segment. (How much time is left is a great factor in these decisions). Returning onstage, the performers quiet the audience with a few bars of a tune as they judge the number of people who remain. The shangshou may then again rap his small wooden block lightly on the table, and the story begins once more. The audience members, as in the first half, display a mixture of attentiveness and seeming obliviousness. A few older guests near the stage may even appear to be napping. Some audience members stare fixedly at the performers, sometimes smiling, even laughing, at the jokes and becoming teary-eyed as the story turns sentimental. A few may mouth the words of lines they anticipate. Contact between audience and performers is very important to storytellers, facilitated by the close proximity of the two parties. According to Cai Xiaojuan, a major drawback of performing in large auditoriums, with their distance and stage lights, is
the lack of audience feedback. With no feeling of immediate response, performers feel out of touch.

Twenty minutes before the performance ends, two or three middle-aged women begin collecting the thermos bottles, then the glasses, placing the latter in large tin buckets. Though anticipated by the performers, this can still be distracting to them. As the performance nears its end, some audience members begin to stir, assembling their bags, canes, private tea cups or jars, umbrellas, and wraps. The storytellers are expected to perform up to the last minute, but not to exceed the prescribed time (in rural areas, however, a few minutes over is sometimes expected).

As the shangshou winds up the episode, some people are already out of their seats heading for the door. The performers, especially the shangshou, usually wait on the platform for a few moments to receive comments (constructive criticism and sometimes praise) from the laotingke (regulars). Depending on the house, the performers leave their instruments on the table or take them with them. Then they retreat backstage or, depending on the location of their quarters, wend their way among the slow moving audience towards the front exit.

At the Guangyu Story House, videos follow the pingtan performance. Thus workers immediately clear the stage of the storytelling equipment and set up a film screen.
After a storytelling performance, the performers change clothes and remove make-up. If they are on good terms with each other, they may discuss the performance and relax together. After dinner is a time for washing clothes and attending to other chores. To pass idle time, performers can watch videos shown by the house for free, attend movies, shop, read, knit, exercise or engage in whatever leisurely activity is available to them.

The next morning the storytellers arise somewhere between five and ten o'clock (depending on personal preference). Some performers exercise regularly, qigong exercises being popular among middle-aged performers. After breakfast, they rest or practice basic storytelling skills, and eat lunch by about 11:30. Around noontime they may begin to rehearse, the length of time varying according to how familiar they are with the story, individual interest, ability, and the sense of how well they must perform that day to sustain audience interest.

In the rehearsals I witnessed by Yuan Xiaoliang and Wang Jin, stress was laid on reviewing song lyrics (sometimes actually sung with instrumental accompaniment, but more often just murmuring the lines), and on crucial moments when the story is tossed from one performer to another. The performers then tuned their instruments, put on make-up, and donned their performing garb. Yuan wears the same long gown for the entire two weeks of each session.
the audience would consider him pretentious if he were to change it. Wang, however, changes her clothing each day, wardrobe being a heavy expense for female performers.

C. Emic Conceptualizations: The Art, Aesthetics, and Voice Registers

1. The Art

There are dozens of terms which pingtan performers and aficionados use to talk about these related arts. Many of the terms commonly appear in written works about pingtan and are used frequently by both audience members and performers. The terminology, however, is neither static nor universally known or used. Also, the terms used by Suzhou pingtan performers to conceptualize and describe their art are not wholly the same as those used in related traditions, such as Yangzhou pingtan. Some terms or expressions seem to be used only among performers. Most of the terminology, however, seems to have correspondences in Standard Chinese, and both that dialect and Wu dialects are used to write the terms. Most writing about pingtan employs Standard Chinese.

Pingtan performers and aficionados describe tanci as consisting of the four different performance means mentioned in the definitions above: shuo (speech), xue (humor), tan (the music of stringed instruments), and chang (singing) (Chen 1958:172; Zuo 1982:1; Tsao 1988:9). Two other means, yan (acting) and shoumian (stylized movements) are also
recognized (Zuo 1982:33). Of these means, shuo not only is considered as the foundation of storytelling performances (Zuo 1981:20), but is also the most difficult to master. Many older performers and audience members believe that the young performers of today sing well, but execute the speaking roles poorly. Within the last sixty years, however, singing and music have been areas of intense innovation. There are over a dozen recognized musical styles (liupai), named after individual performers, most of which have emerged since the 1950s (Chen 1958:198-200; Tsao 1988:13-16). Many local or regional styles also exist, often among lesser known lineages of performers (Tsao:1988:12).

Xuetou, or humor, is identified by three categories: 1) Roulixue (humor in the meat), in which humorous events are entwined in the thread of the frame story; 2) waichahua (flowers stuck in from the outside) or chuancha (stuck-ins), consisting of humorous remarks and anecdotes inserted into the narrative or as part of the introductory patter before the actual storytelling begins (Zuo 1981:77); 3) xiaomai (small sales) are humorous quips not over a sentence or two in length, sometimes satiric or ironic, which can be part of either the frame story or inserted narratives. Xuetou has been a source of close scrutiny by anxious cultural bureaus since 1949.
Stress on acting -- where performers go more deeply into character than traditionally -- is a phenomenon which seems to have been influenced by television and western drama. Bodily movements, including many performed while standing, have been increasingly popular in tanci performances since the early decades of this century when performers sat throughout the entire telling. Young performers are encouraged to view opera performances and study videos of such tanci greats as Yang Zhenxiong, who aggressively incorporated features of Beijing Opera (especially large movements and singing techniques) into his performances.¹⁰⁸

2. Aesthetics

Written evaluative criteria of pingtan performances attributed to Wang Zhoushi, date back to the reign of the Emperor Qianlong. This Suzhou storyteller, a founder of the Guangyushe Guild, gave a command performance for the emperor during one of his celebrated visits to the Jiangnan region.¹⁰⁹

In "Shupin" ("Evaluation of Storytelling") and "Shu1i" ("Storytelling Taboos"), Wang Zhoushi gives concise criteria, in rhyme, for judging storytelling (Chen 1958:173-175; Zhou 1983:97-98; Zuo 1981:105; Tsao 1988:11).¹¹⁰ These include such admonitions as, "Fast, but not confused (kuai er bu luan); slow, but not truncated (man er bu duan) . . .
cold, but not shivering (leng er bu can); hot, but not sweating (re er bu han)."^111 "Shuji" includes similar formulations concerning mood, the use of eye contact, gestures, and enunciation.^112

Towards the end of the Qing dynasty, another performer, Lu Ruiting, suggested the Wujue, or "Five Secrets," of storytelling, which were the aesthetic criteria of li, xi, qi, qu, and wei (Chen 1958:176, 157-170; Zhou 1983:112-113; Bender 1988:58-60). Later commentators, particularly Zuo (1982:69-125), have elaborated on these concepts.^113

In Zuo's interpretations, li is "credibility." If the audience is to accept the action in the story (and thus be moved by it), the story must have certain believable elements. According to Zuo, the storytellers must clearly show causal relationships between events and account for the manner in which the plot develops, as well as provide a reasonable conclusion.^114 Moreover, the human world must be accurately described to be accepted by the audience.^115

The concept of xi (intricate description), which is important in understanding the aesthetics of Jiangnan culture in general, is linked closely to li. Characters, places, times, events, and local customs must be presented in knowing detail. At the same time, events must be presented in a manner allowing for very slight twists in the plot. Xi can be used to describe the intricate workings of character's mind, usually to increase credibility or
heighten artistic tension, rather than to explore the individual psyche.

A very important notion is that of qi (novel, strange), which refers to surprising twists in the plot, conflict situations, coincidental meetings, and unusual characters. Anything strange or out of the ordinary, introduced into at least a tenuously believable context, will excite interest in the audience. The motif of cross-dressing, discussed in Chapter I, is a common qi phenomena in many Suzhou pingtan stories and as will be seen is a significant aspect of the wedding night scene from Meng Lijun.

Zuo equates qu with a kind of audience interest which is created and sustained as the story proceeds. Wei (flavor) is the result of the right combination of the other aesthetic criteria and the proper melding of all the means of communication (speaking, singing, gestures, etc.) into a pleasing whole. Scenes distinguished by wei have "a sense of beauty and a sense of true feeling" (Zuo 1982:126). Zuo also stresses that expression of these various aesthetic principles vary according to the nature of the plot and characters, each scene or episode requiring a different equation of elements to succeed.

In actual use, I have heard audience members comment to the effect that a certain performance had wei, or that a performer's description of a certain chain of events was presented in a very xi or xini manner. Thus, it seems that,
though not officially codified (except in works such as Zuo's), the concepts do reflect actual modes of experience and reception by audience members. This is certainly an area which requires further fieldwork investigation, particularly since many of these aesthetic terms are also applied to Chinese poetry and painting.\textsuperscript{116}


This section deals with the language, speaking and singing registers, and role-type frames adopted by the performers as narrators who both narrate the plot and take on the roles of characters. In the first place, the performance discourse of tanci performance is diglossic, or even polyglossic (Saville-Troike 1982:56-60). While most of the narration and certain of the registers used in portraying the speech and thoughts of characters in in Suzhou dialect, a certain amount of dialogue, usually that of elite characters, is in Zhongzhouyun, a form of Mandarin also used in various styles of Chinese traditional opera. As will be seen, there are a number of conventionalized speaking and singing registers identified by special terms that have certain functions associated with them. On another level, characters (at least in the traditional stories) are presented as speaking in role-types from Kunju opera. The relationship between these languages,
conventionalized registers, and role-types will be discussed below.

It should also be understood that there is no strict agreement over the terminology used by performers and aficionados to identify the number and nature of the conventional registers of speech and song used in pingtan performances. Moreover, there is no standard for using these terms in script books, transcriptions, or other adaptations into print media. In the following discussion of the speaking means in Suzhou tanci I have drawn largely on the works of Zuo (1981:20-36, 1982:1-12). Other sources include Zhao (1937, rpt. 1982b:43-45), Fang (1986:17-18), Blader (1983), Tsao (1976;1988:10-11), and Jiang (1991:89-96). I have also drawn on fieldwork interviews made in 1991-1992 with the performers, including Gong Huasheng, Cai Xiaojuan, Jin Lisheng, Wang Xiaodie, Shen Youmei, Yuan Xiaoliang, Wang Jin, Ma Xiaojun, Ge Wenqing, Qin Jianguo, Jiang Wen, Lu Shixiao, Yan Wenwu, and Shen Xiaolin and discussions with Zuo Xian (Wu Zongxi) and Zhou Liang, high ranking officials in the Shanghai and Suzhou cultural bureaus.

a. Language

As noted in the descriptions in "b." below, certain language dialects are associated with the speaking and singing registers of Suzhou tanci. The two major dialects
used in Suzhou tanci are an obsolescent form of Suzhou dialect and a local form of older Mandarin known as Zhongzhouyun or sometimes, quanhua. Forms of Zhongzhouyun are spoken in Kunju and Peking opera traditions, and tanci probably inherited its usage of the register from Kunju (Zuo 1981:20).^{121}

The primary language register used in Suzhou tanci is a form of Suzhou dialect (jiupai, "old style") now spoken only in pingtan storytelling.\textsuperscript{122} Lexicon and usage differ from modern forms of the dialect, and younger performers do not speak the older form as accurately as their elders. Many Shanghai performers fear performing in Suzhou because they have Shanghai accents.\textsuperscript{123}

The bai (dialogue) in tanci can be divided into those using Suzhou dialect, and those using Zhongzhouyun. The conventionalized roles of upper-class characters are spoken in Zhongzhouyun, though the inner speeches are usually in Suzhou dialect. As in Kunju, the bai roles, especially of higher-class character types, have standard voice registers (usually high or low pitched).

The Zhongzhouyun dialect spoken by upper-class characters originated in the ancient capital of Kaifeng, to the north. During the the Southern Song (1127-1279) when the capital moved to Hangzhou, it gained great influence in the south. The Zhongzhouyun used in tanci, however, has a Suzhou accent. Many performers (Cai Xiaojuan, for instance)
believe that learning Zhongzhouyun was much harder than Suzhou dialect -- though non-Wu speaking listeners find the former much easier to understand than the latter due to Zhongzhouyun's genetic affinity with Standard Chinese and other forms of Mandarin. In recent years younger performers have tended not to stress the use of Zhongzhouyun, often beginning a speech with that dialect, but completing it in Suzhou dialect. According to Lu Shixiao, a young performer of Xiao Meng Lijun, this is done so that "the audience can understand it better." This is taken by interested parties as a "decline" not only in the level of the storytellers, but in the quality-level of the audiences, who increasingly have trouble understanding the language in the traditional registers of tanci. This emergent condition will certainly result in future changes in the registers of tanci.

In some instances, performers will occasionally speak briefly in other dialects (Yangzhou, Shandong, Beijing, Shanghai, etc.) for effect.124

b. Registers of Speaking and Singing

According to Suzhou traditions, the basic divisions of the Suzhou tanci registers are shuo biao (speaking registers) and chang (singing registers).125 The basic shuo biao divisions are the biao (narration) and bai (dialogue).126
Simply put, the biao registers are used by the performers when speaking in the frame of storyteller/narrator while telling the main story. The biao is primarily a speaking register, though there is a phenomenon termed biaochang in which the narrator sings, even though most singing in tanci is associated with character roles. (In some instances the biao is also used in connection with a character role, but the function is very much like that of the narrator's biao.)

The bai registers -- of which there are traditionally six (called the liu bai, or "six bai") -- consist of the speaking and singing registers used in the frame of the character roles -- the taking on of such roles being known as qi jiaose ("adopting a character role"). Some sources also identify a seventh bai (rhyming dialogue, or yunbai), as noted below.

The respective registers of the narrative biao and bai dialogue are as follows:

BIAO (delivered primarily in Suzhou dialect; other dialects/languages sometimes used for effect):

biao -- a. Speech of performer as narrator/storyteller.
biaochang -- a. Singing of performer as narrator/storyteller; b. Singing of narrator/storyteller through the person of a character (see comments below under biaobai).
BAI (delivered in Suzhou dialect, Zhongzhouyun, or rarely, other dialects):

**guanbai** -- Speech of characters, including monologues and dialogue.

**sibai** -- Workings of an individual character's mind as presented by the narrator in a kind of inner monologue usually concerned with the most intimate of thoughts.

**gubai** -- A style of speech used by characters which Tsao (1988:10) translates as "murmuring." This category is divided by Zuo (1981:21) into two aspects: a) **quan gubai**, which is delivered as if spoken aloud, and **si gubai**, which is delivered as if spoken as an inner monologue. Zuo (1981:21) compares these modes to "asides" in western dramatic traditions.

**biaobai** -- Speech of narrator/storyteller through the person of a character. The performer is in a character frame while using the **biao** mode. In some cases this may be noted using a character's name in a particular transcription or other text, i.e. "Meng Lijun biao.") This convention is distinguished primarily by voice register and seems to be used in situations where it would be inconvenient for a performer to shift back to the narrator's mode.
tuobai — Speech used to strengthen and intensify a speaking passage. For instance (see Zuo 1981:210), a passage of guanbai may be followed by a line or so in tuobai for effect.

chenbai — Speech used in connection with guanbai, singing roles, biaobai, and possibly other modes. It is a device for mixing the narrator's commentary, explanations, etc. into the speech of characters.

* * * * *

There are also a number of other recognized register categories which appear in varying degrees, depending upon the story; with the exception of yunbai (the rhyming dialogue noted above) and some types of xiangtan, these are seldom used in modern stories:

xiangtan — Term used to describe the use of local dialects and jargon of various occupational groups (Huang 1991:56).

fucan — Descriptive passages chanted in verse, usually in five or seven character regulated verse (pai shi). Used as a more refined alternate to biao or biaochang description, the subjects treated include palaces and other lofty settings, scenes from the home and community, fights and battles, and vistas featuring bad weather. Used in context (individual performers have a stock of such set
pieces), a fucan might have a name such as "Jin dian fu" ("The Golden Imperial Palace Fu") or "Qiang fu" ("Spear Fu"), or "Yu fu" ("Rain Fu") (Zuo 1981:37; n.a. 1990).

yunbai — This register is a form of verse in varying line lengths and language comparatively close to the vernacular. According to Zuo (1981:42) it is more common in pinghua performances than in tanci.

quako — A short verse sung by a character when introduced into the story. It is similar to the shang chang shi of Chinese opera performances. Using a five or seven character line, it ranges in length from two to eight or more lines in length. May be chanted to classical verse (ci) tunes such as "Xi jiang yue" (Zuo 1981:42-43).

CHANG/Singing

chang — These are the singing registers which employ tunes (diao) and melodies (qiang) used in singing kaipian, and most of the lyrical passages in the main stories. The music of tanci is also called shudiao ("story tunes"). According to veteran performer Huang Yi'an, the music was once known simply as tanci diao (pers. comm., 1992). There are about twenty popular liupai, or schools of music/singing, all named after their originators, such as the Jiang diao created by Jiang Yuequan in the 1930s. There are also
many diao developed by lesser known performers, sometimes within a particular geographical area. The most influential tunes among young performers today are the Yu diao, which is a basic tune presently taught for female singing roles in the Pingtan School, and the Jiang diao, commonly used for male singing roles.¹²⁹

Line lengths may vary, and singing passages may be in either the Suzhou dialect or Zhongzhouyun, depending on the story context. Kaipian tend to have a somewhat stricter form and "tighter" lyrics than sung passages in the frame story. Tsao (1988:12) states that "in performance the 7-syllable line-stanzas are usually sung in divisions of 2+5 or 4+3."¹³⁰

There are also a number of special, conventionalized "minor" tunes known as xiaoqu or xiaodiao. These have names such as meipo diao ("go-between tune"), mihu diao ("dazed spirit tune"), or luanjiti ("wild cock crowing") and are used in scenes which employ stereotyped character roles and may be used to excite audiences by a display of singing prowess. Thus, meipo diao is used in scenes involving match-makers, mihun diao is used when a character has fainted or been knocked unconscious, and luanjiti for use in swift descriptions of miscellaneous things (as in a market) or in the songs of verbose lower characters (often accompanied by very fast-paced vocalization and played on the sanxian-banjo). One of these xiaodiao is called Shange diao (hill song, or folksong tune). This tune can be
introduced in concert with minor characters, such as boat people, to take up time. The lingling diao is used with very evil characters, and is sometimes employed to take up time due to its casual pace. Certain melodies, such as the nuomigianq (sticky-rice melody) can add variation to tunes and help create special effects. Flourishes in singing are known as huaqianq and are added to performances as storytellers mature.\textsuperscript{131}

c. Role-types

The basic Kunju opera roles and their associated traits used in Suzhou tanci are as follows:

\textbf{sheng}: Young male elite; carries a fan, speaks in a high-pitched male voice; uses Zhongzhouyun.

\textbf{laosheng}: Older elite male; beard-stroking gesture sometimes employed; no fan; lower voice pitch than \textbf{sheng}; extended index finger used when speaking; uses Zhongzhouyun.

\textbf{huadan}: Young, unmarried elite woman; delicate stylized had gestures, index finger pointed when speaking; uses Zhongzhouyun; high-pitched voice.
**laodan**: Older elite woman; index finger (or first two fingers) extended when speaking; uses Zhongzhouyun; lower voice pitch than huadan.

**taijian** (eunuchs): In late imperial stories they use Mandarin; may use hand gesture (wagged in back of head) when making obeisances to indicate wearing of a Qing dynasty official's hat (with black tail).

**lower characters**: Use local dialects, usually that of Suzhou.

Specific gestures are associated with each character role-type, as in other Chinese opera forms. Lower-class characters may speak Suzhou dialect and in some cases, dialects from other areas. In late imperial stories set before the 1912 Revolution (such as Yang Naiwu yu Xiao Baicai), eunuchs speak Mandarin, which some performers refer to with the current term Putonghua ("the common language"). In stories set after 1912, performers often wear modern formal dress when performing and characters speak either in modern Suzhou dialect, Putonghua, or in special cases, other regional dialects. For example, in performing his version of Tixiao yinyuan, Yao Yinmei employed eighteen different dialects. In late-imperial and modern stories, foreigners speak in heavily accented Putonghua.\(^{132}\)
4. Aspects of Frame/Register Interaction in Performance

A central aspect of the interaction of the means of communication used in Suzhou *tanci* is the special condition of having two (or more) storytellers on stage at once, sharing the roles of performance. This is particularly effective when performers are of opposite genders. This fact, all too apparent to the audience, is played on by Meng Lijun performers Yuan Xiaoliang and Wang Jin on one day of each two week performance, when Wang (the female *xiashou*) takes the lead for a few moments, actually switching seats with Yuan. More switching occurs in the course of performing the main narrative. Yuan customarily plays Meng Lijun in the earlier episodes of the story, with Wang taking *Su Yingxue's* roles. Later in the tale, Yuan plays Li Mingtang/Meng Lijun and Wang plays the male role of Huangfu Shaohua in the imperial military contest. On occasion, the performers switch back and forth between these roles within a single day for added effect.

In some cases it is actually necessary for performers to take over a role the other has been playing. If one of the pair is feeling ill (the show usually does go on no matter what) or must be absent, the other may partially or wholly take over the other's role, either by subsuming the other's dialogue into his or her own, or actually assuming the roles usually taken by the other. Thus, the spoken
voice presenting a character is not necessarily consistent throughout the narrative. When both performers are of the same gender, at least one of them at times must play characters of a gender different from his or her own. By the manipulation of gender roles and structures of expectation about those roles on both the level of the story and on the plane of performance, the storytellers can enhance the interest potential (Tannen 1993a:53).

In examining actual performances, as given by Yuan Xiaoliang and Wang Jin performing Meng Lijun, we find that Yuan as the shangshou is responsible for being the lead narrator. While Wang, the xiashou, performs characters' roles or co-operates in telling the story, picking up on Yuan's cues. In other words, both performers use the biao and bai voices. Traditionally, however, the xiashou never employed the biao voice (Chen 1958:172).

As noted above, at the beginning of a storytelling session, the performers (or at least the lead) may speak directly to the audience before beginning the kaipian. This level of address constitutes a different frame than that of Yuan Xiaoliang as story-teller when actually narrating the Meng Lijun story. The information provided in these initial words may include disclaimers and deferential remarks ("Please forgive us for being so young and inexperienced . . ." etc.) -- some based on fact ("Miss Wang will soon have a throat operation, so please forgive her low singing
voice."), others constituting a show of politeness ("We may be unable to satisfy all of your demands.") (Bauman 1977:21-22). Upcoming events may be advertised to draw crowds ("On Sunday we'll liven things up with selections from five different kaipian . . . one kaipian will be sung by Wang in a foreign language."). Early departures from the house may also be noted, sometimes with profuse apologies.134

Such utterances function to alert the audience to the situation of the performers, and on another level, to increase the "communicative interaction" between performer and audience (Bauman 1977:43). In terms of the actual story being told, the remarks are in general wholly inconsequential.

As noted above, Yuan Xiaoliang pauses for a few moments after the kaipian, then raps the xingmu on the table to mark the beginning of the story. This shift to the story-telling frame is also accompanied by body language. Yuan often adjusts his gown when beginning, and often employs finger movements, especially raising his index finger in a forty-five degree angle towards the audience. A shift in register occurs, with the use of formulaic language, often a summary of the previous episode made in very concise, crisply paced terms. Wang Jin sits erect and immobile, eyes towards the audience until her lines come up.

Both Yuan and Wang claim to speak through their own voices, or rather, their persona as performers during the
narration of the story. They do not seem to consciously adopt the identity of the traditional storyteller, or some abstract, personless voice, though they certainly perceive themselves as storytellers. Rather than being detached narrators, or simple mouthpieces for tradition, they are embodied performers who have authority over "their" version of a particular tale (Bauman 1977:43-45). Thus, the Meng Lijun told by Yuan Xiaoliang and Wang Jin differs from the Meng Lijun of Gong Huasheng and Cai Xiaojuan (not to mention versions by Qin Jiwen and his daughter Qin Jinlian), even though the story was "given" to Yuan by Gong. Each storyteller has his/her way of presenting a story and that version is identified as theirs -- by both the performer and the audience, some of whom may have heard versions by other performers. Though stories told by performers may resonate in the memories of the audience with previous experiences of the story (whether read, heard as versions by other performers live or on the radio, or in opera), criticism and praise will be directed to the particular performers, rather than to an abstract narrator or a remote author. As noted, performers often stay behind after a performance to accept audience criticism and guests discuss the merits of performers before, after, and during breaks in the performance. Moreover, as mentioned, good performers can tell when a story is succeeding or failing and can adjust their actions to suit. It is in this dimension, that of
trying to continually please particular audiences, that performers, in part, place their own stamp on a story.

Aside from the sphere of the main story, Yuan is also a narrator of stories outside the action of the main narrative, yet "blended" into its overall frame. These meta-narratives include "personal experience narratives" in which Yuan is the "hero" (Stahl 1986). These "stories within stories" (Babcock 1977:71-72) usually are embedded in nonqiangshu episodes and are often a form of xuetou. In the sample transcript from "The Marriage of Two Women," Yuan relates a personal narrative about his mis-identification of a male as a female due to "her" long hair. It does not matter that the story may never have actually happened to Yuan. The importance lies in his framing of the story as his own experience.

One of the most engaging aspects of many Suzhou tanci performances is the use of those conventional registers that allow the audience private entry to a character's thoughts. In many cases a character may speak only a few words, but the implied thoughts are many, and often in ironic relationship to what is actually said. In some instances, when the "inner" sibai registers are used, only the character's thoughts are given. In other instances, through the use of the biao, both the thoughts of the characters and comments (often interpretive and or evaluative) are related by the narrator. Among the devices most effective for
stirring audience emotion are the "silent" songs sung by characters in expressing inner grief or sorrow, often during a climactic part of a story. In some instances, a sort of antiphonal inner-dialogue may be presented, the "spoken" or "sung" thoughts of two characters presented in turns, sometimes interspaced by small lines of conventionally audible dialogue. Examples of this sort of antiphonal interaction of the "un-uttered" registers is prominent throughout the "Marriage of Two Women" episode. This movement between what is spoken and what is thought is also very useful in situations involving trickery and deceit, in cases when information -- which the audience may already know -- is being hidden from another character. In the sample episode, Meng Lijun and Su Yingxue must feel each other out about a number of issues, a major one being that of their mutual identities. In some cases, performers may take up whole episodes in such determinations in order to fill the time. Interesting twists and turns in action are enhanced by the manipulation of the characters' access to knowledge.

Overall, the frame of a Suzhou tanci episode allows for the insertion of meta-narratives (personal anecdotes, anecdotes of other people, legends, historical references, etc.), songs, jokes, and the introduction of minor characters which are used to maintain interest and pass the time, though not necessarily to move the story forward. In
many cases, such insertions are planned beforehand, but storytellers sometimes feel the need to improvise. Stuck in a situation in which he or she "has no story" (meiyou shu) — that is if the action is related too quickly and the performer runs out of story — the performers must call on all resources to fill in the time or risk grave censure by the patrons. Thus songs can be lengthened — even improvised — jokes cracked (sometimes at the xiashou's expense), or a short narrative told, whether it quite fits or not. Introducing a minor character or two, usually a couple up to something ridiculous or even off-color, is also a way of taking up extra time. Although the episode about Meng Lijun's servant's account of pouring urine into the mouth of a sleeping bed-mate was deliberately added to the story beforehand by Yuan (it, as noted below, did not appear in Gong's version), the episode is the sort that could be inserted spontaneously into many other plots with little or no variation. In some cases, performers may be known for the unique diversions that make up certain of these episodes (usually in the nongtangshu). One device, attributed to more than one performer, is the reviewing of the entire history of China in only one minute. In other cases, performers may feel that they are running out of time and, in order to advance the plot to a certain stage that day, must delete or abridge some part of the performance. In
such situations, a song may be left unsung, or trivial
dialogue left unspoken.

Thus, though built of traditional and sometimes rigid
conventions, the "open" frame of Suzhou tanci performances
allows complex interaction and manipulation of frames and
registers, giving performers various means for enlivening
their performances.¹³⁶

D. Suzhou Tanci Lineages of the Modern Meng Lijun

Meng Lijun's story was adapted into Suzhou tanci in the
mid-twentieth century, though the existent story was quite
possibly performed in that and other genres long before.¹³⁷
Two lineages of the story as Suzhou tanci have been
established by performers. The earliest line was founded by
Qin Jiwen (b. 1909).¹³⁸ Qin adapted a version of Chen
Duansheng's ZSY for Suzhou tanci performance in the late
1940s in order to compete for audiences already overly
familiar with such classic stories as The Pearl Pagoda, The
Three Smiles, The Jade Dragonfly, and The Story of the White
Snake. Throughout the latter part of his career, which
ended in the early eighties, his daughter Qin Jinlian was
his partner. She performed the story up until her
retirement in the late eighties. A full-length written
version of Qin Jiwen's ZSY (adapted from a written version
he made in Suzhou dialect) was published in Standard Chinese
in 1981. A radio version of Qin Jinlian's version was made in the mid-eighties.

The second lineage is that traced to Pan Boying (1903-1968), the first leader of the Suzhou Pingtan Storytelling Troupe (Fan 1987; Fang 1990). Pan, a performer of pinghua, was a prolific author of tanci stories from the post-1949 period up until the Cultural Revolution. In 1961, poet Guo Moruo published a series of articles in Guangming ribao calling for serious study of Chen Duansheng and her ZSY (Guo 1961a, 1961b, 1961c). These articles, written in an era when "women's issues" were being promoted in the "New China," stimulated widespread discussion of the author, story, and main characters, a situation which led to the creation of versions of the story in other genres.

The most influential example was a Yueju opera named Meng Lijun. At about the same time, Pan Boying gathered a group of young tanci performers, including Gong Huasheng, Wang Yuexiang, Xie Yujing, Pan Liyun, Xu Biying, and Xu Qinyun to create and perform a full-length tanci version. Zhou Liang participated to some extent in the project. The version written by the group, however, was never completed, the story ending with the meeting of Meng Lijun and Huangfu Shaohua after he passes the martial examination in the capital.

For several months the completed episodes were widely performed in the Jiangnan region, but the performances were
soon halted when objections were raised by North Korea, a PRC ally, over references in the operatic version to Yuan dynasty armies battling Koreans. Though the writing group never lost interest in completing the project, political sanction was withdrawn from it. The decade of the Cultural Revolution followed, throwing the world of Suzhou storytelling into a state of confusion not known since the Anti-Rightist movement in 1957. The 600 page hand-written manuscript and composition notes by Pan Boying and his group were nearly lost in the turmoil.

By his own account, Gong Huasheng personally saved the manuscript from sure destruction by stuffing it in his coat pocket after spying it on a heap of written materials slated to be burned the next day. He hid the story at great personal risk until after the fall of the "gang of four," when he and his partner/wife Cai Xiaojuan began performing select episodes he re-wrote based on the rescued manuscript. Gong and Cai performed several of the episodes in Hong Kong in 1980, when a series of three commercial audiotapes were made. After becoming troupe leader in 1985, Gong has occasionally performed episodes of the story (usually those recorded in Hong Kong) at special gatherings.

During a two week period in the spring of 1990, Gong organized a group of four storytellers in the town of Zhangjiagang in eastern Jiangsu province in order to
transmit the story to them.\textsuperscript{148} Two of the storytellers were older female performers from the Shanghai area whose representative story for many years was The Story of the West Wing (Xi xiang ji). In order to broaden their repertoire, they wanted to learn the Meng LiJun story as an alternative. After the learning sessions, however, they seldom (if ever) actually performed the story. The other pair of performers (already mentioned above) were two promising young people in the Suzhou Pingtan Storytelling Troupe, Yuan Xiaoliang, then age 29, and his partner/fiancée, Wang Jin (previously written Wang Qin), age 24.\textsuperscript{149} They had previously performed a story written by Yuan's mother, Ma Xiaojun, known as Lingzhou Qi'an (The Strange Case of Lingzhou County). Yuan, who joined the troupe at age 17, comes from a family of storytellers, and was trained by his parents from age eleven. He is known for his singing and musical abilities. Largely as a means of furthering his career and improving the speaking aspect of his performance he took Gong as his master in 1986. He agreed to learn the new story out of respect for his new master, "wishing to have one of his stories," and because the story was a famous traditional tale (Bender 1993:14-15). Both he and Wang, a graduate of the Suzhou Pingtan School who performed in Japan in a Chinese folk arts troupe soon after graduation in 1987, were only vaguely familiar with the original Chen Duansheng version.\textsuperscript{150}
The process of transmission of the story was a mixture of traditional emphasis on memorization coupled with the use of modern technology. Gong had chosen the story house in the small town of Zhangjiagang, following the established pattern of a performer honing "raw" (sheng) stories in the hinterlands before performing them in front of demanding audiences in Shanghai, Suzhou, and Wuxi. According to both the young performers and Gong, the story was related each afternoon by Gong -- working off notes -- to the storytellers, each pair performing one hour of it the next day. Gong's version was tape-recorded at each session, then written down that same evening by each pair of performers. In the case of the younger pair, it was Wang who did the transcriptions, noting it was a very tiring process. All the performers felt great pressure, though the younger ones felt that they could memorize the episodes more quickly and easily than the older women, who were in their late fifties.

The transcribed versions became the basis for the performances of Meng Lijun by Yuan and Wang, who as of this writing, still perform the story in two week engagements several times a year. They "constantly" revise what has become their version of the story, making changes according to their needs (which very much includes audience needs) and inspiration.
E. Plot Outline of the Modern Meng Lijun: The Pan/Gong/Yuan Version

Hanan has suggested four possible modes in which huaben stories came into the Ming collections, noting the interactions between the needs of oral and written presentations (1973:210). Blader has pointed out ways in which the Sanxia wuyi story was adapted to suit both written and oral forms (1978;1983). The contemporary storytellers' adaptations of the story of Meng Lijun demonstrate many of the principles used by both authors and performers in the utilization of existing texts (whether oral, or more usually, written).

In the case of contemporary Suzhou storytellers, the tendency has been to create written texts that are eventually wholly or partially internalized by the performers, a practice that has been institutionalized in the Pingtan School in Suzhou. Students now memorize sample texts, though they are still expected to pick up some aspects of performance (including strategies for improvisation) by observing experienced performers.

As noted, Qin Jiwen's scriptbook was published in 1983. Originally written down in the Wu dialect, it was translated into Standard Chinese for publication in the early 1960s by Xue Shan. The plot of Qin's book in general follows that of Chen Duansheng's narrative, but is more streamlined, elaborating on select events, fleshing out or inventing
certain characters, and changing the manner in which things are described.

On the other hand, certain parts of Qin's text (whether stored mentally or in writing) were not included in the published version, due in part to the attempt to rid the book of "superstitious" elements, a common standard for the adaptation and editing of all folk and popular literature in China since 1949.\textsuperscript{153} Examples of this principle are the lack of references to the celestial associations of the characters, as in the very beginning of \textit{ZSY} and the supernatural rescue of Su Yingxue from the river. The plot also lacks dream episodes with supernatural agents or events which are determined by fate. Following orthodox thinking, the claim would be made that the "artistic level" of the work is "improved" by providing more naturalistic explanations for events in the work.

As in the Qin text, the Pan script-book version (and Gong and Yuan's derivatives) elaborates on events, plays with characters and characterization, and changes descriptions. Likewise, the proscription against the superstitious/supernatural is apparent, particularly in the deletion of the celestial correspondences of the characters.

Since a scene from the Pan/Gong/Yuan version of \textit{Meng Lijun} is one focus of this dissertation, a summary of each \textit{hui} of the Yuan and Wang script-book is given here for comparison with the Song (1988) outline of Chen Duansheng's
This summary (which I have translated) was made by Prof. Sun Jingyao, and is based on his reading of Yuan and Wang's script-book. That text is written on thin, lined paper in blue ink. The titles of hui are given, but no author's name appears on the text.

Under each heading in Prof. Sun's outline below, paragraph "A" describes the action in the first hui of the day, while paragraph "B" is the second hui. Inserted narratives and other variable phenomena not directly related to the plot have not been included in the outline.

Outline of Yuan Xiaoliang and Wang Jin's Performance Script Book:

Day One of the Story
A.

During the Yuan dynasty, in Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province, live three powerful military families. One is that of military secretary Meng Shiyuan. The daughter of another family, the Lius, is empress (her father is Liu Jie). The other family is that of military commander Huangfu Jing, who is away fighting on the northern borders. The latter two families send go-betweens to the Meng family to arrange marriages with Meng's daughter, the beautiful "gifted maiden" of Yunnan. Not wishing to anger either
party, Minister Meng arranges an archery contest for the third day of the third month, the winner to receive Meng Lijun in marriage. The two young men have different attitudes towards the contest: Liu Kuibi wants to win at any cost, but Huangfu Shaohua feels he will nobly defer to Liu, if possible.

Peering from the women's secluded viewing quarters, Meng Lijun's mother recognizes Liu Kuibi as the same young man she saw sporting with courtesans during the Spring Festival on Lake Kunming. She thus places her hopes on Huangfu Shaohua. During the contest Liu catches a glimpse of a woman he believes is Meng Lijun. He also attempts to embarrass Shaohua, but manages only to make a fool of himself. Ultimately, Huangfu Shaohua wins and is thus engaged to Meng Lijun. Though Liu Kuibi's words of congratulations are sweet, in his heart he vows revenge.

B.

Liu Kuibi invites Huangfu Shaohua to his home to drink wine. In a heart-to-heart talk, Liu craftily tells Shaohua that a man's aspiration should not be directed towards women, but rather towards doing loyal service to the state. Tricking Huangfu into believing him, Liu stealthily makes him drunk, and administers a sedative in his wine, knocking him unconscious. Liu instructs his servant to burn down the pavilion in which Huangfu is sleeping. The servant's mother
runs into her son on the way to see her mother-in-law, who is ill. She instructs him to burn only part of the pavilion. This plan is overheard by Liu's half-sister, Liu Yanyu, who is holding a nocturnal ceremony to honor her dead mother. She daringly goes to awaken Shaohua and warns him of the plot. With her nurse as go-between, the two young people engage themselves to each other and Liu Kuibi's plan is thwarted.

Day Two of the Story
A.

After escaping from the Liu mansion, Huangfu leaves home for the borderlands on the advice of his mother, hoping to one day clear himself of charges concocted by the Lius. Yet, on the road, he becomes sick and winds up in a small inn on the banks of the Yellow River. The inn-keeper first invites a famous doctor to cure the ailing lad, but later reports on him after seeing an imperial circular urging his capture. Just before the yamen troops arrive, the doctor discovers that his patient is a wanted criminal. He persuades Huangfu to escape and go with him to Yellow Crane Mountain to study martial arts. Huangfu leaves the inn with the doctor.

B.
When the troops arrive, they search fruitlessly for Huangfu; not only was the inn-keeper not paid for his efforts in aiding them, he was subject to extortion. The doctor and a martial artist, Man of Yellow Crane Mountain, were originally commanders in Huangfu Jing's army on the northern borders; saved from false accusations of treason by the elder Huangfu, they ran away to live in the mountains. After the good doctor sends Shaohua into the mountains, there is always someone to help him when he faces difficulty. It seems as if a spirit is guiding his way; but in fact it is the doctor who has used carrier pigeons to alert the mountain brigands. Thus Shaohua enters the brigand's mountain retreat without incident.

Day Three of the Story
A.

Meng Lijun and her friend Su Yingxue are in the women's quarters writing poems and embroidering when the unimaginable word comes that Liu Kuibi has written his father a false accusation against Huangfu Shaohua, and that an imperial edict had been issued ordering that the Huangfu family be taken under guard to the capital. Moreover, the imperial order also directs that Meng Lijun is to marry Liu Kuibi. The Meng family is filled with hatred and worry, and with no recourse, Lijun decides to kill herself. Liu Kuibi sends wedding gifts in preparation for marriage, knowing
that since he has seen Meng Lijun, it would be difficult for her family to send a substitute. Su Yingxue, aware that Liu had mistaken her for Meng Lijun at the archery contest, suggests that she marry in Lijun's place.

B.

Meng Lijun will not accept Su's offer, so Yingxue pleads with Meng that she use her talents on behalf of all the women under heaven in order to rectify this wrong. Meng Lijun can only agree. She paints a picture of herself as a keepsake for her parents. Afterwards, she dresses as a young man and escapes with her maid, Rong Lan (also disguised as a male), leaving Su Yingxue behind to marry in her stead.

Day Four of the Story
A.

Su Yingxue, under the name of Meng Lijun, is escorted to the Liu family to marry Liu Kuibi. Once in the bridal suite, however, she refuses his advances and attempts to stab him with a pair of scissors. Failing, she leaps from a window into Lake Kunming, attempting suicide. Due to a storm her body is not recovered. The Liu family asks an imperial inspector to visit the Meng's to investigate Meng Lijun's actions. A former maid in the Meng family warns the Mengs in advance about their plight, so Madame Meng
immediately advises Minister Meng to tactfully resist the inspector and Liu Kuibi.

B.

Meanwhile, Su Yingxue grabs onto a log and floats to the middle of the lake. At dawn the next morning, she is saved by a boat carrying the wife of a high minister named Liang, who is returning to the city from burning incense at a temple. Madame Liang feels that Su resembles her recently deceased daughter. After hearing of Su's terrible ordeal, she feels both pity and love for the young woman, whom she takes as her god-daughter. Together they set out by boat for the capital.

The Fifth Day of the Story

A.

The imperial inspector arrives to interrogate Minister Meng concerning Meng Lijun's attempt to kill Liu Kuibi. Minister Meng and his wife futilely defend their family, and Meng is to be taken by the inspector to the capital. Liu Kuibi sends people to watch the Meng household, so Minister Meng has no way to escape. Cleverly, a member of the Meng household comes up with a plan, and the minister sends a letter to a high court official named Liang Jianbiao, asking him to report the incident to the emperor.
B.

The Liu family gang had invented a story against Minister Meng, falsely accusing him of a capital crime. But when Minister Liang examines the case, he concludes that it is the Liu's who are in the wrong. The emperor pretends to punish the Liu family, but secretly gives them military backing. At the same time he orders Minister Liang to oversee the military examinations, open to all talented knight errants in the land. He raises Minister Meng one degree in rank and sets up a memorial tablet for his "deceased" daughter, hoping to appease each side in the case.

The Sixth Day of the Story

A.

Dressed as young men, Meng Lijun and her maid, Rong Lan attempt to reach the capital to sit for the imperial examinations, yet are delayed in the mountains by rain. Moreover, though Meng Lijun was well trained in the classics, she did not have papers proving that she had passed the local examinations. One day while walking along the banks of Dongting Lake, she greets an old man fishing. The old man had already seen the "young man" in an inn, and so knows that "he" is on a journey to the capital. Sensing the "young man" is in trouble, the older man arranges a meeting with "him" in the inn late that night.
B.

Speaking with Meng Lijun, the old man tells how, after his son drowned in the lake, it was too difficult for him to return alone and that he has deceived his wife about the painful events. After discovering Lijun's skill at writing and finding that "he" did not have the proper certification or clothing to sit for the imperial examinations, he offers "him" the cap and other accessories his son received upon passing the provincial examinations. Out of both need and affection, Meng Lijun takes the man as her god father, and changes her name to Li Mingtang.

The Seventh Day of the Story

A.

That year Li Mingtang (Meng Lijun) passes the examinations to become the first-rank scholar, zhuangyuan. "He" goes to the palace to give the emperor the requisite twenty-four obeisances, without revealing "his" bound feet to the emperor. In one instance "he" calmly passes by "his' father, without revealing "his" true identity. Yet, while taking part in an official parade, the zhuangyuan is recognized by members of the Liu family, who raise the emperor's suspicions. Thus, Li Mingtang's situation becomes critical.
B. Minister Liang arranges a private talk with Li Mingtang and Madame Liang treats "him" to various delicacies and small presents. The Liang family wish that Li marry their daughter, Liang Suhua. Li politely attempts every way to refuse their offer, but fearing to raise their suspicions, has no choice but to finally agree to the marriage. Though Li tries to delay, Minister Liang sets a date for half a month later. Li Mingtang can only ponder about what to do.

The Eighth Day of the Story
A.

The emperor orders Li Mingtang to visit him, hoping to discern the true identity of the new zhuangyuan with the help of wine. The emperor then mentions the legendary girl, Hua Mulan (who disguised herself as a male soldier) and makes other attempts to get Li Mingtang to reveal "his" true identity. Li, however, passes each of these tests. Just when the emperor is about to order Li to remove "his" boots and reveal "his" bound feet, Minister Liang arrives to discuss the wedding between the new zhuangyuan and his daughter, interrupting the emperor's scheme.

B.

The emperor thinks that if Li the new zhuangyuan is indeed a woman, he will have a difficult time agreeing to
the marriage. Li knows that not agreeing will force "him" to reveal "his" true identity. The emperor commands that the marriage take place the next day. In accordance with the order, Li Mingtang can do nothing but acquiesce, and leaves to prepare.

The Ninth Day of the Story

A.

The emperor's suspicions are still not allayed, so he sends a eunuch to observe the wedding, ordering him to report any unusual developments. At the wedding reception, Li Mingtang observes "his" father. Minister Liang announces that no one may come to jest with the newlyweds outside the wedding chamber (as is custom).

B.

The head of household affairs in Minister Liang's home tries to convince Li Mingtang's servant, Rongfa (the disguised Ronglan), to become his son-in-law. Rongfa claims that "he" is already engaged, and refuses. Li Mingtang goes through with the wedding ceremony, but enters the bridal suite with nervous reluctance. Liang Suhua (Su Yingxue) recognizes Meng Lijun, ultimately identifying her to her face. Meng Lijun then kneels and begs for understanding.157

The Tenth Day of the Story
A. Su Yingxue forces Meng Lijun to explain herself, then the two decide to carry on the charade of husband and wife with the goal of clearing the Huangfu name. Meng Lijun's maid, Ronglan, is summoned, and the three united women of the Meng household have a good laugh.

B. Madame Liang is so intent on getting a grandson that her health deteriorates. She eats nutritive medicinal herbs to improve her health, but instead makes herself sick. The imperial physician orders more nutritious medicine, but Madame Liang's sickness worsens and there is fear she may die. Li Mingtang then offers prescribe a cure. Minister Liang, however, has no faith in Li's abilities. Madame Liang insists on believing in her "son-in-law" and takes "his" cure. As it happens, the medicine Li Mingtang prescribes cures Madame Liang's illness.

The Eleventh Day of the Story
A. Madame Liang holds a banquet to honor her new son-in-law, at which the old couple praise "his" skill as a physician. Thus, Li Mingtang's quickly gains a reputation as a healer throughout the capital. The beloved wife of the evil official, Liu Jie, becomes ill and his son is captured
by bandits on a trip outside the capital. Li Mingtang, however, refuses to see Liu's wife; thus Liu Jie is filled with hate and frustration.

B.

The queen develops a small illness, but the imperial physician aggravates it with a special medicine, making her even sicker. Afraid of being blamed in the matter, he delays, allowing the illness to become life-threatening. Liu Jie sees his chance to take revenge on the zhuangyuan and goes to the court to proclaim that Li Mingtang can cure the illness. Minister Liang attempts to block the missive, but fails and ends up staking his own life on Li Mingtang's skill.

The Twelfth Day of the Story

A.

Li Mingtang arrives at the imperial palace, making the Liang family both pleased (at the honor) but fearful (over the results). Li Mingtang diagnoses the empress's illness, and though it is the same as "his" mother-in-law's illness, "he" prescribes a slightly different cure. The imperial doctor, fearing loss of face, is against it. The emperor's nurse also doubts Li Mingtang's ability. Li can do nothing but put his own life at stake -- risking execution if
"he" fails. The emperor goes to the inner chambers to consult the empress.

B.

The empress is fading. Feeling the room is too stuffy, she says "Open the window," which the emperor hears as, "Order the prescription." He thus orders Li Mingtang to administer the cure to the empress, planning to stay by his side the whole time. He then asks Li to take a portion of the medicine before giving it to the empress. After the empress takes the cure, Li Mingtang waits alone in a small room for the results, "his" thoughts weighing heavy on "his" mind. A eunuch arrives to say that the medicine has taken effect and that the empress is recovering. Everyone rejoices.

The Thirteenth Day of the Story

A.

Upon recovery, the empress, impressed by Li Mingtang's skill and decisiveness (especially in contrast with the weak-willed emperor), tells the emperor to give Li Mingtang a high position. The next day Li is called to the court and made the secretary of the military bureau. When Liu Jie objects, the emperor uses the empress's dissatisfactions with Liu to silence his objections.
B.

Li Mingtang returns home to discuss with Liang Suhua about how "he" will act publicly as an official. The next morning the emperor announces the examinations for the position of military zhuangyuan in order to discover men with martial talent. In the process of selecting the administrators of the test, the emperor selects Liu Jie as a top officiator. Liu then suggests an evil minister as vice-commander. Li Mingtang, however, decides on Minister Meng, hoping that he can be of service in selecting "his" true fiancee, Huangfu Shaohua, if he should appear on the scene.

The Fourteenth Day of the Story

A.

The government representative in the contest is a general under the command of Liu Jie. In the first two days he handily defeats each participant. On the last day, Huangfu Shaohua, disguised as Long Zaixin (Dragon in the Heart) comes forth to do combat with the government general. Liu Jie comes up with an evil plan to destroy Long Zaixin. Minister Meng falls into despair and fears for Li Mingtang. Noticing the expression on her father's face, Li guesses that Long Zaixin is Huangfu Shaohua.

B.
Shaohua uses his esoteric skills to defeat the general in the contest. Li Mingtang and Minister Meng report Liu Jie to the emperor, and Shaohua becomes the military zhuangyuan.

The Fifteenth Day of the Story

A.

The empress throws a feast and gives gifts to Li Mingtang, urging that Minister and Madame Liang have a grandson. Liang Suhua (Su Yingxue) becomes saddened, and Li comforts her saying that "his" own husband will be Yingxue's, as well. Since Liang Suhua has seen Huangfu Shaohua, Li Mingtang asks her to secretly observe him when he comes to pay his respects.

B.

When Huangfu comes to pay respects to Li Mingtang, he bows before "him", but Li does not dare to accept his obeisances, turning aside. Waiting impatiently for Liang Suhua's confirmation, Li Mingtang questions Long Zaixin about his personal background, noticeably upsetting the disguised Huangfu and greatly increasing Li Mingtang/Meng Lijun's love and concern for him. When Su finally confirms Long Zaixin's true identity, Li Mingtang wants to reveal herself and declare that Huangfu is her husband. As she restrains herself, her love again increases threefold. When
Li Mingtang speaks of the talented maiden of Yunnan committing suicide in the lake, Huangfu's grief moves Li Mingtang's heart even more. After having determined that they truly love each other, Li Mingtang still decides not to reveal "himself." Receiving such attention from his benefactor, Huangfu attempts to kneel before "him," but Li hurriedly extends "his" hands to prevent this. Huangfu is startled at the sight of "his" womanly hands, and his face turns red in embarrassment.

The Sixteenth and Final Day of the Story
A.

Liu Kuibi returns to the capital, and in the imperial court recognizes Huangfu Shaohua and attempts to destroy him. Before his execution, Shaohua accuses the Lius of various crimes, and claims Liu Yanyu, their daughter and his fiancee, as witness to his words. The emperor has no choice but to summon Liu Yanyu to testify. Yanyu saves Shaohua, yet cleverly covers her families dark secrets. When the emperor wishes to raise Huangfu to the rank of field commander, Liu Jie notes that Huangfu violated an imperial edict when he ran away in Kunming. Li Mingtang skillfully uses the words of Confucius and Mencius to reveal Liu's agenda and turn Shaohua's crime into a proper course of action. Thus, Shaohua is raised in rank to field commander of the army warring with the northern invaders.
B.

Yuan and Wang often sing a number of kaipian ballads in the last hour as an added attraction to their show. The performers enjoy doing this and it is a chance to show off Yuan's singing and instrumental innovations. Because the last episode is devoted to singing, no kaipian is performed during the first hour. This format for the final day is unusual, as most storytellers will devote the entire day to wrapping up the story.


Hegel (1981:1-31) gives a portrait of the lower Yangzi region in the seventeenth century, within a hundred years of Chen Duansheng's birth and in the era of the well-known storyteller Liu Jingting, whom he mentions (p. 21).

2. On my initial train ride from Shanghai to Suzhou in 1991 I had conversations with several young white collar women from Wuxi and Suzhou who made the above statements concerning Suzhou dialect, variations of which I heard over
and over again while in the Suzhou area. One variant of the "A Suzhou couple . . ." replaces "Ningbo" with "Shandong" and there are certainly other substitutions.

The observations on native attitudes presented in this paragraph are based on conversations held with numerous persons of varied age, occupation, and gender in and around Suzhou. I look forward to further investigations on the subject of gender and language in terms of native perceptions of Suzhou dialect, as has been initially done with a sub-dialect of Cantonese (Light 1982) and Beijing dialect (Hu 1991).

3. The best source to date on Suzhou dialect is Ye (1988), though there are certain inaccuracies in the text. The work includes descriptions of the "Old School of Pronunciation" (jiupai) which is becoming rare, and is the basis of the Suzhou dialect used in storytelling. It also has descriptions of both the "New School" (xinpai) and the "Newest School" (zui xin pai) of Suzhou dialect, the latter showing influences of northernisms and Shanghai-isms. Ramsey (1987), in his description of Shanghai dialect, mentions some features of the Suzhou dialect.


5. Pingtan storytelling (which, again, is a term combining the storytelling styles of pinghua and tanci, introduced below) is sometimes explicitly associated with traditional culture in contexts where such images are being promoted. In the spring of 1992, I attended a performance of a kaipian given by Zhou Xiaojun and Wang Jin at a meeting of radio station employees from throughout China. The kaipian (as a form of pingtan performance) was billed by the master of ceremonies as being part of the three major oral performance traditions of the region, the others being Suzhou Kunju opera and Wu folksongs. The two young tanci performers sang the modern kaipian, "Suzhou hao fengguang" ("Suzhou's Wonderful Scenery"). Other acts on the bill included modern dancing, pop songs, modern instrumental music, and a gugin (Chinese zither) solo. See Shuman (1993a) for perspectives on the conceptualization of local culture involving the discourse of feminism and performance folkloristics.

6. Zhou (1988) offers the most comprehensive introduction to Suzhou pingtan to date, though is fraught with political rhetoric. The text covers history, artistic aspects, repertoire (with extensive listings), aspects of performance, and traditional criticism. See also Chen (1958:170-218). Though brief, Tsao (1988:1-18) is the best general description of Suzhou tanci in English to date,
though much of the information is derived from earlier Chinese and English sources, particularly Chen (1936, rpt. 1958) and Hrdlickova 1965). In her dissertation, Hodes (1991:3-7) makes some useful observations on contemporary storytelling in Suzhou. In the following sections I have by necessity covered some of the same ground as these sources. My approach, however, brings the dimension of extensive recent fieldwork which included the viewing of over one hundred Suzhou tanci and pinghua performances, visiting sixteen storyhouses in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, interviewing (formally and informally) over two dozen performers, and traveling for several weeks with nine storytellers from the Suzhou troupe who were performing a middle-length tanci story. (I became a part of the performance when asked to act as a master of ceremonies for a number of shows, of which my duties included the singing of part of a kaipian ballad, a feat first carried off at the Lanxin Opera House in Shanghai.) Some of the observations I made on context and performance conventions in my 1989 thesis "Suzhou Tanci: Keys to Performance" have been revised below.

The main interviewees were the storytellers Gong Huasheng and his partner Cai Xiaojuan, Yuan Xiaoliang and Wang Jin. Others interviewees and acquaintances -- in no particular order include (stories in parentheses -- all are tanci performers unless otherwise noted): Ni Qingping (Pearl Pagoda), Jin Lisheng and Xu Shujuan (Yang Naiwu yu Xiao Baicai), Zhou Minghua (pinghua), Wang Xiaodie (Fei Long zhu), Wang Diejun (Miaojin feng), Ma Xiaojun, Yao Yinmei (Tixiao yinyuan), Qin Jianguo and Jiang Wen (Yu qingting), Dong Yaokun and Ni Huaiyu (avocational), Huang Yi'an (Xixiang ji), Gu Zhifen (Pingtan School), Qin Jiwu (Ji Gong, pinghua performer), Xue Xiaofei (Zhenzhu ta), Shen Youmei (from Taicang; performs shuangdang pinghua style with wife, surnamed Wang), Tao Qing, Zhou Jie'an (pingtan radio), Wu Junyu (Suzhou pinghua) and Xu Mengdan (author), Lu Shixiao and Yan Wenwu (Xiao Meng Lilun), Li Renzhen (Yangzhou tanci), Shen Xiaolin (self-employed pinghua performer from Huzhou), Ge Wenging (formerly of Suzhou troupe), Jiang Zhaokun (Tixiao yinyuan, Shanghai troupe), Yu Hongxian (Shanghai troupe), Zhang Zhenhua (leader of Shanghai troupe), Zhou Xiaojun (Zhou Hong, Suzhou troupe), Ji Shenhua and Wei Meng, Xing Yanjun and Xing Yanzhi (Pingtan School), Zhang Jianguo, Jin Shengbo (well-known pinghua performer), Yang Zijian (pinghua performer), Shen Shihua, Xu Bole and Lu Yihong (Nu zhuangyuan), Shen Wenjun and Jiang Qingzhu (Mao Long qu jing). Scholars include Zhou Liang, Wu Zongxi (Zuo Xian), Sun Jingyao, and Che Xilun (Yangzhou Teacher's College). Fans included Yin Dequan of Suzhou. I have noted instances of particularly personal or unique input. Chinese characters are supplied in the glossary in the appendices.
7. The most adventurous of these endeavors is the volume of the Chinese Encyclopedia (Zhongguo da baike chuan shu) devoted to opera and guyi (1983). Guyi ("the art of melodies"), a term which appears several times in the discussion below, is a term coined in the 1950s to categorize oral performances (often by professionals) accompanied (usually) by music. Although pinghua (and related narrative styles) has little or no singing, it is also considered a form of guyi. Ni (1991) has written a history of guyi, though due to factual errors, should be used with caution. See Chen (1958:172) for an oft-quoted description of tanci performance.

8. See note eight for a definition of guyi.

9. See Chen (1958:172) for an oft-quoted description of tanci which mentions the solo and duo styles, the use of stringed instruments, speaking registers, and the four components of shuo, xue, tan, and chang described below.

8. Yao's is the most famous tanci adaptation of Zhang Henshui's famous novel of the 1930s.


10. Historically, the term nanci has been used as a term to describe all of these stylistically similar storytelling styles (Chen 1958:182-183). For a history and description of Hangzhou nanci see Yang (1989:27-40). While some commentators (Zheng 1938, rpt. 1987:348, for instance) include Cantonese muk'yu (muyu, "wooden fish") traditions in studies of tanci, I feel that the traditions in the Yangzi delta are distinct enough to be easily differentiated from these other traditions in terms of form audience, performers, and contexts of performance. See Su De San Zheng (1992) for a description of the oral and written traditions of muk'yu.

11. The music of Yangzhou tanci has been strongly influenced by that of Suzhou tanci. In the early 1960s, the political economist and storytelling aficionado Chen Yun declared that Yangzhou tanci was dandiao (dull). Though she has met formidable resistance from older male performers, Li Renzhen, a nationally recognized Yangzhou tanci performer, has contributed greatly to the development of the music of this style of storytelling. See Wei and Wei (1985) for more on Yangzhou tanci/xuanci.

12. Here, the term "context" is in the usage of the performance folklorists such as Richard Bauman introduced in Chapter I.
13. There were several types of shuchang (story houses) and the term was sometimes used interchangeably with chaoguan (tea house) (Zhou 1988:162). In some shuchang, stories were told along with opening ballads (kaipian). In others, women sang songs and ballads, there being no actual storytelling. These shuchang featuring only singing were described by the term qingchang (pure singing). In the late Qing fictional narrative, Jiu wei gui (The Nine Tailed Turtle) (Sou Liushan Fang:1989), the narrator relates his visit to such a shuchang in Suzhou, describing how patrons wrote their requests on slips of paper (tiaozi) to be given by waiters to the performers, some of whom were prostitutes. Today, notes are sometimes used by audience members to request favorite kaipian, though an improperly made request can be considered insulting to performers. See Feng (1988) for an overview of shuchang in the last one hundred years. Ni (1986) details the development of story houses in Shanghai.

14. The exact date mixed-gender pairs began performing has yet to be definitely established. Yao Yinmei (1992: pers. comm.) believes it to have been the mid-twenties, crediting the phenomenon to relaxed social attitudes towards the public mixing of the sexes. Other performers, such as Gong Huasheng (1992: pers. comm.) agree with that time frame. Huang Yi'an (1992: pers. comm.), over age eighty, feels that the form has been practiced for "about one hundred years," though not common until earlier in this century. An early name for mixed-gender pairs, dating to at least the latter 19th century is cixiong dang (cock and hen group).

15. A Mr. Yang, the third generation manager of the only storyhouse in the town of Puyuan, Zhejiang province, told me that during the 1930s Japanese soldiers sometimes came to the storyhouse to recruit tanci storytellers for tanghui performances.

16. The term huishu can act as a noun or a verb (i.e., "We will huishu at the Suzhou Story House this weekend."), while a similar term shuhui seems only to act as a noun and is less often heard than huishu. I did not make this observation in Bender (1992). Hrdlickova (1965:238-239) briefly discusses huishu and similar events in other Chinese narrative traditions.

17. Carlton Benson gave a paper concerning tanci radio performances in pre-1949 China at the 1994 Association for Asian Studies conference. It was entitled "The Manipulation of Tanci in Radio Shanghai."

18. The exact number houses is not constant. Many have closed in recent years due to lack of business, but new ones occasionally still open. In 1992 one trend was for modern
housing developments to include a storytelling place for older residents. Zhou, et. al. (1988) includes a list of over two hundred storyhouses operating in the late 1980s, the largest percentage being in Shanghai and surrounding suburbs. A forthcoming paper entitled "Shuchang wenhua" ("Story House Culture") by researchers in Shanghai will details a number of houses in that area. Yamaguchi (1992) published a short article introducing several story houses in Suzhou and Shanghai.

19. For instance, in November of 1991, Gong Huasheng and Cai Xiaojuan of the Suzhou Pingtan Troupe performed an episode of Meng Lijun in the Suzhou Opera Museum to an audience of "outstanding" elderly people on Old Folks' Day. Amateur performers Dong Yaokun and his wife Ni Huaiyu (daughter of Zhenzu ta performer Ni Pingqing) make feature performances about eighty times a year in factories and other local settings (1991: pers. comm.).

20. Both professional and amateur performances were held in the spring of 1992 on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Mao Zedong's famous talks on art and literature given at the communist base in Yenan in the early forties. It is interesting to note that the subject matter at most of the tanci performances was traditional stories. Efforts by cultural bureau workers to organize events with a more political content met with resistance (by non-participation) from most storytellers. Those that did participate took advantage of the lack of competition to win prizes they normally could not -- at least that is the opinion of some who chose not to participate.

21. In the spring of 1992, a number of elder tanci performers gathered to perform at a storyhouse in Changshu (the event was officially termed a shuhui, though was sometimes referred to as a huishu event) to celebrate the eightieth birthday of Huang Yi'an. Among the oldest living tanci performers, the retired Huang is noted for his skill at seal cutting and calligraphy, and is the originator of the the modern Suzhou tanci version of Story of the Western Wing (Xixiang ji), made famous by his student, Yang Zhenxiong. Huang performed for over a half hour at the event.

22. In late 1991, the Suzhou Pingtan Troupe Great Prize Contest was held, featuring younger professionals. Stories which won had some political overtones and themes were either from the pre-1911 period or the post-1911 period. Though audiences generally prefer the older stories, themes set in the thirties and forties (or more recently), are more suitable as "politically correct" offerings to the judges, who include troupe leaders, officials from the cultural bureau, and representatives from the Pingtan School. One of the winning
numbers was a selection from a KMT-Red intrigue set in the thirties.

23. Zhou Jie'an, trained as a tanci performer, is the host of a popular Shanghai radio show called "Weekly Storyhouse" (Xingqi shuchang). See He (1987) for more on radio shows.

24. Working performers do not want their entire stories aired because they fear attendance will suffer at storyhouses. On the other hand, younger performers desire the exposure gained from the airing of selections of their stories and speciality pieces.

25. It is the opinion of several informed storytellers in Suzhou that the local television station simply does not "understand" pingtan and refuses to air performances.

26. The tape features Qin Jianguo, a 35-year-old performer in the Shanghai troupe, singing a selection from The Jade Dragonfly, surrounded by a chorus of lovely women playing pipa. The music is electronically enhanced and an initial showing at a pingtan hobbyist club in Suzhou in early 1992 was not met with enthusiasm.

27. The Taiping Rebellion, beginning in rural areas of south China, raged throughout the country in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. This massive uprising of peasants were led by a visionary leader who followed a doctrine combining elements of traditional Chinese thought with Christianity. The Taipings sought to bring down the Manchu imperial government and replace it with their own "heavenly kingdom of great peace" (Grasso, et. al. 1991:45-52).

28. Audience members are called tingzhongmen (listeners) rather that guanzhongmen (viewers), suggesting that the oral dimensions of pingtan performance is more basic than the visual.

29. See Yamaguchi (1992) for an alternate description.

30. Since audience members can attend only once a week, they fill their afternoons with other diversions, including opera performances, visits to parks, and films.

31. According to Yuan Xiaoliang, performers like it to rain in the countryside -- "when it rains, it rains money" -- as audiences are larger. In cities, however, rain means smaller audiences and less income.

33. The name Guangyu gongsuo was later changed to Guangyu she in 1912. A ceremony commemorating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its establishment was held in 1926 (Chen 1958:181). A stone column commemorating the event stands in the courtyard of the Suzhou Kunju Opera Museum.

34. See Santangelo (1993:93-95) for information on the historical presence of various professional guilds in Suzhou.

35. Information in these paragraphs on the economic and administrative aspects of the storyhouses and troupes was supplied largely by Gong Huasheng and Cai Xiaojuan in interviews held in early 1992. Gong noted that numerous changes in systems of the various pingtan troupes (there are differences in administration) were expected in coming years.

36. Some houses routinely under-report the number of tickets sold each day, thus affecting a performer's wages. According to Yuan Xiaoliang, this practice is known as giepiao ("slicing off tickets"). While on stage some performers actually count audience members if they suspect they are being cheated (Yuan claims it takes him only a minute to count, adding up the heads five at a time).

37. In early 1992 a radio show in Shanghai reported on the poor living conditions and low salaries of performers. Some commentators, however, felt that thirty-five yuan a day was quite a decent wage.

38. Gong Huasheng noted in an interview in the fall of 1991 that many story houses had problems finding younger staff members because of low pay.

39. Kuniu is a form of traditional drama named after the nearby city of Kunshan, the place of its origin. None of the genres mentioned here are as popular in Suzhou as pingtan, although Yueju has a large following among rural and small town women, especially in parts of Zhejiang province. Shi Haining, a young Japanese graduate student at Suzhou University (who goes by a Chinese name) has for several years arranged performances for foreign tourists by the ailing Suzhou Kunju Troupe in an effort to draw attention to Kuniu.


41. The term xiansheng was once reserved for males, though in some contexts today, including that of professional storytelling, the term may be applied to females.

42. In the Confucian view, entertainers were not among the four classes of respectable occupations, which in order of
merit were the gentry-officials, farmers, craftsmen, and merchants (Grasso, et. al. 1991:10-15).

43. See Fang (1982) for sayings about Suzhou pingtan.

44. This was mentioned to me in an interview with Qin Jianguo and Jiang Wen in 1992 in Suzhou.

45. This opinion was expressed to me a number of times by several pingtan performers.

46. Pinghua performers appear at some events, but tanci is far more popular because of the music.

47. The life stories of several pingtan performers appear in Pingtan yishujia pingzhuan lu (Shanghai guyi jia xiehui, ed. 1991) and in numerous volumes of Pingtan yishu. These accounts often have descriptions of how performers apprenticed with a series of masters.

48. This was how Suzhou troupe leader Gong Huasheng learned his art. As a child, his partner and wife, Cai Xiaojuan was sent to storyhouses to steal stories for her uncle (he would have been driven away if recognized), who wrote down the contents. Cai's memory was so sharp that she began to join her uncle on stage at age nine.

49. For example, the pinghua performer Wu Junyu was capped a "rightist" and sent to Qinghai for several years of education through labor. Several performers in Suzhou have told me of being held in makeshift prisons for several years.

50. In the summer of 1992, I was invited to attend a bai shi ceremony (this rendering is a common shortened form of the term bai laoshi) in which a young woman in the Suzhou troupe, Zhou Xiaojun, took the famous Shanghai troupe tanci performer Yu Hongxian as a second master. In doing so she changed her name to Zhou Hong. At nearly the same time, I witnessed Jin Lisheng of the Suzhou troupe take Yang Zijiang as master in order to receive a famous story from him. See my unpublished paper, "Names of Suzhou Pingtan Performers," presented at the 1993 Chinoperl conference.

51. This was Yuan Xiaoliang. See Bender (1992) for detailed information on his training.

52. A typical student I interviewed at the school in late 1991 is Tao Qin, age nineteen. I later visited her home in a small village ten miles outside of Wuxi. Her father is a farmer and her mother works in a local office. The village is well-to-do, though did not have a storyhouse until 1992.
Older people in her family were interested in tanci, though she knew little about it before enrolling in the school.

53. For information on avocational groups before 1949, see Ni (1988).

54. While touring parts of Jiangsu and Zhejiang with nine tanci storytellers from the Suzhou troupe in the spring of 1992, it became very clear that audiences in marginal or non-Wu speaking areas simply could not follow the story. Thus, dialect is a tremendous limitation on appreciation of the pinqtan arts in the national context.

55. See Mullen (1992) for folkloristic profiles of the elderly and the relation of folklore to personal identity among older people.

56. Storytellers perform only in the afternoons in Suzhou. Cardplaying and chatting may continue in rooms adjacent to the story room during performances in the Shamao Story House and in the Cultural Center. No such activities take place in the Guangyu Story House or the Suzhou Story House.

57. Using Goffman's terminology, Mullen (1978:125-129), in a discussion of local character anecdotes notes that, "The deviant is both a symbol of the group's values and a threat to those values, so that the attitude toward the deviant is mixed." Several well-known "deviants" regularly attend performances at the larger Suzhou storyhouses. There is whispered gossip about their behavior -- especially the loose morals of several younger women. On the other hand, their regularity in attendance attests to their devotion (for whatever psychological reasons) to the storytelling arts. I have also been told of overly zealous fans who become fixated on performers, sometimes appearing in out of the way storyhouses and begging to be accepted as students.

58. Yang began a revival of the story in early 1992, performing to sell-out crowds at story houses in Wuxi and Suzhou.

59. Sex and politics are topics which are easy to make jokes about and are intrinsically interesting to audiences. Historically this material has been very useful to some storytellers.

60. Yuan Xiaoliang has commented to me that the presence of these neihang (experts) can stimulate the storytellers to do a better than average job and that he sometimes feels he performs "just for them."
61. Of course, fans in other cities may not agree with this assessment.

62. The best known fan in Suzhou is probably Yin Dequan, who has over three hundred audio-tapes of tanci performances (Yin 1991). Mao Ruisheng (1991) has privately published a bibliography of his collection of tape-recordings of 115 performers.

63. Zhou's work *Suzhou pingtan jiu wen lu* [Traditional references to Suzhou pingtan] (1983) is among the best sources for early writings on Suzhou storytelling.

64. In July 1993, Wu Zongxi gave a talk on the aesthetics of pingtan performance at The Ohio State University.

65. Performer Wei Haibo's version of *Zhenzhu ta* (Pearl Pagoda), published in 1988 and edited by Zhou Liang, has numerous inter-textual remarks by the editor politically evaluating the dialogue and actions of the characters.

66. I had the pleasure of recording and interviewing the young performers Lu Shixiao and Yan Wenwu at Wuxi and Suzhou while they performed *Xiao Meng Lijun* in 1991 and 1992.

67. "Jiu long ko" is a term from traditional opera associated with an area of the stage where high-ranking characters make an entrance. See Zhou, ed. (1988) for synopses of a number of traditional and modern pingtan stories.

68. Perry Link (1981) feels that Zhang Henshui's *Tixiao yinyuan* does not depart from traditional themes, though the story is set in the 1930s. I have used his translation of the title throughout this dissertation.


70. Tsao (1988) has transcriptions of several kaipian, including "Du Shiniang." Also, see Pian (1986) for a transcription/translation of the kaipian "Birthday Wishes from the Eight Immortals" (*Ba xian shang shou*).
71. Some of these very commonly heard observations on guanzi made here were expressed by Gong Huasheng and Yuan Xiaoliang in various interviews, 1991-1992.

72. In efforts to make tanci appeal to younger audiences it has been suggested that nongtang shu be "eliminated". Pingtan researcher Fu Jurong feels that to do so would be to eliminate the real essence of pingtan, as some of the most interesting aspects of the arts appear in such episodes (1992, pers. comm.).

73. See Zhou (1988:57-64) for a detailed discussion of guanzi and the structure of tanci episodes.

74. In a mixed-gender pair a woman is almost never the lead, except when the positions are momentarily switched for effect. I was told by several performers that men were simply unwilling to be the xiaoshou for women. In special performances, however, a younger man may accompany a woman on the sanxian as she sings a kaipian.

75. It is rare for more than two performers to be on stage at once for the daily performances in story houses. When about fifteen, Yuan Xiaoliang regularly performed together with two of his older sisters, though this was regarded as a novelty. In contests or certain huishu over a dozen performers may appear on stage at once to perform kaipian. In the fall of 1991 I witnessed eight avocational performers in Wuxi sing the kaipian "Ba xian shang shou." See note 70, above.

76. As already noted, I have been unable to determine the exact time men and women began performing together on stage. Though increasingly common in the 1930s, the practice was not accepted by the Guangyu Guild until the 1940s and never was wholly legitimate in some people's eyes until after 1949. Gong Huasheng claims that a relative of his was the first to introduce this innovation in the twenties. Yao Yinmei (as noted above) also believes the custom started in then, with an increase in women's freedom. Even today mixed-gender pairs are pressured to marry, as long-term affairs between unmarried performers working together are not unknown. (Pairs with such a relation are known among performers as matou fugi -- literally, "husband and wife of the river ports.")

77. Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan quyi yanjiusuo (1988:131-132) notes that in the late 19th century, tanci performances by women in story houses were common, and most of the audiences for them were women. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, under pressure from the male dominated Guangyushe guild, such performances became rare in Suzhou.
Performers such as Lu Xiuxing and Wang Xueqing began performing in Shanghai, where they were welcomed in the more open social atmosphere (1988:139). This began a revival of women in tanci and would lead to the acceptance of mixed-gender pairs in later years. See Chen (1958:205-219) for more on early women performers.

78. I am particularly indebted to Gong Huasheng, Cai Xiaojuan, Yuan Xiaoliang, and Wang Jin for many of the following remarks. Cai's remarks on the role of the xiashou (assistant) in performance were especially enlightening. For a written source on shuangdang see the well-known tanci performer Zhang Jianting's (1986) article in which he stresses the difficulties in finding a suitable partner. Also see Zuo (1981:34).

79. Yuan Xiaoliang feels that many audience members find the music of the single sanxian to be dull.

80. I was able to observe Yuan and Wang rehearse on a number of occasions. Such rehearsals were usually done in very low voices, the pair seated very close to each other.

81. I was told many stories about performers becoming confused or forgetting cues, etc. Experienced storytellers -- especially those who work well together -- can often cover (mibu) these mistakes, though it may take considerable imagination. Factors contributing to this confusion would include familiarity with the story, state of mind, and health. Even though a contemporary performer is very likely working from a written script, such aides are not allowed onstage. Thus, performers who "get lost" must be resourceful to avoid embarrassment.

82. One of the better known zhongpian tanci is Jen ging jia yi (True Love, False Meaning) written by Xu Mengdan in the early 1980s. In the spring of 1992, I toured throughout the Jiangnan region with nine storytellers in the Suzhou Pingtang Troupe as they performed a zhongpian called Yang Naiwu yu Xiao Baicai Xin Bian (A New Version of the Yang nai wu and Xiao Baicai Story), written by Gong Huasheng. Performances, which lasted three hours were given in story houses, opera houses, and cultural arts theaters. Three performers were on stage for each of the three parts of the story.

83. The following observations are based on my attendance at several dozen performances in the Guangyu Story House in 1991 and 1992. Most of the performances I observed and recorded there were given by Yuan and Wang.
84. Between sips the tea is placed on the table, though in some houses the glasses are placed in wooden trays or in wire holders on the backs of chairs. Many guests drink tea constantly throughout the performances, sometimes pouring each other tea. In a few teahouses (such as at Puyuan in northern Zhejiang), which retain older traditions, workers still fill the patrons' glasses from kettles. The tea served is usually of average quality, though may be somewhat better in the finer houses.

85. The shutai is a small platform built on the back wall of the room in which stories are told (in some places, such as the Suzhou Story house, an actual stage is present). About two feet high (sometimes a bit more), the platform holds the performers, a small table, chairs and instruments. A painting or ornamented screen, sometimes hung or placed behind the performers, adds atmosphere.

86. Many storytellers do not drink tea when performing, feeling that it constricts their throats.

87. Yuan Xiaoliang always stole out on stage about a half an hour before performances to make sure the instruments were properly aligned. He told of incidents in which workers placed instruments out of reach or upside down. Such misplacements could be embarrassing at the start of a performance. He also takes care in adjusting the microphones, particularly on the first day in a story house.

88. It is interesting that the presence of the male on the left and the female on the right seems very common cross-culturally. American news teams observe the same convention. It was also traditional in parts of America for gravediggers to place the wife to the right of the husband.

89. Some performers like to vary the style of kaipian. For instance, instead of a song, a story shorter than the main narrative, and told in only fifteen minute segments a day, may be performed over the two week engagement. Singing is usually a part of such a form. In some cases, performers may even share the singing of a kaipian, each one doing half. Yuan Xiaoliang and Wang Jin often sing parts of three or four kaipian each day, drawing on a range of famous episodes from full-length tanci and traditional kaipian. Urban audiences like the fact that the pair have a large repertoire of kaipian tunes. Thus, their performances of kaipian are unusually varied.

90. See Babcock (1977) for thoughts on performer/audience communication and the use of metanarrative frames. Yuan's
use of engagement and disengagement with the audience implicitly draws attention to the storytelling frame.

91. Performers may become quite disheartened if they see the audience gradually slipping away, feeling — as one put it — that they are having their skin slowly peeled off.

92. This tiny "awakening" block is held on the sides between the tips of index and ring fingers, with the middle finger on top. The tiny blocks used by Suzhou pingtan performers are much smaller than those I observed being used by performers of Kunming pingshu storytelling (Bender, forthcoming).

93. During my stay in Suzhou the xiashou in one of the better storyhouses became the object of dissatisfaction among audience members and staff alike. Her "crimes" included slouching, not putting enough energy into singing, and constantly "pulling a long face." There is also the story of an older male performer whose very young — and very bored — xiashou would count the rafters of an older storyhouse as the master narrated. After several days of this, the old man suddenly shifted into character and surprised the xiashou, who was playing the role of a maiden, by asking how how old she was. Taken off guard, the xiashou blurted out something like "Sixty-seven," which brought down the house and put an end to the rafter counting. Stories of snoozing xiashou being prodded off stage by the shangshou's sanxian-banjo are also told. It is general practice to put off pre-performance tiffs until after the show, though this is not always possible for hot-headed performers. Veiled insults may be directed at the other performer while both are in character, with comments about body shape and temper. In some cases the audience picks up on these intentional affronts, which can add to the amusement (at least on the audience's part). Skillful intended victims can sometimes sense such attacks in the making and ward them off verbally.

94. This is a favorite technique of Yangzhou tanci performer Li Renzhen who spends months every year performing dandang in the northern Jiangsu countryside and small towns. Though some performers smoke, many complain of throat problems which result from voice strain aggravated by the dense smoke. In winter when the storyhouse doors and windows are shut, it is at its most dense.

95. A well-known, elderly Shanghai performer is rumored to have fed bits of apple to caged crickets and discretely picked his nose on stage during the last years of his career.

96. Some rural story houses do not have a backstage area. Performers thus remain on stage and whisper briefly about the story. In such situations, there is no opportunity to consult
a script book if something is forgotten. The break may be a few minutes shorter than usual, as the performers feel awkward "just sitting" there. As in the city, rural audiences usually leave en masse for the restroom areas during break.

97. In my observations women do more of these "household" tasks than men, though there are certainly exceptions.

98. Qigong is a sort of exercise combining yogic breathing and martial arts movements popular in many areas of China. Tanci performer Jin Lishen claims that qigong exercises help in his delivery. Li Renzhen, a Yangzhou tanci performer, does an extensive daily routine of sword dancing and qigong exercises.

99. Experienced performers know that they cannot give one hundred percent each time, as it is too tiring. Thus, on certain days they will maili (make efforts) more than others. The first day and the following Sunday of an engagement are very important, as crowds are larger, affording an opportunity to attract larger audiences during the week. Also, on some days the intrinsic interest of the story will hold audiences as much as the ability of the performers.

100. See Zhou, et. al., ed. (1988:133-142) for an extensive list of terms.

101. One example may be the term vuankou (in Bordahl's translation, "round mouth") discussed by Bordhal (1992:41-41). He describes this style of speaking as "a smooth, quick pronunciation, closer to everyday speech and open to all kinds of improvisations according to the circumstances." Among Suzhou storytellers the term huokou ("lively mouth" -- my translation) seems closest to this term. Both traditions use the term fangkou ("square mouth") which Bordahl describes as "a forceful, over-distinct, steady pronunciation, with little room for improvisations." Zuo (1981:35) notes that in Suzhou pingtan this term can imply that the story is good enough that the performer can stick very close to rather set wording without adding anything to keep the audience interested. In Zhou, et. al., ed. (1988:135) fangkou is described in a similar way, the emphasis again on the lack of improvisation by performers described by such a term (they "stick close to the script book"). Pinghua performer Wu Junyu, noted for his innovations, inserted jokes, etc., has been pointed out to me as an example of a huokou. Among some performers in Suzhou, the term fangkou is not flattering and may take on the meaning of a performer entrenched in his ways and not interested or open to improvisation -- in other words, one who is si (rigid, inflexible, non-innovative). Whether at one time the terms had closer meanings in the two storytelling communities is a topic for further inquiry.
102. I discovered that there is also a sort of "insider" jargon among performers that is quite unknown even to many pingtan researchers. For instance, there is the concept of daiqing, which refers to the manner in which the managers of a house treat performers. Thus one performer may ask another about a particular story house, inquiring, Daiqing hao ma? or "How were you treated?" (Suzhou dialect, rather than Mandarin, would be the normal register for such usages, however.)

103. More discussion on shuo appears in ensuing sections.

104. During my fieldwork interviews numerous persons noted this apparent decline in speaking ability. Young performers are also very aware that they are not considered on par with their predecessors.

105. I touch on this little known aspect of tanci music in my description of Yuan Xiaoliang's training; see Bender (1993).

106. Du Wenwei gave a paper on xuetou in pingtan at the 1993 Chinoperl conference in Los Angeles using a taped performance of pinghua performer Wu Junyu as a source of examples of these three types of xuetou. See Zuo (1982) for more on xuetou. Chake is another name for chuancha.

107. During the Cultural Revolution the speaking roles of tanci (non-dialogue) were restricted to no more than one third of the performance, severely hindering performers from using their inspiration or telling full versions (Zuo 1981:35). Xuetou was especially suspect. Realizing the need for humor in performances, Chen Yun (1983) re-legitimized the use of xuetou in the early 1980s, encouraging performers to make "healthy" jokes, "unhealthy" ones being those involving scenes featuring prostitutes, mahjong playing, and other activities arousing illegal or immoral interests.

108. Zuo (1982:34) emphasizes that although opera movements have been borrowed extensively from drama, they are modified in tanci performances in part because of the limitations of the small size of the storytelling platform. He also notes a distinction between sizes of movements: dakaimen consists of leg and trunk movements, while xiaokaimen involve only the hands and arms (1982:43). Chake is another name for chuancha.

109. A television adaptation of a short tanci written by Zhu Yinquan, Gong Huasheng, and Ye Qingjiang entitled Qipeng shu wang (The Seventh Grade Official Story King), about Wang Zhoshi's encounter with the emperor was adapted into the
television drama *Shu wang yu Qianlong* (The Story King and Qianlong) in the late 1980s. Several troupe members, including Cai Xiaojuan and Wang Jin, had small roles in the production. A script of the drama was published in *Ju ying yue bao* (Theater and Film Monthly), issue 9, 1989.

110. The title "Shupin" seems to be derived from the twelfth century commentary on painting entitled Huapin (Evaluation of Paintings), written by Li Zhi (Bush and Shih 1985:194).

111. I cite these examples in my 1989 Master's thesis, p. 49.

112. In the spring of 1992, performer Gong Huasheng spent several hours giving me his interpretations of the concepts presented in "Shupin" and "Shuiji." I will present findings from those discussions in future works.

113. See Bender (1988) for a discussion of these aesthetic criteria (as interpreted in Zuo 1982) in evaluating a huaben story. In the following paragraphs I paraphrase parts of that paper (pp. 59-60).

114. See Olrik (1965:129-141) for a discussion of the principle of the "logic of the saga" in folktales.

115. See Wong (1981:240) and Kao (1985:13) for notes on verisimilitude. As I noted (in Bender 1988:), some aspects of Zuo's interpretations of these categories may be influenced by Marxist discourse on realism and romanticism. In some instances the concept of romanticism is useful in validating elements of the fantastic which appear in some stories.

116. See Bush and Shih (1985) for similar terms in Chinese painting.

117. Thus, there is variation between the printed versions of *tanci* performances and in individual script books. Terms may be placed in parentheses or separated from the text with colons. In many recent texts made for reading (which in general are not very accurate representations of performance), the terms are not included. An example would be Zhang Rujun, et. al. *Miao jin feng* (1990) which, though a very interesting story, with many references to Suzhou folk customs, is presented without notation as to character role, etc., appearing very much like a modern popular novel.

118. Script books produced at the Pingtan School in Suzhou and in some troupes may have a more standardized format, but overall this does not seem to be the case. See Hodes (1991:261).
119. There is a considerable amount of "inner-circulating" material on pingtan which has been produced, often in mimeographed form, since the early 1950s. Some of this material deals with the speaking registers of tanci. The most valuable texts are those which include the commentary of particular performers on their art. The published works of Zuo (1981; 1982) and Zhou (1988) cover most of the basic technical information in these sources and provide extensive examples. Articles in Pingtan yishu and in other print media concerning particular performers sometimes include references to the use of various speaking registers.

120. A portion of the glossary (see appendices) supplies the Chinese characters for these names.

121. Foley, in his forthcoming The Singer of Tales as Performance makes the point that these registers of speech associated with certain performance styles contribute to what Hymes has called the "communicative economy" of the language of those performances. In other words, while of little use outside the storytelling performance, the languages of pingtan are efficient for their purposes as narrative vehicles in that tradition and contribute to the creation of meaning.

122. Ye (1988:78) notes that certain speech and singing registers handed down orally have contributed to this conservatism. Speakers of more modern styles of Suzhou dialect may understand this older form, though regard it as anachronistic.


124. In an interview in 1992, Yao Yinmei noted that when he began introducing a number of dialects into his version of Ti xiao yinyuan in the 1930s that is was partially in response to the shift away from Zhongzhouyun in stories on modern themes -- the old language simply sounded ridiculous when spoken by modern characters. Use of differing dialects added variety and helped distinguish between characters.

125. According to Zuo (1981;1982), the basic divisions here are similar or identical to those in Suzhou pinghua. See Chen (1958:172).

126. See Chapter II for Zhao Jingshen's use of these terms in describing written tanci such as ZSY.

127. The term paishi is a popular designation for pailu (Regulated Verse), discussed in Chapter II.

129. See Tsao (1988) and Pan (1988) for recent studies of Suzhou tanci music.

130. Tsao's study is based primarily on a number of well-known kaipian. While outside my own expertise, it is hoped that a full study of music in the long-form of tanci will someday appear.

131. Most of the information on the lesser known tunes and melodies was supplied to me in interviews with Yuan Xiaoliang in June, 1992. Certainly there is much more to be documented about these aspects of tanci music. See Zhou, et. al., ed. (1988:20) for comments on some of these phenomena, which are termed in that text as paizigu (standard tunes).

132. During my fieldwork female performers Cai Xiaojuan and Wang Xiaodie began mimicking my pronunciation of Chinese, eventually incorporating it in their roles as foreigners.

133. On one occasion Yuan announced that because of the upcoming International Women's Day, Wang Jin would act as the shangshou during the kaipian since they were performing Meng Liun. The pair then traded seats. This metanarrative reference to the story is actually a form of maifa, or "hoopla," performers use to increase audience interest.

134. The practice of cutting short an engagement is known as jianshu ("cutting short the story").

135. Evaluation also goes on in restrooms during breaks. The massive quantities of tea imbibed by patrons during a performance insures that many guests will spend breaks in the restrooms. Evaluative conversations often take place among male patrons who discuss the number of times a performer shuocuo (misspoke) and whether or not the performers have paid close attention to details (reflecting the concept of xi) such as closing doors or replacing the lid of a chamber pot.

136. See Moser (1990) for thoughts on framing and reflexivity in the art of xiangsheng

137. Besides Suzhou tanci, these genres may have included Yangzhou xuanzi, and other regional styles of tanci, as well as shuochang ("speaking and singing") traditions relying less on instrumental accompaniment such as Jinjiang jiangjing. In early 1992, I was fortunate enough to attend several performances of jiangjing ("expounding scriptures") on the
north bank of the Yangzi River near the town of Jingjiang. One of the storytellers performed a selection from Zaisheng yuan (the archery contest) an hour after he discovered I was interested in the story. Although the story was not part of his usual repertoire, he was familiar with the plot and had the ability to tell it without lengthy preparation.

138. Qin seems to have died in the mid to late 1980s.

139. Qin Jiwen's Zaisheng yuan is one of several texts based on either performer's script books or actual performances (or the combination of those two in a performer's mind in the act of creating a version for publication) appearing since the early 1980s. These texts usually appear in Standard Chinese, though this is regarded by many as an unsatisfactory compromise with the need for reaching audiences outside the Wu dialect area. Fu Jurong, a performer and researcher in the Suzhou Opera Museum, has worked on a number of these projects and feels that too much of the essence of tanci is lost when translated into the idiom of Mandarin.

140. I was able to obtain a copy of this lengthy performance tape.

141. A portion of a play entitled Huali yuan (another popular name for the Meng Lijun story) was published in Shanghai yishu jia (Shanghai professional artists) in 1988. The author, Wu Zhaofen, seems to have been involved in the earlier writing of several Meng Lijun plays, which may have included the offending version.

142. Lists of participants appear in Zhou, et. al., ed. (1988:62) and Zhou (1990:13), the latter being most complete.

143. I have heard varying accounts of Zhou Liang's input in the writing of Meng Lijun -- it seems that the role of official overseer or censor might be most accurate. Zhou (1990:12-13), in a note on an article written in 1962, claims that his main role was that of urging Pan Boying to read to Gu Moro's articles on Chen Duansheng and offering criticisms on each episode of the work in progress.

144. Gong Huasheng has plans to continue writing the storyteller's version, but the text may suffer a similar fate as Chen Duansheng's unfinished original.

145. This clique, supposedly led by Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, was responsible for much of the reign of terror in the later years of the Cultural Revolution.
146. Gong Huasheng graciously allowed me to photocopy this manuscript. I have included one page of this copy in the appendices.

147. See the "Discography."

148. Information in this section was obtained first in interviews with Wang Jin and Yuan Xiaoliang in the spring of 1992, and later with Gong Huasheng. Their accounts are basically in agreement.

149. Wang's ancestral home is Changshu, a town noted for a number of early women storytellers (Gu 1988).

150. Wang claims she "may have" read the original story. A copy of the 1982 version of Chen Duansheng's text is kept in the library of the Suzhou Pingtan School.

151. Yuan's mother, performer Ma Xiaojun, has advised the pair to huanshu, or "change to another story," as she feels audience interest in the familiar tale cannot be maintained over the long run. This thinking is in line with the present reality in which many of the classic stories are not welcomed by audiences who prefer fresh, faster paced stories.

152. Though they often make small intentional changes in the text (sometimes eventually written into their script book, sometimes not), I found that they were either reluctant or unable to make large revisions. Though they were aware of several episodes which were weak, they used a variety of techniques (such as inserting jokes or anecdotes) to maintain audience interest. Many masters take offense if students change anything intentionally, but Yuan feels that Gong is very open-minded and will accept any truly effective changes. Several suggestions made by Prof. Sun Jingyao and myself, after interviewing the performers, resulted in Yuan completely rewriting an entire episode in the first half of their version and in modifying several episodes, to heighten dramatic effect and to resolve contradictions in the plot. This cooperation between intellectuals and storytellers and other performing artists in China has a long tradition.


154. What is presented below is only a summary of the script-book. The actual script is quite close in content and even wording to the script-book version. In future studies I will directly compare script-books with performance transcriptions. I will note here, however, that since performances are based on memorized scripts (and I am speaking of contemporary performances), what is performed and what is written is often
very close in content and wording. However, as certain performers, over time, re-perform and internalize the text, adjustments are often made, some written down, others simply stored in the memory.

155. Yuan and Wang graciously allowed me to photocopy their entire script-book and presented me with an original copy of one chapter. I will make fuller use of these valuable documents in later studies, as mentioned above.

156. See the Appendices for a sample page.

157. It is this episode that is translated in Chapter V of this dissertation.
A. Introduction

This chapter presents a translation, the performers' interpolations on the text, and an analysis of the "means of communication" in one episode of the Suzhou tanci version of ZSY performed by Yuan Xiaoliang and Wang Jin on December 9, 1991, in the Guangyu Storyhouse in Suzhou. The translation follows a transcription of a tape of the episode (recorded by this researcher). The transcription was made in both Suzhou dialect graphs and (included in the appendices) a Suzhou dialect romanization. The transcribers were Zhu Wenjiang and Sun Yin, graduate students in the Chinese department at Suzhou University. In the process of rendering the transcription into English, the performers and this researcher went over each line together.¹

B. Performance Context

The Guangyu Storyhouse and the process of a typical performance by Yuan and Wang are described in Chapter IV.
The following is contextual information on the December ninth performance of Meng Lijun.²

Day nine of the performance engagement was a cool, overcast Monday. The previous day Yuan and Wang had "put forth great effort" (hen maili) in their singing and speaking roles, hoping to please the Sunday crowd, which responded to the fine singing with palpable renao ("warm excitement"). After the performance Yuan noted that the Sunday ending the first week of a two week engagement is important to performers. It is a day when the crowds are usually larger, which presents an opportunity for performers to show off their talent and attract more of an audience later in the week. As a move to excite the audience interest by frame manipulation, Wang sat in Yuan's seat during one of the kaipian, since "this is a story in which women are prominent" (see Chapter IV). They ended the day with a scene in which the marriage of Li Mingtang (Meng Lijun in disguise) and Liang Suhua (Su Yingxue) is announced, Yuan using the teapot lid as a gong and Wang using her fan as a suona (reed-trumpet). They reportedly obtained this idea from watching a television serial which featured a traditional wedding.

On Monday, the day of the episode presented below, Yuan and Wang were noticeably detached -- a phenomenon I observed during the process of taping other of their two week engagements.³ Days in which they performed very well were
often followed by a day or two of slacking, until the next "big guanzi" (rise in action) came along. This is simply a pattern by which they rest their larynxes and relax, though not a strategy taught in the Pingtan School.4

Yuan was dressed in his usual greenish gown, black pants, white stockings, and had nicely combed and blown hair. Rather than wearing the traditional gipao (as she does on some days), Wang was dressed in a pink sweater decorated with silver sequins and a red spray of artificial flowers, a black turtle neck under the sweater, a long black skirt, nylons, black high heels, and dangling golden earrings. She had changed her hairstyle from bangs to the "cock's crest" hairdo then common in Suzhou (a crest of hair high on the forehead).

The audience consisted of around eighty members, over twenty of them middle-aged women (a number slightly higher than normal, due to the content of the story). Like the men, many women come primarily to hear the singing. The day before I had talked to a sixty-five year old woman sitting near my seat near the front. She was a regular who had retired from office work at age fifty-eight and who was preparing to immigrate to America. She felt that Yuan and Wang sang very well -- "that is why we clap so often." In the minutes before Monday's performance began, I talked to a male audience member of about age fifty who had heard other versions of Meng Lijun's story by performer Qin Jiwen. He
commented that young performers today all sing well, but their use of xuetou (humor) and their ability to narrate (shuo) are "not good" because "they don't use their brains."
He continued, saying that none of the young people were at the level of the famous performers (ming jia) of past decades. From random conversations with audience members over the course of two weeks, it seemed that most were familiar with the Meng Lijun story through other storytelling versions, opera, or television. Only a few said they had read Chen Duansheng's original.

Yuan and Wang began the day's performance with parts of three kaipian (again, an unusual tactic, as one kaipian is the norm). The first, sung by Yuan, was a piece associated with the well-known performer Yang Zhenyan of the Shanghai troupe. On Sunday Yuan had promised that Wang would sing a "foreign language kaipian" as another ploy to bring in the Monday audience. After a lengthy introduction, in which she explained that she had learned the kaipian for her trip to Japan some years before, Wang sang a Japanese rendition of a famous Tang dynasty quatrain by the poet Zhang Ji, which has a reference to the Hanshan temple in Suzhou. It seemed that no one in the audience could understand the language, but some were nevertheless impressed by the novelty of her attempt and the fact that she had performed abroad. The third kaipian was a short scene from the famous tanci story, Pearl Pagoda.
During the break after the first episode, Gong Huasheng and Cai Xiaojuan (Yuan's master and master's wife, who had "given" the story to Yuan and Wang) went backstage to offer advice to the young storytellers, who were performing the story for only the sixth time. At the start of the second episode (transcribed below), Yuan and Wang warmed up by briefly plucking out the tune to "Jingle Bells." I clapped in appreciation. An older man near the front then criticized them for singing the previous kaipian in Japanese instead of English, implying that the audience had been deceived by the promise of a song in a "foreign" language. This comment may also have been made because the man felt he had lost face. He had told me on Sunday to listen carefully to the kaipian the next day because they were going to "sing in a foreign language" for me. Yuan simply smiled graciously at the criticism and proceeded to begin the story. When the performance was over, the man apologized to me for the performers' infraction -- I attempted to be diplomatic by claiming to understand some Japanese.

After the performance (as on most days) Professor Sun Jingyao and I went upstairs to the second floor of the storyhouse to interview the performers. Cai Xiaojuan was in their room giving them lots of detailed advice on their singing and speaking. As usual Yuan came out first, but in a few moments Wang appeared to inform us that she was arranging Cai's hair -- the sound of the hairdrier providing
background for part of the interview. Yuan answered several of my questions about why they had exerted so much energy on Sunday. Wang finally came out and mentioned that she was glad no Japanese had come to the performance today because she had sung "poorly." Professor Sun then discussed with them some of the slips in wording they had made. This input from a scholar was very well-received by Yuan and Wang (she took notes) and in later stages of the field research, the performers incorporated several suggestions from Sun and myself into their performances. Yuan also specifically explained how the narrator's aside on the hairdos of traditional and modern Shanghai women is an example of a *chake* insertion.

C. Translated Text of "Two Women Marry"

1. Introduction

The episode examined below is from the latter half of "Two Women Marry," the first half dealing with the marriage ceremony of the disguised Li Mingtang/Meng Lijun and Liang Suhua/Su Yingxue. In this episode, performed after the ten minute break which performers take between episodes (the *xiaohuai*, "little ending"), each party reveals their true identity to the other. The scene does not end in this episode, however, the action extending into the beginning of next storytelling session, in which Meng and Su discuss how
they will continue to carry on their ruse as a married couple.

As detailed below, the text has examples of the common "communicative means" of Suzhou *tanci*. An outstanding aspect of this particular episode is the frequent use of the "inner voices" of *tanci* by the storytellers, which give the audience privy to the private workings of each character's mind as the conflict deepens. The text also features the use of several types of *xuetou*, a personal experience anecdote of one of the storytellers, various usages of song and music, examples of shifting between *Zhongzhouyun* and Suzhou dialect, onomatopoeic noises made by performers, gestures, and other features.

2. The Storytellers' Comments

After translating the transcription into English with the aid of the storytellers, I went back and discussed it line by line with them, asking them to identify the various voices and other communicative means, using the common emic terminology introduced in Chapter III. In the course of this activity Yuan Xiaoliang (who had been wholly uninterested in the translation activities) began pointing out with great interest and enthusiasm what he had done to the "story" each step of the way. Occasional comments were also offered by Wang Jin.
Though these discussions (which I taped) took place over five months after the performance (the pair had performed the story three more times since), Yuan had excellent recall as to what he had done, and on several occasions pointed out parts of the story which he had intentionally modified, left out, or replaced in later performances. In one instance, he noted that he had deleted a long section of song in this version from a later performance in a rural story house in Changqiao, a forty minute bus ride southeast of Suzhou. He explained that the peasants were bored by the singing, so he replaced the song with a humorous anecdote.

He also introduced to me the concept of huangpi, or "wild improvisation," in which performers make up lyrics to songs the words of which they have forgotten. The performers also noted when they had "spoken incorrectly" (shuo cuo), both in wording and in presenting the action. In terms of altering the received script book, Yuan noted scenes (particularly the one about the urine drinking) that he had added to Gong's version. Part of the reason why the performers may have been so forthcoming in their comments is that they considered the text performed at Guangyu as still rather sheng ("raw," or unpolished), and that in the succeeding performances they were still trying to figure out strategies to improve on content and presentation.
In all, the performers' comments add a very unique interpretive dimension to this analysis and give firsthand evidence of the ways in which performers view texts and how they can consciously manipulate not only the registers/frames/keys used in creating a performance, but other elements of the performed "story" in varying contexts as well. While the insertions of the storytellers' comments in the text may be distracting, my purpose here is to present a multi-facted scholarly investigation enhanced by the interweaving of the comments in the text, rather than a purely "artistic" translation. One strategy might be to skip the bracketed comments, many of which I have paraphrased, on the initial reading.

3. Summary of the Means of Communication

The following terms have been explained and translated in Chapter IV. In the sample story text, the communicative means, particularly the narrative registers, can be categorized under these headings:

1) Narrator (the roles of Yuan, the lead, or Wang, the assistant, as storytellers).
2) Character's name (Li Mingtang, etc.).
3) Style of biao (omniscient storytelling voice, i.e. the narrator speaking as narrator; or else the character speaking as narrator, e.g., Meng Lijun biao).
4) Style of bai (characters speaking to audience directly, e.g., biao bai, guan bai, sibai, gubai, chen bai, tuo bai, some of which, e.g., biao bai and sibai, can be considered biao as well).

5) Use of Zhongzhouyun (underlined) or other dialects, aside from the Suzhou dialect.

6) Singing roles (chang) in biao and bai styles; names of tunes are noted.

6) Special styles, e.g., yun bai, fucan, and guako.

7) Gestures and other kinesics (only a partial record is given).

8) Paralinguistic (especially onomatopoeic ones) sounds produced vocally by the performers.

Note that the notations for these categories are separated by slashes. Interlinear comments by the researcher appear in brackets.

As mentioned, Yuan Xiaoliang, a male, is the lead performer (shangshou), while Wang Jin, a female, is his assistant (xiashou).

The characters which appear in this episode are:
Li Mingtang (the disguised Meng Lijun in a sheng -- young scholar -- role).

Liang Suhua (the disguised Su Yingxue, Meng's former maid and friend in a huadan -- young, elite woman -- role).
Rongfa (Meng Lijun's disguised maid, Ronglan, in a caidan -- young common woman -- role).

Minister and Madame Liang (the foster parents of Su Yingxue in, respectively, lao sheng -- older elite male -- and lao dan -- older elite female -- roles).

Maids and servants (who have no names, identified only by the terms jia ("A") and yi ("B") in Yuan's script book.

Maids as caidan, males as xianren, or "insignificant characters".

Contemporary characters in Yuan's personal experience anecdote.

The notion of attempting to identity the voices was not strange to the performers, as they were familiar with the more common emic voice designations. In some instances, however, they were not wholly certain as to how to best categorize the voice in a given passage of text. They seemed occasionally uncertain as to the nature of some of the more "literary" forms, such as chenbai. These "gray areas" have been noted in the text. Moreover, as pointed out in Chapter IV, there is disagreement over what constitutes the emic voices among both storytellers and
scholars. Thus, the remarks of the storytellers should be considered as their interpretation of the tradition.\textsuperscript{12}

I have represented interjections and onomatopoeic sounds in Suzhou dialect romanization to give a feeling of texture and noted certain instances when the pitch or volume of certain utterances is being specifically modulated.

Gestures and other kinesics in the recorded performance are generally those associated by convention with a particular role type (described in Chapter IV), or movements tied into standing or sitting, those made for emphasis, and those involved with spontaneous actions not strictly covered by convention. Though it was impractical to record every movement, I have noted when performers stand and sit, pick up their instruments (usually placed on the table or behind chair after a song in completed), look at each other or the audience (it can be assumed that they are looking at the audience except during rapid exchanges of dialogue), and many of the expressive movements, some stylized (like a maid holding her left hand on her hip while speaking), some more idiosyncratic ones (like the spreading of arms or legs).\textsuperscript{13}

Following Tannen's suggestion (1993b:54), I have attempted a literal, though readable, translation which will "reflect syntax in the original whenever possible without making the meaning incomprehensible." On many occasions, however, I have divided lengthy passages into sentence
clusters which differ somewhat from those in the transcription in romanized Suzhou dialect (which appears in the appendices). I have further tried to convey a sense of uniqueness for each voice register. In rendering passages in Suzhou dialect (i.e., what is not underlined), I have tended to use less formal language. A somewhat more formal (and underlined) register is used for the Zhongzhouyun passages in the dialogue of upper-class characters. In some cases, I have had to clarify statements by adding a few words in parentheses. Unless noted in parentheses, songs are in Zhongzhouyun (even though they are not underlined).

In order to give some sense of texture, interjections are given in Suzhou dialect romanization. In some cases I have commented on their usage in the brackets, though in general they are expressions of intense emotion. The onomatopoeic sounds are treated in a similar fashion. I have rendered the story in past tense though, as noted in Chapter III, Chinese does not mark time in the same way as English. Instances are noted in which the tape is unintelligible and in passages of rapid dialogue where the transcribers could not distinguish who was speaking.

For easier reference, each complete speech of a performer is numbered, and the comments in parentheses are marked with an alphabetical letter. Thus, ",(1,A)" refers to comment A in speech 1. The total time of this part of the performance is thirty-eight minutes.
TEXT:

1. (Yuan/BIAO:) Well, the two persons are looking at each other; Su Yingxue, just this way, with never a thought that before her very eyes would be her bosom friend of the women's quarters, Meng Lijun. Therefore, as the story continues, one of them is in the light and one is in the dark, and things are in need of stirring up.

[A. This introduction is a repeat of the last part of the BIAO spoken by Yuan just before the xiao luohui break. Both performers are seated. Wang is very poised and wholly motionless until her role arrives.]

Old listeners may feel that within the story, told to this point, there is a mystery — [and you] may feel that you have not been told the story in proper order. What's this? The two people together have already seen each other. Meng Lijun's reason for not making the identification in the last chapter has already been heard by everyone. Therefore, how could Su Yingxue identify "him" as Meng Lijun?

[B. The implication here is that an actual, though anonymous, audience member has asked a question about an inconsistency in the plot during the break. Yuan said this sort of "begging the question" is a storytelling "trick." This explicitly metanarrative device is used to get the action moving and increase
interest. Such a ploy may also be used to cover a real lapse of memory or an inconsistency actually pointed out by an audience member. The final question in the speech is "given" to Wang to stimulate her response.]

2. (Wang/BIAO:) Because Su Yingxue's impression of Miss Meng Lijun as a male was very, very deep. Because when Miss Meng Lijun, a female, dressed as a male, it was she who was at her side thinking up clever strategies [for masquerading as a male]. Miss wore male clothing. Thus, Maiden Su advised her, taking two steps to give her a look [at how to walk]. [A. The beginning speech is purely in the BIAO voice, but shifts in the passage below to BIAO from the perspective of Su Yingxue, with "some sense of GUBAI speech."]

(Shift to Su Yingxue BIAO/GUBAI:) 'Ak-iok! Not correct, not correct! Miss, walking this way is not acceptable. Your steps should be a little bigger -- males are not the same as maidens. You must take a bit bigger steps. Ak-iok, Miss, your waist can't wiggle that way. One wiggle of the waist, and immediately there will be a [sense] of femininity. Thus, [you must know] the "proudly wiping finger under the nose" gesture. And know how to hold and wave a fan properly.
[B. The conventional gestures of the sheng are described in Chapter IV].

(Shift to BIAO:) Maiden Su, at the side, had given one sort of advice or another. Thus, the impression [in Su's mind] was very deep. Moreover, Maiden Su was now a high-class maiden, the prime minister's [foster] daughter; yet after all, she had grown up together with Miss Meng Lijun. Being close friends of the women's quarters, their feelings towards each other were extremely good. She had all along missed the Young Miss [Meng Lijun], all along feared for her. Thus, it could really be said that while drinking tea she had missed her, while eating she had missed her, and while dreaming she had missed Miss. Therefore, you, Young Miss -- when she set eyes on you, even after only half a year -- she still could not believe her eyes, that this zhuangyuan, this young man, \textit{ya}^2, was the Meng Lijun of the women's quarters.

(Shift to Su Yingxue BIAO:) Hhe, presently Maiden Su's attitude towards the Young Miss was one of admiration, but there was also a little blame. Admiration is admiration -- it was not easy for the Young Miss -- a common person going in one jump to zhuangyuan. Moreover, today her courage was big enough to "tear down heaven." Marrying into a prime minister's family was not easy. Blame her, for what? I
understand. You depend on your intelligence, you depend on your talents, and depend on the fact that you were the gifted girl of Yunnan. Thus, today you thought to come and trick me, this inexperienced girl who conformed docilely to convention, shy and disconcerted, a high-class maiden of a prime-minister's family.

(Shift to Su Yingxue GUBAI:) Miss, it's this simple: it's not that easy. I have already seen through you. You are in the light -- so what sort of "opera" do you wish to sing in front of me? I will delay awhile to tease you. Why, my parents like me, and they take to you very much, having raised you "up to the sky" in position. You have totally deceived my parents, deceived them so diligently. So today, I want to release some anger on their behalf; otherwise I will be too unworthy of them, do them too much of a disservice.

(Shift to Su Yingxue BIAO:) Now, how are things? Before her eyes I must not reveal that my heart is excited. If I am not nervous, then she will be able to get her thoughts in order [to trick me into going into the wedding suite]. Now I must lull her, allow her to compose herself.

[A. Yuan identified this passage as an example of thoughts being revealed in the character BIAO mode described above.]
(BIAO:) Maiden Su's efforts were extremely good, so as she thought this far, it was as if nothing had happened; she nodded slightly towards her [Meng Lijun].

3. (Yuan/BIAO:) Hhe! Your idea is really sharp.

[Performers pick up instruments.] Two people simultaneously deceiving each other, heh-heh; at one look, this prime minister's daughter Liang Suhua took the initiative to nod. Ok-iok, today there will certainly be "opera" to sing.

[A. Yuan commented that the opening interjection "Hhe!" was weak (it came off as a squawk), that a strong "Ok-iok!" would have been more effective.]

(Yuan/shifts to BIAO CHANG, then shifts to Meng Lijun BIAO, then shifts back to BIAO. Tune: Fast Jiang Tune:)

This Lijun
in one look became overjoyed*
seeing the Thousand Gold** with
only happiness showing on her face.
In a moment --
when I reveal the truth she will forgive me.
Miss, ah, it is fine as long as you are willing to falsely be a female phoenix,
[and I] deceptively be a male phoenix,
and in front of others act as a married couple.
If I can pass this trial,
then I can pass a hundred others.
I will be a cloud in the sky
fearless before endless difficult trials.
The great Peng bird spreads its wings and sails
smoothly on the wind up into the sky.***
Straight away it can rise directly into the Jade Palace
in the sky.
Thinking thus far, she is happy,
floating, proud of herself, smiling, smiling,
Hating that she cannot immediately laugh out loud.

[B. Yuan noted that Meng sings in a fast version of the
Jiang tune (see Zhou, et al, ed. [1988:22-23]) because
the character's moral character is zhengpai
("upright"). Elite young women were often called
"qianjin xiaojie" meaning young women worth a thousand
gold pieces. This expression (which I have generally
rendered simply as "young lady," appears frequently in
the original ZSY text). The triple asterisks ("***")
refer to an allusion to passages entitled "Free and
Easy Wandering" from the work of the Daoist
philosopher, Zhuangzi, translated by Burton Watson
(1970: 28-31).]
(Shift to storyteller BIAO:) So, thinking to this point, the more she thought about things, the happier she became.

(Shift to Meng Lijun BIAO, with some feeling of GUBAI:) So, now, what's going on? You nod at me [showing that you like me, so now I must start deceiving you]. Ok-iok, so I also want to do a little "flower moving" [deceiving of women] towards her, yes.

(Shift to storyteller BIAO:) Therefore, I wink at her and nod, as if to say:

(Shift to SIBAI inner monologue:) Ue3, Miss, wait a moment you must help me, help me.

[C. Spoken in a mischievous tone.]

4. (Wang in the BIAO voice of Su Yingxue:) Ak-iok, Miss, where did you get such a coy tongue? I now know you are a girl. If I had been wholly befuddled, and didn't know you were a girl, and took you for a male, then if you poured honeyed words like this, I would really fall into a swoon [over you].

(Wang shifts to Su Yingxue BIAO CHANG sings, Fast Yu Tune)

You see him so debonaire,* with such delightful wit, so shameless.
It is clear that you early on had a plan in your heart
You think it (is like) chaining
the warships to defeat Cao Cao.
But I, this Zhuge Liang,
am willing to "borrow the east wind."**
I fully know what is up your sleeve.
You seem to be a silver spear,
but in fact you are only as sharp
as a candle.
You act very debonaire,
but how can I really be moved?
But, I will act foolish and stupid
to allow her to be proud for the moment,
to be relaxed for the moment.

(pause)
In a moment
as people quiet down inside the "green window,"
I want you to remove your shoes,
to reveal the tiny embroidered slippers.
This [strategy] is called, "First show you courtesy,
then slowly get even with you."

[A. According to Yuan, the Jiang and Yu tunes are the
most complimentary for performance with a male/female
couple. The Yu tune (Zhou, et. al., ed. [1988:18-19])
is best for the huadan role "voice" and is suitable for]
use with instruments tuned to male singing registers. Here, I have translated fongloul (fengliu in Standard Chinese) as "debonair."

One of the few allusions (**) to traditional fiction in the episode is this reference to a scene in the historical novel Three Kingdoms (Sanguo yenyi) where the magician Zhuge Liang summoned the east wind to save the fleet during the Battle of the Red Cliffs (See Moss Robert's translation under Luo [1991:371-379]).

The reference to the "silver spear" and "candle" suggest a coded sexual innuendo, though I did not pursue this hypothesis with the storytellers.]

(Wang shifts to storyteller's BIAO CHANG, sings with the same tune:) She lowers her head, acting very shy. Now Maiden Su is also a good actor.

(Shifts to Su Yingxue character BIAO) Today your* acting ability is so good, I absolutely cannot lose to you. [Performers lay down instruments.] So thinking thus far, she [Su] makes up her mind to sweet-talk her. As she takes a sideways glance, her [Su's] lips slightly part, and, "Gek-lek," emits a tiny laugh.
5. (Yuan speaking as Meng Lijun character BIAO) Ok-iok, she is giving me a little laugh. [Yuan rises briefly.] Laughing towards me, this prime minister's treasured daughter. She and I really are fated [to be together]. How sensitive she is. I look at her and nod, I bat my eyes at her, and she faces me and slightly parts her lips, "gek-lek", emitting a tiny giggle. But today it doesn't matter!

(Shift to Meng's "inner voice," SIBAI:) Looking at it this way, a while later you* will be able to reveal myself to you.

[A. The first "you" (*) in the sentence is an example of shuo cuo, or a "speaking mistake". In such cases, according to Yuan and other performers I interviewed, a good strategy is just to ignore the mistake and continue. In this case an immediate distraction is provided by Wang taking up the action.]

6. (Wang as Su Yingxue, "inner voice" SIBAI) This is easy to resolve? Just wait, and I'll "give you some stuff of my own." I will "make you squirm."**

[A. The phrase bek ngesek2 bek ne1 koe5 (*) is literally, "Give some 'facial expression' for you to see," meaning to make someone uncomfortable by one's attitude or actions. In Standard Chinese it is ba
vanse gei ni kan. The "**" is a Suzhou dialect idiom, literally meaning to "squeeze your bones."

7. (Yuan, in storyteller BIAO:) The two persons then looked repeatedly at each other, their mutual perceptions wholly opposite. They ate a while. When they had pretty much finished eating the "Meal of Harmony," maids young and old came from the sides and the bowls and chopsticks on the table were all picked up and put away.

[A. The couple is eating the "Meal of Harmony," customarily shared by husband and wife on the wedding night.]

8. (Wang, as a maid [cai dan], speaks BAI:) Yi2, groom and bride, it's about that time. Do you want to go and pay respects before the old couple?

[A. The "old couple" is Minister and Madame Liang. While speaking, Wang stands with left hand on hip, a conventional stance for a maid. She sits at end of speech.]

9. (Yuan as Meng Lijun character BIAO) That's right, having eaten the "Meal of Harmony," they went to the inner chambers to pay respects to the old couple. After saying goodnight, they immediately go together to enter the wedding suite.
(Shift to storyteller BIAO) Affirming in one voice,* [Yuan stands up] he immediately raises his body to stand up and address her.

[A. Yuan uses two phrases, each employing the phrase "iksran1" ("one sound," or visheng in Standard Chinese). The first is "dakin iksran1" or "replying in one voice" (daving visheng) and the second, what Yuan described as more archaic, is "zraeheu li iksran1" (zhaohu ta visheng.) Here he claims that such wordiness is common in sheng shu (raw or unpolished stories) and that adding the second iksran1 phrase gave him more time to think of the next line.]

(Shift to GUAN BAI, in xiaosheng role:) "Io3, wife!"

10. (Wang as Su Yingxue, character BIAO:) Ggek . . . you see how shameless you are* calling me "wife"? You yourself are a "wife." I just won't pay any attention to her.

[A. This (*) phrase "bhi hhoudek6" or "thick-skinned" is a Suzhou dialect version of the Standard Chinese "lianpi hou," meaning a shameless or uncaring attitude about one's social face.]

11. (Yuan as Meng Lijun, character BIAO) How is it that when I address her, she doesn't respond? [Yuan slowly sits, large hand movements follow.] Oh yes, this is according to
the code of proper behaviour. On the outside, I can open my mouth to speak, but the bride still cannot open her mouth to speak. It must wait until the proper time. The door of the wedding suite must be closed, only then can she open her mouth. If now on the outside, the bride immediately starts "guak-dang, guak-dang1," opening her mouth to speak, it's unsuitable. It would be like a hen crowing -- bad luck! What's going on? I will venture to invite her.*

[A. Yuan describes this section of the monologue as having a tiaopi ("mischievous") tone, but is not really xuetou (in this context, "joking"). Yuan stands for the next passage in Zhongzhouyun, sitting down afterwards.]

(Shifts to quan bai:) Io3, wife. It's getting late. Let's go inside to say good-night to father and mother-in-law. What do you say?

12. (Wang, Su Yingxue GUAN BAI:) N. [Nods.]

13. (Yuan, Meng Lijun character BIAO:) You understand principles of behavior and are polite. Your mouth won't be opened; you just nod slightly.

(Shifts to storyteller BIAO:) "N." So you agree. That's very good. Then she gets up. The house maids, bridesmaids,
and wellwishers, etc. accompany them "lak-lak-lak-lak,"* all along the same road to enter inside.

[A. This ("*") is an onomatopoeic sound to imitate the rushing around of people.]

(shift to maids [cai dan], character BIAO) While walking, the maids and well-wishers* all take a look. Ya3, the two are really a match made in heaven. The Young Miss,** the bride is very shy, her head bowed, face blushing. [Yuan stands.] Eh, this new zhuangyuan, Li Zhuangyuan, has excellent scholarship, this person is not at all embarrassed, walking along, smiling, his head always turned back, looking at the bride. Looking at her, and nodding his head, and going "n, n, n, o, o, o," [Yuan moves head in circle; high-pitched voice.] He is so extremely confident and at ease.

[B. The ("*") escort party is all female. According to Yuan, the "Young Miss" ("**") is an unnecessary and redundant word here -- another sort of shuo cuo speaking mistake.]

(Shift to storyteller BIAO:) How can you all know what Meng Lijun [Yuan sits.] is thinking now? On the one hand she strides along, on the other hand she keeps looking around.
(Shift to Meng Lijun, character BIAO:) Think of it, Miss, as for this thing, I need only you to help. Wait a while, in the wedding suite you can help me get through this dangerous trial. In the future, as I gradually accomplish things, I won't forget you; I will indeed repay your beneficent behaviour. Yet, a girl like her has everything. As the daughter of a premier, her conditions are so good. If I give her gold, silver, or valuable gems, she wouldn't care in the least. How about putting it this way? 'I am a woman. If you marry me, your whole life will be disrupted. At that time, Young Miss, your only hope would be to have someone to support you.' But now, the present thing I want to do is to clear the accusations against the Huangfu family. Everything I do is for my husband, Huangfu Shaohua. Now, my husband is one in a million, wholly exceptional. I will also be completely satisfied, if day one day* I can pass this trial. Then in the future I will "climb the green clouds"** and overturn the accusation against the Huangfu family. Then after my husband is found, marry. I will think up a way to let you marry Huangfu Shaohua. We two women will together care for a spouse, this way repaying you. If you still feel dissatisfied, then, I will invite you to be the first wife; I will be a concubine. The title of "first wife," bestowed by the emperor, I will give wholly to you.
[C. Again, a small mistake ("*") is made. Yuan used the phrase zrael ikrrek (literally "day one day," or zhao yi er), zrael and rrek being words meaning "day". The phrase (**), "Climbing the green mountain," or bhinbhu2 cinyun (pingbu qingyun) means to become an official.]

(Shift to storyteller BIAO, funny sounding voice:) Just like that. That's to say, "You are the senior wife, I am the junior wife." You're using a Yueju opera tune to sing:

(Shifts to CHANG, sings, using a silly sounding Yueju tune, for one line:)

"You be the senior, I'll be the junior,"

(Shifts back to BIAO speech:) -- just this sort of meaning. So she walked on, looking all the while. In her heart she was thinking of these things. [Yuan raises thumb for a moment.] You people [Yuan points with right hand across chest to Wang while addressing audience.] surrounding her on all sides, goodness,* you could never guess what's in her mind.

[D. This (*), lae juse2 (literally "old ghost three," lao gui san) is an obscure Suzhou dialect phrase which I have tentatively rendered as above. According to Yuan, this passage is an example of xuetou, though is
neither the kind called *roulixue* ("in the meat"), of
*waichahua* ("flowers stuck in from outside"). This,
instead, is an example of *xiao mai* (lit. "small sales,"
meaning small jokes), and is spoken quickly in hopes of
eliciting a chuckle. The narration, still in the
storyteller BIAO mode, next shifts to the action,
leaving behind the account of Meng's inner feelings.]

The path has been traversed, straight to the rear
courtyard.

(shifts to maid *cai dan*, character BAI) Madame*, Missus,
ah, the new groom and bride come to wish you good night.

[A. This ("*") is a mistake. Instead of "Madame"
(tatai) the form of address should be "Old Master."
Yuan claims Wang seldom makes mistakes like this (at
least not the number he does) in either speaking or
singing.]

(shifts to role of Mr. Liang [lao sheng role], character
BIAO) These two really understand the principles of proper
conduct. *Akya*, I take such care of you, specially deploying
four maids to work and run errands, standing at attention at
the door of your wedding suite, so as to let you take an
early rest. Yet you have come so early to say good night;
this is really fine.
(Shifts to GUAN BAI:) Good, good, good, hurry and come over.

(Shifts to character BIAO:) The two people go inside.

(Shifts to Li Mintang/Meng Lijun GUAN BAI:) Father and Mother-in-law, your son-in-law kowtows.

[A. This line and the following were not accurately transcribed. After consulting with the storytellers, I have reproduced them in this manner.]

16. (Wang, Su Yingxue GUAN BAI:) [Stands up.] Father and Mother on high, your daughter kowtows before you.

17. (Yuan, Minister Liang GUAN BAI: Come, come. Good son-in-law, daughter, raise yourselves. [Sits down.]

18. (Wang, Madame Liang [lao dan], GUAN BAI:) Akyaya. Good son-in-law, daughter, please arise. [Raises hand in movement indicating the couple should rise.]

19. (Yuan, Li Mingtang/Meng Lijun, GUAN BAI:) Please more thanks to great Father and the Mother-in-law.

20. (Wang, Liang Suhua/Su Yingxue, GUAN BAI:) More thanks to Father and Mother.
21. (Yuan, Mr. Liang GUAN BAI:) Akva, get up, get up.

(Shifts to storyteller BIAO:) The two persons stood up, then sat at the side, chattering away for some time; but now the time isn't early. These few days you have been extremely worn out, please go quickly to rest. This way, if today you go to sleep now, then tomorrow you can sleep in late and get up whenever you like, because these last few days have certainly been too tiring for you. Don't get sick or uncomfortable, otherwise we can't bear it. Go quickly.

[A. Yuan and Wang were unclear how to categorize the "voice" in this passage. Liang's words are being spoken by the narrator in Suzhou dialect, addressed to Li Mingtang and Liang Suhua. According to Yuan the final phrase, "Go quickly" (kue5 qu bha3, or kuai qu ba) delivered in Zhongzhouyun, is spoken to create the feeling that Liang (rather than the storyteller) is actually speaking himself.]

(Li Mingtang/Meng Lijun GUAN BAI) N. yes, yes, yes. Indeed, Father and Mother-in-law, the son-in-law will now take his leave. [Clasps hands in respectful gesture.]

(Storyteller BIAO) Now having taken their leaves, they are escorted back by the maids and bridemaids, leaving there,* and returning there** to the marriage chamber. Now they
officially wished to enter the marriage chamber. The inside there*** is the marriage chamber, the outside is the parlor.

[B. Yuan again identifies a place that is "wordy" (luoli luosuo) "because this is a 'raw story.'" The first two "there"s ("*", "**"), gedak in Suzhou dialect, "don't sound good" spoken so close together. Also, the third marked "there" ("***") (edak1), is a close simile of the first two usages. Very particular audience members find such wordiness distracting and an index of a lapse in verbal skill.]

22. (Wang, maid [cai dan] BAI:) Akya, "new groom", you may now sit in the parlor for a while. We must go inside to help the bride make-up and arrange her hair for the night. Wait until all is done, then we will invite you, you both*, to join each other in the wedding suite.

[A. Another "mistake" on Wang's part. Either "you" (ne3) or "you" plural (ndok6) should be used, not both. Again, the story is still "raw." Wang stands in the maid posture, left arm on hip as she speaks, then sits.]

23. (Yuan, Li Mingtang/Meng Lijun GUANBAI:) N, yes!
(Shift to storytelling BIAO:) What's this? At this time, there were many cultivated young ladies who ate well each day, didn't have to work, and didn't have housework -- so
what did they do everyday? The biggest thing was to make their toilet, morning and night. How much time did it require? The morning toilet needed one rryrren* -- ah, here [gestures by face] braid a braid, there [gesture] stick in a flower, there [Yuan makes gestures of fixing hair and adorning; similar gestures appear throughout the passage.], put in a pin; one by one each thing put in place. Today, one rryrren equals today's two hours. One whole morning spent doing these things. Then for the late toilet -- the time is just half (that of the morning). Half a rryrren needs just one hour -- and what was done? In removing the make-up, the thick face make-up had to be completely wiped off, then the face lightly made-up and all the ornaments in the hair removed one by one. The hair had to be completely re-fashioned -- needing to take up a half rryrren for this. Thus, now the new husband is outside waiting -- why isn't he allowed to enter? The bride has gone inside to make-up and fashion her hair. If he could be there watching, it would be vulgar. Since he must wait a long time, the maids have prepared a cup of tea for him.

[A. This passage was described by Yuan as a guanzi shangde nongtangshu. In other words, though this episode is part of a guanzi (peak in rising action), parts of it are slower and more detailed as in nongtangshu, described in Chapter Three. The term
rryrren (shicheng) ("*") is an ancient measurement of time.

So nowadays it is popular for girls to have short hair. In the factory, they must go to work, so these women can't waste so much time. Would it be OK to spend three hours a day doing their hair? Especially these present day factory weavers. They can't have long hair. If they had long hair, what would happen if it got caught in a machine? It would result in an accident. So, the factories rule that all women must have short hair. Especially like the famous singer on TV, Mao Aming. She has a short hair cut, called a "swimming cut," also called a "jogging cut." Today's young girls all feel this sort of hairdo is extremely convenient. Thus, in the morning when they get up they just have to use two strokes of the comb, "can3 can3," and with one shake of the head, "tang tang." [Yuan moves head from side to side when making these noises.] they can immediately go to work; isn't it extremely convenient? It's not like some young men nowadays who like to have long hair, akyok, they also want to have super-permanents. Last year in Shanghai, I was deceived while strolling on Nanjing Road. I saw a group of people standing in line in front of the Number One Department Store. I thought about buying something, so I inquired what was for sale. I saw the last person in line, with long wavy hair, curling here and curling there, wearing
a red parka, and a jade-green pair of pants, and a pair of deep red leather platform shoes. I went forward to inquire. [Stands up; very fast arm and body movements follow.] I said "Auntie, what are you selling?" She turned her head back and cried out, "You little rascal, I am your uncle!" In one glimpse, I saw he had a beard -- oh, so it was actually a young man -- ok-yok -- I was deceived! I couldn't distinguish (between male and female). So, with today's situation, don't even try to understand [the difference]. So, according to past principles of conduct, the hair of young women had to be done very precisely.

[B. Yuan identifies the preceding passage as a waichahua type of xuetou. He said that the personal anecdote -- which may or may not have actually happened to him (I did not press for a confession) -- is "a little out of date now, as long hair is now out for males." However, he felt that he had to stick in something to "tuo shijian" ("stretch time") so he would not run out of shu ("story") and felt he could get away with it, given the audience. This anecdote does not appear in the version of their script inherited from Gong Huasheng.]

Presently, he [Li Mingtang] sits there waiting for the maid to come out and report. [Yuan assumes a very contrite posture.]
Therefore, with so much time to kill, I can't just sit here doing nothing.* Even more importantly, there is still one person, also an important character -- I must first take care of her. Who is this person? Ronglan, the maid, presently Rongfa, the personal servant of the zhuangyuan. I already said in yesterday's story that this little maid is extremely clever, but barely escaped getting in trouble. When she was looking all around [in curiosity], the household manager of the Liang family saw her, and thought to get her as a son-in-law, wanting his own daughter, Acui, to marry "him." 'Since the East Family [i.e., the Liangs] have taken Li Mingtang as their son-in-law, so the servant [of the zhuangyuan] can be a husband in the family of the household manager.'** Therefore, Rongfa had to find a way to refuse. "He" said "he" was already married, and already had a wife, and already had a son, but "he" finally couldn't [continue to] refuse him. Thus, the two young servants [Yuan points at Wang while addressing audience.] Akiik and Akrianl [sent to act as matchmakers] thought that, 'It's for the best that you didn't want to marry into their family, because we have already been familiar with that Acui for a long time, and if you don't want her, then we'll still have the opportunity to go ask for her hand.'*** Thus the two accompanied "him" to have the customary drinks for go-betweens, as if they were blood-brothers. By the time they had finished eating it was getting late. The wine finished,
they departed, escorting "him" to their room to sleep. The wedding suite was in the inner garden. But it was arranged that Rongfa stay in the outer garden. This place had one room, completely furnished with new netting, blankets, and pillows. Moreover, the tea table was set with s-labal. What would that be? [Gestures.] S-labal, a stereo-recorder? No, they helped "him" put out four saucers of labal-bugle flowers, simply called s-labal -- so they put forth great effort [to get him to agree with the match], and were at last escorting him inside. Thus, Akjik and Akrian tried very hard [to realize the match].

[C. Yuan commented that this scene with Rongfa would appear only in a changpian (full-length) version of the story; otherwise it would be left out. Here, because Rongfa later knocks on the wedding suite door, her situation is introduced. It ("*"}) is notable that the section begins with the storyteller explicitly referring to himself as narrator and even drawing (humorous) attention to the fact that he is "sitting" in front of the audience waiting, just as Li Mingtang is. Yuan as narrator thus points out his pivotal role as teller and observer of the story, almost under the control of the action, rather than in control of it (he has to "wait" until Su's hair is done before he can continue with that thread of the story). After employing this clever transition, he goes on to
recapitulate the events surrounding Rongfa which he recounted yesterday, then begins telling what is going on this day. The speech and or thoughts of the household manager ("**") and the servants ("***") are given through his omniscient position, which he never really relinquishes. S-labal ("four speakers") is a play on words, mixing a modern phrase with the name of a "low-class" flower, the labal, or "bugle," which would never be used to entertain guests. Many servants in bit roles are called "Ak-" -something or other. Yuan noted that it is common to unintentionally confuse, or rename, servants later in a scene. (This seems to have happened in this passage, but in the course of transcription, the difference was rectified, though a "mistake" still lingered in Yuan's memory. The above wordplay was developed by Yuan and does not appear in the Gong version. The scene is both entertaining and functions to take up extra time.]

(Shifts to role as servant Number One, Suzhou dialect BAI:) Here, brother.

24. (Wang as Rongfa [cai dan] BAI:) What is it, Big Brother? [Stands with hands at sides.]

25. (Yuan, servants BAI:) Is it that you want to sleep?
26. (Wang, as Rongfa BAI:) O, thank you so much, for making everything so nice here.

27. (Yuan, servants BAI:) Yes, it's we who helped arrange it for you.

28. (Wang, Rongfa BAI:) O, then I really want to thank you.

29. (Yuan, servants BAI:) You needn't be so polite with your own "brothers."

30. (Wang, Rongfa BAI:) Fine, fine.

31. (Yuan, servants BAI:) Rongfa.

32. (Wang, Rongfa BAI:) What?

33. (Yuan, as servants BAI:) If you are alone in the outer garden -- this place is really somewhat quiet, and so elegant -- aren't you a little afraid of being here alone?

34. (Wang, as Rong Fa BIAQ) Being in such a place, since I am a girl, my skin is a little prickly. I have some goose-pimples. . .
(BAI:) Oh, I am a little afraid, what's to be done?

[A. This is the approximate meaning of the lost sentence. Wang faces the audience as she speaks the lines here.]

35. (Yuan, servants BAI:) Akyak -- there is only one bed, but it is very big, and the three of us can squeeze in together and sleep together. How about it?

36. (Wang, Rongfa BIAO:) Is that suitable? Three people squeezed in so tightly? How can I be wedged in like that with you? What is going on here?

37. (Yuan, servants BAI:) He-he. You are small. You sleep in the middle. We will be on either side to protect you. Ha-ha -- isn't it so?

38. (Wang, Rongfa BIAO:) Big Brother, you have really thought of everything. How can I squeeze in with you? (Shifts to BAI:) Squeezing together is alright, but, I have something I must make clear to you two brothers before we sleep.

39. (Yuan, servants BAI:) What thing?
40. (Wang, Rong Fa BAI:) As for me, the way I sleep is not good. I am a sleep walker.

41. (Yuan, servants BAI:) A sleepwalker?

42. (Wang, Rong Fa BAI) Yes, yes. Once, while in the countryside, an extremely good "little brother" of mine also wanted to sleep together with me. So we slept together. But who would have known that I would sleep until midnight and then this problem of mine would appear. I quietly got out of bed and walked to the side of the bed. Da!* And then I picked up the chamberpot. I opened the mouth of my little "brother" and poured the urine in the pot, "bik8, bik8, bik8" into his mouth . . .**

[A. The "da!" ("*") sound is a conventionalized "grabbing something" sound. The "bik8, bik8, bik8" ("**") is a conventionalized onomatopoeia indicating flowing liquid. Wang makes several scant actions as she speaks, at one point her movements suggest she is pouring. The chamberpot scene, an example of roulixue ("humor in the meat") was inserted by Yuan, and not a part of the version he inherited from Gong Huasheng. Yuan said this scene replaces a song (probably an inner-monologue by Rongfa). In the above passages the rate of speaking was very lively and fast-paced with the performers sometimes breaking into each other's speech. The transcribers had a very difficult time]
following parts of the exchange, though the basic meaning is clear.]

43. (Yuan, servants BAI:) Now just a . . . !

44. (Wang, Yong Fa BAI:) Do you still want to sleep with me? [Wang sits down, posture very erect.]

45. (Yuan, servants BIAO:) We won't sleep with you, won't sleep with you. It's horrid for him to have this sort of problem. If he is a sleepwalker, then what if at midnight, he picks up the bedpan and "pak" hits us over our heads. Won't we be killed by him? This is unacceptable. (Shift to BAI:) Then why don't we wait a while and then come to see you?

46. (Wang, as Rongfa BAI:) Fine, fine. [Stands.]

47. (Yuan, as servants BAI:) There are many people outside, so relax.

48. (Wang, Rongfa BAI:) I'm not afraid, not afraid.

49. (Yuan, servants BAI:) Well then, see you tomorrow.

50. (Wang, Rongfa BAI:) Fine, fine. [Sits.]
51. (Yuan, servants BIAO:) The two are so frightened they went outside. 
(Shift to BAI:) So, you go to sleep a little earlier.

52. (Wang, Rongfa BAI:) I must. 
(Shift to Rongfa BIAO, expressing inner thoughts:) Seeing them go, how could I have slept with them in one bed? It wouldn't be good to have it turn into a joke. Now I can sleep. [Wang begins to repeatedly alternate between gestures made with her right and left hands.] Thinking things over, she was unable to sleep. 'Just now I was too muddle-headed because of the wine; I drank it and became very happy. Miss has said to me, said that from an early age the Young Miss of the Liang family knew her. Akyak, now it comes to me! I have been with my Young Miss [Meng Lijun] from the start. If you know this Miss Liang, a precious young lady, then certainly I should have seen her before. How can it be that I've never even heard of her before, much less seen her? Akyak, could it be the Young Miss is tricking me? [Points to Yuan while addressing audience.] At this point, the more I continue to think, the more I feel fear; the more I think, the more worried I am. As it is, I can't sleep this evening. This is a really big thing.' Who's to say whether Miss can get through this trial tonight?
(Shift to storyteller BIAO:) At this, she quietly went to the room's door, and closed the door, then quietly headed towards the bridal chamber in the rear garden.

53. (Yuan, storyteller BIAO:) You walk step by step. But now how was Meng Lijun? She was still waiting; she was just now very composed, her eyes batting and her mouth curling at the corners, as if she could really trick that bride. But now, things were quiet. One person sitting there, would indeed be a little nervous. [Yuan adjusts robe, moving feet and torso.] That's because these things concerned the big event of a girl's life. An observer on the outside might not see that she is nervous. However, if a third party were standing at her side, watching closely, they would only be able to see that she held a teacup in her hand and that the hand, "dak7, dak7, dak7," was shaking. The tea leaves inside the cup were also, "dak7, dak7, dak7," leaf by leaf, doing somersaults. E4. Here you are, thinking that the time is quickly arriving. "Dak7," the room's door opens. The maids and bridesmaids walk in, "dek7, dek7, dek7."

[A. Yuan had a comment about a minor grammar mistake in this passage. Yuan also made the distinction between xiao kou chong and da kou chong, "big," and "small" mistakes in speaking. He said the audience usually doesn't catch the small mistakes, but some individuals
do pick up readily on other mistakes, such as the mis-naming of servants.]

54. (Wang, Maid One [cai dan role], BAI:) [Stands.] E3, groom, groom. Miss has already had her make-up put on and had her hair combed.

55. (Yuan, Maid Two [cai dan role], BAI:) Everything is done. [Stands.]

56. (Wang, Maid One, BAI:) Now you should go "get together."

57. (Yuan, Maid Two, BAI:) Well then, we are going to go.

58. (Wang, Maid One, BAI:) E1, you needn't go.

59. (Yuan, Maid Two, BAI:) Yes. If you need anything, just call a little loudly, alright?.

60. (Wang, Maid One, BAI:) Yes, just call.

61.-64. (Yuan/Wang as Maids, BAI:) Groom, groom, we wish that you dearly love each other. Yes, have a sweet relationship. "The husband sings, and the wife harmonizes";
"Have sons early." By next year, you will have three chubby sons.

[A. Again, the speech was so rapid the transcribers had a hard time following it. To complicate matters, both performers were speaking in rather high-pitched voices. The phrases in quotation marks are typical expressions used throughout China to describe marriages and the hopeful outcome of the wedding night.]

65. (Wang, Maid One, BAI:) How can you say that? By next year, how can they have three chubby sons? By next year, they can at most have only one.

66. (Yuan, Maid Two, BAI:) Three are good, the more the better. [Yuan holds up two fingers.]

67. (Wang, Maid One, BAI:) Akvak, if you raise more, you will be fined.

[A. This passage of dialogue works towards the humorous xiao mai form of xuetou in #67, which is a crack on the present birth control policy. Thus the characters, though living in the Yuan dynasty are voicing concerns over a present-day social policy. Yuan describes the tone as tiaopi (mischievous). Yuan also said that he should have said "two chubby sons" instead of three,
another sort of "mistake" -- and Wang went along with it, without missing a step.]

68. (Yuan, Maid Two, BAI:) No, no, they can only bear one.

69. (Wang, Maid One, BAI:) E1, then just one.

70. (Yuan, Maid Two, BAI:) But, raising triplets is fine. [A. Having triplets or twins does not violate the birth control policy.]

71-72. (Wang, Maid One, BAI; Yuan, Maid Two, BAI; both speak in one voice:) Well then, we must go.

73. (Yuan, Li Mingtang, [xiao sheng], GUAN BAI:) Good, good. Tomorrow you will receive your compensation.

74. (Wang, Maid One BAI) Yes, we understand, "dek7, dek7, dek7." [A. This is a sound of leaving.]

(Shifts to character BIAO:) They go out one by one and they shut the door.

75. (Yuan, Li Mingtang, BIAO:) Now, there is absolutely no way out. "Pak!" No matter what, this difficulty must be overcome.
(Shift to storyteller BIAO:) [Slower-paced speech. Yuan adjusts his robe several times below.] So, "pak7!" He stands up and step by step walks to the door of the bridal chamber, then raises his hand to push open the door. The person walks inside, closing the door with a "gok" behind him. Then he leans against the door. The night is already deep -- "the crows and sparrows make no noise." Only the sounds from the watch tower can be heard, "pik-pak7, pik-pak7, bang4," the second watch.

[This and the ensuing passage are much slower paced than the humorously frenzied exchanges above. This is another aspect of the shifting rhythm of many tanci performances.]

(Shifts to character BIAO, inner thoughts:) The time has passed quickly. Presently, I will go up, but how, at base, will I break this to her? Just now, thinking about it, it didn't seem to be such an overwhelming problem. But now that the things hang before my very eyes, I want to explain in concrete terms. Thus, I must prepare carefully what I will say. It can't be done on the spur of the moment. One can't just think something and then say something. That's how things will get messed up. Then, yes, [Performers pick up instruments.] I will gradually make something up, and lead her on, bit by bit.
(Shifts to character BIAO:) So she leaned against the door to think it over.

(Shifts to character BIAO CHANG, sings in Shen Tune:)

At this time,
when already facing the difficult problem
what do I say to solve it?
I wish to just go to her and talk it out,*
just say that I had no choice
but to come to the capital,
a girl dressed as a male, to become an official.

[A. Yuan says that he had not been prepared to sing this song before hand, so had to make up those lyrics which he could not remember clearly. This is an example of luan chang ("wild singing"), or in performer's jargon, huangpi (the literal meaning is unclear, but it has the sense of "making up lyrics as you go"). He said that the "*" line is not very clear, but does rhyme. The implication being that if lyrics rhyme, no matter how poorly they fit, a performer can usually get by with it. The tune is that of Shen Jian'an. See Zhou, et al, ed. (1988:25-26).

The following spoken passages elaborate on some things in the songs. This interaction between song and speech Yuan referred to as "chang-chang biao-biao" (sing-sing; tell-tell). Meng thinks of
three ways to tell Su the truth — Yuan was unsatisfied with this scene and the reasons were modified in later tellings. The songs must be expanded in speech, because, in part, they are "emotional and complex," thus needing clarification for those who cannot catch the lyrics or their implications.]

(Shift to Li Mingtang, character BIAO:) The first way is [Holds up index finger.]: "To open the door and see the mountain." Just come right out and tell her. I will go before her and say, Young Miss, now that everyone is gone, I will say something for you to hear. So long, so short, so square, so round*: I had no choice but to dress as a male, and arriving at the capital, to become an official. Your father [Mr. Liang] was too insistent, and so, I had no recourse but to come to the prime minister's house to be a son-in-law.

[B. Yuan said that these phrases "*" are used to describe how storytellers waste time to lengthen stories — how they maiguanzi ("sell suspense"). Thus the phrase is a reflexive, and humorous, comment on the act of storytelling, as well the character's actual thoughts.]

(Li Mingtang GUBAI, spoken to self:) [Shakes head.] That's no good.
(Shift to BIAO CHANG:)

You see her shyly sitting on the bed,
the precious young lady of the women's quarters is
so poised.

[C. Another passage Yuan had trouble with and described
as being luan chang.]

(Li Mintang, character BIAO:) She [Miss Liang] lowers her
head, as if she is bashful. She is so lovely to behold,
quietly sitting there so poised, just as if she were a
freshly opened flower bud. How can such a maiden bear to
listen to such words? Once my words are spoken, she will
immediately be fearful. Akyak, "I want to die! How could
such a thing really happen? So you are this sort of
person, you are too unbelievable." Ok-iok, crying wildly,
screaming loudly. Then if the maids stationed on each side
and those other servants rush inside [Great hands
gestures.], the thing will immediately be exposed, and
everything will be finished. This matter can't be told,
can't be told.

(Shift to Li Mingtang, BIAO CHANG:)

Or I can control my truthful feelings and
just say that my body has an affliction,
and this evening we cannot "come together"
in the wedding suite.

(Shift to Li Mingtang, character BIAO:) Or maybe this way:
I will think up some nonsense [Put down instruments.] --
what will I say? I will just say 'Miss, I have something I
must tell you, because your father was very insistent, I
didn't have time to tell him that my health is not good. I
have a hidden affliction, this evening, I am unable to
"wedding suite" with you. If I did "wedding suite" with
you, afterwards, the results would not be fair for anyone.
So I wish to suggest we sleep separately. Then after a
while, we will have a doctor treat my ailment until I am
fully recovered. Then I will enter the marriage suite with
you. Is this the way I will speak to her? No, it's not
suitable. [Shakes head.] If I said it that way now, it
would seem a bit [Adjusts robe.] salacious. And if I say it
this way, this maiden will not be able to stand it. [She
will think] 'What? You -- a person like this should not
exist. If you have this sort of ailment, you shouldn't be
taking a wife, and should not marry. So why didn't you tell
me earlier? In one sentence, you could have explained it
clearly. But you have brought things to this pass before
speaking. You ask me to do what now? How do you think I
should tell my parents?' After a shock like that, this
maiden would certainly not be able to stand it. It would be too lacking in virtue to take this way out. How could I have the heart to speak like this? So -- what's to be done?

[D. At this point Yuan said there should be another song expressing the third method of revealing the truth to Su. However, Yuan chose not to sing for these reasons: 1) he glanced at his watch and saw he did not have sufficient time; 2) he was tired of "making stuff up," his mind felt fatigued, so "suanle" ("forget it"); and 3) Gong Huasheng suddenly appeared in the back of the hall (the troupe office is upstairs), so Yuan was afraid to huangpi in front of him, because Gong could discern the mistakes.]

Eh, I have it! Both of us are females, both maidens. If I put myself in her place, in what situations would I not cry or scream out? Today, I'll do this. I will begin by trying the "soft" method. I will first ask the maiden to come sleep in the bed. [Stands.] I will wait until she is sleeping in the bed, then I will turn my back to her, and when she isn't looking, will remove my outer garments, and take off my shoes. Then when she isn't paying attention, I'll get under the covers, then lie next to her, with my head next to hers. [Sits; speaks in "feminine" voice.] Sleeping together, I will "qik, qik, qik7, cok, cok, cok7,"
utter heartfelt words, utter tender, honeyed words to her. When I about reach the point when she is in a very happy mood, then I will gently reveal to her, one way or another, that I am a girl dressed as a boy, and not to be alarmed. [Shift to regular voice.] By that time it will surely already be the third watch [midnight]; we will be shoulder to shoulder, head to head, extremely close. As both of us lie within the quilts, I will speak these words. By that time, the precious maiden of the women's quarters, with the sort of status like your's, will not mindlessly cry out. It would be impossible for her to run out in nothing but her underwear, "wangdang1, wangdang1," screaming. Impossible. By this point, if she has tears, they could only flow down to her stomach. This much anger, this much distress can only be kept under control. There would seem to be no other way. Yes!

(Shift to storyteller BIAO:) It's decided. Then [Stands.], extremely composed, "he" goes step by step over to the side of the bed. [Sits.]

[E. Yuan said the shift here from character BIAO to storyteller BIAO is because actual movements of the character are being described.]

76. (Wang, Liang Suhua/Su Yingxue, character BIAO:) Miss Su's eyes have witnessed the whole thing, saw her [Li
Mingtang] leaning so long against the door thinking [Points at Yuan with left hand.], then coming over step by step.  
(Shift to GU BAI)  Good! Now she wants to "sing opera" to my face. But, I still don't know what sort of salesmanship she will use when she comes over.  
(Shift back to character BIAO:) She looks at her out of the corner of her eye. Her face is full of smiles -- so it seems today she will use the "soft sell."*  Good, Young Miss. Come, I'm waiting for you.

[A. The term ("*") "ngoegong2" ("soft method" or ruangong -- here interpreted as "soft sell") would be the opposite of the "hard method" (yingong in Standard Chinese, or "hard sell").]

77. (Yuan, Li Mingtang/Meng Lijun/storyteller BIAO:)  
[Alternates raising right and left hands.] The bride's face was also full of smiles. It seemed like today it would be alright. Even more confidently, she took two more steps, right up to her (Su's) face, and tapped her [Stands.] "dak7" on the shoulder, softly saying: (GUAN BAI) I o, my* wife.  
[Bows while speaking.]  
[B. Yuan said that his timing on the "dak7" was off -- he said that the movement of slapping and the squawking, clicking noise made by the mouth should be one. Instead, he said that he had first slapped the table, then made the noise. It is amazing that this
sort of detail, suggested by a written transcription, was remembered after five months. Yuan also said that the "my" (z-gal) was unnecessary here.]

78. (Wang, Liang Suhua/Su Yingxue, character BIAO:) My friend here is now acting like this. I will now allow her to compose herself first.
(Shift to GUAN BAI:) Io, my husband. [Bows while speaking.]

79. (Yuan, Li Mintang BIAO:) The bride has spoken. The word "husband" was spoken very affectionately. The sound is sweet, very pleasant to hear.
(GUAN BAI) Io, my wife. The time is not early. Bride, please go to bed first. [Points in front of him while speaking.]

[A. Yuan/Li is standing.]

80. (Wang, Liang Suhua, character BIAO:) What? The time is not early, yet he asks me to go to bed first. Oh, you want me to lie down ahead of you. [Wang points to Yuan while speaking, looking at audience.] Then when I am asleep, you plan to lie down at the foot of the bed. And the night will pass just like that. It's not that easy. (Shifts to SI BAI) 'Miss, during these few days, you have performed your "opera" quite well; you are also rather tired. You have deceived the emperor, you have deceived my parents, and,
likewise, your father has been deceived. So now you wish to come and deceive me? Is anything as simple as this? My act is also about to begin. Old friend, a, don't worry, don't be foolishly proud of yourself. I want only to say one thing.* [Uses several gestures in following lines.] If I don't make this new *zhuangyuan*, this prime-minister's son-in-law, so startled that "he" takes three steps backwards, then I am not the wedding suite stabber, who jumped into Lake Kunming, Su Yingxue. If you don't believe it, just try me.' [Looks at Yuan, gestures.]

[A. Yuan and Wang said that the use of *SIBAI* here can be detected by a shift in voice register, the tone becoming more emotional as Wang enters more deeply into character. Wang makes a major "mistake" here, as she left out an essential phrase, "eight words," which she was supposed to play on below.]

(Shift to storyteller *BIAO*:) Just a moment ago, Maiden Su was all smiles, but now her face was expressionless. The sound of her voice is softer, though still remained strong. (Shift to *GUAN BAI*:) Husband.

81. (Yuan, Li Mingtang, *GUAN BAI*:) Wife.

82. (Wang, Su Yingxue, *GUAN BAI*:) Kindly, loosen your official's jade belt, and remove your shoes and stockings.*
Get into bed ahead of me and lie down. As a wife, I will then come to join you right away. [Clasps hands.]

[A. This phrase ("*") koe-i1 jiada3, tekxok7 siafok3 is represented by eight morphemes -- the "eight words" which Wang should have hinted at above. With her omission, these lines were deprived of their potential flavor. Van Gulik (1961) notes that stockings were not normally removed by lovers in ancient China.]

83. (Yuan, Li Mingtang, character BIAO:) Yak,* [Performers pick up instruments.] hearing these words, how could "he" not fear? ** She said "husband, please loosen your official's jade belt, remove your shoes and stockings." She tells me to take off my clothes and get into bed before her. Then later she will follow me in. [Yuan plucks one note on his sanxian-banjo.]

[A. This ("*") is a loud, ridiculous squawking sound. Yuan said that here ("**") he should have inserted something about Li taking four steps backwards, but forgot. Yuan also said that he should have added something in CHEN BAI to make the moment more forceful.]

(GUAN BAI:) This . . .

(character BIAO CHANG, Free Tune,* Zhongzhou yun)
The eight words, on being heard are
just like eight swords,
also just like eight sharp knives, stabbing her heart.
Maiden's such as this one are rarely seen.
You see her
fine eyebrows,
battling eyelids,
lovely figure,
delicate shape --
the tone of her voice is raised even a little.
So how could each word and sentence
seem like sharp knives,
scaring this Li Mingtang out of his wits?

[B. Yuan said a so-called Free Tune ("*") (ziyou
diao) is used here -- sung so that the audience
pays attention to the important lyrics, not to the
execution of a specific popular tune. The basic
tune he used was the Yu Tianxiang one, with many
free improvisations of his own.]

(Shift to storyteller BIAO) These words are not proper.
[Taps table with palm, then points up with left hand.] In
the past, it was the feudal period. Those misses and
precious young ladies were all very shy. They always
listened to what males say. Whatever males said, they just
bowed and said, "Yes, I understand." But this maiden was an
entirely different case. She says for him to take off his
clothes, take off his shoes and stockings and get into bed
first. For something like this, you needn't talk only about
the past. [Hits knuckles on table.] Even today, if a bride
were to act like this, the present-day grooms would probably
be unable to bear it. So, it isn't strange that Meng Lijun
was shaken and apprehensive.

[C. Yuan said that he resisted making a humorous xuetaou
remark in this passage because it would have intruded
into the somber mood.]

(CHANG, Free Tune, Zhongzhouyun)

Can it be that she, early on [Points with left index
finger.]
saw that I am female?
Where has that shy manner
she just displayed gone to?
Has she changed into a shrew,
with a don't-tread-on-me manner?
I only fear she has become the
companion of female tigers.

[Performers lay down instruments.]

(Li Mingtang, character BIAO) I had just thought out so
carefully how I would explain things to her, but it now
seems that I will not get by this difficulty before me.

[Again, the character BIAO comments on the lyrics.]
(Character BIAO CHANG, Free Tune)

My eyes see I can't evade this problem,
it seems my heart has jumped into my throat.
Just now she was very debonair and gentle,
but she has changed, her eyes open wide and face
flushed.
Soon her sweat will
dampen her outer garments.

(Li Mingtang, character BIAO:) Thinking of this, she cannot
keep from sweating, and she wobbles slightly, as if about to
faint.

84. (Wang, Su Yingxue, BIAO:) Maiden Su has seen everything
before her eyes. [Many alternating hand gestures.] Now are
you are so debonair? Now you are still so grand? Not so
grand! Your sweat is dripping! Today, I want it to be
exactly like this, simply because you are so bad. Because
you want to trick me by becoming my husband. I want to see
how you get out of this one.

85. (Yuan, Li Mingtang/Meng Lijun, SI BAI:) Hhe4.*
(Shift to character BIAO) Pak! She has other thoughts. What
am I worried about? Why am I so upset? She still hasn't
cried out that I am female. She spoke only eight words.
And, come to think of it, these eight words are very normal. Why? Because she is a prime minister's daughter, and her position is indeed high. She is probably the "pearl in her parent's palm." [Shows palm.] They like her extremely much and spoil her, thus breeding in her this sort of disposition. [Spreads arms wide.] So, she is behaving like a bride. From dawn straight through to the present time, three bells in the middle of the night, she still sits there, motionless [as prescribed by custom].** [Speech becomes very fast for the next several sentences.] Now, the people have all left. In any case, we are husband and wife; so with me, she has no limitations on her behavior. She therefore, has revealed her basic disposition in front of her own man. It makes no difference now. 'Ah, the time is not early, you undress first, and go to sleep first,' she said. [Shakes head like giving an order.] This sort of disposition is very normal. Yes, yes, yes. I shouldn't be so upset. If I'm like that, the jig would be up, and if so, she would be angry and ask, 'What are you up to?' The fact is, she spoke only two very normal sentences. 'I said for you to sleep first, why are you like this? Ok-ikok7, it appears you look down on me. It appears that you are a shrew.' If I spoke like that, then she'd really be angry. And, if I spoke like that, what follows will really be hard to deal with. Indeed, I can't get upset. I will just follow her directions. But if she still wants me to lie
down ahead of her, that would be completely out of the question.

So, just now "dang1, dang1, dang1, dang1" — "he" [Li Mingtang] retreated four steps.*** He has retreated four steps, but Su Yingxue only wanted him to retreat three steps, but he retreated four steps, exceeding the quota.**** [Stands briefly, in loud voice.] Now he is "dang1, dang1, dang1, dang1," walking forward four steps, going closer to her than before, practically touching her. Lowering his head, and putting his face next to her ear, he whispers: (GUAN BAI) A, wife, you are so frank; a female with real bravado. I, Li Mingtang admire you. But today, I wish to invite you, wife, to lie down ahead of me. I don't dare go first. [Stands and points at Wang briefly during address.]

[A. This ("*") utterance is a sigh. As for ("**"), not only is Su sitting properly, but Wang is as well, in good xiashou form. Yuan explained that this ("***") is an example of making up for a left out part (bu luodong). Here he adds "four steps" to make up for the phrase Wang missed above. He must do this so he can make the point that Li has surpassed his quota of steps. This ("****") is another form of xiaomai xuetou. Most of this passage was spoken very rapidly and the footsteps were very loud.]
86. (Wang, Su Yingxue, BIAO:) Ok-iiok! She was shaken for a moment, but now she's not; she's become composed once more. What's to be done now but to try again?
(Shift to character GUAN BAI) Ehe. The husband is master; you should sleep first.
[A. Wang uses very clear hand gestures which indicate a young lady.]

87. (Yuan, Li Mingtang, character BIAO:) She has a good point. [Raises hand briefly.] Why does she tell me to lie down first? Because males are the masters. And what's the meaning of that? "When the middle line in the character for 'heaven' extends through the top line, the character becomes 'husband,' and thus a husband is more of a master than heaven."* 'You are the husband, the master, you must sleep first before I can sleep,' she said. But I have my own reasoning.

[A. *A common saying, "tiez1 crek dhou fu zok7 zry," meaning that the main stroke of the written character for "heaven" (tian 天) is extended through the top stroke -- though actually it descends through it -- the character becomes "husband" (fu 夫).]

(Shift to character GUAN BAI:) Akyak, wife, you have spoken thus. Today, I have become the son-in-law of a prime minister. I am a groom marrying into the wife's home.***
[The last sentence is an example of CHEN BAI, adding clarity and support to the previous sentence. According to Yuan, the BIAO comment that follows below has a "tiaopi" or mischievous flavor to it. It is spoken in Suzhou dialect in order to contrast it with the Zhongzhouyun lines and to make the meaning clearer.]

(Shift to character BIAO:) And what is this "a groom marrying into the wife's home"? To put it in everyday words, it's a male given in marriage to a female. [Yuan sits legs apart, body relaxed in confident pose.]

[A. As noted below, this was a rare, but not unheard of, custom in some parts of China.]

(shift to GUAN BAI) So, today the wife is the master. So the wife must lie down first.

88. (Wang, as Su Yingxue GUAN BAI) E1-e3, husband, I certainly must wait until you have gone to bed before I can lie down, even if it is we sisters sleeping together. I want you to lie down first; that is just my disposition, yak. [Very extended, trailing yak sound.]

89. (Yuan, Li Mingtang, character BIAO:) This is really unbelievable. How can this person have this sort of
disposition? Even with sisters she wants them to get into bed first before she does, otherwise she would not fall asleep.

(Shift to GUAN BAI) [Spoken at fast pace.] Ak-iak-ia, wife, as for me, I'm also that way. If I'm sleeping with a blood-brother, I also want him to lie down first, before I could go to sleep. I never imagined both of us would have this sort of disposition. Ak-iao-ia, wife, we two are really one and the same, we can certainly be married for our whole lives and produce lots of descendents. [Shakes head somewhat foolishly.]

90. (Wang, Su Yingxue, character BIAO:) Or, maybe we won't have even a single descendent, not to mention "lots of descendents"! How can you say such a thing? Going on like this, we won't be sleeping the whole night. Fine, [The performers reach for their instruments.] today you certainly are out to deceive me, so you can't blame me if I am impertinent to you.

(Shift to GUAN BAI) E, master, I see you don't seem to be a man. Rather, you seem to be like a woman. So I don't dare go ahead of you. What do you say to that? [Yuan makes a startled squawk during this speech.]

(Shift to character BIAO/CHEN BAI:) Well, so you still want to be a shrew?
(shift to GUAN BAI:) You, you are so very brash.*

[The word "brash" (dade4, or dadan in Standard Chinese) is extended here for some moments in a high-pitched voice.]

(Sing, CHANG, Wang Yuexiang Tune.) [In the following passages of song, Wang points with right finger several times, occasionally looking at Yuan.]

You are a woman who is unaware of imperial policy.
Your ability is so great that you can rise to the Heavenly Palace.

[A. The tune used in these passages is also called kuai diao ("fast tune"), xiang xiang diao ("scented tune"), or ku diao ("crying tune"). Yuan said these passages are sung to help build an emotional climax in this part of the episode, and is more effective than speaking would be. Yuan provides most of the music, as Wang often gestures and pauses for effect. See Zhou, et al, ed. (1988:28-29) for information of the Wang Tune]

(Shift to character BIAO/CHEN BAI:) You have talent. Your rhetoric is so great that you could deceive people right up to the heavens.
(Shift to singing, CHANG, Wang Yuexiang Tune.)

A female masquerading as a male
comes to take the imperial examinations.
But your position is gotten by stealth.
If fish and dragons are put together,
the norms of behavior are in chaos.
When male and female are turned upside down,
the rules of propriety are disturbed.
You have committed this enormous crime,
isn't it enough for you?
Yet you want to come in male dress
to Qin-Jin* me.
By so naturally coming to my home to
be a son-in-law,
You are deceiving the emperor,
showing contempt for his court,
Hoodwinking the prime minister,
and standing in the way of Suhua.
Still, you dare to laugh in
the wedding suite and
chatter away deceitfully.
You don't know what's illegal
and what's immoral.
From past to present no one
has ever encountered you,
a female of this sort.
You know that you are capable, 
    and can trick many people.
You consider everyone on earth 
    to be fools.

[A. Yuan thought that part of the above passage was a transcription error, that not all of it should have been sung. Wang, on the other hand, absorbed in something in another room, cried out that it was supposed to be sung. Qin-Jin ("*"") refers to two ancient states involved in political intrigue against each other.]

(Shift to character BIAO:) In the next sentences I want to stress the main point, and make things perfectly clear for you.

(Sings, CHANG:) 
    You are a Yunnanese, 
    so why do you speak in Xiangyang dialect? 
    You should know that I, 
    Liang Suhua, am not some stupid female. 
    I know what you are named and called, 
    of whose household and where you lived. 
    Why have you come to the capital? 
    Why don't you have a woman's
coiffure instead of an official's cap?
Why do you want to interfere with
my hopes of marriage by
masquerading as a groom?
Why have you committed such
a crime, yet not know
how wrong you have been?
Why do you wish to wink and smile to titillate me?
Why you don't take off your
jade belt and shoes?
As I ask you these questions,
in your reply
you must answer accurately,
without an incorrect word.
Possibly, then, I can forgive you.
Don't think that there are only
the two of us in the wedding suite.
I am wholly surrounded by household attendants.
I need only to give the order and can immediately
have you taken to the vamen office.

(Shift to GUAN BAI:) You, this bold woman, have turned male
and female upside down, stealing an official position,
obstructing the marriage plans of others; and still you have
not honestly told me about it.
[A. The final lines are spoken by Wang in a very high-pitched, emotional voice as she looks at Yuan.]

91. (Yuan, Li Mingtang, BIAO:) It's finished, everything is finished. What can I do now? [Performers lay down their instruments.]

(Shift to storyteller BIAO:) "What can I do now?" Tomorrow I will tell you.

[A. These final lines were spoken quickly, carrying on the excitement that was built by Wang's final song and speech. Several audience members quite audibly expressed praise at the end as they were rising to leave. The performer's remained on the platform for nearly a minute, then entered the wings.]

[End of transcript]

D. ANALYSIS

1. Introduction.

In this section the topics discussed will include that of the nature of the narration and the performance of status and gender. Continual reference will be made to the pervasive shifting between communicative means, the nature of those means, and the performance strategies which involve them. As will be shown by numerous examples, the shifting between the various registers of performance is a process
underlying the entire delivery. These shifts aid in evoking and sustaining audience interest throughout the lengthy performance.

2. Aspects of Narration

Focusing on who utters what in a performance and how they do it will allow us to understand the nature of the narration in the context of this version of the Meng Lijun story (Bauman 1986:15-26; Genette 1980; Oxford 1991:115). The storytellers and audience agree that it is Yuan Xiaoliang and Wang Jin who perform the narration. They are the storytellers, as the sign at the front of the storyhouse proclaims. They also identify themselves by name, and as shuoshu xiansheng ("master" storytellers) or as shuoshude ("tellers of tales"). Thus they explicitly present themselves to the audience as storytellers who are presenting "their" version of a story that resonates within the memories of their listeners who have encountered versions over the radio, on television, in print, on the operatic stage, or in other pingtan story houses. By convention, their very presence in the performance context gives them authority over their text, "creating a social structure" with themselves "at the center" (Bauman 1977:44).15

Once Yuan and Wang assume their roles, the formal situation of storytelling begins. Yuan presents most of the story through his role as narrator. This role may sometimes
shift to Wang, but it is always subservient to the frame
Yuan has established at the beginning. This fact exists
inspite of any "frame-breaking" involving personal
anecdotes, or metanarrative/metaperformance comments which
may occur to generate laughs or enhance interest (indeed, the "frame-breaking" is part of the frame). As Oxford
(1991:115) has noted, the "'lapses of cohesion' are not
disjunctive but instead represent a different sort of unity,
one in which narrative is blended with metanarrative." Thus, everything that goes on in a tanci performance is part
of a whole storytelling process, which is well within the
horizons of expectation of the genre's intended audience.

The heavy impress of styles of local opera (especially
Kunju) on tanci presents some interesting questions,
especially regarding the position of characters' dialogue
within the frame of narration. The amount of dialogue
usually varies between episodes in a given story. Moreover,
performers may choose to utilize the device in varying
quantities, such decisions often dictated by the nature of a
particular story and the skill of the individual performer.
As exemplified by Yuan and Wang's story, dialogue, though
occasionally used as commentary on the narration, or even as
direct address to the audience, is still ultimately
subservient to the biao roles (Zuo 1982:1-2).
3. The Means of Communication and the Performance of Status and Gender

In Chapter II and III the related concerns of status and gender were discussed in the context of Chen Duansheng's ZSY. In this section, they will be treated in the context of the Meng Lijun performance.

In terms of the integration of the registers of narration in tanci, the scenes of the marriage of Meng Lijun/Li Mingtang to Su Yingxue/Liang Suhua are particularly inviting since they involve mutual deception. Indeed, the role of deception and the manipulation of persisting cultural expectations on the performance of status/gender roles and related stereotypes may in part explain why a story set in an era 800 years in the past is of interest to audiences today. The phenomena in the story associated with and made possible by Meng Lijun attempting to assume a different gender role to deceive the largely male imperial court is qi, or "strange," in the aesthetics of Suzhou storytelling (Bender 1988:59-60) and plays with the framing of Chinese status/gender stereotypes.

Primed with the knowledge of other versions and previous episodes, listeners are already aware that Meng Lijun was masquerading as a male (and doing very well at it) and that her former maidservant, Su Yingxue, once offered to the Liu family as "Meng Lijun," was now disguised as Liang Suhua, the foster daughter of the prime minister. They have
also been told that the two were already suspicious of each other's true identities, yet, in his performance, Yuan purposely pretends to undermine his own control over the story (creating an impression that he is not paying attention to what he is saying) by stating that only Su Yingxue really knew what was going on ("one of them is in the light, one is in the dark"). This is done, according to his own testimony, in order to be able to ask the rhetorical question (see textual note 1.B.): "The two people here have already seen each other; Meng Lijun's reason for not being able to identify [Su] in the last episode has already been heard by everyone. So how could Su Yingxue identify 'him' as Meng Lijun?"

The narration is then tossed to Wang, who repeats and elaborates on the reason Su has not recognized her master: "Because Su Yingxue's impression of Miss Meng Lijun was very, very deep, because when Miss Meng Lijun, a female, dressed as a male . . ." 21

Verbally created images and Wang's actual movements are used in the play on gender-specific stereotypes of bodily movements, meant to be (and taken to be) humorous. Wang goes on to describe how Su once advised Meng on walking like a male, a concern further elaborated on when Wang shifts to the inner voice (gubai) of Su as recalled in the voice of the character biao: " 'Ak-íok! Not correct, not correct! Walking this way is not acceptable. Your steps should be a
little bigger, males are not the same as maidens; [you] must take bigger steps.'" The implication here is that not only do women in general have smaller feet than men, but women of Meng's age would certainly have had bound feet, an image important in later stages of the plot.22

The idea that carriage is gender-specific is further explained as Wang continues: "'Ak-iok, Miss your waist can't wiggle that way, one wiggle of the waist, and immediately there is a [sense] of femininity.'" Wang then introduces gestures (which she as narrator acts out) associated with the sheng character role as examples of "male" body language, thus providing an interesting metanarrative dimension: "'Thus you must know the "proudly wiping the finger under the nose" gesture, and know how to properly hold and wave a fan.'"

In passage (4) Su, in the BIAO CHANG mode, directly mentions bound feet in the song lyrics, "I want you to remove your shoes,/and reveal the tiny embroidered slippers." Wang, in the mode of the storyteller BIAO comments on Su's inner song, saying, "She lowers her head acting very shy,/now Maiden Su is also a good actor." The "lowering of the head" in shyness is a common act of body language among young women in China even today, and its pervasiveness in films and drama would suggest that some women intentionally employ the movement. The indirectness of Meng Lijun's "sideways" glance at Su in the succeeding lines
and Su's slight giggle reflect Chinese stereotypes of heterosexual romantic interaction. In Meng's BIAO (5), are the thoughts about Su's giggle: "'How sensitive she is. I look at her and nod, I bat my eyes at her, and she faces me and slightly parts her lips, "geklek," emitting a tiny laugh . . . .'"

Female sensitivity and gentleness are perceived through the eyes of a female acting as a male -- yet spoken by a male performer for an audience that might find the attention to "parted lips," if not the entire transaction, sensual.

Stereotypical male and female movements and stances are also contrasted in the scene where the maids and maidservants who escort Li Mingtang and Liang Suhua to bid goodnight to the Liangs (14). Again, these contrasts become interesting because the "male" is a female. Wang, assuming the mode of character BIAO, speaks: "... the bride is very shy, her head bowed, face blushing. Eh, this new zhuangyuan, Li Zhuangyuan, has excellent scholarship; this person is not at all embarrassed, walking along, smiling, his head always turning back, looking at the bride. Looking at her, and nodding his head, and going "n, n, n, o, o, o" -- so extremely confident and at ease.'" In the storyteller BIAO mode is the comment, "How can you all know what Meng Lijun is thinking now? On the one hand striding ahead, on the other hand looking back." It is obvious that it is the man's role to "look," "smile," and otherwise display
confidence, while it is the woman's role to show embarrassment. Yet, despite appearances to the assembled maids and maidservants, the image of the "confident male" is playfully undermined by the narrator, who reveals that the "groom" is actually thinking over what sort of transaction "he" can work out with Su to win her complicity in the deception.

After Li and Liang bid the elder Liangs goodnight, they return to the marriage suite, where Li Mingtang is instructed to wait in the anteroom while Liang Suhua is prepared for nuptial activities in the bridal suite. This physical separation -- with the image of Li sitting alone in the parlor while Su is surrounded by maids inside the bridal suite (though the narrator never directly allows the audience privy to this scene) -- is an opportunity created by Yuan to digress on women's beauty care habits past and present, which serves as foregrounding for a humorous narrative involving gender mis-identification based on misplaced expectations of gender construction.

While Li sits alone, Yuan, in BIAO (23) gives a lengthy digression on the ways in which elite women in the past spent hours a day making themselves up. He acts out the braiding of hair, the donning of flowers and a golden pin, and then goes on to describe how the thick make-up worn in the day was removed and replaced with lighter make-up and a special night-time coiffure was made. Why doesn't the groom
go inside to watch? It would be "inappropriate." This passage may work on two levels of meaning, one being the interest in the private lives of upper-class women, and the sensuality of the donning and removal of make-up. This interest in the private activities of women is made "safe" by the use of a politically-colored message that the elite women were privileged enough to have time to waste on frivolous pursuits such as make-up -- a standard target of attacks on "bourgeois" behavior from 1949 to the "Spiritual Pollution" (jingshen wuran) campaign of the early 1980s. This political-moralisitic flavor continues as Yuan shifts to a modern context involving young women working in factories, yet also conjuring a "suggestive" scene of sensuously healthy young women combing their short "swimming" or "jogging" cuts.

Yuan, still in the BIAO mode, quickly makes an ironic reversal on these images of young women's hair with a shift to long hair on men, a style which he later noted was already out of fashion at the time of the performance. The waichahua or "inserted flower" type of xuetou which Yuan develops in the succeeding lines plays heavily on expectations of male/female hair stereotypes and clothing. Traditional long hair styles for men largely ended, at least in urban areas, with the 1911 revolution. The source of confusion over long hair and gender role in China would seem to have its origin in that era, increasing with the May
Fourth Movement of 1919, a time when young women students typically wore short locks.

Just as short hair was borrowed from the West in the early twentieth century, so too in the late seventies and especially the early eighties were long hair, bell-bottom trousers and disco music, all sources of vexation to the older generations.\textsuperscript{28} Yuan's mistaken impression of the "Auntie" being in fact an "Uncle" is suddenly revealed when the person who "deceived" him turns out to have a beard: "In one glimpse, I saw he had a beard -- oh, so it was a young man after all -- okyok -- I was deceived! I can't distinguish (between male and female), so with today's situation, don't even try to understand (the difference)."

Thus, by use of the BIAO, a present day situation reflecting social tensions enhanced by China's re-opening to the West in the late seventies and early eighties is playfully juxtaposed against a scene from an age when things were more clearly defined, yet in Chinese Marxist discourse, more "feudal."

It should not be forgotten, however, that the whole episode about hair is optional. In the case of Yuan's own situation, the need for something to "stretch time" so he won't "run out of story" was of the most immediate importance to him. As Yuan noted (20, A) the digressions give the episode the sense of a nongtangshu, in which the plot advances very little. Rather than move the plot along,
which would eat up the next day's material, Yuan continues to insert anecdotes and trivial dialogue peppered with small jokes to pass the time and retain audience interest. Yet, his choice of anecdote adds a thematic dimension to the entire Meng Lijun masquerade (Babcock 1977:66).

Ending the anecdote, Yuan shifts back into the time dimension of the frame story, making a meta-performance comment on his own act of "sitting" in front of the audience -- just as Li Mingtang is still "sitting" in the ante-room, waiting for Liang Suhua. Instead of taking up the action in the immediate scene (which has been on hold while he digressed), Yuan introduces another time-consuming, entertaining scene concerning Li Mingtang's maid, Rongfa (Meng Lijun's disguised maid, Ronglan).

Sexual tensions are clearly evoked in the scene in which Rongfa cleverly outsmarts the young men who wanted to sleep with "him." In the BAI mode of a servant, Yuan rationalizes: "Akyak, there is only one bed, but it is very big. The three of us can squeeze in together and sleep together. How about it?" In the mode of the BIAO, speaking through the character of Rongfa, Wang explicitly evokes the image of two males and a (disguised) female -- whose "skin is a little prickly" with goose-pimples -- contemplating being "squeezed" into the same bed: "Is that suitable? Three people squeezed so tight. How can I be squeezed so tight with you -- what sort of situation is this?"
tension mounts until Rongfa defuses it with the imitation (with appropriate noises) of "him" pouring urine down a former bed-mates throat, the scatological reference provoking laughter in the audience. It is a "lower-class" take on cross-gender disguising, allowing a more "earthy" treatment of the theme than would be acceptable with the upper-class main characters.\(^{30}\)

It is important to note that this scene was not part of the text inherited from Gong Huasheng, replacing a song (another strategy to pass time, though requiring more effort than speaking). Its use in this particular performance was again determined by Yuan's need to take up time and its fitting relation to events in other parts of the story.

Yuan shifts the focus back to the main story, conjuring up the image of the nervous Li Mingtang, a tea-cup in "his" trembling hand, waiting to enter the marriage suite. The ensuing scene largely involves the attempt by Liang Suhua to get her groom to remove "his" clothes and get into bed ahead of her, deliberately causing Meng Lijun mental stress. The number of physical images and descriptions of behavior invoking gender stereotypes decreases as the performers employ an increasingly intricate -- and intimate -- web of inner speech and external repartee to present the characters' manipulation of each other.

The locus of these events is the wedding suite, a setting that normally brings on intimate contact, both
verbal and physical, between a husband and a wife. In a society of arranged marriages, it is normally the place that a couple first speak to each other.

In the narrative, many gender stereotypes, highlighted by Li Mingtang's cross-dressing, and revealed in both the dialogue and the BIAO modes of speaking, involve the personality types of women, the proper order of action of men and women, and the position of men and women in the marriage code.

When Su finally confirms her suspicions about the true identity of Li Mingtang, her feelings are a mixture of reproach and admiration at Meng Lijun's courage. She also points out the very different approaches the two have taken to dealing with their situations as women. Spoken through the character BIAO mode, Su rather sarcastically thinks:

Blame you, for what? I understand you. You depend on your intelligence, you depend on your talents, depend on the fact that you are the gifted girl of Yunnan. Thus, today you have thought to come and trick me, this inexperienced girl who conforms docilely to convention, shy and disconcerted, an upper-class maiden of the prime-minister's family.

Later on in the episode (beginning in 68), after the asides, the action begins to rise. There is a long sequence
in which Li Mingtang attempts to implement his strategy to get Liang Suhua into bed first, so that he can hide "his" bound feet. Countering these efforts, Liang Suhua skillfully manipulates her former master. The language that Li Mingtang chooses to use must be suitable to the context: if his revelation or persuasions are too forward, then Liang might scream out and be heard by nearby maids. Putting himself in Liang's place, Li Mingtang, in the character BIAO mode, thinks (74) to himself: "Eh, I have it! Both of us are females, both maidens. If we were to change places, then in a certain situation, when would I not cry or scream aloud?" Describing how he will trick her into bed first, he continues, "... Sleeping together, I will "gik, gik, gik7, cok, cok, cok7" speak heartfelt words, speak sweet honeyed words to her. When I have talked to this point, talked to when she is very happy, then I will softly this way and that way [tell her] that I am a girl dressed as a boy and not to fear . . . ."

Yuan lightens the seriousness of the deception with a slight joke on female hysteria: "... you a Thousand Gold of the women's quarters with this sort of status will not carelessly scream out. It would be impossible for you to run out in just your underwear, "wangdang1, wangdang1" screaming. Impossible. By this point, if she has tears, they must only flow towards her stomach. This much anger, this much upset can only be kept under control. There would
seem to be no other way. Yes!" Thus, Li Mingtang must count on the need of Liang Suhua to control her emotions and maintain face (lian) before her parents and ultimately the imperial court in order to carry out his plan.\textsuperscript{35}

Liang Suhua's language is "out of character" for a person of her gender and status. When she speaks the "eight words" requiring Li Mingtang to remove his belt and footwear, Li sings (in the character BIAO mode, 73), expressing his shock that the apparently docile maiden would speak such frightful words:

Hearing these eight words, they are just like eight swords,
Also just like eight sharp knives stabbing her heart.
Maidens like this one are rarely seen.

As the exchange between Li and Liang continues, Yuan comments in the storytelling BIAO mode on "speaking rights" of brides, highlighting the uniqueness of Liang's bold words of insistence that Li "sleep first," a situation that even contemporary males would find difficult to accept.\textsuperscript{(82)}:

These words are not suitable. In the past, it was the feudal times. Those misses and Thousand Golds were all very shy. They always listened to the words of males. Whatever males said, they just bowed and said, "Yes, I understand." But this maiden is an entirely different case.\textsuperscript{36}
This passage has a definite flavor of communist rhetoric on the raising of women's status in new China and are consistent with Gong Huasheng's positive portrayals of women characters and issues of sexual inequality.\textsuperscript{37}

Meng Lijun sings a few lines to herself about her fear that Su has become "fierce," bold and assertive. This fear is well-founded since Liang Suhua begins in earnest to torment the false Li Mingtang (83) when she notices that "he" is already sweating, reviving the theme of Su's anger over the deception (Wang as Su Yingxue character BIAO): "Now are you so debonair? Now are you so grand? Not so grand! Your sweat is dripping! . . . I want to see how you handle things now!"

Meng, however, in a long inner monologue in the character BIAO mode (84), decides that Su is actually only acting out her natural temper within the safe confines of the wedding suite. The eight words that she spoke are "very normal," and she has this disposition because her new parents spoiled her, ". . . so before my face she has no limitations" on her behavior. Su has revealed her basic disposition to her husband, though it is acceptable within the private confines of the situation. Unable to agree about who is to get into bed first, Li takes on the strategy of attempting to sweet talk Liang, speaking directly into her ear (GUAN BAI mode), a speech which begins a series of
exchanges in spoken Zhongzhouyun contrasts with passages of inner revelations given largely through the character BIAO mode.

As evidenced in several passages above, on another level, class distinctions between Meng Lijun and Su Yingxue are even more important than gender distinctions once the true identities of Meng and Su are made known. Meng is the daughter of a high-class family. Su, despite enjoying a status created by "fictive kin ties" (Mann 1991:220), was once Meng Lijun's maidservant. Though in some sense still Meng's servant, she has acquired a new status of wealth and privilege, making it necessary for Meng to tread carefully in dealing with her, at least until they can clarify the new power relations.38

Considerations of face and power arises early in the episode. When it becomes clear to her who her groom is, Su is incensed and immediately feels a sense of duty to the foster parents who have aided both her and her new "husband." She desires to punish Meng Lijun. Speaking to herself in the GUBAI mode, she thinks (2): "... I will delay awhile to tease you... You have totally deceived my parents, deceived them so diligently. Today I want to release some anger on their behalf. Otherwise, I will be too unworthy of them, do too much of a disservice to them."

As the episode unfolds, it becomes clear that part of the tensions between the two women in this episode involve
what status each will have after they marry Huangfu Shaohua. Aware that Su now "has everything" in terms of material needs, Meng can only beseech Su to understand her desire to clear the Huangfu name, and offers Su the position of co-wife.

These lines are related in the character BIAO mode while Li Mingtang is confidently walking along to bid the Liangs goodnight (14): "I will think up a way to let you marry Huangfu Shaohua. We two women will together care for a mate. If this way of repaying you still leaves you unsatisfied, then I will invite you to be first wife, and I will be a concubine." It should be pointed out that, no matter how much she enjoys her accomplishments as a male, Meng's motivation is still to clear the name of the Huangfu family and be reunited with Huangfu Shaohua, whom she regards as her true husband. Su's hand in the plot is possible only within the structure of the "feudal" marriage system, which allowed multiple wives.

In the meeting with the Liang's, in which Zhongzhouyun is the medium of verbal discourse, Li Mingtang properly bows first before "his" new parents-in-law, followed by Liang Suhua. When Minister and Madame Liang ask them to stand, the older couple each use similar phrasing: "Come, come, good son-in-law, daughter, raise yourselves" and "Akyaya, good son-in-law, please arise." Only Li Mingtang speaks when the young couple take their leave.
While some inquisitors might imagine that the episode seems to create sensual or even sexual interest in the minds of some audience members, several local informants who viewed the performance stress that what is most compelling is the suspense over how Meng Lijun will get out of her fix, how she will *guo zhege guan* ("get out of this difficult situation"). Living in constant fear of exposure, Meng Lijun must gain the cooperation of Su Yingxue, but at the same time maintain her face while allowing Su to maintain her's as well. Early in the episode (passage 3) Yuan uses singing in the BIAO mode (both narrative and character perspectives) to describe and reveal Meng's appearance and reveal the workings of her mind:

This Lijun
With one look is happy.
Seeing the Thousand Gold,
One thread of joyful meaning appears on her face.
'Wait just a moment more
When I reveal the truth she will forgive me.
Miss, ah, [all is well] as long as you are willing to falsely be a female phoenix, with a deceptive male phoenix, to act in front of others as a married couple.
If I can get out of this fix
Then I can pass one hundred others [that may come].
From the inner dialogues it is clear to the audience that both Su and Meng are very aware that Meng already took advantage of Su by having her marry Li Kuibi in her stead. The BIAO voice as well as the inner voice of Su combine to comment on Meng's reactions to the delicate unfolding of the truth, teasing and rebuking Meng from two distinct vantage points. The audience is thus very involved in exactly how Meng will get out of the fix, knowing more than Meng about what is going on, yet not as much as the storytellers. As Yuan once commented, everyone knows that the two will go to the marriage suite together, but it is how the scene is carried off that matters.

In a deliberate play on the role reversals of male and female, Li Mingtang attempts to get out of his predicament of getting into bed first by invoking an alternate marriage custom (passage 86) called zhao nuxu, in which a groom — usually of a poorer background — marries into the bride's home. In a shift from the inner-thoughts revealed to the audience by the character BIAO mode to the spoken style of Zhongzhou yun, Li first establishes the notion of male authority using a play on words with the characters tian (sky) and fu (husband). Yuan then humorously subvert this by having Li speak directly to Liang: Akyak, wife, you have spoken thus. Today, I have become the son-in-law of the prime minister. I am a groom marrying into the wife's home. An immediate shift back to the character BIAO mode, which is
a form of **CHENBAI**, allows Yuan to clarify the reference to the custom by saying "And what is 'a groom marrying into the wife's home'? To put it in everyday words, it's a male given in marriage to a female."

Passages 78 to 89 create an ever-increasing rise in tension, as the inner-voices contrast with what is actually spoken and sung between the characters. Su is increasingly amazed at Meng Lijun's boldness in attempting to deceive her, and Meng is ever aware of Su's steadfast refusal to give an inch in her demands that Li Mingtang get into bed first and her increasingly direct insinuations that Li has not told all. In three long passages performed by Wang, the singing mode (**CHANG**) is used to sum up the conflict created by Meng Lijun's deceptive cross-dressing, and to characterize Meng Lijun's actions in terms of social norms ("male and female turned on head, the rules of propriety are disturbed"). The passage also stresses the nature of her disregard for not only family and emperor, but to the institution of marriage and Su herself. Finally, Su suggests a way out for Meng, if she would be willing to reveal herself.

In the process, a certain amount of the plot is recapitulated. As noted, the tune is a **kuai diao** (fast tune), the quickening pace of which is used to increase emotional tension, singing being more effective than speaking in the stirring of emotions.
In the final CHANG passage, Su directly accuses Meng of deception, referring to local dialect and stressing that Meng should not think that she is such a great pretender, for Su is "not a female idiot." The repetition of the "Why"s is a fairly common strategy in tanci for creating emotional tension:

So why do you speak in Xiangyang dialect? . . . .
Why do you want to interfere with my marriage hopes . . . ?
Why have you committed such a crime . . . ?
Why do you wish to wink and stimulate me? . . . .
Why don't you just take off your jade belt and shoes . . . ?

Stressing the fact that she can have Meng arrested with a single word to the attendants, Su/Wang switches to GUAN BAI to summarize the sung passage, a common strategy to help the audience understand the lyrics. Accusing Meng, Su declares: "You, this bold woman turned male and female upside down, stealing the official position, blocking others' people's marriages hopes, and you still haven't honestly told me about it." The basic conflict kernelized in this final passage of Zhongzhouyun by the disguised Su Yingxue leaves the audience with clearly stated but unresolved conflicts. Yuan, the narrator, speaking in the character
BIAO mode, reveals Meng Lijun's thoughts and at the same time verbalizes the sense of suspense created in Wang's final passage: "It's finished, everything is finished. What's to be done?" He then steps outside of the story, and speaking in the storyteller's BIAO mode, echoes the character's inner thoughts, and speaks directly to those assembled in the audience: "'What's to be done?' -- Tomorrow I'll tell you."

Within the frame of mutual deception, the storytellers use the various voices of narration to construct and comment on social images of gender in the fictional context of the frame story and in the more real-world asides concerning modern young people in China. Driven by the central image of Meng Lijun in disguise as a male, the interacting registers (on one level the sort of antiphonal interaction noted in Chapter III) are used constantly and playfully in a shifting that creates ironies that continually fold back on each other, suggesting that the genders assumed by the characters are roles involving standard, stereotyped behaviors. The play on the conventional gestures associated with traditional opera and storytelling character types serve as a meta-statement on the implicit notion of gender as role.40

It can be seen that the story has a main thread, which is consistent from performance to performance (though can be changed consciously in varying degrees if the
performers find it necessary and are capable of doing it). This thread can be fleshed out in a number of ways from a stock of variable anecdotes, descriptions, dialogues, and songs available to the storytellers in their memories and/or script books. These changes involve a number of variables, including the performers' assessment of the audience, actual audience reactions in the process of presentation, the physical well-being, mood, and interest level of both of the performers, level of performer skill in remembering stories and managing "mistakes," general co-ordination between the performers, and the element of time.

1. At the time the graduate students from Suzhou University took up the transcription project, it had not occurred to me that the performers could have performed the service. In the interim between the making of the transcription and the translation of it with the performers, I found out that Wang Jin had copied their entire scriptbook from tape, as described in Chapter Three. It was useful to discover, however, that the performers were surprised that the transcription was so accurate -- they feel that few listeners can readily understand, word for word, all of what they sing.

2. If not for the kindness of Japanese folklorist Suzuki Takashi, I would have been unable to video-tape this episode. He gave me two blank tapes just at the moment my precious supply had dwindled to near extinction.

3. In all, I attended portions of five of their two-week performances, completing taping three of these lengthy engagements. The first taping was in the Guangyu Story House, the second in a rural area near Suzhou called Changqiao, the third in the story house in the cultural center in the nammen district of Suzhou, the fourth in the Puyuan Story House in northern Zhejiang province, and the fifth in a small village outside Wuxi (which is also the hometown of the young performer, Tao Qing mentioned in Chapter IV).
4. Wang Jin had a small throat operation a few days after the Guangyu engagement ended. Throat problems are common among storytellers.

5. In the course of my fieldwork, Prof. Sun, who was my constant companion in the first months of research, gave this kind of advice to several young performers. Since many felt a need to "improve" their stories, yet did not have the resources to do so, most were very grateful for his comments.

6. For more on the concept of luohui ("endings"), see Zhang (1984:85) and Tsao (1988:11).

7. I have recordings of the other versions, as well as commentary on two of them which I will compare with the present in future writing projects. I will note here, however, that Yuan had a high awareness of certain intentional changes he made between the versions. He did not seem to regard small changes in wording as anything more than a consequence of performing without a script in front of him, unless there was a conscious reason for saying something differently. In the course of Yuan attempting to teach me a short portion of the episode, he modified the language in my script several times, each time taking out more description and action to make it simpler. This, however, did not seem to change the essence of the scene in his mind. See Blader (1983) for comments on Jin Shengbo's conception of "change' in storytelling.

8. Yuan was unable to write the graphs for this term.

9. These sort of mistakes may be deviations from wording (usually lyrics) in the script book, but more importantly seem to be errors in pronunciation, grammar, and lexical usage. If the performers miss an important item in the plot, this may lead to later problems which have to be cleverly mitigated. An example from the sample text involves the number of steps Li Mingtang takes when approaching the bridal bed. The performers' sensitivity to these "mistakes" was evident even in the early interviews at Guangyu Storyhouse, which may have been one reason why they were capable of so readily utilizing many of the suggestions for improving their story made by Prof. Sun and myself. One of the overall effects of my presence at performances was to make the performers pay greater attention to what they were doing. (Even after the performers and I became very familiar, audiences expected them to perform especially well in the presence of a foreigner.) Once when I missed a performance, the couple mentioned that they had been glad for the rest. This was an interesting phenomenon, since my listening comprehension in Suzhou dialect was very poor at the beginning of the study, only improving gradually in the course of the fieldwork.
10. The process of moving from raw to cooked seems to be similar to that of academics refining their lectures: the content is more or less the same, though after a few readings things get added or dropped until a polished version that becomes more or less standardized is created. Even so, it is not the same each time. Production of some oral genres, such as the personal experience narrative may be similar. As Stahl (1983:269) has noted: "Without pushing the metaphor too far, we might say that the first telling of a personal experience story serves as an ur-form for the teller's retellings always consciously or subconsciously take into account the form, style, and content of the first telling. But, through context-sensitive recreation, the teller polishes the story until it becomes a fairly stable performance piece incorporating those consistent aspects of style and content that the teller deems essential to a good rendition. If the story is successful, if it effectively entertains, teaches, or awes the audience, then the teller is likely to repeat it whenever the context -- the the context for a proverb or pun -- is appropriate."

11. Blader (1983:90), basing her remarks on interviews with pinghua performer Jin Shengbo and other studies of traditional storytellers, has stated that "... in spite of adamant denials by tellers and singers of having changed the 'story,' the 'song,' the 'skeleton,' evidence suggests to me that not only do we know that they often make significant changes, but they do also." See Eberhard (1970) for comments on texts by Taiwanese storytellers.

12. Moreover, my paraphrases and remarks are my understanding of the performers' explanations and comments.


14. The numbers of these passages correspond to the Suzhou dialect transcription in the appendices.

15. Oxford (1991:114) quotes Langellier's suggestion that the context of a storytelling situation can include the performer. In this view, "a performer's expectations, competence, personal/social/cultural history, and status within the performing situation" must be considered. In my paper, "Name Adoption Among Suzhou Pingtan Performers: Implications to Performance," read at the 1992 Chinoperl conference, I followed Oxford in noting that even names of performers are an important aspect of self-presentation and identity, and are a part of the performance context, helping to create and shape audience expectations, construct the "performing self" of the
16. Although Moser (1990) may be correct in stating that the use of "reflexivity" and "frame-breaking" in xiangsheng (often translated as "cross talk," though Link [1984:83] and Moser prefer "face and voice routines") are "taken to a much greater extreme than do other guyi forms" and that it is "one of the central aspects" of xiangsheng as narrative, the level of reflexivity in some pingtan performances (again, certain episodes by certain performers in certain stories) may be very high and an integral part of the performance process. In some case, the frame-breaking may actually break out of generic expectations. Yuan and Wang told me of an incident in which an older male performer was so disgusted with what he perceived as his partner's constant mistakes, that he suddenly broke out of performance and asked her directly, "Do you know how to tell stories?" When his answer was met with only a glare, he prodded her off the platform with the tip of his sanxian, apologized to the audience, and continued the performance alone. After intervention by the manager, who feared losing the audience if no xiashou appeared the next day, the assistant finished the booking.

17. Tannen's ideas on framing and expectation have been addressed in the Introduction. The idea of the "performance of gender" is discussed in Jehlen (1990), using a scene from Huckleberry Finn in which Huck dresses as a young women. His act is seen through by a woman, Judith Loftus, who teaches Huck that "concealment is not the issue but projection: projection, meaning construction" of gender (p. 270).

18. In assessing several studies of sex-role stereotypes among groups of Chinese in Taiwan and Hong Kong in the 1960s and 1970s, Bond and Hwang (1986:239-240) cite evidence that both American and Chinese students "showed similar features in their stereotypes of both sexes. Men and women in both cultures generally agreed on which sex was the more adventurous, dominant, independent, and so on. Nevertheless, the Chinese sample showed greater sex-role differentiation than did the Americans: they rated the male stereotype, for example, as more 'manly' than did the American subjects (for example, as more independent, more self-confident, makes decisions more easily, act as a leader more, and so on). The difference could be interpreted in terms of the fact that the social structure of the Chinese family has traditionally shown a greater degree of sexual differentiation and has been more male centred."
19. Abrahams (1970:19-20) notes that in observing performances, the possibility exists for noting how the performer uses the piece to "establish a relationship between the tale on one hand and the experience and conventional understandings of his hearers on the other." In this manner the audience is induced "to take a stance in relation to the predicament presented in the story and the way in which it is worked out." Moreover, "The audience will be guided in this by reminders from the performer as to the way this predicament is traditionally handled." Thus, "The performer's ultimate purpose will be to present a movement of actions stamped by all with a sense of approval or disapproval." Though there is an esthetic level of appreciation, "the attraction is essentially a device of control to persuade the audience into accepting the values of the piece."

20. See Chapter I for a discussion of the "scholar and beauty" theme in Chinese literature.

21. This excuse — that Su had only the deep impressions of Meng Lijun as a beautiful young woman who had awkwardly donned male clothing — is artistically rather weak, and not a very good example of the aesthetic principle of li. It is textual problems such as this that must be perpetuated by poor performers (who have no choice but to perform the story as learned) or improved upon by more innovative, or at least more motivated, ones.

22. Levy (1993:340), in describing the attractions of the bound foot, notes that, "The eye rejoiced in the tiny footstep and in the undulating motion of the buttocks which it caused; the ear thrilled to the whispered walk . . ." He cites the story of Meng Lijun as an instance of footbinding in literature, basing his observations on the 1936 prose version by Qi Luhe and a pre-1949 "play" (which I assume is a traditional opera) which he has translated as Meng Li-chun Removes Her Shoes (1993:188-189). He further explains that types of male footbinding existed in a limited extent in some areas of northern China, especially among actors who played women's roles in traditional opera, and in reported instances where males were passing for females (1993:193-196).

23. Kristeva's notion of the male "gaze" is of course a topic of much interest in gender studies.

24. Van Gulik (1961:63) claims that "sapphism" was "tolerated," and in some instances even encouraged, during various times in Chinese history, it being "a custom bound to prevail in the women's quarters, and even praised when it gave rise to self-sacrifice or other beautiful acts of love and devotion."
25. In this thesis, I can only suggest some further avenues for exploration in terms of the greater social "meanings" of the given texts to Chinese audiences. On one hand, in discussing the nature of Ming dynasty huaben, Wong (1981:245) has noted that the entertainment value of traditional fiction is more important than the didactic, which generally acts primarily as a vehicle to legitimize the portions of the text that "please and delight us." On the other hand, Pickowicz (1989:52) in a discussion of popular thought in China, as reflected in "serious" films of the early 1980s, observes that despite what is suggested by the political reform movements of that era, "it seems clear that the contours of mainstream popular political discourse in the years immediately following the death of Mao were still being shaped to a significant degree by the political categories and even the language set forward by the party in the early 1950s."

While audiences for films and storytelling differ in numerous ways, Yuan's "politically correct" statements, as they appear throughout the text, are certainly understood by the audience, and even appreciated if humor is involved, as in the xuetou on the birth-control policy. While Yuan occasionally invokes political themes for their use in raising a chuckle, he is also aware that he is performing in a medium that is under the scrutiny of the local cultural bureau. This fact, effects, often in subtle ways, anything that is said in performances, even the humor.

On the other hand, the storytelling contests I attended had an overtly political content, a bit at which many storytellers chafe. It was rumored that in late 1992 an attempt was made to organize a storytelling contest in honor of the Fiftieth Anniversary of Mao's Talks at Yenan. Although several gatherings of storytellers were held under the aegis of that anniversary earlier in the year, younger storytellers refused to sign up for the fall contest, in which performers would have been asked to perform pieces with overtly political themes.

I should note that on several occasions I had audience members in various story houses describe one of the functions of the storyteller as a kind of teacher or educator who related a knowledge of history and examples for living. See Tsao (1988:xii-xiv) for thoughts on the traditional role of Chinese storytellers as educators.

26. Throughout much of the 1980s, young women clad in and tights rolling balls across their limber young bodies were popular fare on Chinese television -- this being a "healthy" image of young Chinese women, and then the closest thing to erotic dancing on socialist TV.

27. Lu Xun has a short story on this theme which Lyell (Lu 1990) has translated as "The Story of Hair."
28. The film *Moshengde pengyou* (*Strange Friends*) features young hoodlums with long hair, bell bottoms, and disco playing radios. Several films of that era have scenes of older males walking in on "wild" parties and suddenly turning off the music, sometimes clutching themselves as if having chest pains.

29. Van Gulik (1961:91-93, 163, 203) stresses that while "sapphic" relations were tolerated in China, more concern was aroused over male homosexuality, despite periods of relative social acceptance throughout Chinese history. In this scene, the tension may be two-sided. On the one hand, is the possibly overt homosexuality (though men sleeping in the same bed does not necessarily connote a homosexual relationship in China) and, on the other, the fact, known to the audience but not to the characters, that Rongfa is a young woman.

30. Performers must work within prescribed limits set by the cultural bureaus. While scatological humor is common in government sanctioned media, the suggestiveness of the "three in a bed scene" would have been "unsuitable" in past decades. The scene is mild in comparison to situations, jokes, and double-entendres common in some pre-1949 stories such as *Three Smiles* and *Etched Gold Phoenix*.

31. Liu (1986:78) in a discussion of cognitive development among Chinese, claims that a dominant behavioral rule is that "Chinese are taught to respect and be obedient to their superiors under all circumstances." In traditional Confucian orthodoxy, a husband is socially superior to the wife.

32. Yang Jiang (1983) discusses the manners in which Chinese and western authors and playwrights have dealt with problems involving restrictions of association among men and women in traditional societies in writing love stories.


34. "Thousand Gold" is a rendition of *qianjin*, or "young lady worth a thousand gold pieces." This phrase was often used to refer to elite young women.

35. Bond and Huang (1986:230-231) in reviewing the literature on the recognition of emotions in Chinese culture stress that "The Chinese counsel against showing joy or sadness functions to maintain harmony by avoiding the imposition of one's feelings on others." In terms of self-esteem, while Chinese have been found to have a "lower self-concept" than Americans,
Within Chinese culture, however, it does appear that a more positive self-concept is associated with more satisfactory interpersonal relationships [236-237]. In discussing the Chinese constitution of face (both mian and lian), they note Goffman's notion of face as "an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes" in the theatrics of social interaction (244). (It is interesting that the phrase you xi chang, which occurs a number of times in the text and which I have rendered "has opera to sing," implies the act of deception). They further note that "... in the Chinese game of face, situations are different for each of those playing the game. One has to speak in the language suited to one's station and display appropriate behaviour and status symbols. It is generally believed that the image of self presented to others has a lasting impact, so one has to be very careful about one's behaviour [245]."

36. Note that, in the notes, Yuan claims to have refrained from making a joke here, which would possibly have been at Wang's expense. On other occasions I witnessed Wang anticipating such teasing by Yuan, defusing the "attack" by re-phrasing her dialogue or even cutting into what Yuan was about to say.

37. Gong's most recent project is the writing of a middle-length tanci about Tang dynasty Empress Wu Zetian, casting her as a powerful woman who has been wronged by traditional Chinese historians. Episodes of the work-in-progress were performed publically by Gong and Cai in the spring of 1992.

38. On the topic of hurting another's face, Bond and Huang (1987:247) note that "In a highly structured society, a necessary condition for an individual to function appropriately is that he or she should be sensitive to his or her relationships with those higher or lower on the social scale and be aware of the important and special resources they control. When a man wants to ask a favour from a resource allocator of some prestige, he first assesses his position relative to the allocator and the likelihood that he may be successful." Clearly, Meng Lijun has attempted to assess the nature of Su's current prestigious position and the chances of her helping in carrying out the deception. Su is also aware of this and aware of Meng's desperate need to maintain her cover. Though set in the past, the audience can certainly relate to these negotiations.

39. In passage 67, when Meng is deliberating over how to reveal herself to Su, she states, "This way, if I said it now, seems a little low." The Chinese term xialiu, which I have rendered as "lowlife," implies loose sexual conduct. This is the sort of explicit sexual comment that can seep "through the
cracks" of censorship. The themes of multiple wives, the setting of the wedding suite, and the play over who undresses first could all contribute to mild titillation.

40. Jehlen (1990:268), in her discussion of gender, analyzes Huck Finn's cross-dressing as a girl to discover information about the pursuers of Jim, thought to be behind the "murder" of Huck Finn. In assessing the advice given by the woman who tricked Huck into revealing his true gender (though not his real identity), she notes that, "As a social construction femininity has its standard parts. A girl, Judith Loftus tells Huck, can thread a needle; she spreads her lap to catch things which thus land in her skirt, and she cannot throw straight. The precision with which Mrs. Loftus describes how a girl does throw necessarily implies equal knowledge of how boys do it. She can detail femininity because she sees it as a role, which must mean that masculinity is also a role. The logic of this is that anyone who knows the rules can play, boy or girl, man or woman. For instance she has just been playing, pretending not to be able to hit the rat, thus pretending to be feminine in order to force huck to reveal his masculinity. In her criticism of Huck's feminine acting, Judith Loftus labels it just that, acting."
A. Summary

The focus of this dissertation has been on two forms of Chinese prosimetric narrative, both identified by the context-sensitive term *tanci*. Discussion, based on theories of the performance school of folkloristics, has centered on the "means of communication" in those forms of narrative and the relation of those means to context, expression, and meaning. The narratives from which the sample texts were drawn are Chen Duansheng's *Zaisheng yuan*, an example of so-called "women's *tanci,*" and Meng Lijun, an adaptation of Chen's *ZSY* in the form of Suzhou *tanci* storytelling.

This final chapter is a summary and discussion of implications inherent in observations made in each chapter relating to issues raised in the Introduction. Due to the rather wide range of inquiry and the sometimes uneven amount of source material on some subjects (in particular studies on the relations of gender and language in Chinese culture), certain claims must be tentative. An underlying concern has been the potential of the performance approach as a method in the study of both Chinese orally performed and written
narrative. I have also attempted to highlight the sophisticated nature of two distinct traditions of Chinese fictive narrative, both situated marginally in comparison to traditional novels and short stories (not to mention poetry). One form is associated with elite Jiangnan women of the late imperial period, and the other in the realm of traditional urban entertainments.

I will comment first on those concerns most basic to general questions of context, performance, and meaning, stressing the concerns of status and gender. Other subjects raised previously include the process of adaptation of stories from written to oral modes of expression, performance genres and local identity, the study of topolect, and translation. Some issues have been dealt with, if less than adequately (sometimes in the endnotes), in various chapters; those concerning Chinese narrative per se will be touched on again below. I will first review the individual chapters.

B. Review of Chapters

In the Introduction, the themes of performance, context, and meaning were raised in relation to both written and orally presented narrative. A major focus was on the "ways of speaking" in the two types of narrative sharing the name tanci: one written and the other performed -- though neither falling neatly within those categories. The
subjects of status and gender in relation to speaking was especially noted, since it is of both current scholarly interest and a natural topic given the shared theme of each episode. The subject of cross-dressing, a major motif in both narratives and of importance to the discussion of gender interaction, was addressed along with gendered speech in women's literature, in the context of Chinese literary history. Translation strategies were also discussed in relation to written and oral texts.

Chapters II and IV consist of contextual information about the respective texts. Authorship, cultural context (including readership), and textual history on ZSY were presented in Chapter II. In Chapter IV, information was presented on performers, audiences, locus of performance, and performance conventions of Suzhou tanci. Information was also given in these chapters on the textual histories of ZSY and Meng Lijun. In Chapter II, formal aspects of the communicative registers of written tanci were explored. The communicative registers of Suzhou tanci were described in Chapter IV. These chapters provided various levels of context for interpretation of the texts presented in Chapters III and V.

In Chapter III, a partial chapter from ZSY was presented in translation and interpreted in a close reading which stressed the interaction of the various "means of communication" comprising the ways of speaking in that text.
In terms of cultural meaning, the themes of status and gender were addressed in the commentary. In Chapter V, an episode from a Suzhou tanci performance was presented in a translation format that included paraphrased comments about the transcription given by the storytellers. The interpretive commentary focused on the interaction of the means of communication, with focus on meaning in terms of the play on status and gender, as in Chapter III.

C. Texts and Meaning

1. Emergence

Bauman's quality of "emergence," described in Chapter I as residing "in the interplay between communicative resources, individual competence, and the goals of the participants, within the context of particular situations" (Bauman 1977:38) is apparent in the process of adaptation of the storytellers' Meng Lijun from the ZSY text. Though theme, plot, and characters are similar, in the course of adaptation into a contemporary oral medium, the story becomes a vehicle for new meanings. Yet this vehicle is subject to constant formal modification due to the interactions between its defining components, the means of communication.¹

In the case of Meng Lijun, the continuous process of emergence is evident at every telling and in every physical (or mental) alteration of the script book. As we have seen,
some aspects of emergence are willed by the performers, who have the ability to consciously decide to tell a particular story in a particular way in a given context. Thus over time and repeated tellings, the story (including the meta-levels of inserted anecdotes, jokes, songs, and so forth) may accrue into a mass of possibilities upon which the performers can draw and add to according to creative insight, need in negotiating audience expectations, time, mental and physical states, social and political phenomena, the weather, or other conditions brought to bear on lives spent within story houses. Moreover, should the performers' script book be published, another step in the potentialities of emergence is taken, which in turn may influence the creation of other texts in other mediums.

2. Foley's "Word-Power"

The work of John Miles Foley has been touched on repeatedly in this dissertation. Here I would like to briefly discuss his evolving strategy and suggest its implications to the study of Chinese narrative, in particular oral and orally-related texts.

Dealing with issues of meaning in traditional texts, Foley has combined elements of performance theory (particularly the work of Tedlock and Hymes), oral-formulaic theory (Parry-Lord school), and Receptualism (Iser and Ong), to suggest that the meanings in a particular text (oral or
written) are context bound and that examination of the particular word units, especially those which have been thought to be merely mnemonic devices, will yield insights into the metonymic function of these units. Stressing context of tradition -- both diachronic and synchronic -- and the particular performance event, Foley has defined his concept of "word-power" (the "meaning" of a unit, or units) as the intersection of two factors: "performance as the enabling event, tradition as the enabling element." These phenomena are received within the "horizons of expectations" (using Jauss' wording) of the participants in the performance situation. Just as "suitably prepared audiences" make meaning from the metonymic elements of performance, in negotiating the "indeterminate" portions of the performance text, they fill in the gaps with knowledge gained through experiencing the cultural tradition, which includes, of course, other performances in a given traditional register. These concepts have the potential to create a new way of reading traditional texts, and should help mitigate some of the dilemmas created by imposing literary theories derived from a reading of modern Western novels onto traditional texts.

I would like to stress, however, that while the increased sensitivity to the nature of meaning potentially available in the "word-power" approach will certainly aid in enhancing comprehension between emic and etic audiences, the
gap between the nature and range of aesthetic appreciations of a "native" audience and the "outsiders" still exists, as Foley optimistically acknowledges. The search by persons outside the tradition for meanings as potentially "full" and within similar horizons as those of "suitably prepared" insiders remains elusive and difficult to assess.® Utmost among the problems is the tendency for outsiders to "fill in" the indeterminate portions with understandings that probably would not be arrived at by in-group members -- these outside interpretations being molded at some level by the observer's own cultural "horizons of expectations." Limon and Young (1986), cited in Chapter I, have discussed the "methodological paradox" which they feel is "imbedded" in the performance approach in particular -- that of the "observer's sufficient fluency in the varieties and registers of the linguistic and metalinguistic codes in which emergent folkloric acts are performed." Moreover, from Foley's perspective, it might be added that whole dimensions of tradition, from the level of the personal, to the group, to the larger society, are available (albeit problematically) to the outsider willing to do the legwork.®

3. Status and Gender

The relations between the means of communication, meaning, and context were explicitly explored in the two versions of the "Two Women Marry" scene from the respective
texts. The focus of interpretation was on the related concerns of status and gender in the creative contexts of Chinese fictional narrative. As noted in the Introduction, schemas of status and gender are constructed from available cultural resources and vary cross-culturally. In both episodes, the means of communication were utilized to help in the constructions of these schema on the level of the narrative. In real life there is also a meta-dimension to these constructions. The educated, elite women of Jiangnan could probably relate easily to the position of Meng Lijun – her social status and "culture" were close enough to their own to allow a certain degree of empathy with the heroine, both in her response (in some instances possibly coded) to social situations presented in the text and with her obvious success as a zhuangyuan, a role she carries off better than most males. In the case of the storytellers' version, the physical presence of gender-diverse dyads adopting and shifting among gendered roles in live performance and employing gendered registers of speech, song, and kinesics provide a contemporary frame for the traditional story, as the performers are known to be real, "modern," people and throughout the performance, remind the audience of that fact. One prominent way the presentation of the traditional story is contextualized in contemporary life is by the inserted narratives and other digressions of the storyteller as narrator, and sometimes as his/her "actual" self.
Larger social issues, especially those related to the changes in the social positions of Chinese women since the 1911 revolution, and especially since 1949 -- and tensions evoked by those changes -- are another frame which is explicitly and implicitly evoked by the storytellers and carried to performances by members of the audience. This is especially true when it is felt by both audience and performers that more women are present due to the theme of the story told. Thus the presence of women, in some cases, is a sort of meta-commentary on the entire performance event.

In the course of both episodes, the action moves from a concern over the identification of persons in terms of gender, to an interest in the negotiation of status. As noted, the notion of face in Chinese culture demands that such negotiations take place within certain cultural bounds -- complicated in these stories by the effects of gender roles and kinship/friendship/master-servant relations which bind the characters together on one level, but also demand that status be clearly delineated -- at least for the moment -- on another (Tannen 1993a:168-170).

Comparing the two versions, the roles of humor and inner monologues become especially prominent in the performed version, revealing an audience interest in sophisticated entertainment, yet also figuring in the didactic level of performance as noted by Abrahams (note 19
in Chapter V). In both forms of "performance," the registers of speech and song (or their representations in writing) demand that the audience possess a degree of competence for understanding and appreciating them. The oral form allows a certain latitude in the language and the register employed (such as the deletion of songs when performing in some contexts), though, in comparison to the language of contemporary mass media, knowledge of the special conventions and vocabulary of the Suzhou pingtan "ways of speaking" are required for fullest appreciation.

D. Writing and Performance

1. Means of Communication, ZSY, and Meng Lijun

This thesis has involved two versions of the ZSY story, the original women's tanci by Chen Duansheng and an adaptation of the story first written, then performed by Suzhou storytellers. Among the principles of adaptation involved are those of selection of motifs, themes, and characters, the alteration of these items to fit a current ideology, the complete revamping of language and text into a different "way of speaking" (as evidenced in the use of different means of communication). Between the two episodes (and this seems to be virtually true for the complete texts), aside from the names of the characters, there is not a single instance where even a phrase is shared verbatim. Thus, the storytellers' strategy seems to be one of complete
adaptation into the registers of professional storytelling. The storytellers are therefore not held accountable (unless they purposely place themselves in such a position to obtain some sort of rhetorical effect) to audiences for the same kind of intertextual knowledge that say a scholar might be. Veteran performer Yao Yinmei once noted in an anecdote about the adaptation of the modern novel Ti xiao yinyuan (Fate in Laughter and Tears) into Suzhou tanci that, when first performing the story, he followed a written tanci version that had been recently published. To his dismay, many patrons brought that same tanci version to the storyhouse and followed along, pointing out his various "mistakes." This situation forced him to create a wholly new text, adapted (as part of this particular process of emergence) into a different "way of speaking" -- yet one that could still be justified to knowledgeable audience members in terms of plot, and it is here that comments in the biao mode help negotiate changes. Thus, no matter what the medium, in terms of efficacy of performance and fear of accountability to audiences (and these concerns certainly vary according to situation), narratives and dramas are adapted into professional storytelling by a complex, wholesale linguistic patterning.

In terms of the means of communication, the registers of narrative ci lyrics, prose passages, and framing shi poems of Chen Duansheng's ZSY are replaced by the
specialized registers of narrator's speech, songs, and dialogue between characters in the medium of Suzhou tanci. In the oral performance, there are the added dimensions of music, kinesics (conventionalized gestures, facial and body movements), and elaborate shifts in speaking registers (including various "voices" adopted in set narrator/character roles, as well as the use of dialects and idiolects), made even more complex by the interaction between two performers. In short, as detailed in the relevant chapters, the move is from a less rich (and the term is relative) set of means of communication (including frames, registers, and keying devices) and processes of interaction of those means, to a richer, more elaborately interwoven set of means and interactions.

The nature of this particular style of scripted oral performance -- a mature, yet emergent tradition of entertainment in which stories can be memorized from written texts (as is usually the case today), yet are still subject to improvisation and elaboration while being performed -- is multi-channeled, requiring visual and auditory senses to process firsthand, aside from the imagination and intellect. Thus, in the context of the story house, the effect of the various means of performance in their own right on the limbic system -- and the constant shifting between the means -- may constitute a greater effect than that provided by
reading, and in part aids in the task of sustaining audience interest.

The written women's tanci, on the other hand, provide a different sort of enjoyment. The imagination is stimulated by writing, possibly with aid of a reader's voice, which might vary in style of expression. There is no music, or conventionalized opera registers and gestures. The level of "performance" — should the text be read aloud -- is likely to be that of the individual reader (as might be a tape-recording of Suzhou tanci to a listener) or at most a small group of friends or relatives. The role of the narrator is less intrusive, and concerns almost wholly the telling of the story at hand. Individual reading performances of such written tanci could, however, conceivably include any number or sort of comments by either the reader(s) or listeners.

In either case, the stories are subject to alteration and adaptation into other forms of expression, whether it be written tanci (especially in the form of sequels in the case of ZSY), opera, or other performance versions. In a sense, today both are written forms with oral (or potentially oral) dimensions, though in the case of Suzhou tanci, the written dimension (if one exists for a particular story) is usually not made accessible to audiences, at least while a performer is still active. 10

One area needing further investigation in the examination of these two particular narratives is that of
coding (Radner and Lanser 1993). How do instances of coding — what might be "feminist messages" in the original — fare in the course of adaptation, especially into genres in which audience members and adapters are largely male? Or in some cases (as might be guessed about by both the descriptions of hairdos and multiple births) are newly coded messages encoded into contemporary oral adaptations, acts in which performers must take into account the reigning socio-political climate?^11

2. Chinese Written Fictional Narrative

The implications on this study to the use of the frame of professional storytelling common in Chinese fiction must be limited here to the two genres discussed in this dissertation. As noted in Chapter II, concerning the women's tanci works, the various formulaic keying phrases, notably the ubiquitous huashuo and queshuo, are similar to those used in much of traditional fiction, especially that of the latter period. The use of such phrases in these written tanci brings up questions of its origins. Were such conventions adopted from oral performance, or were they appropriated from written fictional xiaoshuo? Or were there origins (possibly synchronic) in both traditions? Observing Suzhou tanci conventions offers no hint. What can be said, however, is that to some extent, the women's tanci (and I am really limiting this to ZSY) shares certain structural
conventions with other types of Chinese fictional prose. However, the frame of Hanan's "simulated context" or Idema's "storyteller's manner" is at best implicit. What seems to be more the case is that the story is framed as if being told by a particular speaker, one who reveals facts about herself within the context and process of writing. Thus, the narrator appears as a more personal construct of author in ZSY than in most other tanci, and differs in manner of intimacy from the "simulated context" found in those traditional xiaoshuo works, where a narrator does speak directly to the reader.

On the other hand, the women's tanci may be written traditions which were stimulated, or even based on particular oral traditions sometime in the course of their development. As has been noted in Chapter II, that course is unclear. The prosimetric structure, of alternating prose and verse is so common among Chinese forms of narrative (both written and orally performed) that it can hardly count as criteria for anything more than the most basic of comparisons with anything to which direct genetic relations can be established. Of possibly greater significance is the tendency which I have observed among many native persons to impute an oral dimension to these written texts. Prof. Ma Yazhong, for example, has commented offhandedly to me that certain sections of the ZSY were "sung," the implication being that in the minds of some readers (contemporary and
maybe former), the written texts may actually be processed in some sort of oral frame. More information is needed in regard to the creation and use of tanci such as ZSY, especially among those who appear to have traditionally been the most prominent users, the elite women of Jiangnan.

And what of the correspondence between the language of contemporary Suzhou tanci storytelling and that of traditional Chinese xiaoshuo prose fiction? As far as Meng Lijun is concerned, there is certainly a "storyteller's manner" (or "way of speaking"), though there are differences with the storytelling frame (if indeed that is a wholly correct attribution) in vernacular fiction. Since Suzhou tanci is a nearly unique mixture of narration, dramatic dialogue, and singing, a comparison of the speech of the respective narrators would be most practical. Though such an examination is outside the scope of this thesis (certain findings here, however, could bear on the question), the results of such a study would likely indicate that the storytelling context represented in vernacular fiction is in some ways similar to that of contemporary professional storytelling (and certainly closer to Suzhou pinghua), but has many linguistic and structural features which are dissimilar to orally performed stories. Certainly, the "traditional referentiality" of the genres is in the largest sense, similar.
More work must also be done on comparing Suzhou *tanci* performances with Wu dialect written *tanci*, such as *Zhenzhu ta*, *Miaojin feng*, and *Sanxiao yinyuan*, since the genetic links between these forms is certain (keeping in mind that the style of presentation has changed since the body of these written texts were produced in the nineteenth century). Moreover, contemporary published stories based on Suzhou *pingtan* performances should be compared to corresponding live performances, as these publications seem to fulfill some of the functions and are in other ways similar to the nineteenth century Wu dialect *tanci*. Such texts (sometimes termed *yanchuben*, or "performance scripts"), include the *Yang Naiwu yu Xiao Baicai* story, *Zhenzhu ta*, and Qin Jiwen's *ZSY*. Such studies would throw light on the present processes involved in moving from oral presentation to published writing. Such comparisons might also be useful in reconstructing the development of the parallel traditions of writing and oral presentation which has long existed between Suzhou *tanci* and Wu dialect written *tanci*.

E. Further Questions

This thesis raises a number of questions under the umbrella theory of the performance-centered approach to folkloristics. A question which is now appropriate to ask is to what extent has the use of these theories been
successful in bringing new understandings to the genres/texts in question. By using the performance-centered approach, the intricate nature of the means of communication in both forms of narrative called *tanci* have been systematically represented within a specific critical framework. The stress on context of performance and the process of performance has helped provide a clearer picture of how these forms are/were actually used in a social setting, providing certain kinds of evidence for further investigations into larger social meanings of performance events. This is particularly true for the Suzhou *tanci* version of "Two Women Marry" due to the input from audience members and performers (on both narrative and extra-narrative levels). The intricate web of shifting between the means of performance in Suzhou *tanci* -- and its rhetorical force -- has been highlighted by the present approach. In the examination of Chen's original ZSY text, a better understanding of the rhetorical devices *per se* of that medium has also been gained. In particular, focus has been trained on the nature of conversational interaction in the text, using interpretive tools developed originally for living language study.

In a recent paper written by Victor Mair and a number of his graduate students, the call was made for new approaches to the study of oral literature in China (Mair, et. al.:1990). The authors stress the relation between oral
tradition and history and the metaphorical meaning of language. While I have suggested a general historical context for written women's tanci, the present thesis has spent little space on the historical roots and precedents of the Suzhou tanci tradition, focusing on developments primarily in the last half century. Future historical studies of both traditions of tanci would be useful.\textsuperscript{15}

In a discussion of orality and literacy, the concepts of context, performance, and transmission are described by Mair (1990:7) and his associates as aspects of folklore studies that need attention. I would suggest that the performance approach underlying this dissertation — in concert with Foley's ideas of immanent art and word-power — hold tremendous promise for the study of oral performance and written corrolaries in China. Such a syncretic approach would enhance the realization of the goals of Mair and his associates, as well as facilitate discourse with scholars studying other cultural areas.\textsuperscript{16}

1. Examining the textual histories of various works of traditional Chinese literature will reveal that the notion of fixed written texts is suspect (Timothy Wong 1994; pers. comm.)

2. The observations here lend strong support to Blader's (1983) suppositions about Jin Shengbo's ability to "change" his pinghua performances at will.

3. See Honko (1990) for thoughts on the folkloric process, which includes -- in part -- collection, reduction to print, and archiving.
4. Again, I sincerely thank Prof. Foley for his gracious permission for me to utilize the manuscript *The Singer of Tales As Performance* which I have referred to at various points in this thesis.

5. Limon and Young (1986:446), in criticizing the limitations of the ethnography of speaking/performance school quote Bloch as stating that for performance analysis to "extend beyond the situated speech event to other levels of social context" would be difficult if not impossible. Recent criticism in cultural anthropology has been directed towards limitations of the ethnographic method itself and the problems of outsiders confronting the "other." See Clifford and Marcus, ed. 1986; particularly Crapanzo's article on "ethnographic subversion" (52-76).

6. It would seem that extensive co-operation between locals and competent outside researchers (which in a sense includes native researchers sensitive to the communicative needs of the outside), is vital to allowing a fuller communication of local meanings to outside audiences.

7. Limon and Young (1986:446) stress that studies of speaking must go beyond the actual event of telling to other levels of society, thus allowing performances to act as meta-commentary and enlarge our understanding of societies as wholes. On the other hand, in regards to specific speech events, wider social knowledge is needed for interpretation.


9. Foley, in his forthcoming *The Singer of Tales As Performance*, congenially employs the phrase "dedicated register" (in the sense of computers devoted to a particular task) to describe the linguistic medium in a particular style of oral narrative.

10. In light of the both the complexity of orally performed *tanci* and the tendency the limited means of communication available in writing -- regardless of written genre -- Hodes' (1991:266-268) claims about simpler forms of written Wu dialect *tanci* (which usually concern themes popular among 19th century performers and in some cases may have been written by or with the aid of performers) being closer to oral performance that the more complex styles may not be a reflection of the nature of oral performance, especially in the case of Suzhou *tanci*. Other factors may be at play. Simpler versions could be that way because of the requirements of editors, or because the version was not made with the aid of a storyteller. Moreover, a version written by a storyteller (or with his/her input) might be considerably
richer than one "transcribed" from actual performance, an act that in some cases might even involve "stealing" stories, because the author could avail himself of all the variations stored in the mind.

11. Again, the use of inserted narratives is important for the encoding of new messages. However, they are easily left out in both oral and written texts (adaptations).

12. This tendency to link the written fiction with storytelling traditions is probably best exemplified by Lu Xun's ideas about huaben being storytellers' promptbooks (Lu 1959). On the other hand, Chen (1982:1) herself explicitly frames the ZSY text as being written and expresses the difficulty in rendering feelings into verse.

13. Hodes (1991:268), if I am interpreting her remarks correctly, feels that there is nothing to gain in comparing modern performed Suzhou tanci with Wu dialect written tanci. I would prefer to look for tendencies in development in both genres over a period of time dating from the latter 18th century up to modern times, including printed versions of stories told by professionals, such as Qin Jiwen's ZSY.


15. To my knowledge Carleton Benson is writing a thesis on the social implication of Suzhou tanci in Shanghai of the 1930s. Zhou (1983) would be a good starting point for sources on pre-twentieth century Suzhou tanci.

16. Studies covering as vast a geo-cultural range as Mair's Painting and Performance (1988) could be coordinated by scholars working within a common discourse of performance. See Bender's (forthcoming) article on Kunming pingshu for suggestions on use of the performance approach for describing styles of Chinese oral performance on a national scale.
APPENDIX A

HOU ZHI'S "PREFACE," CHINESE ORIGINAL

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诗以言情，史以记事。至野史弹词，或代前人补恨，或惩往事无传。虽俚俗之俚词，付之梨而并寿。余幼弄柔翰，敢夸柳絮迎风，近抱采薪，不欲笔花逞艳。是以十年来，抛置章句，专改鼓词。花样新翻，只恐词难达意，机丝巧织，未免手不从心。近改四种，《锦上花》业已梓行。若《再生缘》，传抄数十载，尚无镌本。因借作者苦思，删繁撮要。觉此书大旨专为皇甫少华及孟丽君两人而作。若不与以忠孝节义之名，政事文章之品，不足以高其身价，令阅者刮目相看。盖流离颠沛，权改男装；富贵显荣，应修妇职。乃功既付乎一品，位已驾乎百僚。金石盟心，松筠守介。荷九重之恩宠，不易清操，任两姓之怀思，终持亮节。机关既破，面目难遮。以始章以终章，成今世之美眷。可以卒可也，了前史之良缘。叙事言情，俱归礼德；书非戏文，不尽荒唐。虽闺阁名媛，可堪寓目。市廛贾客，亦可留情。昔人有以《玉钏缘》致于作序，曾酿数言于简末。至兹编又非其笔可比，故改而付梓，不没作者之意。未识阅中人以为然否？

道光丙年秋上浣日书
香叶间主人稿

(Chen 1982:23)
APPENDIX B

ZSY EXCERPT, CHINESE ORIGINAL
诗曰：金陵乐思点状元，少年高枝占风流。
未得荣枝临错境，先去委宛接彩球。
意气飞扬成佳配，无缘续玉锁相思。
欲说故人惊相识，不该深情说旧话。

话说当下吉时已到，众亲友俱皆入内房。顷刻间，大厅上高彩夺目，新人出堂参拜天地。
仙乐飘扬凤吹响，两个喜娘扶翠袖，红毡并立绣罗地。参天拜地
公话应方为礼，喜娘们，相请夫人入庙。但见那，夫人缓步出华堂，梁相同翠袖一双。年少夫妻同下拜，鸾角描祥彩绸络。
荣公夫妇从荣，看了看，敬才郎喜气扬。如此一双方与庙，
自和顺不相量。当时出庙齐呼免，长老诸之在将。风笛鸾笙
声细细，雾时相送入新房。状元步入礼待，一得红罗露面纱。
绣楼低垂细品，半边粉面燃香。状元一见心惊骇。将似我，何
处曾记这女娘？端前赴上真面善，为什，一时忘却那红妆。有
眼不识金箍者，只得坐身欲坐床。合卺交杯排御宴。梁小姐，微
回凤眼相新郎。分明竟是本生缘，有相合，一朵桃花锦环旁。
不觉芳心惊又喜，满腔只顾诉情怀。交杯已毕新郎出，女眷纷纷入
洞房。谈笑多时方出外，内厅坐席饮琼浆。外边已换群花布，坐
席里坐惊大堂。不表前厅欢长事，且说小姐在香房。罗帷深处暗暗坐，
双龙绣福来作长。四个丫环并侍立，忽听那，碧纱窗外乱喧
忙。可当好似夜行风，指地还如故放妾。内有一人声急至，连忙
唤进那边房。我们新 进 元分已，须问何中众大娘。小姐一闻如
此语，芳心惊动暗思量。

呵呵奇哉！这是柴兰的口气呀，莫非真正是他们了？
如若柴兰是此人，状元必定重千金。芳心正想带绣阳，仆妇前来
第一声。

小姐呀！官房的长随周升连吉并书童荣发都在道前请安听见，
还问姑娘的行李在那房屋中，求小姐吩咐。
素华小姐听其言，心内惊疑又叹惋。口鼻气来名又象，分明来发
是柴兰。今时此情无复感，必定千金中状元。小姐其时心更酸，娇
盖慢卷出房。改朝再见今朝先，收拾衣存对面房。仆妇应声传出来，
吩咐送进右边房。事完方始齐出。素华，专待相留诉别言。
不表周房荣小姐，要表外面陈银星，银怀弄齿多欢悦。陈银尚书
赐士元，自领新郎情且恳。心扉爱女役前程。老夫不及翼思相，你若
作，得见风流薛状元。可我我，射御夺标曾许配，那郎君，何曾
不是个美人，谁知好事多磨难。一遭风破不复全。更居怕居刘家外，也冤得，是言就成好儿男。谁知新笑心性，易得私逃在外边，须也再无女亦失时，孟台士，有何心难拜郎君。今朝却未生亲家，好教我，见景生情旧檀心，新愁步公心惨切，待将不单少欢容。状元偷看严亲面，见尚书，俊强之容意不安。不觉悲心如破裂，冤前好似坐针毡。泪将垂下变低面，情欲伤时更正远，不敢露于面色上，也只得，回头却又向人间话。少停换席齐闲步。孟郎书，先就相拜上轿还。焚香敬敬相送出，大家依旧举华筵。黄昏时候方才散，笑言纷纷亦渐散。清姬一齐在内房。夫人进人后中堂。状元移下金交椅，坐在明堂西半边。侍女上前喜春盘，垂帘宽坐是密谈。远隔帘幕叮当响，烛影摇摇进帘帘。却是千金未定否，俨然冠冕请平安。张公夫妇齐称恳，小姐相辞肯再还。景氏夫人唤醒春，照吩咐，出厅安歇洞房中。侍儿笑拥罗裳裙，玉手拾身正起跃。深谋作计相辞去，竟到香房秘室中。侍女到门齐退出。状元缓步入帘帘。外房原是妆妆室，竟到香房秘室中。但见那，洞房锦被似仙乡，宝帐高烧近翠厨，隐隐芙蓉遮琐琐，轻轻罗幕映牙床。绣帐深垂看春色，惟见那，侍婢垂眉立两行。君玉迟迟归侍坐，呼环剪烛取新芳。侍儿已泣是春客，解明妆，玉手擎杯低且重。今日洞房花烛夜，忽然安置这红妆。她若是个贤良女，还可以，指故相托管同床，景氏含情情意别，真真是倒卧明堂。红颊一对春相合，怎么得。想却芝田一家郎。昔日呼云和谢女，不知她，莘香挽玉要何方？今朝令我无良事，不知那意气何从？君玉暗思心内急，愁颜微皱翠眉长。香指欲伸还密坐，只见那，堆堆灯花照洞房。侍女低头生倦态，二鼓更深打的长。状元只得起身去，剪烛开帘喜薰娘。夜已深来你何病，你自去去归房。丫环答应方才退，解状元，闭上朱扉入洞房。

话说解明堂闲好房门。就移了一段窗前的烛火。步入绣楼中来。

只见千金架紫华，花容低首似含羞，微带春色展眉黛，淡照红妆一叚新。半揭纱帘娇色多，丝窗新旧风细数。芳容艳丽真堪爱，妙颜风流实可夸。君玉一见心甚骇，执烛呆立暗惊疑。

呵呵奇哉！我说十分面善，却原来是郭春兰娘。

可怪梁家小姐容，竟如黄莺一般同。天长日久为夫妇，好叫我也思念春娘在房。可叹佳人涉风流，今朝忽见芳容面，寸断柔肠情刻中。

咦，我想梁老师也是云南人氏，莫非铁骨投身，被他收留在此？
虽然如此不堪，仍是梁家相府人。他若果然选择雪，投他岂可又重婚？我此刻便难释。反弄不得，假装之情也要明。君王暗思故宴定，待风一油近新人。方拾袖袖挽衣巾，便往言词低唤他。

小姐温身难答应，芳心不定意难违。恐其果是真男子，不辱身时也自知。滴酒离席难忍，忙开绣口吐香声。

“可听状状！”旋者你不是盛广人氏，声音口气竟类云南。乞将肺腑之情，一一向奴言说。

云南口气未为奇，美艳丰姿世上稀。奴料你，不是男来便是女，因此上，行文言辞自应。快将肺腑言情事，一一从头向我摆。如若状状还抵赖，告知父母拒狐疑。豪言却尔显我色，郎状状，意乱心慌非他。玉面通红眸惨恨，芳心已乱意迷茫。自知容若娇羞，隔不过，或故暂时使眼观。且是用言遮饰去，她如不留再求伊。状状暗把泪双垂，按定容颜转绣衣。

“可听夫人言，何出此言？”

下官本是微才，幸蒙岳父拔来，连仇元身及第，现今供职立功。下官若是尊师女，于怎敢，赘入堂堂相府来？何故夫人思至此，竟将新婚当狐疑。这元言色藐藐然，梁小姐，眉面微红自来采。再攀星眸一瞥，分明小姐断无猜。芳心一度抢起身，欲启朱唇把口开。

状状呵，你不明言么？将小妾等说了罢。哎，那状状呀状状元，听我言来。

只因新嫁你成婚，守节逃方作远行。遇见康公收义子，仗才华，三元连中入朝堂。侍奉道是真名姓，你本是：闻说云南孟丽君，小姐之言犹未尽，吓坏了，多才学得词词林。桃花两颊登时热，柳叶双眉映彩霞。惊骇之中心忽忽，这佳人，定然映雪又重生。

“可听是耶？”快将她语译说，唤她独步成风？

寻常不是一妇人，彼何如斯仔细行。况且反故人不识，岂有，梁家倒似甚寂寞。新人必是苏家女，我就明白也不妨。君王想完重绘后，按惊惶，手携翠袖道别详。

“呵，梁小姐呀梁小姐，你道不识我么？也道你温柔。

朝廷令下旨刘门，孟氏私逃你举婚。要与于金留名节，竟妆偏冷赴幽欢。梁家收作媒婚女，又得全身在帝京。此日有花花又笑，反来孤负好清官。即知有雪苏家女，幸是云南孟丽君。梁氏素华闻此语，又含又喜又伤心。奉劝微此红袍袖，惨惨凄凄叫一声。

“可听状状呀！”

如今不必用含情，奴认清君认奴，可视阿意何相送。上天怜念重逢面，诉诉离情寄著何。自古隔隔有耳，还当悄然勿高呼。
我因早年婚姻，不肯从末世幽室。手执其毫留别念，男装假扮
出家为。因思金陵还风俗，故将君。承欢父母前，何意汝娘
心不顺，终年怒，竟弃一命赴清泉。在里忽得闻笛声，很哀我，
断送芳容一旦抛。道今生是末语，清之日诉离情。不知尽意
因何故，懒却了，老母孤身赴九泉。今日重逢半万幸，应将辞赋
道真言。伏元说到伤心处，止不住，痛如珠泪几层。小语闻言
欲欲哭，悲声呜咽落花前。思君去后伤心处，好把哀肠细读。
意正合悲方并坐，聚豪华，娇羞谁在说誓言。

千金可换

今朝见面好伤心，尽吐冤屈向尔云。一自夺宫境新奔，病倦不
妨神。谁知是夜分奇事，花下相逢缔盟。既在南柯留一宿，
愿甘守节不复望。他年水沉将事事，苏映雪，同归至府门。
不料忽然遭惨祸，父台被陷全家破。钦差相为谋议，小女全
身着黄衣。故首立心原不背，怎禁得，主人相救母亲。当时应允
归刘氏，暗自兴刀送春门。本想刺刘国舅，且凡怕，刘映 cine
主人生。因而辱骂家此等，也罢我。不射千金一世名。邵昭监读
人不救，忽然问。神风惩向贵州城。非云非雾身飘雪，落在沙滩
又转身。夫幸官船使继母，求夫人。向明有此情归处，荷薰修
从密，一路破带是回。问得说，至男交街从此过。况且是，
于帊亲见象才人，彩楼已接奴方晓。思君无心再丧身，是日见奴
成一梦。空中神语对奴说。

千金可换，奴音非梦受神言，怎肯生今于今日？神人说：
真个痛怅误良辰，即日妆台共故人。凤夜烟霞终会合，三番花烛
始为真。言穷既自云云出。梦醒罗帐事更妙。奴方识，得合华
公子面，因此上，皆将使命常作人。后或期礼交环物，方认得，
半是已中小客。想及到楼曾暗面，仪容原如在千金。况是皆有
妆妆色，拟定了，是必是金改妆人。故此暂停三寸气，今夜是，
果然得诉千万情。可怜多少伤心事，忍于怀不得明。此夕重逢
君小姐，真正是，三生有幸万般好。奴家来前分明说，小姐真情
也请云。一出家中何处言？何为也，恋公承欢作暖语？伏元说罢
情由事，悲欢如雨演又零，玉玉长衣映映峭。问得你，这般性情
这般便。梦中偶遇无凭据，竟是推身守此盟。你若在家曾告我，
于当背，亦得令你誓成婚。不亏天无神明故，竟是奴，选送三贞
九烈人。可叹可惊可喜，世间烈女数此君。愿足愿，少华有个
升显日，报一报，映雪生平苦寒恩。皇甫乡君如不遇，辜负了，
罗魂相记按番留。若然不死还须命，可想那，梦里良缘也得成。

咳，映雪姐呀！
问我这水边后，从头至尾向君言。素兰女仆同乔扮，将晓之日
出了园。君玉有文思姓郭。书童来发同素兰。一双叔侄登此路，
夜夜奔驰不得安。素兰只因身碌碌，赶到了，贵州地方病魔逃。
露降云诡行动，于只得，亲自开方与药敬。不但书童身染病。
又连着，惊悟乔雨是何人。可怜顾问杨梅店，遇见了，湖广咸宁
康芸山。名唤信仁珠宝客，亦因雨阻在途间。扣门数询问谈论。

见我孤身意却怜。欲继继依为父子。同行不落路途艰。愁中得道
仁人爱，只是从权拜敬前，正在店房称继父，次日天晴便整。
相问一直同商广，继父家中得天安。孙氏亦君生一女，黄氏名字
尚年青。其夫入政官员官，官府司银换脱。员外唐公家富贵，
还有郭，柔娘杜姐两房。元郎幼小柔娘育，一家中，也算调和
和也安然。我在他家为义子，唐公厚待郭姐。出银就替吾捐监，
做得好，乡试中夺解元。继母多疑又不悦，常省得，老山继父
甚怜他。柔娘杜姐梁关切，补孔坯衣送寒衣。身在异乡无照应，
托顾员，两条青帝不孤寒。乡中后于进士，难得他，也似亲戚
一样看。今与姑娘同会试，恩师，一时提拔上云梯。彩楼独坐
为亲亲，我还愁，花烛成亲要费周。不意洞房催妆面，将及来
天公偕合便姻缘。历来虽左经旁征，至美也，得保贞良也流年。
但得能遇显皇，求朝廷，归宗复族再团圆。爹娘继女为千金，
就是同胞姐妹般。背后韶同亲手几。人前仍作假姻缘。做一对，
举案齐眉娇白鸟。也教我，继父与姑娘喜欢。到后来，皇甫郎君
加得强，欲合你，同去同归不异端。慢道闺房分隔离，自当姐妹
作齐眉。今朝并尽欢肠事，永守素约过几年。君玉说完话伤心。
纷纷来新落花颜。素兰小姐知心气。含羞连饮不敢当，千金可，
今日妖穴在相门，昔年妖仆分当逃。后来有辛依依饮，敢与千金
一体饮。小姐十分怜念我，称呼不可论年庚。千金为奴奴为妹，
只以为，晚来尽朝长数句。映雪自当依旧礼，听不数，妄尊自大
并千金。万万悲惧起捉起，喜只喜，今日何缘见故人。小姐说完
收了酒，明镜台，一闻此语忽然惊。可寄语内背朝身，这句言词
结织女。此刻台娘言正合，分明天意成先闻。状元不觉心悲喜，
并带佳语诉酬情。早见灯花留半签，已闻点破在三更。双双方始
得起身，对酒围衣入绣房。君玉含欢低话语，芳即将假当为真。
下官本是真男子，谁晓何人唤丽君。在诗已探按歌唱，即即与我
快成亲。素兰小姐盖欢笑，低说千金莫伤人。言还相挽入愁，
横样东仰卧兰.perm同睡屡枕，好似莲花并蒂生。说道回更方始
倦，梦中犹似许情事。迟眠犹觉春宵短，起来时，晓日含妆
映曙光。夫妻恋妆梳晓罢，一齐缓步出房门。

(Chen 1982:226-233)
APPENDIX C

SUZHOU DIALECT TRANSCRIPTION OF
"TWO WOMEN MARRY" (SUZHOU TANCI VERSION)
This transcription is based on a performance of "Shuang nu cheng qin" ("Two Women Marry"), an episode in the Pan/Gong/Yuan lineage of the Meng Lijun story. In some script book versions, the episode is entitled "Shuang mei cheng qin" ("Two Beauties Marry").

The present text is the latter half (after the xiao luohui, or break) of the performance given on December 9th, 1991 in the Guangyu Story House, Suzhou by Yuan Xiaoliang and Wang Jin. The audio-tape was transcribed by Zhu Wenjiang and Sun Yin, graduate students at Suzhou University, into Wu dialect characters, which were in turn transcribed into a Suzhou dialect romanization created by linguist Shi Rujie (Chinese Department, Suzhou University), based in part on earlier systems invented by western missionaries. This is the first instance in which this system has been used in a scholarly document outside of China. The transcription of the performance in Shi's system is given below in its entirety. A key to pronunciation in Shi's system, with comparable International Phonetic Alphabet symbols also appears below. A simplified tonal register chart is also included. The only additions to the transcriptions are notations indicating the categories of Yuan and Wang's roles as storytellers, punctuation, and the indentation of the sung passages. The numbers correspond to sections of the translation in Chapter V, which can be
compared with the following text in terms of the story and divisions of the various registers of tanci. After the initial transcription was made, the text was checked by the storytellers, resulting in a few minor changes, mostly in the understanding of individual written characters with shared pronunciations. Instances of marking with ellipses (...) indicates loss of material in the recording process. In two instances (noted in parentheses) the transcribers have assigned short passages of dialogue to both performers -- in the English translation (after clarification by the performers), these passages are assigned to individual performers. These passages are not a perfect representation of the performance since the transcribers had a difficult time following these parts from the tape. This was due to the very fast pace at which the performers spoke and exchanged roles in these passages, sometimes breaking into each other's speech. Any mistakes in typing the romanization herein are the final responsibility of this researcher.

Key to Pronunciation of Shi RuJie's Suzhou Dialect

Romanization with Corresponding IPA Symbols:

Initials:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{b} & \quad \text{[p]} & \quad \text{p} & \quad \text{[p']} & \quad \text{bh} & \quad \text{[b]} & \quad \text{m} & \quad \text{[m]} & \quad \text{f} & \quad \text{[f]} & \quad \text{v} & \quad \text{[v]} \\
\text{d} & \quad \text{[t]} & \quad \text{t} & \quad \text{[t']} & \quad \text{dh} & \quad \text{[d]} & \quad \text{n} & \quad \text{[n/n]} & \quad \text{l} & \quad \text{[l]} \\
\text{z} & \quad \text{[ts]} & \quad \text{c} & \quad \text{[ts']} & \quad \text{s} & \quad \text{[s]} & \quad \text{r} & \quad \text{[z]} \\
\end{align*}
\]
Tonal Registers in Shi Rujie's System and IPA:

1 = 44, 2 = 23, 3 = 52, 4 = 31, 5 = 412, 6 = 31 (same as above), 7 = 5, 8 = 23
1. (Yuan) Jiaesra5 lianggadhou2 ikdan3 zraemi1, Seu Insik1 rebhie2 nakhan3 hhak sianfekdae5 ngezinmenriegek2 bhanyou2 juroel uedek5 rou2 guezong1 mikyou3 Man Lijun2. Seu-i5 liehholegek2 sryl, ikgek lek minli2, ikgek lek oeli5, iae5 dheudheu jiae2 nae-ikfe6. Bekgeu5, sryl srekdae5 gedak1, laetinzong2 keunen1 gokrrauk yougek6 midoe2, gokrrauk sarektong. Sramekr5? Lianggek6 nin2 sianneuzryjiel dhaga2 ijin1 koejie1, Man Lijun2 ninfekcreklegek6 nioe-in2, ngeu6 rrangboewe2 sryl, ganggang1 ijin1 srekbek dhaga2 tinlekl, gekmek Seu Insik1 nakhan3 uedek5 ikkoe5 rou-uedek2 nincrekle6 li r1 Man Lijunne2?

2. (Wang) Inwei Seu Insik1 de5 man lijun2 siaezia5 noezanggek2 inrian5 jhik sren1 jhiksren3, Man Lijun2 siaezia5 nyube6 noezang2, hher2 li1 denlekl bielangxian1 crekmou1 xie5cauk. Siaezia5 zaukz3 noenin2 irang1, namek2 Seu geunian1 guezrae li1 zou lianbhu3 beklek li koekoe5, ak-iok, ghezong yanz2 zou3leu6 feklergek2, jiaukbhumek2 iae5 fang5 dheudie6, noeninga fekbi3 geuniang gaz1, iae5 fangdekkedie5. Ak-iok, siaezia5, ne6 iae1 feknengou1 rekghan niulekniugek3, ikniuzlek1, marang1 niannianqian2 geunianqian1 iae5 nocreklegek2. Nanmek2 we-iae2 kankan1 bhekdu, we-iae2 z-sroel qinyae1. Seu geunian1 denlekl bielangxian1 wandiebok2, rrydiebok2, ghekgek inrian5 sren1 jhik. Hhelci6, Seu geunian1 seroe1 r-ga2 zeuz5 sianguek5
ciejin1, dher3 bikjin1 dak Man Lijun2 siaezia5 rongsiae2 ikdae2 zandheu3, jiae5 guezrong1 mikyou3, goerin5 firrangzryl hae3, ikjin1 leklang3 qieji1 siaezia5, ikjin1 leklang3 well6 desin1. Nanmek2 zrenzren1 jiae5 roli2 s1, well6 sian3, kunmongdhouli1 we-iae2 sianrrauk5 siaezia5. Seu-i5 ne6 siaezia5 ikdae li5 ngezinmenrie2, siankauk zrekyoul boenieya5, jierrek5 feksiansin1 r-ga2 lianzrauk6 ngezin2, sragek5 rrangnioelang ya2, guezrong1 mikyou3 Man Lijunwek2. Hhe, yeregek2 Seu geunian1 degek5 siaezia5 jir1 bhevok2, your6 youdie6 ma-ou2. Bhevokr2 bhevok2, siaezia5 fekjiede5, rrong6 ikgek bauk-i zyrren1 ikbang3 hhelwe6 dhangdhang6 rrangnioegong2, hhelci6 jinzrael dez3 dheudeklek6 cauktiel, sianful zraeze1, fekyongyi1. Ma- ioedie2 sra5? Ngeu6 you seumaukgekwek2, ne6 irranz1 r-ga2 congmin1, irran r-ga2 you6 reyok2, irran1 r-ga2 r6 yunnoe2 renyu2, nanmek2 jinzrael sian3 le2 qiqi ngeu1, qiqi1 ngeugek6 fekcrek guemen1, ringguedhaeu2, poneweringgek1 sianguel5 ciejin1. Siaezia5, mbek2 rekghan3 jiede5, mbek2 rekghan3 bhiedanggek2. Ngeu6 ijin1 koecerkleze5, ne6 leklang3 minli2, ne6 lek ngeu6 men-rie2 iae5 crang5 sragek5 xi5, ngeu6 denxik3 iae5 haehae jiae5 zoklong nelek3, sratimek5, ngeugek6 yanian2 rrekre3 huoexi ngeu1, koezrongdek1 ne6 fekdekliae6, none2 pongdaez3 tielangxianqil. Ne6 no ngeugek2 yanian2 moedek2 mekfektong fongmek1, moedek2 hae3 keu3, ngeu6 jinzrael iae5 we6 lidok1 crek-ikkou3 qis, fouzex1, tekye1 defekqu1 lidozek ya1.
Nanmek2 nakhan3, ngezinmenrie2 feknengou1 nian6 lil yere2 rou6 jik, yere2 rou6 jikzya1, lil s-sianlangxian1 iae5 you6 zrenbhegek3, yere2 iae5 mobhi li2, nian li2 dhin-ikdhin6 sin1. Seu geuniangekl zeugong r1, hhakr3 craecraeden1, dhekdhek den, seu-i5 siandae3 gedak1, zangdeklek1 rrankvujhir3, dezrenz lil dhoule2 die-ikdie1.

3. (Yuan) Hha? R-ga2 cesian1 rrekdhou3 linguang2. Liangadhou2 dhaga2 ngeusian2 leklang3 miae3, daer1 mokguang3 ikzikcok, ghedkwel sianguek5 ciejin1 lian seuhho2 zrydhong5 siel de ngeu5 dhou2 diedie1, ok-iok, ghekr1 jinzrael you6 xi crangze5.

Na3 Lijun2,
iki5e lok rrang6 xiong1;
jie5 ciejin1,
iki5 kue-i rrang6 mefong2,
srae1 dhindhin2,
leuteu2 zrenrin1 dhin6 keu3 le2 dek kuoeyong1.
siaezi a5,
zek-iae5 ni1 jiavongxuwang5 genioe1 we6,
re6 na3 rrenrie2 rebai2 fuci1 crong1,
engeu ikgue1 tong1 rongc2 keu3 bekgue1 tong1.
Sian3 ngeu1 r6,
rrang6 cinyun1,
bekpai you6 cierrerong1 zeu3.
Na3 dhabhen2 zrecr5 jia5 cinfong1,
den5 keu-i5 veuyae2 rererrang3 biksiaegong1,
ta1 siandae3 jhiji6 sinhual fang5,
piaerroe-dek1 siaeyongyong1,
hhenbuknen6 fangren5 dhasiae6 lokyongyong3.
Seu-i5, siandae3 gedak1 yuesian3 yuek kesin1. Ghekmek
nakhan3, ne6 dak ngeu6 diedie1 dhou2, ok-iok, ggekr1 ngeu6
hhak-iael longdie6 hogong1 bek ligek1, de5, seu-i5 hhak1
dezren li1 ngezin2 saksak, dhou2 diedie1, in-inrro5: Ue3,
siaezia5, denxik3 iae5 bangbang1 manka2, bangbang1 mangka2.

4. (Wang) Ak-iok, siaezia5, ne6 ghekzrong1
youqiangwakdhaegek2 qiangdhae1 jir3 hhokdekleggjia, ngeu6
zren jiae1 xiaedek5 ne6 r-gek6 geunianwek1, rrygeu2 ngeu6
monglek2 geulixian5, fekxiaedek5 ne6 r-gek6 geunian1, tang5
ne6 r-gek6 noenin2 srekfak, ne6 reghan1 guoe3 mitang2, ngeu6
zrengek1 iae5 bekne1 guoehuentegkewek5. Koeqilemek5, ngeu6
denxik3 daknel haesranglian5.

Ne6 koe6 ta1 rran6 fonglou1
ma6 ciae5 zren1 veule6,
fenmin r1 zaeyou3 zranren1 reyu6 xiong1,
ni1 iew5 seu3 zrerroe5 uen-uen5 peu5 raegong2,
keu3 zryxiae1 ngeu1 zrygeklian1 nioebknioe6 zia5
dongfong1,
ni1 rouli2 jhiekuen2 ngeu1 rie6 kepeu1,
ni1 r-geu6 nin-iang2 ciandhou1 lak-ian3 fong1,
ni1 rin6 fonglou1,
ngeul qi-ue3 dhongyu6 zrong1.
Denr5 ngeul jiazok5 crynge1 jiazok5 bhen6,
hae3 nian6 ta1 rer2 dek-i5 rer2 song1,
sraedhindhin1,
lokoran3 rrenrin2 dhngvangli2,
engeul iae5 ni1 tek xioe1 leucrek6 souhha1 gong1,
zrek rou6 jiae5 siele1 hheuroe2 mele2 xiong1.
Ta1 dil dhou2 zrangzok1 hhesou2 te5,
na3 Seu geunian1 ieyoul haezeugong5.
N6 jinzrael zeugong1 rekghan3 haefakz3,
engeu6 rikde3 fekhae3 srybekleknel,
seu-i5 siandae3 gedakmek1, yousin2 ze1 dhiedhie1li2,
dezrenzlil midhou2 ikyab1, siaezry5 ikx1, "geklek" iksiae5.

5. (Yuan) Ok-iok, de ngeulek5 siae5, de ngeulek5 siaezek-uek5, ghekgek sian-guek5 ciejin1 ngeudakli6 rekdhou3 you6 yoevengek2, jiho3 srek liez2, ngeulang6 de li5 koemek5,
dhou2 diediel, ngeu6 de li5 ngezin2 saksakmek, lii hhak de ngeu5 zrybo5 huahual, "geklek" iksiae5, ghekrl jinzrael fekngejin1, rekghan3 koeqilemek5, ngeu6 denxik3 daknel haesranglian5.

6. (Wang) Haesranglian5? Denxikmek3 bek ngesek2 bek ne1 koe5, iae5 srounel guedhou1.
7. (Yuan) Liangadhou2 koelekoeqimek5 jiae5 ismek1 jiae5 dheulianyanlekhe2, qikdael amoyan5, dhoeyuoe-iave2 cofangfekdeu1, bielangxian1 odhou1 nianyi2 iaejin1 geule1, dhelangxian2 uoekugasan5 ikyan-ikyan1 shouzokke1.

8. (Wang) Yi2, singeuya1 sinniannian1, rrenguangmek2 cofekdeuze1, ak-iae5 q15 bajie5 e1lae2 srangcinbhai?

9. (Yuan) Degek5, qikgeu1 dhoeyuoe-iave2, dae5 hhoudhou2 bageu5 srangcin1, cingeu3 ia-oe1 zry1 hhou6, marrang1 rour2 dhongvang2 hozrok1. Dak-in-iksran1, iaejin1 likqi3 srenle1, zraeheuli-iksran1: "Io3, nianz2!"

10. (Wang) Ggek zran1 bhi2 hhoudekle6 z-zoe1 z-hhak1 z-fekzingek1, jiae-ngeu5 nianz2, ne6 r-ga2 hhakr3 nianz ya. Fekqi1 celi3.

11. (Yuan) Nakhan3 herrangqi5 fekxianni3? 03, dege5, ghegek hhakr gueju1, leklang3 ngadhourennunguang2 yere2 ngeu6 hae kesranbo1 kou3, dher2 sinnianz1 hhe2 feknengou1 gangzran5, iae5 dae5 srarrenguag5? Sinvangelixian1 vangmen2 guejinz, ghekrrenguang1 hae3 ke1 koulek3, tangs5 yere2 denlek1 gnadhou2, sinnianz1 guakdangguakdang1 siekekou1, feklinge. Jiae5 c-jidhi1, iae5 cokmedhougek1. Ghemek nakhan3, ngeule6 cinlizekuek3, "Io3, nianz2, r-guangbokzrae3, ngeumen1
daedek5 libie2, yu3 yokveu3 yokmeu3 cin3 equ1, ni1 koe5 ke3 hae3?"

12. (Wang) N ... 

13. (Yuan) Dong3 gueju1 you6 limae6, kou3 feknengou1 ke1, vivi2 die-ikdie1 dhou2. N, dak-inle1, ghemek5 mehae1, nammek2 likqi3 srenle1, odhou1, bhoenian2, kauknin1 denden3 honglaez1, "waklaklaklak," ikeulelangxian1 mangzren2 lixian2 zingi1. Ikdhoul bhae2, ghekdie1 odhou xinian5 dhaga2 lek koe ya5, liangadhoumek2 zrengekq1 tiesan1 ikde5, siaezia5 sinnianzmek1 hoesoudakdak2, dhou2 rrendae2, miekong2 xioexioe1 hhong2. Ya3, jiaesra5 ghegek sinkeu1 lirrangnioe2 daedi1 hhokven3 hae3, ghekgek nin2 ak-iae5 cretang5, ikmie3 bhae2, e1ci6 siaexixi1 dhou2 ikrrek bhekgeuqi3 deli5 koe5, koekoemek5 hhelek2 diedhoudeknae1, welek2 "n,n,n,o,o,o" n, crektanggek5, crektanggek5. Fekxiaedeklek5, ndok6 zrenhhak1 fekxiaedek5 Man Lijun2 lek zroe5 sragek5 niedhou2, ikmie3 bhae2, ikmie3 zou3, ikmie3 leklang3 koe5, sian3, sian3 siaezia-a5, ghekszal1 r-ti2 zreknengou1 cinne3 bang1man2, denxik3 dhongvang2 hozok-ia1 reghan1 wexiegek2 dangkoul nengou2 bang ngeu1 oero1 dheugeu2, ghekmek ngeu6 liehhole2 honghong liklik1 goe3 ikfe1 r-ti, ngeu6 zonggue1 fek-uedek5 mangjitek2, ngeu6 ikdhin1 iae5 baedak negek6 enrin1. Li1 yanyan2 youlek6, singuek5 ciejin1, dhiaejhie2 yik hae3,
bekne1 jinnin1 rebae1, genben1 fekrehheucl. Rekghan1, ngeu6 r6 nyuninga. Gabekne, negek6 zrongsren1 degokteklek1, ghekrrenguang1 siaezia5 geunianga1 vi-ik2 rour2 zrongsren1 you6 kae5, ghekmek, ngeu6 yere2 iae5 zeugek5 r-ti2 rour2 wangfu2 moemen2 zraesik1 rren-ioe2, wez6 ngeu6 guoeren1 wanfu2 sraehho5. Ghekmek ngeughekgek6 siaeguoenin5 jiae5 vezrong2 tiae1 ik, fekzry1 ak gedekcrek5 reghan3 haegek3 ikgek nin2. Ngeu6 hhakr3 firran1 crensinmoe-i1, iouzrael ikrrek ngeu6 guekou1 geutek5, zianle1 hae3 bhinbhu2 cinyun1, moemen2 zraesik1 rrenyuo2, siaeguoenin5 rinrраu2k2 zry1 hhou6, ghekmek nan6? Dhoeloe2 hozrok1, ngeu6 rou6 sian3 bhefak2 hhak nianne2 gabeklek5 Wangfu2 Sraehho5, ni6 liannyu6 dhongr2 qiklikdek fekdek liaelek6, hhaesae2 qiu5 xiusik. Reghan3, jinzrael kunshhoqi5, ikfu1, rekghan3 le2 baedakne5, tangs5 ne6 wefek2 moezok2, ghekmek rinnyoe6 ne6 zeu5 zrensrek1, ngeu6 zeu5 pievang1, guoegae1 wangfong2, qins1 wangfong2 funin1 riebh6 nian beklek ne2. Sra gangjiou5? Rour2 ne6 dheulaebhu2, ngeu6 siaelaebhu5, yong yuekjik rraexinxi2 crangqile5 jiae5 "ni1 zo5 dhole6 ngoya6 zo5 siao3," reghan3k3 laejuse2. Seu-i5 ikmie3 zou3 ikmie3 lek koemek5, sinlixian1 welang2 dhong6 gegek1 naejin2. Ndok6 bielangxian1 nin2 ghekru2 rebie2 nakhan3 cefekdaegek1. ikleulangxian1 geuqi1, rreekdae3 gedak1 hhoudhou2. Odhou gang iksran3: "Tata1, funin a1, singgeuya1, sinninnian1 le2 koucin3 ia-oezel."
Zrenzren1 dong3 gueju1, akya, ngeu6 we6 ndok6 rrausianya3, dhekdhi3 guezrael s-gek ceus-odhou1 sroulek3 yuoemenkou2, rour2 wez6 nian6 nfok6 zaedie3 xiusik1, we-iae2 le2 cin3 ikgek oe1, ghekmek, zrenzren1 haegek: "Hae3, hae3, hae3, kuecin5 zinle1, kuecin5 zinle1!" liangadhou2 dae5 lixian2. Diediel1, meucin1 re6 rrang6, nyuhheli1 kou5 dhou2!

14.-16. (Confusion between speakers -- see translation in Chapter V.)

17. (Yuan) Le2, le2, yesi6, hhella6, bhaliae2, qile1!

18. (Wang) Akyaya, yesi6, hhel la6, kuekue3 qile1!

19. (Yuan) Deu1 rie6 yokveu3 yokmeu3 dharren2.

20. (Wang) Deu1 rie6 diediel1 meucin1.

21. (Yuan) Akya, qile1, qile1.

Nanmek2 lianggdhou2 likqi3 srenle1, boebie1 reudin6, sraewel pedhe1 fuyetekliansran1, rrenguang2 fekzae3, ghegek jiniktie3, ndok6 rrekre3 qiklikdek fekdek liaelek6, hhaesae2 qi5 xiusik. Reghan3, jinzrae1 kunzhhoqi5, minzrae2 kungek5 egae1, rebie2 srarrenguang5 qile1, ghegkek jiniktie3 ndok6 rrekre3 tek qiklillek, fek-iae5 yousra6 sranbhinloktong1, ni-iae6 feksodekgek3, kue5 qubha3.
N-s3, s3, s3, jirroe1 rryc2, yokveu3 yokmeu3 dharren2, siaesi3 gaete1.

Nanmek2 wedhou iksran, odhou1, hhoenian2 vulaelidok2, like2 gedak. Wedae2 gedak1 sinvanggeli, iae5 zin5 vangmen2, zer1 zrensrek5 dhongvang2, ngadhou2 r6 kaukdang1, seu-i5 odhou1 cevu1 like2 edak1, srentil reudhin6.

22. (Wang) Akya, singeuya1, ne6 edakdie1 saewe1 reutek-ikxik6, dentekxik3, ni-iae6 qi5 bang1 sinniannian1 uesyzrangle5, syzrangl i3 bikmek, zel cin ne3, ndok6 qi5 dhoeyuoe ya2.

23. (Yuan) N----sy3.
Srati5, ghexikrrenguangl, guegok5 ciejin1 fekdek liae6, hodhou1 touya5, lidok1 qikbaez3 ve6, yongfekrrauk1 rrangbe2, yongfekrrauk zeu5 jiavur-ti1, ghemek lidok1 ikniktie dindind5 heugek6 r-ti2 rour2 zrae syzrang1, ia danbe, ak-iae5 jiho3 rrenguang? Zraesyzrang1 zraelangxian1 qile1, ikgek rryrren. No, gedakmek1 longdia6 bhiez2, ghekmiemek crakdeu3 ho1, gedakmek1 longyang mekr3, ikyanikyan1 longrrangqi2. Ikgek rryrrengek2 rrenguang2 siandangyu1 yere2 liangek6 zrongdhou1. Ikzraelang1 rou6 long6 ghekdie1 r-ti2. ghekmek iadanbenek? Getek5 ikboe5, boegek5 rrrrnrne2. Hhak-iae3 ikgek zrongdhoudeklek1, ghekdie1 r-ti2 rour2 sia5 zrang1, niongzrangmek2 riebhu2 hotek5, nammek2 liaksry3 zryfen1, nammek2 moedhou2 zrycemek2 ikyan-ikyan1
bhaktek, dhoufakmek2 sy-iksy1 hae3, lihole6 iae5 boegeubol zrongdhoudeklek1. Ghemek yere2 ne6 singuoenin1 denlek1 ngadhou2 den3, we6 sra5? Sinnianz1 dae5 lixianqi2 danbe3, syzrang1, ne6 denlek1 bielangxian1 koelekhe5 fek-ia3, iae5 jiaejiae guegue1 rrenguang2, bangli1 pae5 ikbe1 ro2. Iae5 rekghandiel rrenguang2, seu-i5 yerer2 weyouzrong2 zie3 doedhoufaklek5, gongcrangli1 re-iae2 rrangbe2, nyudhongzry2 ghekr1 mbek2 ghekrandiel rrenguang2, iknkitie ho5 segek1 zrongdhou1 le2 longhekdie6 dhoufak2, feklegek1, dhekBhik fanggonglixian5 feknenggoul lou2 randhoufakgek2. Fangzrekyitonggek5 nyugong2, ne6 jias5 lou2 randhoufaklek, ve-ik2 longdae2 qjilixian1, iae5 crek gongsrangr-geu1. Seu-i5 cranli5 guedhin1, iklik doedhoufak5. Dhebhikrian dhierryjilixianggek2 zrymin5 geusin1 mae-ak2 min2, akr3 zie3 doedhoufak5, jiae5 youyongsrek2, yijiae5 bensrenk1. Yerezrong2 siaegeunian5, re2 hhan2 ghekzrong1 dhoufak2, ghemek bhiedanglek2, zraelangxian1 qile1, zrek-iae5 moksy3 "can3 can3" lainji6 "tang, tang" marrang1 rrangbeqilek2, ghekr bhiedangdek2 deulek1, akrgek3? Ghekmek na2, fekrian3 yerezrong2 noennindae2 huoexi1 lou2 randhoufakzek2. Akyok, we-iae2 tang5, tangdekle5 linguangdek2 fekdek laie6. Jhiounie2 ngeu6 dae5 rranghe2 rranggeugek6 danglek5, denlek1 noejinleulangxian2 douqioez1, koejie1 ghekmie1 dhi-ik2 baukheu1 sandie1 menkou2 lek bhandhe2, ngeu6 sian3 fekzry1 madie6 sramekr5, menmenkoe6. Ikkoemek5 ze3 hhoudhou2 bhahez2 ikgek nin2, a, rranbulang2, qiokqiok-ue-ue,
srenlang1 hhonggek2 waksikse, hhodhou, bikbik lokgek
benkeu1, hhodhou2 iksang1 zorraukngekgek1 gae-iae1,
xianbinsrek1 bhihha2. Nanmek2 ngeu6 rrangqi2 zraeheu-
iksran1, ngeu6 gang3: "Ayi-a1, ndok6 lek ma6 sra5?" Dhou2
bhezkroele3 "wanlan6" iksran1: "Siaononggek ceklaq, na
yasok!" Ikkoemek5, ikcok akheuz ya1. Dhoemin2, ikgek
siaeheuzya5. Okyok, rrangdekgek6 dang-a5, yik
longfekdonglek, seu-i5 yeregek2 r-ti2 hhak fiaeqi5
longdonglile2. Lir1 geuqi1 gueju1, geunianggagek1 dhoufak2
jiaegue1 kaejiou3. Seu-i5 yere zinqi1, 111 srentil
reudhinmek6, rou6 leklang3 den3 odhou1 creklezek1.

Iae5 rekghan3 xuxudeudeu5 rrennguang2, ngeu6 feknengou1
hhak ngedenden2 reuleklang6. Dindin5 iaejin1 you6 ikgek
nin2, hhakr3 iaejin1 renvek2, ngeu6 sie-iae1 noli2
gaedhetek1. Sranin5? Yongle-odhou2, yere2r2 Yongfak2
nitaya2, ngeu6 ronik6 sryli gaedhekeugeuze1. Siaejudhou5
ledekgek2 congmin1, xiejiahheu5 canggek3 hheu6, dongbhael
silzou3, laezongguoe2 koezrongli1, laesian1 zraeli1 nyusi6,
r-ga2 noe-n2 akce3 pebeklekki1, sian3 ndok6 donggamek1
laesianya2 zraewel nyusi6, ne6 nitayamek2 bekngeu3
laezongguoe2 zeu5 nyusi6. Bekli1 cikgekli be1 niou2,
bokgek1 be1 mo6: Jikhunzel, youz6 gasiae1, niz-hhak2 ijin1
youzek6. Seu-i5 zongsoe1 bekli1 cinr1 wedhoutek2. Ghekmek
lianggek6 dhonghhe6 akjik, arian1 sian3 ne6 fiaemek5 zehael
mbek2, ni6 hhak koezronggek1 akoelekheya3, ne6 fiaemek5,
zongsoe1 weyoudie2 jiwe1, wehae2 xiyang1 zrencizrenci1,
nanmek2 qik laezou2, jikba5 xiongdhi1, qikdae1 amoyan5, rrenguang2 fekzae3, zoule5 rikse5, songlidae5 r-ga2 vanggeli2 kunga1, sinvangge1 lek nehoyoe2, iae3 jingeu1 yoemen2. Nanmek2 ghegek yongfak2 nitayanek2, oebhalil rrylek6 gnahoyoe2, gedak1 youizrak6 vangge2, riebhu2 ijin1 dansae5 cinsrang1. Rrang2 puhae1, cokze3 riesingek2, zranz1, bhidhou, niokz3, zrendhou5, singek1 longrrangqi6, ngagamek2 bielangxian1 we2 fanghae5 s-labal. Sramekr5? S-laba, litisren3 sroulokji-a? Fekrgekl, bangli1 fangz5 s-bhen5 labaho2, jiecren5 s-labal. Seu-15 malikdek2 fekdek liae6. Namke2 songlidae5 lixian2, Akjik, Akrianrl jiaeguel qijin3: Ghegek, xiongdhi a1.

24. (Wang) Hhou, akgeu1, nakhan3?

25. (Yuan) Akr1 iae5 kungaezek?

26. (Wang) 0, deuria1 deuria1, ndok6 dakngeu1 longdeklek6 haedakte3.

27. (Yuan) Rer2 ni6 bangnel1 longgek6.

28. (Wang) 0, zrengek1 riariazek6.

29. (Yuan) R-ga2 dhixiong2 rer2, ne6 fiae5 kauskqi5ez5.

31. (Yuan) Yongfakya3.

32. (Wang) Nakhan?

33. (Yuan) Ne6 ikgadhou1, edak1 ngahoyoe2, inwei rrekre3 huoexinelek1, edakdhifang1 longek6 rrekre3 pikrin3, bijiae5 ia3, nanmek2 ne6 ikgadhou1, akyoudie3 haukjia?

34. (Wang) Rekghan1 dheugek6 dhifang2, ngeu6 geuniangga ya1, daer1 meyoudie1 hhoemaelinlin2.

35. (Yuan) Akyak7, rrangmek2 zrekyou7 ikzrak7, dher2 me dheu4, se gadhou1 gakgak8 neokoe5 nakhan3?

36. (Wang) Ne biae5 haedek ghek31e8, sega dhou1gakgak8. Ngeu6 hae3 dak7 ndok6 gak pugek3 ngeu6 dangz5 sra5 r-ti lek4.

37. (Yuan) Hehe, ne mek6ninsiae2, lekhe3 dangzrong1, nimek6 liangmie2 baeheul ne3. Haha7 -- akriak.

38. (Wang) Laexiong ak1, ne1 dael siandek3 rrekdhou7 zoudhougek1. Gak pu5hae gakya3 gak pu3z mek7, jiokho7 naeman1 lekhe3. Ghek mek7liang gek4ak, geu7kun gae3
menrie2, you zong4r-til iae3dak7 ndhou6 gang gang3 cinsanggek1.

39. (Yuan) Ganggang koe5sakghe5 r-til?

40. (Wang) Ngeughek ninb kunsian5 fekho7, you4 mongyegek2.

41. (Yuan) You4 mongyegek2.
[Note: Confusion as to role in the above short dialogue, 39-41.]

42. (Wang) You4ik nik z dak7, ngeu6lekhe3 xian hha dhoughhek1 rrenguang2, you4 ikgek7 siaebanyou3 ye1 dak ngeu6 fi-rran1 iae hae1, ye srek liae5 dak ngeu6 gakpu3, ngeu6 srek7 me hae uek1, ghekmek8 rou gak punian3. Ne mek7 liang gadhou1 kunlek5 ikdae7, fekxiaedek7 kundae5 boe-ia5lixian1, ngeughekb mengye2 fakzokzek ya7, nemek2 ngeu6 qinsou1 qinjiak1 bohho rrang2, bodae2 rrauk-rrauk hho dhou2, jiaesra5, dak ia heul no dhae2sou3. Zak7, no2 ngeu6 banyougek2 zryba3 bak kele8 iaheursry1 mangzren2 n ne1 zryboli3, "bik8, bik8, bik8."

43. (Yuan) Me4, me4, me4.

44. (Wang) Ak-iae7, gak pulek5?

46. (Wang) Haegek3, haegek3.

47. (Yuan) Gnadhounin2 hhak8jiae guegue1 lehe3.


49. (Yuan) Ghek mek8 minzae ue2.

50. (Wang) Me hael1, me hael1.


52. (Wang) You2 seumakl. Koe5 lidok1 lainggadhou2 mang gnadhoun2 crekqi7. Hae3dak lidok7 lianggadhou2 gak pugek3, fekiae7 nongcrek1 siaehholegek1. R-ga4 iae sian5 kun5. iksian meme jiae2. Gangang zousry3 heudeu3, qikdeke7 kesin1. siaezia3 dak ngeu6 gang3, li srek1 lianggali1 siaezia3 rongsiae2 dak 117 nindek2 akyak7, yere2 dae1 sianzakzek3, ngeu6 dak7 siaezia3 cren bu1 fekli7, ne6 nindek2ghek
siaezia3, ngeu6 kengding3 hhak8 koejie xikgeugek5. Ngeu6 nakhan3 ne5 rong we2 tinggeu1, rong vi2 jiegeu5, ak-ue5, siaezia3 pie5 ngeugek6 siandae5 edak1, yueksian3 yuekhak7. Yuesian3 yuekdhesin zekya1. Ok-ok, jinzrael ialil rebhie2 nakhan3 hhak8 kun fekrranukzek5. Gheu-r4 zronggue1 r4 dhou r-ti4. Siaezia3 fekzry7 zek ikgue7 nakhan3geulehe3. Namek2, iae jinlye dae3 fangmenkou2, men2 dal-ik-da1 rrang5, qinqin jiaelmang zren2ge dak1ne hoyoe2 sinvanggel lehe3 yegeule3.


54. (Wang) E3, singeuyal, singeuyal, siaozia3 ijin1 seuzrang1 uoebikze2.
55. (Yuan) Riebu2 sryrize1.

56. (Wang) Ne6jin qi3 dhoeyou bha2.

57. (Yuan) Namek2 ni6 iae5 baezek2.

58. (Wang) E1, ni6 iae5 zouzek2.

59. (Yuan) You sra4r-ti mek2he ni5, hhoulong2xian diehaezek3.

60. (Wang) R-ak4, fenfu ni1 haezek3.

61.-64. (Yuan/Wang) Singgeuyak1, singeuyak1, bo mang1 ndok4 en e e1, dhie dhie2 mikmik8. Fucang1 qire1, zaedek3 gue-z3, dae-z5 kenie mek1, yan4 segek3 dhou pang4 ni-z1.

65. (Wang) Nakhan3 bek7ne6 srekdek crekgek yan4 segek1 dhoupang4ni-z1, dae5 ke nie1 yan4 ikgek7 dhou pang4 ni-z1. [Confusion over roles in the above short passage, 61-65.]

66. (Yuan) Segek1, zonggue1 yuekdhou4 yuekhae3.

67. (Wang) Ak-yak7, dhouz1 iaek vakkoegekyak8.
68. (Yuan) Mede1, medegek yak. Zek hae7 yan4 ikgek7.

69. (Wang) E1, yan4 ikgek7.

70. (Yuan) Yan4 sebaetemek1 fekiae jingek7.


73. (Yuan) Hae3, hae3, minzrae2 linsrang6.


[Confusion over roles in the above short passage, 69-74.]

75. (Yuan) na r2 mbek2 befakzek2, ba5. Wan rry wan4 zonggue1 jinqigek3. Seu-i3, "pak7," likqi7 srenle, ikbu7, ikbu7 dak dae8 gedak sinvang1 menkou2, qi sou3men langxian2 te1, nin2 dak dae8 lixian2 resou2 diaezroe3 srenle. Men2, luek ikgok8 soe-ik-soe rrang1. Namek2 ghekgek nin2 lehe3 menlangxian2 ikgai. Ta le1 gan sren1, iaqiak weusren6, zek7 tinjie1.gaklhou7langxian1, "pik-pak7, pik-pak7, bang4." hhe1gengliae2. Rrenguang2 rie2guetezek5. Ghekmek8, ngeu6 yere2 rrangqi2, daedil nakhan3 gang fa z ne3? Ganggang1 xianxian3 m sra2 daeli2. Bikjin7 yere2 r-ti4 ba hae3 le he3 ngezin2 menrie1, ngeu6 iae5 juti2 dedhe5, juti2le gang1, ghekmek8 ikdin7 iae3 yusie2 sianhae3 hhehho2, feknen gou7dae.
rrenguang3 xianrerauk3 sraeye5 gang sragek3. Ghek r8 r-ti2
iae3 nongjiangek1. De5, ngeu6 srae-ue1 iae5 bie ik bie5,
seu-i3 yese2 nge zrenzren2 nge zrenzren2 gele4 menlangxian2.

Na rry guang4,

yi dae1 ne guerie2,

ngeu6 r4 Yuekgeu8 ci gue rry zrenyan1 ye2,
sian ngeu3 r4 rrangrie2 dangmien ye minbak2,
rousrek2 ngeu6 wu keun1 heu2 dae5 jinji1,
nyubek1 noezang2 r4 rek gekrie8.

Di4 ikgek befa4: kemen1 jiese5. Ngeu1 rrangqi2 zou gang2,
siaezia3, yere2 mbe2 nis zek2, gangdie3 bekne7 tintin1.
Zekyan7 ran2zek yan7d0e3, zekyan7 fanglyan7 yoe2, ngeu6
wukeu6 ne heu2 nyubek1 noezang2 goebeng3 jinnin3, dekzrong7
gongmin1, ndok6 ya2 mangmang3 rrangrrang4. Ngeu6 w keu6

Nil koe ta5 hhesou2 dakedak7 r4 rrangrie seu2,

na3 guegek3 ciejin1 r4 you vengsin4.

Li1dhou2 rrendae2, hoosou2 dakedak7, niaenal pinlin2. Dakhae
z7 gaz1, reu hae4 lehe3, segeu sian r4 ikdheu7 firrangi
jiaen1nik sieho1. Geunian1 gaz1, quikfekqi7 hakdhou7.
Ngeu6 ikfe7 hhehho2 gang rrangqi3, li ne1 ikeeper "akyak1,"
iae5 r kuazek3, you4 ghek zang zrong2 r-ti4. Ne6 r4
ghekyanz2 ikzrong7 nin ak2, we dang1liaedek2. Ok-iok,
wanglang1 kukcrekel7, heqile5, s-miel rie2 rry haegek2
odhou1, hhonin2, crongdae1 lisian4, r-ti4 marrang koebang,
uee-ue2 dajik4. Feknengang7, feknengang7.
Ue zou r2 ngeu6 rejiang2 zrenrin1 in moenie3, ngue6 srekdae8 sren you in rik3bin ne3 qie3, jinxiae1 buknen7 re4 dongvang4 ri4.

Ikzoe7 nikdhou, ak iae7 ghekyan1. Ngeu6 siangek3 juhho3, nakhan3 srenkfak7 z ni? Rou2dak ligang1, siaezia5, ngeu6 youzang r-ti4 iae5 dak nesrek7, inwel ndok6 yak2 rrek re8 jik fekgeu7, ngeu6le fekjik dak li7 srek7. Ngeu6 srenti1 fekhae7, you uoe maebingek4, jinzrae1 feknen geu7 dongvang2 hozok. Tang r5, jinzrae1 dak ne7 dongvang2 hozok1 z-heu1, de ne5, de ngeu5 daja4 fekli7, seu-i3 ngeu6 sian3 ne re r2 fenvang1. Geutek5 ikqian7 meme jiae4, meme jiae4 ngeu6 srenti1 cin langzrong3 riebu2 koehae5, ikcik7 fuknioeliae7.

Dae rrenguang5 ze dak ne1 dongvang2, ak iae7 ghek rran gang3. R buk dek4. Iae1 r kuazek4, ghekgek1 befak4 yere4 gangqile3 youdie4 hhoseleu4. Ngeu6 gang3 ge zrong1 hhehho4 qi ye4li zanzry1, ghekgek1 geunian1 iae5 yuoegek3 ya.

Sramek r5? Ne6 ghekgek banyou2 fek zokxing7. Ne6 you ghekzrong4 maebin2, fekhae7 tae3 ga zrybu1, fekhae7 jikhungek7 ne6zaedie3srale5 fekgang7, ikju7 hhehho4 rouhae2 gangcrek kouhek-uek3. Bingdae 5yere2 zekgeu7 que jil rkek4, dak ngeu6 le gang3, ne6 jiae ngeu5 jinhoul nakhan be3, ne6 nakhan3 jiae ngeu5 dak yanian2 qi gang1, yuek gen8, yuek sangsin1, ghek r2 ghekgek2 siaezia5 feknen7 rengrou2, ngeu6 ghekgek r2 fekdaedek7, ngeu6 yusin1 henrhen2. Namek2, ru heu2 r hae4? nak8, youle4. Daga4 rie r4 nyulhou2z be1, da ga4 r2 geunian1. Ngeu iae6 diae ikgek5 difang1, reksrren7
crydi4, tang-r4 ngeu6leklang8lige1 kuejin z hho2, sra rrenguang2 wedek4 fekkukcrekle7 fekhhecreckle7. Jinzrae ghek rrang1, ngeu6 sierrang qil yong ngoegong4 siehoholil1, hodek1 ghekgek4 siaezia5 siedae1 rranglang2qi kun5, dengdae3 li1 kundae5 rranglang2, ngeu6 besin1 no li2 ikzo7. Crenli5 fekzry-i7 nga tae2 xiatek3, haz2 tektek7, ne mekcren2 li5 fekfangbemek hhak rou8 mang zren2 bidhoundongli2 zoe jinqi1, nemek2 binbabin4, dhoukaedhou4, kunle5 ikdae7, ngeu6 dak li7 "qiqiqiqik7 cokcokcok7," dak li7 gang3 zrysin1 hhehho2, dak li7 gang3 dhiedhie2 mikmik7ge hhehho2, gangdae3 ak mo ian3, li1 eusindek1 fekdeklliae7, nemak ze1qin dongdong1 dak li gang7 ghekrran4ran2 ghekrran4doe3, ngeu6 r4 nyube4noezang2, ne fekhak7. Gangdae3 boeiali segan1, jie bingjie1, dhoukaedhou2, ghekrran iaehae1, daga4 kunle5 bidhou tongli2 gangz crekle3, dae5 e gekdangkoul, ne gek6 guegek1 ciejin1, ghekrran zong4sren ven1, rebie2 nakhan3 fekkeunen1 bangdingdang1 tiaeqile5, zakz7 ne-i2 ne-keu2 daecrekqi2, wangdang1wangdang1 hhe5 fekkennen7. Li1 dae3 ege1 dibu2, you z4 ngeli4 zek hae7 wang dheubili2ye5, ghekdieqi5 ghedieheu3 zek hae7 nganjin2 ak ik ak7 mbek2 befak2 haesian3. De5, zry-i3 danhing3. namek2 dokdokdingding7 ikbu7 ikbu7 mangzren2 rrangmenrie2lelang3 geule3.

76. (Wang) Seu geuniang1 ngesa2lxiian2 rie2kue hae lehe, zek7 kuejie1 li1 nge denden2 nge denden2 lehe3 vangmenkou2 dongz4 boenikgek5 naejin2, yere2 ikbu7 ikbu7 lelang3
Dher2 fekxiadek7 lirrangle2 yong4 sraghkek5 gongfu1, ngesae2
dae li5ghek miekong2 ikmiae, mek7rrek tek8 xixi1 siae mimi5,
jinzrael iae5 yong ngoegong2. Mehae ne1. Siaezia5 ne6
lebha2. Ngen6deng hae3 lehe3.

77. (Yuan) Siae xixi1 leheue3. Feknge7, sinsing5 gengga5
zokzek7, dakrrang7 lianbu6. Dae5 lii menrie2, qi3ge zek1
soulelang li jiega rrang1 qinqin hiae1 ikdak7, "dak7," z-gal
qin sren xinyu5. Io. Nianzla2.

78. (Wang) Ghekgek2 bangyou2 daehhak ghekrranzek2, nianz2
hhak jiaez15 creklezek ue7, yere2 sie dhiedhie li. Io,
goeren1.

79. (Yuan) Zrongsoel ke jin kouzek1. Iksren7 goenin1
hhedek5ghemek jiae5 cinnik1. Ghekmek jiae5 dhiemmik2,
sakqiae7 haetingek3. Io, nianz2, sian3 rryguang4 buk zae7,
qin3nianz2 siesue1.

80. (Wang) Sramek5 ak4? Rrenguang2 fekzae7, geuzae1 ngeu6
siekun5. Ok7, ne6 sian3 den3 ngeu6 lelang3 rrang2
rrangkun5sry qizek1, den ngeu3 kunrrauk zek5, namek2
jiak gen dhousoksok7, ikiatle7 rou2 ghekrran4 geuqi1.
Mbek2 ghekrran4 bie4dang4. Siaezia5, ne6 egek1 ji niktie
le3, zou gong1 ghek rran4 hae faz3, ne6 hhak me qiklikzek1,
wangdi2 bekle7 ne6 moegeu4. Ngeu6 yanian2 bekle ne6 moegeu4. Ne6 ghek ya2 hhak8bekle7 ne6 moegeu4, ne6 yere2 iae5 pie ngeu5. Mbek2 ghekrran4 jiede3. Ngeu6 ghek xi5 hhak iae5 ke r zek1. Laebanyou ak, ne6 fiae5 jik7, ne6 fiae5 sra ia1, ngeu6 zek iae7 ikju7 hhehho2 dei bek ne1. Fek no7 ne6 ghekgek sinkeu1 rrangnioe2. Zesian3 nyuxi4 hakdek7 daete3 se bu3. Ngeu6 fek jaie7 dongvang2 cijie5 yeukia8 tiae5 Kunminheulgkek Seu Insik1 fek siansin mek7 ak iae7 srysry koe5. Seu guenian1ghek miekong2 ganggang1 ue siae xixi1, yere2 miekong2 "haklak7" ikbe7, heulong2 srenin1 bin fek gae2, srae-wei zok mikz1 ikxia7, dhe r2 heng you3 fenlian3. goe ren1.

81. (Yuan) Nianz2.

82. (Wang) Ngeu6 koel1 koe-iljiada3, tekxok7siafok3, rrang rrang2 siesue1, zouqidik5 rehhou2 vongpe2.

83. (Yuan) Yak! Tinjiel ghekju1hhehho2 ne6 sian3n ne1 nakhan3 fekiae hak7, sramek5 r ak4, srek7: Goe nin ak1, ne6 dak ngeu6 koe-iljiada5, tekxok1siafok5, guezae ngeu6 sie1 tektekz1 sie dael rranglangxian qi2 kun5, rroehou2 lii ze rrangle1. Zekgeumek7?
   Baz1 tinle1 jie badiae5,
   hae bi3 na jiedae1 babin ci sinvang3,
   ru s2 geunian1,
xijil sae3,
nil koe ta1,
mehhel2 miae5,
yehhel2 qiae5,
ninhhel2 zun5,
tihheu3 jiae5,
srekhho di7srenin1 bin bekgae2,
zen ue dek1 juju5 srensren1 sian3 jiedae1,
hakdek7 ngeu6 li mindang2 den2rry1 unde siae2.
Ha koe-iljiada3z c hhel3,
tekxo1siafok3 gen qiqi3e3.

Ghekgek hhehho2 fekedhou7, geuqi5 fongjie1 wangrae2 rryde4
ghekzong2 geugek1 ciejin1rie r4 hoesou2 dak dak7, zonggeu1
tin ne1 noenin2gek hhehho2, ne6 nakhan3 gang3, n, r4,
zonggeu1 ciksren7 youseuliae4. Daesrek1 li lae1 gaga2,
geuzae1 noelni2n2, ne6 dak ngeu6 koez5. Yirran1 sie1siatek3,
haz2 tektek7, ne6 dak ngeu6 sie dae1 rranglangxian qi2 kun5.
Fekiae srek7 geuqu5 ba dae3 yere2 gek sinnianz1,
rekghammek2, yere2 gek sin goe nin1 kuangci5 hhak2you xi4
roufekliae2. Ne6 fekiae gua5 Man Lijun2 li1 r iae jik4, li1
r iae hak4.

Mokfi7 r4 zaejin3 koecrek3 nyu deu jiae4,
ta1 fangre1 jiaesoul nali qu1,
bie zokliae5 linlin2bokbe7 dong sou gae3,
zek pa4 r4 meu ie ca1 r4 tadi1 nyu dhongbae4.
Ngeu6 ganggang1 ru-i2soeboe5 siandek3 mehae1, nkhan3 yanz1 gang3, nakhan3 yanz1 gang3, koerrang qi ngezin2 menrie1 yijing1 tae fekgeuzek.
Ye koe1 ci geu3 tae bukgeu2, geu hhel1 ta sin hhel1 tiaedong5 rehoujie2, fangre r1 fong lhoul titang1 wenrou1 te5, bie zokliae5 mukden7 kou de3 mie fa sae2.
Geu hhel1 talji hheu1 sektheuliea7 jinleu bae1.
Siandae3 gedak1, fekyou7 z zry2 srenrrang1 hoe4lehe3z crekle1, you4 ik diedie7 lik feklae7.

84. (Wang) Seu geunian1 rie4 koehae5leheyak3. Ne6 yerel fonglhou niak1, ne yere2 zel rrengqi niak1, ak r4 rrengqi2 fekdekek7, hoe6hhak lehe3 z crekleze1. Jinzrael rouia2 hakhak ne7, we-z2 ne6 ua5fekeulek7. Ne6 iae le5 zou ngeu gek3 rrangfu2 le ya, koe5 ne6 nakhan3 shourran1.

85. (Yuan) Hhe4, "pak," zel ikzoe7 nedhou2, ngeu6 jikdek ghekrran4, huangdek7 ru-c2 srati5. Li hhakfen2 hhepu3 ngeu6le, zek fekgeu7 rekghan2 bokgek7 z iak4, ghekgek2 bokbek z1 xixi dael iksian7 zrrrangek5. Srati5, ghekgek sian2gue5 ciejin1 srenjia1 rrek re7 gae1, kouen1 bin rran2nik jiak7zrang rrang3 minzry2, rrekre4 hoexi1, biqi5 rensin2, yanrreng gong2 wuju2wusok2 gek biqilek2. Nemek6 jinzrael nebeghekya2, zeuz5 sinnianz1 crong4 nikli xian7 ikrek7 dou daez5 yere2, boeia5 hhel se gan4 negeudekle6
reu41elang3 dong4 hhak fekhae7 dong4, ghekmek ngadhou nin2 rie zhouguanglek, ngeu6 dak li7 fezren r3 fuci1 daelil1, ghemek ngeu6 dak ne6 wuju2wusok2, benle3 gek biqi2 rouiae2 nocreklegek1. R-ga2 noenin2 m sra2 daeligek2 ak3. Rrenguang2 fekzraele7, ne6 dak ngeu6 sie1 siatek3 irrang1, ne6 sie1 kun bak5. Ghekgek biqi2 hhaksrek fekdinggek7. De5, de5, de5, ngeu6 fekiae5 reghan2 jinhuang1 srekcougek7 yanz1 crekle1. Sie1 iae5 loucrek4 mojiak4ghekgek7 fekiae5 qi srekli1. Nemek2 den xik3 li iae1 dongqigek2, srekqile7 srati5, ngeu6 gangz3 gheklianyu4 hhehho2 me z ren rrangek1 guezae1 ne6 sie1 kun3, ne6 iae5ghek rrangfu5 yanz1, ok-iok7, sekgeu7 koe fekqi ngeu6, sekgeu7 dang5 ngeu poklakbu7, ne mek7iae5 dongqi2, lie hhoule2 r-ti1 zrenzren1 nebe2. De5, feknen huang7, ngeu6 iae5 heu2 neghek diae6, dhe r2 ne6 iae jiae5 ngeu6 sie1 kun3. Ghekgek7 r-ti1 veve2 befekdaegek2, seu-i3, ganggang1 dang1, dang1, dang1, dang1, ne6ghек sren1 hhehho2 crekkou7. Li1 daete3 s-bu3, qisie3 Seu Insik1 zekiae7 ne6 daete3 sebu1, li1 daete z3 s-bu5, caengek1 uoerrengzek2. Yere2 jiaez1 dang1, dang1 rrangqi1 ngbu6, bi3 benlegek3 juli2 gen gajin3, jiheul tiklae7 li1 boebiele5, fu shou4 tikhhe17, qinsren srek7: A nianz2, kue ren4 kue yu4, sinrin3 haesuang2, zren1ne r4 ikgeu7 haesuandik2 jingue1 rrangfu2, li mouren1 jinpe2 zryzry1, bukgeu7 jinurrek11i1 uue cin2 nianz2 sielsrue3, ngeu6 bukgan7 zrysie1.
86. (Wang) Ok-iok, hakz7 ikhak7, ikxixik7 dae1 hhak dinsinzek4, ghekmek nakhan3 ze1e1. Ehe1, guanren1 r zry4, li dang guanren1 sie srue5.

87. (Yuan) Ikgek7 liyou2 creklezek7, srati5 guezael ngeu6 sie kun, you4 daeliek2. Ne6 noenin2 r4 zrynin3, sragek5 gangjioe3, tiez1 crek dhou fu zok7 zry. Ne6 r4 rrang fu2, ne2 zrynin3, ne6 sie1 kun1 namek2 ngeu6 ze1 kun3. Ngeu6 hhakyou4 daeliek2. Akyak7, nianz2, hua3re1 ruc2, jinrrekli1 ngeu1 ne r4 zraeze1 sianfu5, ngeu6 zrae nyusi ya1, srajiae sra3zrae nyusil, ni6 putong3 hhehho2 gangqile rou r2 noenin2ga bekle3 nyunin2. Jinzrael mek nianz2 r zry4, lidang1 nianz2 sie1 srue3.

88. Wang) E1 e3, goeren1, ngeu6 dingiae6 gonghou1 goeren1 srue haeliae3. Ngeu6 fangnen1 ze1 srue3, napol ziemei3 dongtak2, ngeu6 ye iae1 ru-c2, zek7bie r4 ngeu6 dik1 biqi ya2.

89. (Yuan) Iae1 xizek3. Ghekgek banyou2 you4 egel1 biqigek2, na poldak7 siaez mei5 kun3 hhak iae5 lidok1 sie1 kun. Li1 ze1 kundekrauk3, fekroe7 iae5 rekmin7gek. Ngeu6 hhakyou4gek ak-iak-iak, nianz2, sian ngeu meklye r1 ru-c2, na po1 yijik2jinlegel1 jik ba7xiong di1daeliae5 ne rrang1 dhonglak1 aoesrue1 ngeu6 ye iae1 ta ren1 sreuliae3, bi ren re nen 2 aoesrue1. Sian fekdae3 ngeumen1 lianren1 deu you1
zekzrong77 biqi2. Ak-io-io, nianz ak2, ni ngeu1 lianggeu2 zren1 ne r4 zr dong3 dae hak2, dingnen2 bakshou7dhaelae3, z-sen3 modang2.

90. (Wang) Iae1 sikz7 sik senzek7, ue-iae2 zsen3 modang2, nakhan3 bek ne6 srekdek crekgek7, zekyanz7 bin hhoqi5 koerrang q15 ikiaties7 fiae kunzek3, mehae1. Ghekgek rranmie2 beiae cang hhoqigek1. Ngek6 jinzrael be iae3 no2 ne6 lahholez1 uoejik2. E, goenin2, ngeu6 koe ne5 dae feksian1 ikgek noehhel2, dae sian1 nyuhheljia1, geuhhel15 bukgoe7 rrangrrang2 sie srue3, ni1 dae4 kou r1 mek1. Nakhan3, ne6 ak iae7 laele4. Ni1, ni1 hae dade4.

Ni1 r4 bukzry7 wangfak2 ikjunce7, jinroe5 feyunlfokyu7 rrang2 cewa. Ne6 r you4daeli2, diae2 cianho1, diaedae4 tierrang qizek1.

Nyubelnoezang2 le kaesry3, theole dingjia3dewusa3. yulong2 hunza2 gangrran loe1 inyan1 diedae1 fakdeu sia7. Zeve2mitie2 ue bakghou2, ni1 e iae1 mae zok2 noehhel1 ba3 sinjinsik2, gongroel rek ze8 dae3 ngeu jia. Ni1 r1 qi junwang1, miae2 goe-ia1, pie5 siangue5, ngeu seu ual,
juroe r1 dongvang2 xi siaelkou zakzak3,
 buzry7 vefak2 buk zry ca7,
geujin le1,
saejie3 ni zek nyurenga.
Ni r1 s dae2 nenwe2 moedekgeul,
ni ba tiexia1 ren hhel2 riedang sa2.
Lie hhole2 ikju7 hhehho2 iae3 haehae jiae3die ne3 ikdie7,
nian ne2 kou-i3 cece didi gek1 minbak2.
Ni r1 yun noeren2, sreksekmok7 xianyan hho,
kouzry xiae3,
ngeu lian soe hua2 bin bukr2 nyulsagua3.
Ni1 xing yu ming3,
nali jia1,
in sren r1,
da e jin hua3,
wesekmok2 bukseu7 fongjik1 de euda3?
Wesekmok2 ngeuren2 min jik2 ze ngeu jia3?
Wesekmok2 zeve2 mitiel ue1 buksrekca7?
Wesekmok2 jimei1 nongye2 xi neu jia3?
Wesekmok2 bek tok7 i-se1 bek tok7 ha2?
Iae5 srekdek7 ikz7 ikye7 bukxuca7,
ue nen4 raesru2 ni zek1gue jiae ua5,
ni1 mokdae7 dhongvang2 ren2 lian geu1,
neu r1 s zou3 me vok2 zoe bingco3,
ngeu1zek siae7 ik-sren7 linhhho4 ba ni1 song guanya3.
Ni zek1 dade4 nyuz4, roegoe2 inyan1 diedo1, daequ2
gongmin1, ngeu ren minjik2, ue buk2 yu ngeu1 crongrek2
zraele1.

91. Nemek2, nin2 rou2 uoe uoe2 dajik4, nemek2 nakhanbe3.

Nakhanbe3 minzrae2 srek bek7 daga4 tin1.
读：既然无儿无女，却又无家可归了……
曾：（至前屋）我去见他，
喝：二三同志去哪里，
友：我想是应该去的，我想是应该去的，
亲：这样的想法，
展示了整个会议的气氛，
并展示了整个会议的气氛。

苏州市评弹团编排
APPENDIX E

GLOSSARY OF CHINESE CHARACTERS
The listings of Chinese characters corresponding to romanized names and terms in the text are divided according to subject heading: I. Proper Names (Works, Personages, Characters) in the text; persons marked with an asterisk (*) are contemporary performers (see note 7, Chapter IV). II. Vocabulary (terms associated with both forms of tanci, general literary terms, vocabulary and short passages and phrases from the texts/transcription). All entries are in alphabetical order and represented in Pinyin romanization. (Chinese characters for authors and scholarly articles appear in the Bibliography.)

I. Works, Personages, Characters, and Other Place/Dynasty Names

Bai Juyi 白居易
Baishe zhuan 白蛇传
Bi sheng hua 笔生花
Cai Xiaojuan* 蔡小娟
Changshu 常熟
Che Xilun 車錫倫
Chen Yun 陳雲
Chen Duansheng 陳端生
Dong Yaokun* 延慶坤
Dongdou Xing 東斗星
"Du Shiniang" 杜十娘
Faguo nu yingxiong tanci 法國女英雄彈詞
Fan Boqun 范伯群
Fei Long zhuan 飛龍傳
Feng shuang fei 鳳雙飛
Feng Menglong 馮夢龍
Fu Jurong* 傅菊蓉
Fusheng liuji 浮生六記
Ge Wenqing* 葛文請
Gong Huasheng* 龔路聲
Gu Zhifen* 顧芝芬
Guangling chao 廣陵潮
Guangqianjie 觀前街
Guangyu gongsuo 光裕公所
Guangyu she 光裕社
Guangyu shuchang 光裕書場
Guizhou 貴州
Honglou meng 紅樓夢
Hongse de zhongzi 紅色的種子
Hu Qiaomu 胡喬木
Hu-guang 湖廣
Huali yuan 華麗緣
Hua Mulan 花木蘭
Huang Yi'an* 黃異庵
Huangfu Changhua 皇甫長華
Huangfu Shaohua 皇甫少華
Huangfu Jing 皇甫敬
Hudie bei 蝴蝶杯
Hui tu diyi qu nu 絵圖第一奇女
Huitu nianshi shiji nushi wenming deng tanci 絵圖廿十世紀女士文明燈彈詞
Ji Shenghua* 計笙華
Jiang Qingzhu* 蔣倩珠
Jiang Wen* 蔣文
Jiang Yuequan* 蔣月泉
Jiang Yunxian* 蔣雲仙
Jiang Zhaokun* 蔣肇昆
Jiangnan 江南
Jiangsu 江蘇
Jin Lisheng* 金麗生
Jin Shengbo* 金聲伯
"Jindian fu" 金殿賦
Jin shang hua 金上花
Jiu long ko 九龍口
Jiuwei gui 九尾龜
Kunming 昆明
Liang Desheng 梁德生 (Liang Chusheng 梁楚生)
Li Mingtang 李明堂
Li Hanqiu 李涵秋
Li Ji 禮記
Li Junyu 李君玉
Li Renzhen* 李仁珍
"Li Zhuangyuan jiaxie kangli" 李狀元假借伉儷
Liang Jianbao  梁鉴表
Liang Suhua  梁素华
Liang Shanbo yu Zhu Yingtai  梁山伯與祝英台
Linzhou qi'an  林州奇案
Liu Jie  刘捷
Liu Jingting  柳敬亭
Liu Kuibi  刘奎璧
Liu Yanyu  刘燕玉
Long Zaixin  龍在心
Lu Shixiao*  吕施晓
Lu Wenfu  陆文夫
Lu Yihong*  陆艺红
Luo jin shan  落金扇
Ma Xiaojun*  马小君
Mao Long qu Jing  毛龙去京
Meihua meng  梅花梦
Meishi jia  美食家
Meng Shiyuan  孟士元
Meng Lijun  孟丽君
Meng Lijun  孟丽君
Miaojin feng  描金凤
Moshengde pengyou  陌生的朋友
"Mulan ci"  木兰词
Nanshi liezhuang  南史列传
Nian shi'er shi  廿史二十
Ni Huaiyu*  倪懷瑜
Ni Pingqing*  倪萍情
Ningbo  宁波
Nu zhuangyuan  女状元
Pan Boying*  潘伯英
Pan Liyun*  潘莉韵
Pipa ji  琵琶记
"Pipa xing"  琵琶行
Puyushe  譠裕社
Puyuan shuchang  卜院書場
Qianlong  乾隆
"Qiang fu"  槍賦
Qin Jiwen*  秦紀文
Qin Jiwu*  秦紀武
Qin Jianguo*  秦建國
Qin Xianglian  秦香蓮
Rongfa  榮發
Ronglan  榮蘭
Sanquo yanyi  三國演義
Sanxia wuvi  三俠五義
Sanxiaoyi yuan  三笑因緣
Sanyan  三言
Shamaoting shuchang  紗帽庭書場
Shanghai  上海
Shanghai shi pingtan tuan  上海市評彈團
Shen Fu  沈復
Shen Jie'an*  沈徳安
Shen Shihua* 沈世華
Shen Wenjun* 沈文軍
Shen Xiaolin* 沈曉林
Shen Youmei* 沈友梅
Shi Haiqing 石海青
Shi Rujie 石汝杰
Shili jin dan 十粒金丹
"Shuji" 善忌
"Shijie, nage meiyou niangqin?" 世界那個沒有娘親
"Shupin" 書品
Shuang jin ding 雙金碇
Sisheng yuan 四聲猿
Su Yingxue 蘇映雪
Sun Jingyao 孫景堯
Sun Yin 孫隠
Sungzi Niangniang 送子娘娘
Suzhou 蘇州
"Suzhou hao fengguang" 蘇州好風光
Suzhou huaju tuan 蘇州市話劇團
Suzhou shi pingtan tuan 蘇州市評彈團
Suzhou shi kunju tuan 蘇州市昆劇團
Suzhou shi shuchang 蘇州書場
Taiping quangji 太平廣記
Tang Bohu 唐伯虎
Tao Qing* 陶倩
Ti xiao yinyuan 踏笑因缘
Tian yu hua 天雨花
Wang Diejun* 王蝶君
Wang Jin* 王瑾 (also Wang Qin 王勤)
Wang Mu Niangniang 王母娘娘
Wang Xiaodie* 王小蝶往
Wang Xiaohong* 王小红
Wang Yuexiang* 王月香
Wei Meng* 偉夢
Wei Yong'e 衛勇娥
Wopao 倭袍
Wu 吳
Wu Junyu* 吳君玉
Wuxi 無錫
Xi xiang ji 西廂記
Xi xiang zhou tanci 西廂州彈詞
Xiao Meng Lijun 小孟麗君
Xiao Danqu zhi si 筱丹桂之死
Xie Yujing* 謝毓菁
Xie Yuhui 謝玉輝
Xing Yanchun* 邢晏春
Xing Yanzhi* 邢晏芝
Xu Biying* 徐碧英
Xu Bole* 許伯樂
Xu Mengdan* 徐檬丹
Xu Qinyun* 徐琴韻
Xu Shujuan* 徐淑娟
Xuan Miao Guan 玄妙觀
Xue Shan 薛山
Xue Xiaofei* 薛小飛
Yan Wenwu* 燕文武
Yan'an 延安
Yang Naiwu yu Xiao Baicai 楊乃武與小白菜
Yang Zhenxiong* 楊振雄
Yang Zhenyan* 楊振言
Yang Zijiang* 楊子江
Yangzhou 楊州
Yao Yinmei* 姚聰梅
Yin Dequan 殷德泉
Yu chuan yuan 玉釧緣
Yu Hongxian* 余紅仙
Yu Qingting 玉蜻蜓
Yu jing tai 玉鏡台
Yulian huan 玉連環
Yu Xiushan* 余秀善
Yuan Chengzhong 元承重
Yuan Xiaoliang* 袁小良
"Yu fu" 雨賦
Yunnan 雲南
Zaisheng yuan 再生緣
Zaizao tian 再造天
Zhang Jianguo* 張冀國
Zhang Rujun* 張如君
Zhang Zhenhua* 張振華
Zhangjiagang 張家剛
Zhao Jingsheng 趙景深
Zhejiang 浙江
Zheng Ruzhao 鄭如昭
Zhenzhu ta 珍珠塔
Zhou Liang 周良
Zhou Jie'an* 周介安
Zhou Minghua* 周明華
Zhou Xiaojun* 周小君
Zhu Wenjiang 朱文江
Zuo Xian 左弦 (Wu Zongxi 吳宗錫)

II. Pingtan and Literary Vocabulary, Minor Passages, Phrases

ai-ya 阿呀
bai 白
bai shi 拜飾
baojuan 寶卷
bianwen 變文
biao 表
biaochang 表唱
caidan 彩旦
cailou 彩樓
caiqiu 彩求
cainu 才女
caizi jiaren 才子佳人
chaquan 茶館
chake 插柯
chang 唱
changci 唱詞
changong 蟾宮
chenbai 襤白
chuancha 穿插
chuantong shu 傳統書
chunshan 春山
ci 詞
cihua 詞話
cixiong dang 雌雄檔
dakaimen 大開門
da kochong 大口充
dan 淡
dan 旦
dandang tanci 單當彈詞
dandang 單當
dashu 大書
diao 調
ding-dang 叮噹
dingzhen 頂針
diu 丢
donfang 洞房
duanpian  短篇
dui'ou  對偶
duibai  對白
duichang  對唱
erlei_shu 二類書
fan  繁
fang  芳
fangxin  芳心
fangyan  方言
fengliu  風流
fu  賦
fucan  賦贊
gaoqa  高拔
getihu  個體戶
gexing  歌行
gushi  古詩
guako  掛口
guanbai  官白
guanhua  官話
guanzhongmen  覽衆們
guanzishu  閣子書
guanzi_shangde_nonqtangshu  關子上的弄堂書
guanzi  閣子
gubai  咕白
guci  敲語
quo_zheige_quanzi  過這個關子
quoyin tanci  国音弹词
qushi  故事
hanlian  含殓
hen maili  很卖力
huaben  話本
huadan  花旦
huaju  話劇
huangpi  鬼編 (second character uncertain; also huangshu 鬼書)
huanshu  換書
huashuo  話說
hui  回
huishu  會書
huyu  呼籲
jia, yi  甲, 乙
jian  简
jiashan  简书
Jiang diao  藩調  (kuai Jiang diao 快藩調)
jianghu  江湖
jiao'e  娇娥
jiewuan  解元
jinglian  頸聯
Jingxi  京戯
Jingjiang jiangjing  靖江講經
jiupai  舊派
juan  卷
kaipian  開片
mihu diao 迷糊调
mingjia 名家
muyu 木鱼
nanci 南词
neihang 內行
Nong Xiao ting 弄厢庭
nongtangshu 弄堂書
niu baive 牛柏葉
nong 濃
nuban nanzhuang 女扮男装
nutanci 女弹词
paiziqu 牌子曲
paishi 排诗
pianwen 鈴文
piaoyou 栗友
pinghua 平话
pingtan 詩彈
pipa 琵琶
Putonghua 普通话
qi 奇
qijiaose 起角色
qigong 气功
qipao 旗袍
qianjin xiaojie 千金小姐
qiang 腔
qiushui 秋水
giyan pailu 七言排律
qu 趣
queshuo 卻說
guoi 曲藝
renao 熱鬧
reqing 熱情
roulixue 肉里噱
ruangong 軟功
rusheng 入聲
sanfanhua 三番花
sange dang 三個檔
sanren dang 三人檔
sanwen 散文
sanxian 三弦
shangchangshi 上場詩
shangshou 上手
sheng 生
sheng_shu 生書
shi 詩
shichen 時辰
shidan 屎蛋
shifu 師父
shoulian 首聯
shoumian 手面
shuangdang 雙檔
shuangdang_pinghua 雙檔平話
shuangdang tanci 雙檔彈詞
shuchang 書場
shudiao 書調
shuhui 書會
shumí 書密
shutai 書台
shuo 說
shuocuo 說錯
shuoshu xiansheng 說書先生
shuoshude 說書的
si 死
sibai 私白
silaba 四喇叭
su 俗
sunjiao 筍尖
Suzhou pinghua 蘇州評話
Suzhou tanci 蘇州彈詞
Suzhou pingtan 蘇州評彈
tan 彈
tanchang 彈唱
tanci 彈詞
tanci diao 彈詞調
tanci xiaoshuo 彈詞小說
tanghui 堂會
taozhen 陶質
tiaozhi 條子
tingzhongmen 聽衆們
toushu 偷書
tuvin tanci 土音彈詞
tuobai 托白
waichahua 外插花
Wang Yuexiang diao 王月香調
wei 味
weilian 尾聯
wenci 文詞
wujue 五詠
xi 細（xini 細膩）
xialiu 下流
xiashou 下手
xiandai ticai 現代題材
xiangfang 香房
xianggui 香閣
xiangsheng 相聲
xiangxiang diao 香香調
xianjing 仙境
xianren 仙人
xianren 閎人
xiaodiao 小調
xiaokaimen 小開門
xiao kochong 小口充
xiaoluohui 小落回
xiaomai 小賣
xiaogu 小曲
xiaoshu 小書
xiaoshuo 小說
xinpai 新派
xingmu 睿木
xizi 戲子
xue 喆
ya 雅
yan 演
yanchuben 演出本
yang 陽
Yangzhou pinghua 揚州評話
Yangzhou xuanci 揚州弦詞
Yangzhou tanci 揚州彈詞
yanjiushi 研究室
yaoguai 妖怪
yiduohua 一朵花
yin 陰
yinchan 銀蟾
yinyuan 因緣
yishu 藝術
youjing youxi 又驚又喜
Yu diao 余調 （kuai Yu diao 快余調 ）
 Yuefu 樂府
Yueju 越劇
yuqui  于歸
yuiing  玉頸
yunbai  額白
zhao dape yangu  招待演出
zhao nuxu  找女婿
zhengpai  正派
zhezi  折子
zhongpian  中篇
Zhongzhou yun  中洲韻
zhongzhuang  中章
zhuangyuan  状元
zhugongdiao  諸宮調
ziyou diao  自由調
zui xinpai  最新派
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