Plot Evolution and Character Transformation in

*Shihou ji (The Lioness’s Roar)*

On the Traditional Kunqu Stage

by

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Abstract

The traditional Chinese theatre of Kunqu, also known as Kunju, is a highly stylized and conventionalized theatre genre evolved from the melody of Kunshan, which emerged in 14th century and became the dominant style of private, commercial, and even court stages from the 16th to 18th centuries. Defined by its conventions and regarded as “the ancestor of hundreds of [Chinese] theatrical genres,” Kunqu became an audience-centered theatre, whereby audience’s preferences reshaped not only the characters but also the plots of plays on stage.

Playscripts of Kunqu originated as chuanqi (southern drama), plays written by literati dramatists from the 15th to 18th centuries. Their arias follow very strict prosodic rules and follow the tonal patterns and rhyme schemes of classical poetry. Kunqu’s music also follows rules based on the tones of each character; such is the refinement of its lyrics that it was a nearly impossible task for the actors, who were mostly illiterate, to change the lines. However, Kunqu troupes still managed to convert the plots and characters of a play by changing the fundamental stage conventions rather than the texts.

An example of such conversion is Shihou ji (The Lioness’s Roar), a play that has undergone an amazing transformation, from a shrew-taming chuanqi in thirty scenes written in the mid-Ming dynasty to a husband-taming play in four scenes popular in the mid-Qing. Regardless of the chuanqi playwright’s intention to inculcate the orthodox Confucian principle of the husband’s supremacy in the domestic sphere, the second half of his play, in which the wife gets tamed, was abandoned by actors. What survived on the Kunqu stage are four acts from the first half, in which the husband suffers punishments and gets convinced that following one’s wife is by all means a right thing to do. This thematic changeover was mainly achieved by the changing of role types, costumes, and make-up of the main characters. In addition, a few lines added as dialogue and some stage movements created by actors on stage also helped to give a new look to the play.
Preface

This thesis is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Yanting Qiu.
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Glossary

An’hui 安徽
An Tizhe 菽提遮
Bizheng jin 必正巾
baimian 白面
“Bianyang” 变羊
cabi 擦鼻
Cai Zhengren 蔡正仁
canman 黛滿
cansan 黛三
cangtou 蒼頭
Cao Chunshan 曹春山
Changchun Gong 長春宮
Changsheng dian 長生殿
Chen Lian’er 陳連兒
Chen Sibao 陳四保
Chen Suowen 陳所聞
Chen Zao 陳慥
chengshi 程式
“Chibi” 赤壁
chou 丑
Chuandeng lu 傳燈錄
chuanqi 傳奇
Chuan zi bei 傳字輩
Cilin yizhi 詞林一枝
cisha dan 刺殺旦

Dajiu ni de shendao zaici 搭救你的神道在此

dan 旦
“Dang huchuan”蕩湖船
“Dingdeng”頂燈
Dongpo jushi 東坡居士
Du Buyun 杜步雲
er’mian 二面
“Fanbi” 泛壁
Fangshanzi zhuan 方山子傳
“Fangyou” 訪友
Fensan wusi 奉三無私
Fo shuo zhangzhe nü An Tizhe shizi hou liaoyi jing 佛說長者女菴提遮師子吼了義經
Foyin 佛印
Fu 付
Fu Xihua 傅惜華
“Fuxing” 復形
“Fu’er” 撫兒
gan’nian 乾念
Gao Lishi 高力士
Gaoyang 高陽
Gu Chuanjie 顧傳玠
guimendan 閩門旦
“Guichi” 跪池

Gui shi bei ren de bend eng na 跪是卑人

的本等哪

“Guiyan”歸讌

Han Xin 韓信

“Haoyou” 豪遊

Hedong shihou 河東獅吼

Heiman 黑滿

Heisan 黑三

Hong Sheng 洪昇

Hua Wenyi 華文漪

Huancuitang 環翠堂

Huancuitang xinbian chuxiang shihouji 環翠堂新編出像獅吼記

Huang Chunquan 黃春泉

Jichang zhi pi 季常之癖

Jichang 季常

Jicheng qupu 集成曲譜

Jigu ge 汲古閣

Ji Zhenhua 計鎮華

“Ji Wu Deren jian jian Chen Jichang” 寄吳德仁兼簡陳季常

jí yì wéi nán zi, zên kē quxí yù furen 既已為男子，怎可屈膝於婦人

“Jian Liu” 諫柳

Jietuo 解脫

Jing 淨

Junei 懼內

Kanjian 坎肩

“Kuxiang” 哭像

Kunju 崑劇

Kunqu 崑曲

Kunshan qiang 崑山腔

Laodan 老旦

Laowai 老外

Lata baimian 邋遢白面

Lengshui ermian 冷水二面

Li Fu 李福

Li Longji 李隆基

Li Yannong 李艷儂

Liu 柳

Liu Bang 劉邦

Lu Xiaofen 陸小芬

Lu Di 洛地

Lü Tiancheng 呂天成

Majia 馬甲

Man 滿

Men’er kai zai ci, bumian jingru 门儿开在

此，不免径入

Mei Lanfang 梅蘭芳

“Mengpa” 夢怕

“Mito si” 彌陀寺

Mingyi 明義

“Mingyou” 冥遊
mo 末
Mu Suhui 穆素徽
“Naoci” 鬧祠
Ni Chuanyue 倪傳鈞
pi 袅
pilu 毘盧
Pipa ji 琵琶記
Qi Biaojia 祁彪佳
“Qidu” 奇妒
Qi Zhongmin gong riji 祁忠敏公日記
Qianjin ji 千金記
Qincao 琴操
Qing neifu sise chaoben shihouji chuanqi 清內府四色抄本獅吼記傳奇
Qian Jingfang 錢靜方
qupu 曲譜
Rixia kanhua ji 日下看花記
rankou 髭口
san 三
“Sanpa” 三怕
Sanqing yuan 三慶園
“Shang chun” 賞春
“Shedui” 攝對
sheng 生
Shen Chuanzhi 沈傳芷
Shen Shoulin 沈壽林
Shen Siguan 沈四官
Shen Zhiqiu 沈芷秋
“Shengzi” 生子
Shihou ji 獅吼記
Shihou ji zacai zhu xiaoshuo 獅吼記雜採諸小說
shiju 時劇
Shi Yongtang 石潯塘
“Shuzhao” 書招
“Shuzhuang” 梳妝
Shuihu ji 水滸記
shuixiu 水袖
shuopo 說破
sidan 四旦
Song Jiang 宋江
Su Dongpo 蘇東坡
Su Shi 蘇軾
“Suyuan” 訴冤
“Tanchan” 談禪
Tanhuang 灘簧
“Tigang” 提綱
“Tizong” 提宗
tie 貼
"Tingjian" 廷薦
“Tongrong” 同榮
“Toule” 偷樂
tuanyuan 團圓
wai 外
Wang Baishou 王百寿
Wang Guilin 王桂林
Wang Tingne 汪廷讷
Wo zigan quxi, yu laoxiong shenme xianggan 我自甘屈膝，與老兄什麼相干
wudan 五旦
Wu Mei 吳梅
Wu Xinlei 吳新雷
Xilou ji 西樓記
“Xigui” 西歸
“Xiayou” 狹遊
xiaomian 小面
xiao quanben 小全本
xiao sheng 小生
xiao tiedi daoren 小鐵笛道人
“Xieshi” 謝師
Xiuning 休寧
“Xubie” 敘別
xujia 虛假
Xu Xiaoxiang 徐小香
Xu Zichang 許自昌
Xuanxue pu 玄雪譜
xuezi 褶子
“Xunji” 訓姬
yamen 衙門
Yan Jupeng 言菊朋
Yan Xijiao 閻惜嬌
Yang 杨
Yaopian 么篇
Yiyang qiang 戀陽腔
“Yingxiang” 迎像
“Yingku” 迎哭
Yongjia 永嘉
“Youchun” 游春
you ru shihou yiban 猶如獅吼一般
Youyi ti 又一體
Yuhuatang riji 玉華堂日記
Yu Juan 于鵑
Yu Sulu 俞粟盧
Yu Zhenfei 俞振飛
Yuan Yuling 袁于令
Yuzhong qupu 與眾曲譜
Yue lu yin 月露音
Yue Meiti 岳美緹
za 雜
“Zengqie” 贈妾
Zhang Wenyuan 張文遠
Zhao Jingshen 趙景深
Zhao Shanhui 趙山輝
zhezixi 折子戲
“Zhengchong” 爭寵
Zhou Chuanying 周傳瑛
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Last but not the least, special thanks to Professor Luo Di. It is his theories about traditional Chinese theatre that initially inspired me to undertake the research that led me to this topic.
Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, who have encouraged me to keep my thinking independent and critical since my childhood. Their understanding and support are the source of my courage.

This thesis is also dedicated to all the Kunqu masters and my friends in Kunqu circles.
1 Introduction

There are two idioms in classical Chinese: “Jichang zhi pi” (Jichang’s weakness) and “Hedong shihou” (The Hedong lioness’s roar). ‘Jichang’s weakness’ [is] synonymous with ‘being henpecked,’ while ‘lioness’s roar’ means ‘shouts of a shrew.’” (Lin 191). “Jichang” is the courtesy name of a Song Dynasty scholar Chen Zao. Hedong is known as the hometown of a great clan, the Liu family, and Liu happens to be the family name of Chen’s wife. The two idioms are about an extremely henpecked husband Chen and his shrew wife Liu, the best known couple of this type. These two idioms come from Shihou ji (The Lioness’s Roar), a chuanqi play by the publisher and playwright Wang Tingne (1569-1628). Not much is known about the couple depicted in Wang’s play beyond a few poems and short biography of Chen composed by his friend Su Shi (1037-1101), a renowned writer, poet and calligrapher of the Song Dynasty. Su’s courtesy name is Zi Zhan. He is often referred to as Su Dongpo because his pseudonym is “Dongpo jushi” (The lay Buddhist of East hill).

Wang “glorified” the tidbits from Su’s writing and developed them first into a zaju (Yuan drama) in seven acts, and later into a chuanqi in thirty scenes, both on the theme of shrew taming. After the publication of Wang’s chuanqi, it moved to the Kunqu\(^1\) stage and became very

\(^1\) Kunqu is often referred to in English scholarship as Kun Opera or Kunqu Opera, following the same translation convention of Peking Opera or Beijing Opera. This translation has been accepted in academic circles, but strictly speaking the classification is improper. Kunqu should not be referred to as “opera” because its basic theatrical elements include not only the arias and their musical accompaniment, but also other strictly conventionalized elements such as movements, costumes, and make-up patterns. It would be more precise if this genre were translated as “the traditional Chinese theater of Kunqu,” similar to “the traditional Japanese theater of Kabuki”.
popular. However, the staged version abandoned the original theme of the shrew’s
domestication, turning instead to the theme of the husband’s taming.

A play on stage had considerably more impact on audiences than a play on page, given
the high rate of illiteracy in late imperial China. It is not hard to understand that what really
garnered fame for Wang’s couple was the successful image building of their characters on the
Kunqu stage. From the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, Kunqu was the most popular
theatrical genre at both the court and in commercial theatres, which explains why these two
idioms are known to refer to a story of a shrew but not a tamed shrew. Wang Tingne must be
disappointed, because in his original play the wife finally gets converted into a very obedient
woman who follows every dictate of her husband.

How Shihou ji on the Kunqu stage became a husband-taming play, instead of the shrew-
taming one designed by the playwright, is very interesting. Its evolution reveals the secret of
Chinese traditional theatre, namely, that as a highly conventionalized form of theatre it has
become an audience-centered theatre over the past four hundred years. In Kunqu, because
every movement on stage is symbolic and stylized instead of being realistic, it would only make

\[2\] One of the oldest genres of Chinese traditional theatre, Kunqu evolved from Kunshan qiang (the melody of
Kunshan) in southern China about four hundred years ago. Kunshan qiang emerged at the end of Yuan dynasty
after nanxi 南戲 (southern plays) had spread to Kunshan and merged with the local folk arias. This was
accomplished with the promotion of the local musician Gu Jian (?-?). Also known as Kunju (崑劇) in modern
Chinese, this latter term refers to the theatrical genre of Kunshan, while Kunqu 崑曲 means the arias of Kunshan.
However, Kunqu has been used to refer to both the arias and the theatrical genre since the late Ming. The exact
date when Kunju began to be used instead of Kunqu is not traceable, but the Institute for the Preservation and
Transmission of Kunju (Kunju Chuanxisuo 崑劇傳習所), established at Suzhou in August, 1921, used “Kunju”. From
then on, use of Kunju and Kunqu in Chinese texts is mixed and can be confusing. Generally speaking, Kunqu might
be used for both the arias and the theatrical genre, but not the opposite. Therefore, I use Kunqu
sense if the audience had an active interpretative and imaginative role to play, based on their profound understanding of theatrical conventions. Like Kabuki, Kunqu is also a presentational theatre, in which “the actor is [the] principle means of expression” (Ernst 18) and has “its rapport with the audience” (105). Kunqu is comparatively more conventionalized, and thus has an even more close relationship with the audience than is true with Kabuki. Compared to the latter, Kunqu is a minimalist form of theatre that uses almost no realistic stage settings, instead relying heavily on the actors’ performance skills and the audience’s imaginative ability to create a world onstage. Therefore, in Kunqu the relationship between actors and audiences is even more “paramount” (Cavaye, Griffith & Senda, 19) than in Japanese traditional theatre as described by the Kyōgen actor Nomura Mansai.

In Chinese traditional theatre, especially in Kunqu, “audience is the GOD” (2009, 11), in the words of Luo Di, a Chinese scholar specializing in traditional opera studies. Luo notes that Kunqu troupes cater to audience preferences when staging the characters and changing plots. Moreover there was a tradition in Kunqu troupes of staging xiao quanben (shortened complete plays), which was enabled by selecting scenes from an original and much longer play, but with a different focuss (Luo 1986, 55).

Some xiao quanben became so popular that once they dominated the stage, the original play would become an an’tou ben (desktop play for reading only). For example, Changsheng dian (The Palace of Everlasting life), a fifty-scene chuanqi play by Hong Sheng (1645-1704), when staged by Kunqu troupes shrank to a play of only eight zhezixi (selected scenes)
concerning the love story between Emperor Li Longji and Lady Yang. Other scenes from the play based on historical or political issues might be performed as separate zhezixi, but they were not included in the xiao quanben Changsheng dian (Luo, 58). It also happened that in the staged version of Shuihu ji (Water Margin), only the scenes concerned with a love affair between Yan Xijiao and Zhang Wenyuan were included in the xiao quanben version, while Song Jiang, the leading male role in the original chuanqi by Xu Zichang (1578-1623), had at best a supporting role on the Kunqu stage. After several selected scenes were combined to create a new play, with the same title as the original chuanqi, they developed a new storyline based on the chuanqi, but with a different focus and ending as well as very different relationships between the characters.

The emergence of zhezixi on the Kunqu stage, started during the Kangxi and Yongzheng reigns (1662-1735), marked “the beginning of the shift from a playwright-dominated drama centered in household troupes to an actor-dominated one centered in professional troupes based in urban areas” (Swatek 151). Audiences would prefer to see these zhezixi rather than the whole play, given the limitations of their time. Calved from the whole chuanqi and often focused on dramatic highpoints, zhezixi were good theatrical material, and because audiences were familiar with the plots and characters they were easy to comprehend and fun to watch. However, with the passage of time, when only a few zhezixi extracted from a play were performed on stage, audiences might not be as familiar with the whole play as their elders had been. Then the practice began of linking several zhezixi together to make a play with a comparatively complete storyline. This trend of creating xiao quanben, according to Luo Di,
appeared at the time of the Qianlong emperor’s reign (1736-1795) and became very popular in the late Qing Dynasty and Republican China (1912-1949).

There is no doubt that these reframed *xiao quanben* by no means recovered or replicated the playwright’s original work. Just as with the choosing of some scenes from the mother *chuanqi* play to become *zhezixi*, the audience also played an active role in the forming of *xiao quanben*. It is quite understandable that the choice of certain *zhezixi* over others to form a *xiao quanben* actually revealed the best-accepted interpretation of a certain play that the troupe could apply to reframe it according to the audiences’ opinion. Then among all these *chuanqi* that have been converted into *xiao chuanben* and gained a different look on the Kunqu stage, *Shihou ji* is the one that experienced the most astonishing changes, from a shrew-taming play to a husband-taming one. A study of this play will uncover the amazing transformation that a play can undergo, from a *chuanqi* in print to a play on the stage.

The scripts of Kunqu plays are based on *qupai* (fixed tunes) and composing a musically notated script had to be done according to strict prosodic rules, with attention to the tonal pattern and rhyme scheme designated for each *qupai*. The added requirement that the lyrics be refined made it almost mission impossible for illiterate actors to tinker with the lines of a *qupai*. Taking into consideration the hardships that actors faced when changing the plot of a *zhezixi*, the conversion of *Shihou ji* was achieved, largely, by making changes to the dialogue instead of the rigidly fixed *qupai* and by making changes to other theatrical elements concerning role type, costumes, and movement conventions. With this in mind, what follows is an examination of this process of change over a period of several hundred years, in the case of *Shihou ji*. 
2 Shihou ji as a Chuanqi

2.1 Publication of the Original Play and the Plots

The original chuanqi was written by Wang Tingne (1569-1628), a famous publisher and playwright, under the title Huancuitang xinbian chuxiang Shihouji3 (The newly composed Lioness’s Roar with illustrations published by Huancuitang, Huancuitang for short hereafter), which he published during the Wanli emperor’s reign (1573-1620). No exact publishing date is given. However, several scenes from it were published as zhezixi (selected scenes) in anthologies of playscripts or aria collections, an indication of their popularity in the theatre at that time. Two such anthologies of Ming popular dramas, Cilin yizhi (A branch from the forest of song) and Baneng zoujin (Eight facets [of ritual music] struck from a tapestry) were published around 1606-16084 (Guo & Wang, 61). The date of publication of the Huancuitang version of Shihou ji, according to its listed order in Lü Tiancheng’s Qupin, should be between 1605 and 1608, about the same time as that for Cilin yizhi and Baneng zoujin (Guo & Wang, 58). The Huancuitang edition was published a bit earlier than the other two collections.

Though Wang claimed that he was the author of Shihou ji, whether all of the credit should be given to him has remained controversial. Chen Suowen, a friend of Wang, was probably the real author of several plays that Wang published as his own. Zhou Hui (1546-?), a

3 Huancuitang is one of the most famous publishing houses of the Ming dynasty, Located in Nanjing and owned by Wang, it was named after the main building of Wang’s residence, Zuoyn Yuan in Xiuning.
4 Guo Yingde places the composing time and publication dates of Cilin yizhi and Baneng zoujin around 1605-1608. Yue lu yin was published around 1616.
Ming scholar, in his book titled *Xu Jinling suoshi* (Continuation of *Trivial matters in Jinling*), says that eight of Wang’s plays, including *Shihou ji*, were actually written by Chen (Zhou Hui 268). This claim is supported by a comment by Chen’s friend Gu Qiyuan, that “most of Chen’s plays were published under others’ names” (Huang Biao, 606). Another interpretation is that Wang was the real author of the play and Chen might have helped to edit and polish it. “[We] can only believe that Chen had been Wang’s collaborator for a part [of *Shihou ji*]” (Zhao, 210). There is some support for both claims, but the identity of the real author of *Shihou ji* may remain a mystery for lack of sufficient clues. However, Wang was normally regarded as the author, or at east the principal author, of this play.

The original *Huancuitang* version of the *chuangqi* play contains thirty scenes and the plots develop with interactions among several main characters: Chen Zao (the husband), Liu shi (the wife), Su Shi (a friend of the husband), Monk Foyin (a friend of Su), and some supporting roles such as a courtesan Qincao (an admirer and lover of Su), a maid Xiuying (one of Su’s maids, who becomes Chen’s concubine later on) and several servants with no exact names other than *yuangong* (male servant) or *cangtou* (old male servant with grey hair).

A summary of the original play goes like this:

(Scene 1-7) With the high-sounding excuse of seeking an official career, Chen leaves his hometown and lives an extravagant life in the capital city, Luozhong, in the company of his friend Su Shi. Chen’s wife, Liu shi, hears about this and sends him a letter telling him about his four new concubines. Chen hurries back to meet them but is frightened by their ugliness.
(Scene 8-15) As Chen has lost Liu’s trust because of his dishonesty, she punishes him by making him kneel beside a pool because he joined Su’s spring outing with courtesan Qincao. Su arrives to save his friend and intends to teach Liu a lesson, but instead he is defeated in debate with her. Su gives Chen a concubine, Xiuying, to bear a son for him. (Scene 16-21) Liu maintains stricter surveillance over her husband after his boating excursion with Su at the Red Cliff. Chen pretends to be transformed into a sheep by his ancestors with the help of a female shaman and manages to marry Xiuying with the ancestors’ support. Liu cannot hold in her anger, seeing that her husband loves the young concubine more, and becomes sick. (Scene 22-24) The final taming of the wife is achieved only after she is taken to the underworld by ghost messengers, tortured and threatened, and brought back to life with Foyin’s “help”. (Scene 25-30) After that, Liu becomes a very obedient wife and helps Xiuying to raise the son she bore to Chen. The whole family enjoys the great honor of both Chen and his son being recommended (by Su) to serve at the court. Foyin promises all of them that they will enjoy Buddhist deliverance at the end of their lives\(^5\).

### 2.2 The Playwright’s Concern

As luck would have it, there is one copy of the original *Huancuitang* edition preserved in the Kyoto University Library\(^6\). It is the only known extant copy, with Wang’s original preface

\(^5\) For more plot details, please read the Appendix A scene summaries.

\(^6\) Beside the *Huancuitang* version, *Shihou ji* has also been printed and published in *Jiguge* (A collection from ancient times) and also in *Liushizhong qu* (Sixty southern dramas) of *Jiguge*. Neither imprint includes the author’s preface.
announcing his purpose for creating this play for taming shrews. In the preface, Wang explained his motivation for writing a seven-act-zaju on this subject:\footnote{7}

> Women are born from Yin. Yin is just like water, which is deep and hard to predict. Men love them lustily. Love generates favor, favor generates disobedience, and disobedience generates jealousy; it has been like this from the beginning. If one is not a real man, he can hardly resist being deluded by women. The upright heart yields to the beauty and the heroic spirit withers between the sheets. There are even cases of men being controlled as if their hands were bound, and there is nothing anybody can do to help them. There is no special reason for that. In general, love is the origin of this problem. Alas! How can the sea of bitterness get people drowned? It is actually people who choose to drown themselves. I personally have worried that the relationship between husband and wife, as one of the three principal moral relations, is corrupted like this. What will it be like when this develops to an extreme in the future? Therefore, I picked the story of “The Lioness’s Roar” and composed a seven-scene zaju out of it. My purpose is to make all viragos and shrews surrender to and obey [the husbands] on whom they rely. Some commenters may think that the first half [of my play] consists of too much banter and the second half is much too illusory. However, they fail to see that the orthodox is concealed in the banter and reality is fixed within the illusion; the meaning lies between the lines. As for detailed research of classic works and broad citation of historical biographies, all sentences in this

\footnote{7 The play script of this zaju version of Shihou ji hasn’t been found yet, but the existence of this zaju was proved by Qi Biaojia’s drama critcs Ju pin “Shihou...was originally just a single play...” (XXSKQS, Vol1758, 151).}
play are based on evidence and no story is without its origin. For those who do not agree, I only wish that they would follow the theatre spectators [and go to the theatre].

小引8: 婦人秉陰氣以生。陰猶水也。水深沉而不可測。為男子者。以好色之心愛之。愛生寵。寵生梗。梗生妬。有由來矣。自非大丈夫鮮不遭其蠱惑。剛腸柔於紅粉。俠氣萎於袵席。甚且束手受制。而莫可誰何。此無異故。捴之。愛為禍始也。嗟夫。苦海何能溺人。人自溺耳。余竊慨。夫之於婦。三綱之一。倒壞至此。後將何極。乃採獅子吼故事。編為雜劇七齣。欲使天下之強婦悍婢。盡歸順於所天。說者以為前段似謔。後段似幻。不知即謔寓正。就幻寄真。意在言詞之外。至於詳稽經典。雜引史傳。則言皆有據。事匪無徵。其誰曰不然。惟願觀場者從。”

The preface is followed by additional remarks on why and how the original zaju got expanded into a thirty-scene chuanqi play. Wang then encourages the reader to go to the theatre to appreciate his play and get a further education from it. It seems that Wang failed to see not only the real value of chuanqi, here refering to a genre of short fiction in classical Chinese, but also that of theatre:

Additional remarks: [The author] Wang Wuru9 says: previously I wrote the zaju play titled “The Lioness’s Roar” and widely printed and published it all over the country.

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8 These two articles are printed in calligraphy and with no punctuation. The Chinese scholars Tong Wancheng and Nie Wenli also include in their essays a copy of these two texts, but the characters and punctuation they recorded, based on their knowledge of calligraphy and classical Chinese, differ from mine. I have punctuated these two texts using period marks to separate every sense-group instead of sentence, and did the translations based on my own reading.

9 “Wuru” is the pseudonym of Wang Tingne.
Everybody enjoyed reading and singing it. It is because the play is about a current problem and offers a proper remedy to it. Jiao, the Court Historian from Moling who is a very knowledgeable scholar of our time, thought that this play did not exhaust the stories about Su and Chen. Therefore, I again conducted very wide and deep research and collected almost all the anecdotes concerning Longqiu (Chen) and Meishan (Su) in their time, with nothing added or left out. Then I took the zaju play and revised it, extending it from the original seven scenes to the thirty scenes. The secret situations between the couples and the ugliness of the shrew are depicted thoroughly. The audience cannot wait to clap with laughter while the play is still on. This play also frightens the audience with the evil of the underworld and moves them by bodhi\(^{10}\). In this way, bad people will become good and good people will become Buddhas. [After all], who would be willing to act in an arbitrary manner and continue to do evil things forever? As for the decline of today’s moral ethics and the collapse of the husband’s authority, this play is not without some small compensation.

又叙: 汪無如曰。往余編《獅吼》雜劇。刻布宇內。人人喜誦而樂歌之。蓋因時之病。對症之劑也。秣陵焦太史。當今博洽君子。以為不足盡蘇陳事蹟。余復廣搜遠羅龍丘眉山當日之事。庶無添漏矣。乃取雜劇而更編之。始以七齣。今以三十齣。閨闱之隱情。悍戾之惡態。模寫殆盡。不待終場。而觀者無不撫掌也。復以幽冥惡懼之。以菩提化誘之。則兇人可善。善人可佛。誰肯甘於恃頑怙惡也者。其於今日風俗之陵夷。夫綱之頹敗。未必無小補云。

\(^{10}\) Bodhi means the supreme wisdom or enlightenment, necessary to the attainment of Buddhahood.
As Wang says here, he has published a seven-act *zaju* first. Here he refers to his friend Jiao Hong, a Ming Dynasty scholar who was interested in proofreading and writing notes or commentaries for playscripts (Tong 66). It seems that Jiao knew many more allusions to Chen Zao and Su Shi, so Wang accepted Jiao’s suggestion and did more intensive research, finally expanding this play into a much longer *chuanqi*. Wang sounds pretty confident when he emphasises that “all sentences in this play are based on evidence and no story is without its origin”. It seems that he intends to indicate that this play is based on very solid historical facts instead of fictional materials.

However, according to Yenna Wu, “Wang Tingne...ingeniously incorporated a number of well known anecdotes on shrews into his play” (Wu, 162). Her view is supported by Zhao Jingshen, a renowned Chinese scholar of theatre studies. In his article “*Shihou ji zacai zhu xiaoshuo* (*Shihou ji* covers materials from several novels)”, Zhao points out that this play is almost “a complete collection of all the envious wives past and present” (214), as it “covers almost all the materials concerning henpecked husbands from earlier novels and in classical literature” (210). In fact, the meaning of *chuanqi* is “transmission of marvels” and “the more [these *chuanqi*] travel, the more extraordinary they become.” (Luo, 2000, 163) Therefore, the historical authenticity of a *chuanqi* should never be the concern of readers, not to mention the theatre audience.

Wang’s emphasis on the authenticity of his story’s origins not only is untrustworthy, as Zhao Jingshen has pointed out, but is also unnecessary as Luo Di has noted. The idea of
indoctrinating married couples with the principles of Confucian moral conduct is Wong’s own wishful thinking. Once the plays moved to the stage, the audience might not be willing to take it in his way. With some of imperfections inherent in the original play, there exists the possibility of other interpretations, which can develop into another story.

2.3 Literary Origins of the Play

2.3.1 Characters as Historical Figures

There is not much that we know about Chen Zao or his wife except for a biography of him written by Su Shi, in which a few lines reveal a bit about the relationship between Chen and his wife. In this Biography of Master Fangshan (Fangshanzi zhuan), Su recorded how, when he encountered his old friend Chen in Huangzhou, he was invited to spend the night at Chen’s home. “His rooms were just bare walls, and his furnishings were rudimentary, yet his wife and children and maids all appeared happy and contented. I was quite astounded” (Pollard, 56). Su recalled the dates he spent with Chen at Fengxiang County nineteen years earlier, when Chen had lived a life of luxury with all kinds of entertainment. Su was astonished to see Chen abandoning this previous life style, of family property and great expectation of an official career. There is a note of administration in his description of his friend and his family, especially his wife, who are content with their lives in such a remote area of Huangzhou.

According to Su’s biography, not only was Chen an aloof and detached person, but his wife was also a supporter, if not an originator, of the idea of living an otherworldly life. Thus it
would not be too bold to infer that Chen and Liu might be real soulmates, who enjoyed a largely harmonious relationship. Wu Mei (1884-1939), a noted scholar of drama, also criticized Wang’s selective quoting of Su Shi without studying the real intention underlying the writing, “the reason that there were these two sentences in Su’s poem and essay [about Chen] is to praise Chen’s great happiness of living in harmonious seclusion with his wife and children, not to say that he was henpecked.” (Wu Mei 2009, 194)

Su “was too good a philosopher to be a puritan” and was actually “a poet of nature” (Lin, 165), who would never be constrained by rules and conventions. He once annoyed an austere Buddhist priest by taking to his chamber a courtesan, but succeeded in making him laugh by asking the girl to sing a comic poem. Even the Buddhist monk Foyin, who lived a life “far from ascetic” (Lin, 166), also enjoyed a similar reputation of being as unconventional and unrestrained as his friend Su. It is not hard to understand why, for both of them, interfering in another’s domestic life as a Confucian moralist would be inconceivable. Wang Tingne’s portrayal of the two as apologists for Confucian’s ethical norms is not at all convincing in the eyes of most intellectuals who were familiar with the writings of Su and Foyin.

As Lin Yutang has put it, “[b]y a literary accident Chen became immortalised as a henpecked husband.” (Lin, 191) Then, on the theatre stage and by dint of the co-efforts of the actors and the audience, the truth was to some degree restored.
2.3.2 Meaning of the “Roars”

The name of the play, *The Lioness’s Roar*, comes from one of the two sentences Wu Mei mentioned, quoted from a poem by Su Shi titled “Ji Wu Deren jian jian Chen Jichang” (Poem sent for Wu Deren and for Chen Jichang as well. Su wrote four lines about Chen, as follows:

The lay practitioner of Dragon Hill [ie. Chen] is also pitiful,
he stays up discoursing on emptiness and fullness all night long.
Suddenly he hears a lion’s roar from east-of-the river [ie. Liu],
the cane drops from his hand, he is at a loss.

龍丘居士亦可憐，
談空說有夜不眠，
忽聞河東獅子吼，
柱杖落手心茫然。(Su 100)

It is generally accepted that “lioness’s roar” comes from this allusion. Su’s purpose in composing this poem was interpreted by Lin Yutang as “making fun of his friend as friends often do,” but not necessarily as laughing at Chen for being henpecked. Lin believes that if Su “had clearly referred to ‘a lioness's roar’ [rather than ‘a lion’s roar’], the case could be better established” (Lin, 191). However, Su had already made it clear that the “roar” was from Chen’s wife, by mentioning her hometown Hedong (east of the river) rather than the family name “Liu”.

11 This argument is based on the studies of scholars like Wu Mei, Zhao Jingshen, Huang Biao and Lin Yutang as well.
In this line, Su made it clear that it was the voice of the wife that Chen heard. Lin explains the dropping of the cane as because Chen’s wife had a loud voice and he was frightened (Lin, 191). This is the same interpretation that Wang had in his play. In Scene 11 of Shihou ji, Su is frightened by Liu’s loud shouts and says to Chen that “it sounds just like the roar of a lioness.”

Lin also observes, “lion's roar' was originally a Buddhist phrase signifying ‘the voice of Buddha’” (Lin, 191), but he didn’t consider the possibility that “Hedong” referred to Chen’s wife Liu, nor did he consider that “lion’s roar” could refer to the content of her speech, i.e., that its meaning didn’t have to be about the volume of her voice. The “voice of Buddha” is often referred to as “the lion’s roar” in many Buddhist sutras because it is very loud and could be startling and enlightening as well.

Other than the three sutras titled “The Lion’s Roar” that record the teachings of the Buddha himself, there are two others whose titles incorporate this phrase concerning female deities of extraordinary wisdom and eloquence. One is The Sutra of Queen Srīmālā or The Lion’s Roar of Queen Srīmālā Sutra,12 the other is Fo shuo zhangze nü An Tizhe Shizihou liaoyi jing (The sutra of Buddha’s talks about elder’s daughter An Tozhe’s understanding of the lion’s

12 The Sutra of Queen Srīmālā is an important early Mahayana text. It is a unique development within the Buddhist tradition because of its egalitarian and generous view concerning women, portraying, on the one hand, the dignity and wisdom of a laywoman and her concern for all beings, and, on the other, the role of woman as philosopher and teacher. The major philosophical emphases of the text are the theories of the “womb of the Buddha” and the One Vehicle. Taisho Tripitaka Vol. 12, No. 353 Shengman shizihou yicheng dafangbian fangguang jing 勝鬘師子吼一乘大方便方廣經 (The Sutra of Queen Srīmālā). http://www.cbeta.org/result/normal/T12/0353_001.htm
Both of these sutras are about women’s wisdom in understanding Buddha’s teachings and their efforts in promoting these teachings to laymen.

In the second sutra, the very wise lady An Tizhe debates with Shariputra, one of Buddha’s disciples, about the most fundamental and profound Buddhist concepts, such as the relationship between emptiness and being, form and being, and life and death. Shariputra is astonished by her eloquence and asks why she is still in the inferior form of a woman instead of a man; the reply he gets from An Tizhe is that sexuality is merely a skin that does not really represent the real being of a person. Lady An Tizhe then gets praise from Buddha himself, who declares, “this woman is extraordinary, [and her wisdom] is equal to that of the boundless Buddha. She will reach true enlightenment soon.” (Taisho Tripitaka Vol. 14, No. 580). This sutra of the lion’s roar is not only about the Buddha’s enlightenment, but also about a woman’s wisdom in understanding it. On top of that, the idea of equality between the two sexes is also brought up.

Taking into consideration Su Shi’s considerable knowledge of Buddhist teachings, the “lion’s roar” in his poem could also be interpreted as admiration of Chen’s wife. It could be that Liu shi had a deeper understanding of Buddhist sutras and advanced some fairly enlightening arguments that startled her husband, so the latter was at a loss upon realizing his wife’s talent. Qian Jingfang, in his documentation of Wang’s Shihou ji, makes a similar argument. Qian cites the Biography of Master Fangshan and argues, “Chen was a very gallant man with the least

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http://www.cbeta.org/result/normal/T14/0580_001.htm Translator unknown.
likeliness of being henpecked.” (Qian Jingfang, 94) He also takes “lion’s roar” as complimenting Liu’s eloquence, “somebody said Chen loved talking about Chan Buddhism but his eloquence was considerably below that of his wife. Whenever they debated, he would be defeated by her. That is why [Su] Dongpo quoted the term [“lion’s roar from Hedong”] from the Record of the Transmission of the Lamp [Chuandeng lu 傳燈錄] to make fun of him. [I found] this interpretation pretty convincing.”(Qian Jingfang, 94)

2.4 Potential Problems concerning the Play’s Plot

It is a commonplace of Chinese chuanqi drama that all problems beyond man’s control will be solved by a supernatural power such as the Buddha, a Taoist deity, or an underworld judge. From Wang Tingne’s viewpoint, since the shrew’s behavior is so unconventional and unacceptable that even the underworld judge gets annoyed, then cruel torture is what the shrew deserves. At the same time, the Buddhist monk Foyin, as representative of the Buddha, appears to be indifferent when Liu is tortured and ends up with one eye blinded and one arm broken. Though she finally is converted and becomes a devout follower of Buddhism at the end of the play, it is not without irony that extreme violence toward a woman is used to prove the benevolence of Buddhist power. That just does not accord with Buddhist teachings.

Therefore, Wu Mei once expressed his strong aversion to the scene of “showing Liu around the underworld” in Shihou ji:
“The reason that there are [scenes involving] ghosts and humans on the stage is because [the playwright] had so strong a desire to make [the play] grotesque that [he] drove it to a dead end. He had no choice but to create an illusory scene, so that the sheng and dan\textsuperscript{14} can have a reunion on the spot. It was actually because the clues are not clear and there is no remedy for that. I would say it is better [for him] to achieve something by writing a [short] zaju rather than showing weakness while trying to create a [much longer] chuanqi.

六尺氍毹，人鬼參半，皆由好奇之心太過，山窮水盡，不得不設一幻境，以便生旦當場團圓，實則線索不清，補救不來而已。余謂與其作傳奇，而捉襟露肘，毋寧作雜劇，而點筆成金。” (Wu Mei, 2000, 57)

Wu Mei suggests that this play should be much shorter and the underworld scene should be cut because it actually reveals only the weakness of the play. The use of violence and threats from the underworld is not a convincing solution that develops naturally from the plot. It is very interesting that Wu brings up the issue of “tuanyuan”, the final reunion of the sheng and dan, which according to Luo Di, is one of the basic and most important concepts of Chinese theatre. The sheng and dan have to be reunited at the end of the play, no matter what they have experienced in the process. Only with the elimination of all the factors or characters that separate the sheng and dan can they reunite in the final scene and the play be regarded as complete.

\textsuperscript{14} Sheng and dan are two main role types in traditional Chinese theatre, playing the leading male and female roles. For more details of the role type system, please see Table 6. Here the sheng and dan in Shihou ji refer to Chen and Liu.
This “tuanyuan” can be any kind of reunion of husband and wife (if the sheng and dan are married) or of lovers (on earth or in heaven), but it need not be restricted to the conventional understanding of “tuanyuan” based on mainstream Confucian norms (Wu Mei, 2000, 170). The reunion of sheng and dan in chuanqi plays varies considerably. Being united in marriage is a common solution, as happens in the last scene of Peony Pavilion, in which the scholar Liu Mengmei and his lover Du Liniang, after the latter comes back to life, reunite when their marriage is confirmed by the emperor. In the chuanqi Changsheng dian, Emperor Li Longji and Lady Yang reunite in heaven after their deaths. However, the xiao quanben of plays of the Kunqu stage may sometimes reveal a very different idea of “tuanyuan”, which represents the audience’s understanding of the play. For example, in xiao quanben Changsheng dian, the plot ends with a zhezixi called “Yingku” (a combination of “Yingxiang” [Receiving the statue] and “Kuxiang” [Weeping to the statue]). It is almost a soliloquy, in which Emperor Li Longji tearfully addresses the statue of Lady Yang, telling her of his regret for forcing her to take her own life and his sorrow at being left alone in the world. In this scene, all the characters on stage, including Li, Yang, Gao Lishi and two sedan-chair bearers, “all dress in red” (Lu 1980, 110) as if this is a celebration or happy ending of the play. The playwright Hong Sheng, annoyed, declared, “[all] dressed in red is actually unreasonable” (Lu, 1980, 110). However, the fact that this practice has continued since the Kangxi reign to this day is proof positive that this scene of a

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15 The statue of Lady Yang would be played by a dan, who dressed up in the most formal and magnificent costumes of Lady Yan, sitting in the arm chair. It creates the illusion for both Li Longji and the audience that Li is talking to Yang.

16 The statue of Lady Yang, actually the actor/actress who plays the statue of Lady Yang, would sit on a chair with two poles, which would be carried by two bearers.
repentant emperor has been accepted as the final and most satisfying “tuanyuan” of Yang and Li.

“Tuanyuan” is of such great importance to Chinese theatre, but the form that “tuanyuan” takes often deviates from the mainstream values. It could be more humanized and idealized than in the society of its day. That might be why Wu Mei found the reunion of Chen and Liu in the original Shihou ji, which involves underworld ghosts and scenes of torture, very unnatural and unconvincing. How to solve this problem and effectuate a natural and humanized “tuanyuan” for Chen and Liu would be crucial to the success of a Kunqu troupe. They have to understand what the audience wanted.

Wu Mei is not the only one who was not satisfied with Wang Tingne’s plot. Other male readers of the play who are not drama critics found the ending of the play hard to accept. It seems that Wang failed to notice the possibility that the solution he suggested in Shihou ji would indicate the incapability of all men in the mortal world. What happens in Shihou ji is totally different from what happens in Shakespeare’s Taming of the Shrew, where Petruchio tames the shrew Katherina with his own wisdom and power while the latter is in his household and under his control. In Shihou ji, on the other hand, none of the men, neither the husband, nor the talented scholar-official, nor the respected Buddhist master, succeed in making one woman obey the “universal rule” that a wife should respect and be submissive to her husband “as if [he represents] her heaven”. 17 It is the power from outside the domestic sphere that gets

17 See page 10-13, as Wang Tingne suggests in his foreword.
the problem solved. The more frightening and cruel the punishments for the shrews in the underworld are, the more powerless the males will appear to be onstage in their own household. In order to protect the husband’s authority, the playwright has unintentionally challenged male pride.

There was a poem on this issue composed by a Qing Dynasty Jingju (Peking Opera) actor and writer, Wang Xiaonong (1858-1918), which was published in the first issue of the magazine Dalu in 1905.

In “On shrew-taming”, Wang says:

“There are one hundred reasons why [Chen] Jichang should be mortally ashamed. How come a hen is expected to be the harbinger of dawn? To get the devils defeated, it is not the vájra that one should count on. It would be better to rely upon several roars released from a [male] lion.

凡百季常應愧死，
司晨何待牝雞鳴。
降魔不恃金剛杵，
好仗雄獅吼數聲。(A Ying, Vol 5, 588)

Wang Xiaonong obviously did not like the idea of “letting a wife become the head of a household”, but it seemed that he was even more uncomfortable with getting challenged in the

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18 It is the third year of its publication.
19 Vájra is a simblic ritual object used to symbolize both the properties of a diamond (indestructibility) and a thunderbolt (irresistible force). It is often used in Buddhism to represent the firmness of spiritual power. As the Chinese name for Vájra is jingang chu (diamond pestle) or xiangmo chu (devile-defeating pestle), this name would inevitably be associated with the idea of violence.
domestic sphere. He was not happy getting the wife defeated by means of violence, even if that is achieved with the Buddha’s power. Wang thought domestic problems should be solved within the household, between the husband and wife. The only reasonable and acceptable solution lies in the manliness of the husband. Chen would not be henpecked if he could produce several masculine “roars”. Otherwise, he should be ashamed, since he is the one to blame. As a man and a husband, Wang Xiaonong was ashamed by Chen’s failure to behave like a head of a household and solve the problem like “a lion”, but what really bothered him is the idea that the problem got solved with interference from outside the household. Letting other powers invade the domestic sphere poses a big challenge to male pride.

Wang Xiaonong was probably not the only male who had this concern. Wang’s poem represents the aspirations of many, if not all, in the male audience. However, as the audience might already have noticed, he must at the same time have understood that if Chen suddenly became a real man and got the problem solved with a few “roars” (and presuming that no domestic violence is involved), the scene of taming would either be dull or lacking in either drama or romance. Who wants to see a play about an ordinary couple who follows each and every teaching of Confucian norms? A play about a husband beating up his wife would not be attractive, either, since that might be a scene from everyday life and would not qualify as a chuanqi at all.

“Theatre, as an art, is basically different from drama, as literature. A stage performance appeals to the audience by the combined visual and aural effects of the stage action but drama,
when read, produces its effects entirely by words.” (Hsü 137) Whether or not a good drama will become good theatre depends on the actor instead of the author. How the play would be performed on stage plays a crucial role in making a play good theatre, and audience’s reception is another key issue. Only scenes with great theatricality that do not conflict with the audience’s values can find favour with them. Such audience appreciation is the only reason that a play has long career on stage.

That Shihou ji has been performed on the Kunqu stage for over 400 years and is still among the most popular plays in the current repertoire demonstrates that audiences kept on appreciating it instead of turning their backs on it. There must be something that the troupes did to enable the play, at least a part of it, to survive on stage without injuring the male pride of audience members. How did they manage to bring along a natural and convincing “tuanyuan” for the sheng and dan?

The answer lies in this tradition of Kunqu called zhezixi. As Shihou ji was converted from a thirty-scene chuanqi into a four-scene play on stage, the story must then start somewhere, with the initial task of selecting which scenes to use. Only scenes with great theatricality, which can be appreciated and enjoyed by most of the audience, would be preserved on stage. How they got reframed into a new play is an interesting process.
3 Shihou ji as Zheizixi and Xiao Quanben

3.1 History of Scene Selection

Wang Tingne, in his foreword to the Shihou ji, urged the readers to go to the theatre and watch this play on stage. As this chuanqi was published in two volumes, the thirty scenes might be designed to be performed over two nights. A Ming Dynasty drama critic Lü Tiancheng (1580-1618) had a few lines of comments on this play in his book Qupin:

There has never been any nanxi [southern drama, meaning chuanqi] on the theme of henpecking. Wang originated a play to mock shrews, which was soon performed full length. [This play] involved the revolting manners [of the characters] and was very funny. The [wife’s] repentance at the end of the play should be a model [for others] in the domestic sphere.

惧内从无南戏, 汪初制一剧, 以讽枌榆, 旋演为全本。备极丑态, 堪捧腹。末段悔悟, 可以风笄帏中矣。(Lü 264)

Lü watched the play and was pleased with the ending. Though nothing was mentioned of how “full” this “full length” play was, it is at least clear that the ending Lü saw was faithful to the original play, when the play was being staged “very soon” after its publication. However, there is no guarantee that this play would always be staged in the way Wang foresaw. Another record of performance of Shihou ji can be found in Qi Zhongmin gong riji (Diary of Qi Biaojia) by

20 Volume one is scene 1-15 and volume two is scene 16-30.
Qi Biaojia (1602-1645), another Ming Dynasty theatre critic, who watched several Kunqu plays in Beijing during the first two months of 1633. *Shihou ji* is listed among the plays he watched there that year (Wu Xinlei 2002, 973). It is a pity nothing of the content or length of the play was recorded in his diary. The practice of performing several *zhezixi* from different plays in one night started pretty early, as evident in Pan Yunduan’s *Yuhuatang riji* (Diary of Yuhua Studio), which records that his private troupe performed several *zhezixi* in 1588 (970). It went on to become a common practice on the Kunqu stage in the following 300 years, so there is the possibility that what Qi watched in Beijing was a series of *zhezixi* of *Shihou ji* instead of the whole play that Wang Tingne had written.

**Table 1 Zhezixi of Shihou ji published in miscellanies in Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenes in HCT Scripts</th>
<th>3 “Fangyou” (Visiting Friends)</th>
<th>5 “Haoyou” (Luxury Outing)</th>
<th>11 “Jian Liu” (Admonishing Liu)</th>
<th>13 “Naoci” (Farce in the Temple)</th>
<th>16 “Dingdeng” (Lamp on the Head)</th>
<th>17 “Bianyang” (Becoming a Sheep)</th>
<th>19 “Fuxing” (Recovering Human Form)</th>
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<tr>
<td>CLYZ21 1605-1608</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Fuqinaoci”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BNZJ 1605-1608</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Chen Zao jü’nei dingdeng”22</td>
<td>“Chen Zao bianyang fuxing”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YLY 1616</td>
<td>“Fangyou”</td>
<td>“Haoyou”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXP 1644</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Jian Liu”</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there is no evidence to show how complete the staging of *Shihou ji* was, there

>21 The four miscellanies are *Cilin yizhi, Baneng zoujin, Yue lu yin, Xuanxue pu*.
>22 Meaning Chen Zao’s being henpecked and having a lamp on his head. *Jü’nei* means “afraid of one’s wife”.

26
are some scenes, or arias, from this play that were published in drama miscellanies (*xuanben*), woodblock collectaneas of popular stage scenes or arias. Table 1 show that seven scenes were chosen as the most popular scenes on stage in late Ming miscellanies.

Among the four publications listed, three were published in the Wanli reign (1573-1620), the same period that the *Huancuitang* version was published. The first is a selection of arias, while the other three are scripts of a whole scene that include both actors’ lines and arias. These excerpts reveal, in part, the truth behind the staging of *Shihou ji* in theatres of the Ming. One remarkable fact is that among all seven scenes that were the most selected and therefore likely the most popular scenes of *Shihou ji* on Kunqu stage in Ming Dynasty, none of the violent scenes about the torturing and transforming of Liu was selected. It seems that even Ming Dynasty audiences were not very interested in the shrew-taming theme. They might have had the same concern that Wang Xiaonong expressed in his poem. Table 2 does not show any of the scenes from the second half of the play because none of them survived on the Kunqu stage after the Ming dynasty, which supports Wu Mei’s observation. According to Fu Xihua’s study, in the late nineteenth century, scenes 16, 17, and 19 were compiled into a *shiju* (contemporary play) for the Jingju stage called *Bianyang ji* (A stratagem of transforming into a sheep) 23 (Xie

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23 In the original *Shihou ji* of Wang Tingne’s *Huancuitang* version, a shaman happens to be at Chen’s door when he needs help and randomly comes up with the idea of borrowing the transformation excuse to set Chen free. However, in *Bianyang ji*, the transformation into a sheep is a plan of Su and the shaman is actually a servant of Su, who is sent to Liu to deceive her. (He 174)
That play featured the performing skills of a *chou* in the role of a shaman who helps Chen deceive his wife (A Ying, Vol 4, 448). 24

*Yue lu yin* collected only the arias of plays. Four out of eight arias from the original scene 3 (*Queqiao xian, Tianxia le, Er'fan bangzhuangtai, Qiangqiang, Bushi lu, Changpai, Duanpai, Weisheng*) and six out of eight arias from scene 5 (*Jinju dui furong, Juhua xin, Putian le, Bei chao tianzi, Putian le, Bei chao tianzi, Putian le, and Bei chao tianzi*)25 were selected. The selection of arias might represent how these scenes got staged: some arias, which do not contain crucial content, were omitted.

According to Guo Yingde’s study, *Baneng zoujin* and *Cilin yizhi* were published around 1606-1608. 26 This suggests that four scenes got selected as popular scenes, especially scenes 16, 17, 19, and that even if *Shihou ji* was not presented in its full length, at least some scenes from the second half were staged during the earlier seventeenth century. In 1644, only one scene, scene 11 (Admonishing Liu), was included in *Xuanxuepu*. This is the *zhezi* that later became known as “Guichi” (Kneeling by the Pond), which has ranked among the most popular *zhezi* on the Kunqu stage from the Qing Dynasty until the present day.

The formation of *Shihou ji* as a four-scene play was no doubt a very long and complicated procedure, whose details may no longer be traceable. It is, however, demonstrable

24 According to Lin Shu, a Chinese translator who was active in late Qing and Republican China, *Bianyang ji* was one of the best *zhezi* of a famous *chou* actor called Liu Gansan. Liu was one of the thirteen most famous actors in late Qing, who were called “*Tong Guang shisan jue*” (thirteen extraordinary actors during Tongzhi and Guangxu period).
25 The underlined arias are those collected in YLY.
26 See page 6 of the detail of Guo’s study.
that this version must have been formed during or before the Qianlong period, since there is a
copy of a stage script, which consists of only four scenes, called *Shihou ji - lian sichu (The
lioness’s roar- in four continuous scenes).* This copy is a very fine four-color- woodblock version
preserved originally in the Qing court as an item in the collection of the Qianlong emperor. 27
The exact printing date is unknown, but the copy was “a tribute from a prince, because during
the Qianlong era, the emperor and imperial princes were all interested in theatre, which is why
there were tributes of play scripts from the residences [of the princes] now and then.”(QNF, 5)
The *Neifu* version, though printed by a prince for the emperor, is actually based on the stage
performance of an actor-dominated type, which was in fact an audience-dominated, theatre.
The *Neifu* version of *Shihou ji* is a play reframed through the joint efforts of the actors and
audience in the commercial theatre around the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The *Neifu* version contains only four scenes developed from the original scenes
9/10/11/13. Scene 13 (Farce in the Temple) was changed slightly and served as the ending of
the play in the newly framed four-scene version. This version was published under the title of
*Shihou ji* but with a totally converted theme. Fu Xihua after studied this *Neifu* copy in Mei
Lanfang’s studio, he then commented of it that “there are even stage directions marked [in this
version], it is not only for the convenience of troupes to put it on stage, but also offers a
glimpse of a typical model for the old days’ [performance].” (5)

27 This copy was originally in Qianlong’s collection, so when it became a collection of *Zhuiyu xuan*, the studio of the
Jingju master Mei Lanfang’s, this copy was labled “Neifu wuse chaoben (five-color scripts from inner court).” As it
was reprinted and published under the name *Qing neifu sise chaoben Shihou ji chuanqi* (Four-color script of *Shihou
ji* from the inner court of Qing Dynasty) in 2010, I will hereafter refer to it as *Neifu* version and the abbreviation for
it is QNF.
Table 2 Zhezixi of Shihou ji published in miscellanies and qupu since Qing Dynasty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenes in Huancuitang Scripts</th>
<th>9 “Qidu” (Extraordinary Jealousy)</th>
<th>10 “Shangchun” (Appreciating Spring)</th>
<th>11 “Jian Liu” (Admonishing Liu)</th>
<th>13 “Naoci” (Farce in the Temple)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qing Dynasty (1644—1912)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neifu 1735-1795</td>
<td>“Liushi shuaijing” (Liu Breaks a Mirror)</td>
<td>“Chen Zao youchun” (Chen Zao’s Spring Outing)</td>
<td>“Dongpomingyi” (Su’s Admonition)</td>
<td>“Jichang mengpa” (Chen’s Fears in the Dream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZBQ 1777</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang” (Morning Toilette)</td>
<td>“Guichi” (Kneeling by the Pond)</td>
<td>“Mengpa” (Fears in the Dream)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSYWJQP 1792</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang”</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican China (1912—1949)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZJLYQP 1922</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang”</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
<td>“Mengpa”</td>
<td>“Sanpa” (Three Fears)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCQP 1924</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang”</td>
<td>“Youchun”</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
<td>“Sanpa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZXBM 1927</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang”</td>
<td>“Youchun”</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
<td>“Mengpa” “Sanpa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MYQP 1933</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang”</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YZQP 1940</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang”</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s Republic of China (1949—)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKSHJ 1979</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang”</td>
<td>“Youchun”</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
<td>“Sanpa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZFQP 1982</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang”</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28 The miscellanies and qupu here are Zhui baiqiu, Nashuyin waiji qupu, Zengji Liuye qupu, Chuanzibeiximudan, Mengyuanqupu, Yuzhongqupu, Shangkun Shihouji, Zhenfei qupu. See appendix E for details.

29 This record is not based on any script but on Chuanzibeiximudan (A list of plays performed by “Chuan” generation actors) recorded by Zhou Chuanying in his book Kunju shengya liushinian (A sixty-year career in Kunju). This was based on the program of Shihouji that was performed by “Chuan” generation actors as a quanben (full play) in Shanghai’s Xiaowutai theatre during 1927.

30 This is a mimeograph copy printed by Shanghai Kunju Company in February 1979 for its actors and actresses, but not published. The Shihou ji script contains three selected scenes: “Shuzhuang”, “Youchun”, and “Guichi”, while “Sanpai” is printed separately as a zhezixi script.
The Neifu version represents the standardization of the husband-taming version of Shihou ji on the Kunqu stage. This version was passed down through generations of Kunqu actors and was performed with very little changes, as can be demonstrated when comparing subsequent scripts to performances on stage today. Therefore, it can be demonstrated that even by the Qianlong period, this four-scene Shihou ji was already mature and, like many other zhengben (standard scripts), finally “took the place of the original full-length play.” (Luo 1986, 55) Shihou ji became a husband-taming play instead of a shrew-taming one. From then on, it was accepted more as a story between a henpecked husband and his jealous wife, which has already been shown by the two idioms that originated from this play. Wang Tingne’s thirty-scene play then became an an’tou ben, not a play for performance.

As can be seen from Table 1, in the four anthologies of the Ming Dynasty, the scenes selected were all published under the name given in the original play, because they were not yet established on the stage as independent. However, as found in Table 2, these scenes all gained their own names as zhezixi in the Qing Dynasty. As such they were recognized more as zhezixi from the Kunqu play Shihou ji than as scenes from Wang Tingne’s shrew-taming chuanqi. This all happened after the standard version of Neifu Shihou ji had appeared.

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31 Zhengben 正本 is the way Ming and Qing Dynasty theatre troupes called their staged scripts, in contrast to the original chuanqi play, which was called an “an’tou ben 案头本 (desktop play [i.e. for reading, not performance]).”
3.2 Zhezixi in the Four-scene Shihou ji

The four scenes of *Shihou ji* (original scenes 9/10/11/13), after they were reframed into a new play that was printed in *Neifu* version and appeared on stage as a husband-taming play, also established their names as separate zhezixi. However, these four scenes were not equally popular in this form. Over time, the two most popular ones have been and remain “Shuzhuang” (Morning Toilette) and “Guichi” (Kneeling by the Pond); Sanpa (Three Fears) was sometimes performed as a single zhezixi, but “Youchun” does not appear at all in records of the famous scenes of Qing performers, as can be seen from the Table 3.

Sixteen famous Kunqu actors of are listed here, together with their representative zhezixi, as mentioned by various theatre lovers in critiques published during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Here only the zhezixi of *Shihou ji* have been listed. One can see that no matter which jiao’se (role-type) these actors specialized in, they were all famous for their performances in “Shuzhuang”, “Guichi” or “Sanpa”. The reason that “Youchun” is not mentioned is not because it was not performed or these actors didn’t know how to perform it, but because it was not sufficiently appreciated as a top-class popular zhezixi, hence actors could not build a reputation by playing it. Therefore, theatre lovers turned a blind eye to “Youchun” when commenting on their favourite stars. The fact that they didn’t even bother to mention “Youchun” showed that it had little importance on the Kunqu stage.
Table 3 Qing Dynasty Actors who were good at performance of zhezixi from Shihou ji

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reviews</th>
<th>Publishing Date</th>
<th>Actors’ Names</th>
<th>Role Type(^{32})</th>
<th>Zhezixi from Shihou ji, that actors were famous for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XHXY(^{33})</td>
<td>1794-1795(^{34})</td>
<td>Wang Baishou</td>
<td>xiaosheng</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YZHFL</td>
<td>1795</td>
<td>Shi Yongtang</td>
<td>zhengsheng</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang” “Guichi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RXKHJ</td>
<td>1803</td>
<td>Shen Siguan</td>
<td>dan</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang” “Guichi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZXG</td>
<td>1806</td>
<td>Wang Guilin</td>
<td>dan</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSZL</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>Du Buyun</td>
<td>dan</td>
<td>“Guichi” “Sanpa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Huang Chunquan</td>
<td>laosheng</td>
<td>“Guichi” “Sanpa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chen Lian’er</td>
<td>sheng</td>
<td>“Guichi” “Sanpa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JBQY</td>
<td>1874</td>
<td>Shen Zhiqiu</td>
<td>dan</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang” “Guichi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cao Chunshan</td>
<td>laosheng</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang” “Guichi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Zhu Lianfen</td>
<td>dan</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang” “Guichi” “Sanpa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Xu Xiaoqiang</td>
<td>sheng/dan</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang” “Guichi” “Sanpa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lu Xiaoqian</td>
<td>dan</td>
<td>“Sanpa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DXYL</td>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Chen San</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lu Xinlin</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JTJXL</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>Li Yannong</td>
<td>xiaosheng</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang” “Guichi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chen Sibao</td>
<td>dan</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Audience preferences are clearly revealed in this table, but the reason why some scenes were more popular than others can be found only through detailed reading and comparison of the staged play scripts and audience reviews.

\(^{32}\) For more information of the role type system in Kunqu theatre, please see Table 5.

\(^{33}\) The actor and performance reviews here in this table are Xiaoan xinyong, Yangzou huafang lu, Zhongxiang guo, Rixia kanhua ji, Shengpingshu zhilüe, Jubu Qunying, Dao Xian yilai liyuan jinian xiaolu, and Jutan jixiu lu. Please see appendix E for details.

\(^{34}\) Some of the dates in this table are drawn from the diaries and notes compiled in Zhang Cixi’s Qingdai yandu liyuan shiliao zhengxubian (Compiled historical materials of pear garden in Beijing during Qing dynasty).
3.2.1 “Shuzhuang” (Morning Toilette)

Scene 1 of 4, “Shuzhuang (Morning Toilette),” is developed from Scene 9, “Qidu” (Extraordinary Jealousy); scene 3 “Guichi (Kneeling by the Pond),” is from the original scene 11 “Jian Liu (Admonishing Liu)” of the Huancuitang version. These two scenes haven not changed much in either the Neifu version or when they were developed into zhezixi on the Kunqu stage. All eight arias from “Qidu” were performed with almost no changes to the lyrics: 

- Yijian mei, Nü Linjiang
- four Lan huamei
- two Jie san cheng.

These two scenes haven not changed much in either the Neifu version or when they were developed into zhezixi on the Kunqu stage. All eight arias from “Qidu” were performed with almost no changes to the lyrics: 

- Yijian mei, Nü Linjiang
- four Lan huamei
- two Jie san cheng.

There are three main characters in “Shuzhuang”: Chen Zao (sheng), Liu shi (dan) and a servant of Su Dongpo called Su yuangong (old male servant). The action of the scene covers one morning, after Chen has returned from Luozhong and is shocked by the ugliness of his four new concubines. Intending to please his wife, Chen volunteers to assist in her morning toilette. Liu catches a glimpse of Chen making a face behind her back while she looks in the mirror. Chen explains that he is actually fascinated by her beauty and compares her appearance to one of the neighbours’ wives. Liu becomes jealous and feels insulted, so she throws away the mirror, which is caught by Chen. He takes out a fan to cool Liu down, but this effort also turns into a disaster, because Liu senses the possibility of “a mysterious relationship” between Chen and somebody else, as that fan is “a gift from a young friend.” She tears the fan into shreds. At that point, Su yuangong comes with a message from Su Shi inviting Chen to accompany him on a

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35 The role type of this servant is recorded as mo in Huancuitang, changed to za in Neifu, and settled as a fu in the zhezixi, also called er’mian (secondary painted face).
36 This is the reason why, in the Neifu version, this scene on stage is named “Liu shi shuaijing” (Liu throws the mirror on to the floor). See Table 2.
spring outing. Liu would not let Chen go when she hears mention of Qincao, a courtesan. Chen swears that she has heard wrong and promises her that no women will accompany them. He even agrees that he will be caned one hundred times if there turns out to be courtesan present.

Though all the arias are retained in the stage version, there are a few lines added to the original script and changes in role type, especially as regards Su Dongpo’s servant. In the zhezixi, when questioned closely by Liu about the spring outing, the servant attempts to assure Liu that there will be no courtesans; he even swears that Master Su himself “is still a virgin,” which is, of course, a poor choice of words, but an addition guaranteed to make the audience laugh. In the original play, the servant replies, simply, “Please rest your mind. Even the Master Su himself has in his own life never been very pleased to meet women.” In the zhezixi, after Liu extracts Chen’s promise, she tells him to fetch a green stick from his studio and insists on striking him before he leaves. The servant happens to witness the caning and makes fun of Chen’s being henpecked on their way to meet up with Su. All that happens on stage helped to achieve the character transformation of Su yuangong from a mo to za, fu, or er’mian, all role types designating a comic character of the painted face type. In turn, this change foreshadows some of the imperfections in Su Shi’s role, even before the character comes on stage. It is not hard for the audience to predict that since his servant is not very well behaved, master Su himself is probably not a very respectable figure of exemplary virtue.
3.2.2 “Guichi” (Kneeling by the Pond)

In “Guichi”, the three main characters are Chen (sheng), Liu (dan) and Su (mo), the same as in the original playscript, with only one character, a servant of Chen, added. All nine arias from “Jian Liu” remained on stage as well: two Shengcha zi, two Yichun ling, four Liangzhou xu and one Weisheng.

The plot can be summarised as follows: the morning following the spring outing, before Chen gets up, Liu complains about her husband’s lying and decides to punish him. Chen first tries to deny that there is such a person as a courtesan Qincao, but Liu exposes the lie by threatening to summon the servant as a witness. Chen then admits the existence of Qincao, but still denies that he had promised to be caned 100 times. Liu is enraged, but even before she starts to beat Chen one of her nails breaks on the cane and she decides to demand that Chen kneel by the pond. Chen kneels by the pond in the back yard while Liu is having a rest indoors. He scares the frogs away because he worries that their noisy croaking will make Liu suspect that he is complaining about her to others. After that, he falls asleep.

Su comes to visit Chen as he supposes that Chen will be punished after the spring outing. Without knocking on the door, Su enters the garden and is shocked at the sight of Chen kneeling by the pond. He pretends to be a deity who has come to save Chen, only to discover that Chen is complaining about his friend Su, but not the wife Liu. He decides to teach Liu a

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37 The “nail breaking” scene appears in the dialogue of the original play, but without stage directions. On stage, it is performed with fixed movements. Can you provide details about the fixed movements?
lesson. First, he chides Liu, informing her that the wife should be obedient to the husband and follow his words. Next, he is stunned by her rejoinder that the problem lies with the husband, who does not behave properly. Su is driven out, but he comes back in again after talking to Chen at the gate for awhile. Strategically, Su first comforts Liu by saying that Chen had promised that he would in future behave decently so there is nothing to worry about. Liu is pleased by these words and asks a servant to serve Su some good tea. However, Su changes tack and suggests that Liu should let Chen marry a concubine, this being their only chance to have a male heir. Liu falls into a rage and asks the servant to take back the tea. She then tells Chen that the only possibility for Chen to have a young concubine is if he is willing to endure being caned by her 100 times a day until he is 99. Chen swears that he wants no concubine and that there will be no problem if they have no son. Liu drives Su away again.

The added character is the servant who brings tea. He first replies from the back stage to Liu’s request that he “serve tea to Master Su,” and when he brings the tea on stage, the audience is already aware that Su would not have the luck to enjoy it, not only because Su is about to bring up a very improper topic concerning the concubine, which will surely offend Liu, but also because the character who brings the tea is a chou. Chou is a role type that diverts the plot momentarily in an “opposite direction” (Luo 2000, 120), and it is a convention that what a chou does on stage will generate unexpected consequences. Once the servant brings the tea on a tray and says to Liu, “Your ladyship, tea is ready.” Liu shouts, “Take it back!” The chou is

38 In Huancuitang, Liu says “till you are 60.” The stage performance further exaggerates the punishment for comic effect.
shocked and in his trembling hands, the cup flips and rests on the tray up-side-down. He then sighs: “I knew all along that Master Su would not have the luck to drink this cup of tea.” Adding this character does not really alter the singing arias or contribute much to the plot development, but seems to be designed to offer another opportunity for the audience to laugh at Su.

### 3.2.3 “Shuzhuang” and “Guichi” on the Court Stage

The popularity of “Shuzhuang” and “Guichi” in the commercial theatre during Qianlong’s reign is evinced by the fact that they are the two scenes that got selected in Zhui baiqi39, an anthology of the most popular zhezixi in theatre. Moreover, these two scenes were also very popular on the court stage. According to the Chuandai tigang (Catalogue of costumes), a general guide to theatre costumes during the Qianlong (1736-1795) and Jiaqing (1796-1820) periods that was printed in 1811, among all the 312 Kunqu zhezixi performed at court during that period and before, “Shuzhuang” and “Guichi” were the only two scenes selected from Shihou ji (Zhu & Ding, 118). There are several records of performances of these two scenes in palaces of the Forbidden City.

In the 24th year of the Jiaqing Emperor’s reign (1810), the emperor watched these two zhezixi five times: on the 11th of the first month, Zhao Shanhui and Li Fu performed “Shuzhuang” in the Fengsan wusi Palace. Each of the two actors was specially rewarded with a

39 See Table 2.
small ingot of silver, weighing 5-\textit{qian} and a \textit{hebao}\textsuperscript{40} from the emperor for the quality of their performance (100). On the 26\textsuperscript{th} of the same month, in the same place, Xi Qin and Zhao Shanhui performed “Guichi” for the emperor (101). On 8th of the seventh month that year, the Jiaqing Emperor watched “Guichi” again in the \textit{Fensan wusi Palace}, as performed by Zhao Shanhui and Li Fu (105). Then on 30\textsuperscript{th} of the eleventh month and 22\textsuperscript{nd} of the twelfth month, these two \textit{zhezixi} were performed together twice in the \textit{Yangxin Palace}, the residence of the emperor (110-111). Each time they were performed with three other \textit{zhezixi}.

According to court records, Emperor Xianfeng (1851-1861) was also interested in these two scenes. On the 15\textsuperscript{th} of the first month of 1856, he required that a transcription of the play scripts of “Shuzhuang” and “Guichi” be presented as soon as possible (262). He also watched “Guichi” on the 7\textsuperscript{th} of sixth month of 1861 at \textit{Da Jitai} (the stage of great sacrifice) together with fourteen other \textit{zhezixi} (302). On the 21\textsuperscript{st} of eleventh month of 1880, Empress Dowager Cixi (1835-1808), the widow of Emperor Xianfeng who exercised control of China during Emperor Guangxu’s reign (1875-1908), also watched a performance of “Shuzhuang” and “Guichi” in her residence, the \textit{Changchun Palace} (368). Taking into consideration that the performance was ordered by herself only a few days after her recovery from sickness, it seems likely that she attached special importance to them.

The \textit{Neifu} version produced by a prince for the Qianlong emperor in the mid-eighteenth century shows that there were performances of the four-scene version of \textit{Shihou ji} in court

\textsuperscript{40} Qian is a traditional Chinese measurement of weight. It is also referred to as mace. One mace is 3.779936375 grammes. A \textit{hebao} is a pouch or a purse, often with rich embroidery.
during that period. Therefore, these two scenes must have been performed at the Qing court for about a century. “Shuzhuang” and “Guichi” have often been performed, with the scene “Youchun” in between omitted. This is because what happens in “Youchun” can be presented as an an’chang41 and the audience would have no problem understanding the plot without it. It seems these two scenes are a condensed version of the four-scene Shihou ji in revealing the domestic relationship of the couple.

3.2.4 “Youchun” (Spring Outing)

“Youchun” (Spring Outing) is base on Scene 10 “Shangchun” (Appreciating Spring) in Huancuitang. Its name came from the Scene 2 (“Chen Zao youchun”) in the Neifu version. Though the plot of this scene happens in between “Shuzhuang” and “Guichi”, because those two zhezixi often got performed together onstage, “Youchun” often was omitted and became the least performed scene. The other three scenes all garnered fame as great zhezixi on the Kunqu stage, as demonstrated in Table 3, while this one owes its stage existence to its status only as Scene 2 of Shihou ji on the Kunqu stage. Five out of six arias from the original scene are kept in the staged version: Manting fang, Rao Honglou, and both of the two Shiliu hua, but one of the two Qi Yanhuis is omitted because it is sung by Qincao, who is not a crucial character in this play. This omission may have been out of a desire to save time and enable performances of the play in one night.

41 暗場 (dark scene) refers to a part of plot mentioned in the actors’ lines but not performed.
In fact, on Nov. 26th, 1925, when the “Chuan” generation actors staged the *quanben* (full play) *Shihou ji* at *Xiao Wutai* theatre in Shanghai, the four-scene version contained “Shuzhuang”, “Guichi”, “Mengpa” and “Sanpa”. “Youchun” was added about a year later when this play was staged again at the *Da Shijie* (Great World) theatre. It seems that with or without “Youchun,” the *quanben* version of *Shihou ji* was accepted by the audience. This establishing of a performance practice is what Zhou Chuanying has described as “*buxi*” (adding scenes): first learn from the Kunqu masters several classical *zhezixi* from a same play; if the plots of those scenes are not continuous enough to form a whole play, add one or two scenes from the original play to make the new version more complete (Zhou & Luo, 43). The scene or scenes added in are performed according to the original script, but they lack standardized stage traditions compared to the well-preserved *zhezixi* inherited by generations of actors. “Youchun” might have its own stage tradition in the Qianlong period as the *Neifu* version suggests, but it was not included in *Zhui baiqiu*, the anthology of popular *zhezixi* of the same period. The stage tradition may have been gradually lost because of a comparatively low frequency of performances. From Republican era music scores, we can determine that the arias were also rarely sung by amateurs. Only one score selection, the *Zengji* *Liuye qupu*, includes “Youchun” in its collection of *zhezixi*.

As noted above, for the “Chuan” generation Kunqu actors, this scene was not indispensable in the *quanben Shihou ji*. In his performance guide for “Shuzhuang” and “Guichi”,

42 Please see Table 2.
Xu Lingyun (1886-1966)⁴³, a Kunqu scholar and amateur player, remarks that the performance of “Youchun” in Suzhou Kunqu troupes was nothing special compared to that of the Gaoyang and Ningbo troupes.⁴⁴ Though the style of Suzhou Kunqu troupes represented the mainstream of performance traditions, the performances of Kunqu troupes from other areas can also provide evidence for audience tastes at that time.

Foyin, who does not appear in the original Scene 10 in Huancuitang, or in the music scores or stage script of “Youchun” scene, would sometimes appear on the Kunqu stage⁴⁵ as a self-invited guest who joins Chen, Su and Qincao. “They would sit on the ground,⁴⁶ drinking wine and composing poems” (Xu Lingyun 83), as suggested in the original play. Foyin would be “played by a mo, wearing the standard costumes of a monk”⁴⁷(83). Gaoyang troupes perform the scene in a similar way, the only difference being that Foyin would wear a dignified pilu hat, which detail prompts the audience to consider that drinking and laughing are very improper behaviors for a Buddhist monk such as Foyin (84).

⁴³ Xu was a qujia, an amateur expert of Kunqu with great knowledge as well as singing and performing skills. He also learned how to perform several selected scenes from a Kunqu master Shen Yuequan (1865-1936), who specialized in the male scholar role type.
⁴⁴ Gaoyang is an area in Hebei province. Troupes there performed plays in both Kunshan and Yiyang musical styles, so they would sometimes be called Kunyi troupes. Ningbo troupes refers to those troupes operating in Ningbo and Yongjia area that perform Kunqu in a distinctive local style. Both styles were different from the Suzhou Kunqu style, and both have disappeared. Then as now, the Kunqu troupes in the Suzhou area were regarded as more standardized and authentic, so they were referred to as Kunban (Kunqu troupes), while other troupes might have other names according to their special style or location to differentiate them from the Suzhou-style Kunqu troupes.
⁴⁵ Foyin’s appearance onstage in the “Youchun” scene seems to be only a temporary practice of the Republican stage.
⁴⁶ “Sitting on the ground” is not a literal description of the stage performance. On stage, the sheng, dan and mo sit on small stools.
⁴⁷ Pilu hat is a hat worn on stage by the eminent monks.
The Ningbo troupe went even further in making Foyin a satirical figure. According to Xu’s account, this scene was called “Youchun taodai” (Spring Outing Wearing a Gunnsack).

Foyin was the main character and would be played by a fujin/baimian role type. All of the main characters, Chen, Su, and Qincao are boating on a lake for their spring outing while all the dan actors of the troupe are costumed as courtesans. After each courtesan approaches in her own boat, singing for the males, Su and Chen tip the singer. Needless to say, it is very improper for Foyin, a monk, to be present on such an occasion. Since he has no money, Foyin tips the courtesans with the belongings he has on him: his hat, coat, shoes, shirt...and so on.

When all the courtesans have finished singing, Foyin is the one left on the boat, half naked. He begs the boatman for help and ends up wearing a gunnysack back home. It is a sarcastic response to Foyin’s always “having a free meal” (84) as a mendicant monk. According to Xu Lingyun, the performance of taking off every piece of costume on stage might be borrowed from the tradition of the zhezixi Mituo si (Mituo Temple) from Pipa ji (The Lute) on the Kunqu stage (84). In that scene, the jing and chou have no money, but are so moved by the singing of the dan Zhao Wuniang that they take off all that they have and give to her, from their fans, coat, shirt, shoes, collar...to their headbands and even their rankou (artificial beard).

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48 It is very possible that Xu is talking about the Kunqu troupe from Yongjia, a city close to Ningbo. Or he might be referring to Yongju troupes, a different genre specific to Ningbo.  
49 In scene 15 of the original Huancuitang version, Foyin is invited to go boating with Chen, Su and Qincao at Chibi (Red Cliff). The Ningbo troupe version of Spring Outing “on a boat” likely derived from that.  
50 There are also other sarcasms directed at the mendicity of Buddist monks on the Kunqu stage, such as a joke about how even tigers are afraid of monks’ demands for alms in the frequently-performed zhezixi You dian 遊殿 (Visiting the Temple Halls) in Xixiang ji (Romance of the Western Chamber).  
51 The performance of Mituo si has almost vanished on the Kunqu stage. Only some of the “ji” generation actors (繼字輩) in Suzhou can perform it. The script of this scene can be found in the first Volume (Volume Jin 金集) of
However, the performance of “Youchun” on the boat seems more closely to resemble a play originated from *Suzhou tanhuang* a local theatrical genre of Suzhou, which was very popular in Jingju troupes early in the twentieth century. Titled *Dang huchuan* (Boats Paddling on the Lake), it features a *chou* who plays a stupid lecher and has all his belongings from clothes to shoes stolen while watching a beautiful boat girl. That play demonstrates to perfection how “Lust does not overpower men, men surrender themselves to lust.” (Ding 303-304). The “gunnysack” version of “Youchun” staged by the *Ningbo* troupes is obviously designed to call attention to the inappropriate appearance of Foyin in such an entertainment involving many sing-song girls and courtesans. He may not be overpowered by lust, but he is punished for being on the scene and made the butt of humor. The fact that Foyin was played by a painted face clown role in this scene reveals the audience’s attitude toward this role: Foyin is not at all the decent and respectful Buddhist monk portrayed in the original play of Wang Tingne.

What happened in *Ningbo* troupes was very different from what happened in the Suzhou troupes, and this offers some explanation for why this scene was not very popular mainstream *zhezixi*. The performance of the standard “Youchun” lacked any special features and the audience might not want to accept Foyin as a respectable eminent monk, even though in the original play he commanded great powers that could bring Liu shi back from the underworld.

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*Jicheng qupu* 集成曲譜.
3.2.5 “Sanpa” (Three Fears)

Among these 4 acts, the changes that scene 4 “Sanpa” underwent in transforming from the original scene 13 “Naoci” of Huancuitang version are the most remarkable. As in Wang Tingne’s original play, the farce in the local court and the local earth temple are represented as occurring to Chen in reality, including the episode between the local magistrate and the local earth god. Though the comic effect is great, the absurdity of a man bringing an ordinary legal case before the earth god to judge is obvious. To put this scene on stage and keep the plots in the mortal world, the Kunqu performers over time changed the real meeting with the earth god into a fantastical scene that takes place in Chen’s dream. When Chen awakens, he recalls what has happened in the dream and concludes that the right thing to do is to obey his wife. Zhao Jingshen found this version to be “much more reasonable than [what happens in] the original act” because “one dreams at night what one thinks in the day” (214).

In order to change scene 13 into an ending scene for the four-scene play, it was necessary to make some changes to the original script, especially the arias. The original scene 13 of the Huancuitang version has only nine arias in it, while in the Neifu version, scene 4 contains twelve arias, with five newly composed arias not included in the original play. As can be seen from the Table 5, nine arias were divided into two acts: arias 1 & 2 Bei duanzheng hao and Gun xiuqiu, were separated from the remaining seven arias and became a new zhezixi

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52 Please see Appendix B for translation of “Naoci”.
called “Mengpa” (fears in the dream). In the process of “Naoci” changing into “Sanpa”, it was first divided into two acts: “Mengpa” and “Sanpa”. “Mengpa” contains seven arias, with the original first two arias from “Naoci”, Bei duanzheng hao and Gun xiuqiu, plus five newly composed arias: Tuo bushan, Xiao liangzhou, Yaopian, Manting fang and Chao tianzi. The composer of these five new arias is unknown, but he (or they) must have been literati with profound knowledge of classical poetry, because the composing of Kunqu qupai (arias) follows very strict rules and forms of composition with respect to such matters as tonal pattern, rhyme scheme, and use of extrametrical syllables. As Kunqu music composition is based on the tone of each character, and the literary refinement of the lyrics, it would have been almost impossible for Kunqu actors, most of whom were illiterate, to compose or even adjust the lines. These five new arias point to the involvement of literati in the thematic shift in Shihou ji.

“Mengpa” begins as Chen enters, sighing about being henpecked. Then he falls asleep. Everything that happens thereafter on stage is in Chen’s dream. It is very unusual that all seven arias of “Mengpa” are sung by Liu, the dan, as she complains of her husband and his friend Su, and expresses her determination to bring Chen to the court to seek justice. In the last line of Chao tianzi, Liu sings, “[s]eeing all these implements of punishment and clear submission, I guarantee that you will perceive my true ability this time.” Judging by the last aria, it seems that the couple has arrived at court by the end of this act.

53 Please see Appendix D for translation of all 17 arias.
It is a common practice in Yuan Dynasty *zaju* that one character sings all the arias in a whole scene while the other characters have only a few lines of dialogue, but it is quite unusual to find this in Kunqu plays,\(^5^4\) which are based on Ming Dynasty *chuanqi*. Given that Chen is the dreamer in this scene, it is also not very reasonable that all arias are sung by his complaining wife, even with the excuse of his being henpecked. Because most of the arias in “Mengpa” repeat the same theme, it is reasonable to abandon four of them and retain only three in the stage version, when this scene was merged with the “Sanpa”. Nine out of twelve arias of the last scene are from “Sanpa”, so it was often called “Sanpa” instead of “Mengpa”. (See Table 4)

**Table 4 Evolution of Shihou ji scene names from Huancuitang to Zhezixi**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene 9</th>
<th>Huancuitang</th>
<th>Neifu</th>
<th>Zhezixi performed in Xiao quanben</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Qidu”</td>
<td>“Liushi shuaijing”</td>
<td>“Shuzhuang”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 10</td>
<td>“Shangchun”</td>
<td>“Chen Zao youchun”</td>
<td>“Youchun”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 11</td>
<td>“Jian Liu”</td>
<td>“Dongpo mingyi”</td>
<td>“Guichi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 13</td>
<td>“Naoci”</td>
<td>“Jichang mengpa”</td>
<td>“Mengpa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Sanpa”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second part of “Naoci” became “Sanpa”, which starts with the county magistrate entering with his *yamen* runner. Two arias titles [Lihua’er] were composed for the magistrate and the earth god as *dingchang shi*, or poems used for a *zibao jiamen* (self-introduction).

According to the *Neifu* version, these two [Lihua’er] would be sung, while in the *zhezixi* recorded in *Zhui Baiqiu* and other musicically notated scores, they are marked as being recited.

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\(^{54}\) It is not entirely impossible for one character to sing all the arias in a *zhezixi*, but it is not a common practice. There are several *zhezixi* in Kunqu that are famous for being sung by only one character, but under most circumstances such scenes feature one of the leading characters.

\(^{55}\) The changes of scene 13 will be discussed in the following chapters.
(nian), not sung. This change was caused by the change of the role type of the two characters. In Neifu, they are be played by za, meaning they could be played by any role type, while in the zhezixi tradition they are played by the painted face comic roles. Rhythmic recitation of a poem can create comic effects, so it is a very basic and distinctive skill of the painted face role. Once the role type of these two characters was settled as painted face roles, the style of reciting the two Lihua’er arias was fixed.

Shawei, the last aria of “Naoci”, is sung by all three male characters (Chen, magistrate and earth god), who express their helplessness at being henpecked. It was abandoned in the Neifu version, its place taken by a newly-composed aria title [Qingjiang yin], which only Chen sings about how he awakes from the dream and learns from it that he should resolve to enjoy life as a henpecked husband.

The practice of having “Mengpa” and “Sanpa” as two separate scenes may have existed on the Kunqu stage for only a short period of time before they got merged into one under the name of “Sanpa”. The seven arias recorded in Nashuying waiji qupu document the existence of the zhezixi “Mengpa”, while the Neifu version of Jichang “Mengpa” shows how the two were combined into one. Although in Zengji Liuye qupu there is still a zhezixi titled “Mengpa”, only three arias are recorded. This indicates that it could not be staged alone as a zhezixi because it is too short, and requires “Sanpa” as the second part. As can be seen from Jicheng qupu and present-day stage performances, a zhezixi of twelve arias titled “Sanpa”, which is very similar with the Neifu version, became the standard ending of the four-scene Shihou ji.
Table 5 Aria Changes from “Naoci” to “Sanpa”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>HCT 1573-1606</th>
<th>CLYZ 1573-1608</th>
<th>QNF 1735-1795</th>
<th>NSYWP 1792</th>
<th>ZLYQP 1922</th>
<th>JCQP 1924</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aria</td>
<td>“Naoci”</td>
<td>“Naoci”</td>
<td>“Jichang Mengpa” (Jichang’s Fears in the Dream)</td>
<td>“Mengpa”</td>
<td>“Sanpa” (Three Fears)</td>
<td>“Sanpa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bei duanzheng hao</td>
<td>Bei duanzheng hao</td>
<td>[Bei] Duanzheng hao</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gun xiuqiu</td>
<td>Gun xiuqiu</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tuo bushan</td>
<td>Tuo bushan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tuo bushan</td>
<td>Xiao liangzhou</td>
<td>Xiao liangzhou</td>
<td>Xiao liangzhou</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yao pian yiti</td>
<td>Yao pian</td>
<td>Yao pian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chao tianzi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lihu’a’er</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Shua hai’er</td>
<td>Shua hai’er</td>
<td>Shua hai’er</td>
<td>Shua hai’er</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Wu shan</td>
<td>Wu shan</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Si sha</td>
<td>Si sha</td>
<td>Si sha</td>
<td>Si sha</td>
<td>Si sha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>San sha</td>
<td>San sha</td>
<td>San sha</td>
<td>San sha</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Lihua’er</td>
<td>Lihua’er</td>
<td>Lihua’er</td>
<td>Lihua’er</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Er sha</td>
<td>Er sha</td>
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<td>Er sha</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Yi sha</td>
<td>Yi sha</td>
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<td>Yi sha</td>
<td>Yi sha</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Sha wei</td>
<td>Sha wei</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Qingjiang yin</td>
<td>Qingjiang yin</td>
<td>Qingjiang yin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10/12</td>
<td>10/12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

56 Abbreviations for Huancuitang, Cilin yizhi, Qing Neifu, Nanshuying waiji qupu, Zengji Liuye qupu, Jicheng Qupu. Please see Appendix E for details.
57 Please see Appendix C for a translation of “Mengpa” from the Zhengji Liuye qupu. The “Sanpa” is very similar to the second part of original “Naoci”, starting from [Shua hai’er].
58 You yiti indicates that the qupai used is the same as the previous one. Yao pian has the same meaning as You yiti. This is the term used in music scores of Kunqu in bei qu (a set of northern qu), while in nan qu (a set of southern qu) the term used would be Qian qiang.
59 Two Lihu’a’er qupai are added in the Neifu version of Shihou ji as self-introductions sung by the magistrate and the earth god. However, in Zhengji Liuye qupu and Jicheng qupu published in twentieth century, both of the two Lihu’a’er are marked as “gan’nian”, which means “recite only”. 

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4 Stage Conventions of Shihou ji

4.1 Basic Conceptions of Kunqu Theatre

Both the zhezixi published in different xuanben and the xiaoquan ben printed in the Neifu version record the changes that Shihou ji has undergone. The characters and their relationships had already been modified once they got staged, and were settled once the audience approved the changes. Changes to the plot recorded in print are the result of, not the reason for, changes on stage. A close look into the stage conventions of Kunqu will be helpful in understanding how a play could be transformed so drastically once it moved from the page to the stage.

Through his studies of traditional Chinese theatre and his long friendship with a “Chuan” generation actor Zhou Chuanying, a Kunqu master in sheng roles, Luo Di found that the basic artistic elements of traditional Chinese theatre are: expose, phoniness, and reunion (shuopo, xujia, and tuanyuan). Exposé means “uncovering everything to the audience [or keeping no secret from the audience]”. Phoniness means “frankly telling the audience that everything in the play [that happens on stage] is phony,” while reunión means, “serving the audience with a satisfactory ending” (2000, 11). These artistic elements of Chinese theatre, the representative genre of which is Kunqu, are formed under the basic conception that “the audience is the GOD of traditional Chinese theatre” (2009, 11).
For example, in the theatre of Kunqu, everything is taken care of for the audience. There is no concern about what will happen next to the characters, or any confusion about the relationships between the characters. The audience has an omniscient perspective throughout the play, such that their attention is focused on the performance as are their critiques. Without a doubt, Kunqu is theatre for the audience.

As Donald H. Shively has observed of Kabuki, “[it] was never intent upon sustaining the illusion of reality” (Brandon, Malm and Shively 20), Luo Di finds that it is the same for Kunqu. As a highly conventionalized and stylized theatre form, Kunqu is not meant to be “real”; because of this it does not have to conceal any secrets from its audience but can choose to reveal everything at the very beginning. Exposé thus includes the following conventional practices: “Fumo kaichang”: Before a play even starts, a fumo actor steps onto the stage to tell the whole storyline and even comment on the characters. “Zi bao jiamen”: Each time a new character steps onto the stage, he or she gives a self-introduction that includes not only background information but also information regarding his or her nature. “Da beigong”: During the performance, some actors step out of their characters temporarily to communicate with the audience as an actor, not as a character.

On top of these techniques of vocal communication with the audience, the role type setting with its specific make-up and prescribed costumes for the character speaks visually and directly to the audience. Because of these carefully coded conventions with
representative meanings, costumes reveal not only the social status of the character but also comments on his or her character traits.\textsuperscript{60}

Since costumes and makeup set up a role immediately, the first step to take when making changes to characters and their relationships is to assign them to the proper role types and choose for them the right pieces of costume, sometimes with artificial beard, to complete their \textit{zi bao jiamen}. Of course, only the role type and costume setting that has received the assent of the audience would become a stage convention to be preserved and inherited by generations of actors. Even these formed conventions, if they cease to be accepted by the audience in a certain period, must be modified again. Therefore, changes of role type and costume, though designed by the troupe, actually speak on behalf of the audience.

It is a pity that a certain part of the audience for Kunqu has been mute in studies of it. Most of the materials used by scholars emanate from the elites in Ming and Qing dynasty and intellectuals in Republican China. It is extremely hard to find comments or theatre reviews from any lower class audience members, simply because of their high rate of illiteracy. However, there are some traces in the writings of the elite concerning the common people and their understanding of a certain play. For example, Yuan Yuling (1592-1674), who wrote the \textit{chuanqi Xilou ji}\textsuperscript{61} (The western bower), once overheard his

\textsuperscript{60} Please see Table 6 for more details of role type system in Kunqu.\textsuperscript{61} 

\textit{Xilou ji} is a romantic story between a young scholar Yu Juan and a singing girl Mu Suhui.
sedan-chair bearer’s comments while hearing a household performance of Qianjin ji\(^{62}\) (A thousand pieces of gold), “why don’t they sing ‘xiuhu chuan jiaoyu’ [the pleasant voice of a (young girl) coming out of the boudoir] on such a romantic night? What is the point of performing Qianjin ji? ” (Hong 1090) “Xiuhu chuan jiaoyu” is a line of an aria quoted from Xilou ji. Yuan Yuling must have felt amazed, perhaps also flattered, by the bearer’s familiarity with his play and his stated opinion about “a romantic play for a romantic night.”

Readers today should be glad to see this proof that Kunqu, in its golden era, was the theatre for almost everybody in the society. Even a man of a very low social status who very possibly was illiterate was a fan of this genre and could make relevant comments concerning plays that he had seen. The lack of comments about Shihou ji by the illiterate lower class of people is not because they were not in the audience or had no comments to offer, but only because their comments were not written down and published. However, they were no doubt a very important part of the audience that had a role in shaping this play as well as other plays on Kunqu stage throughout the four hundred years.

\(^{62}\) Qianjin ji is a historical play about Han Xin’s experience from his youth until he became a strategic expert and powerful general of Liu Bang, helping Liu to establish the Han Dynasty.
4.2 Changing of Role Types in *Shihou ji*

In the transformation of *Shihou ji* from print to performance, Kunqu troupes changed not only the characters and their relationships but also plot developments, by rearranging the role types and costumes of the three main characters. As a result, Chen Zao and Liu shi are more closely related on the stage. Categorized as *sheng* and *dan*\(^{63}\), the lead romantic roles, the antagonism between them is changed to romance. Originally designated as a secondary female role, Liu gains a higher position because of a change of costume to that of a leading female role. Contrariwise, Su Dongpo, played by the *wai* role, is isolated as an elderly outside intruder into Chen’s household. Chen’s choice to follow his wife rather than Su results in making Su a negative character. His role type as a dignified elderly scholar was degraded by changes to his beard and performance style. As soon as the union between the two males was dissolved, the theme of the play was no longer a “wrestling match between males and females” (Cai 179), and the shrew-taming play was transformed successfully into a husband-taming play. Through the efforts of troupes, the play was staged in accordance with the audience’s taste, no matter how wildly it differed from the playwright’s version\(^{64}\).

\(^{63}\) Please see Table 6 for the role type system of Kunqu theatre. This table is based on the description in Zhou Chuanying’s autobiography, and derived from his studies and personal understanding of the role type system. Only the basic items have been listed here. What happens on Kunqu stage is sometimes much more complicated that that.

\(^{64}\) Please see Table 7 for the changing of role types of all the characters in the *Shihou ji* from *Huancuitang* to *zhezixi*. 
This character transformation was achieved through the change of role types of the three main characters from script to stage, with additional subtle modifications of the costumes additions to the stage performance beyond the written script. A close look at these role types, costume changes and performance additions will help to explain the way Kunqu troupes categorize Chen, Liu and Su and reveal their interpretation of these characters. The following analysis of a stage performance is based on a yin pei xiang (old audio with new performance) video\(^65\) of a 1961 audio record of the Kunqu masters Yu Zhenfei\(^66\) as Chen, Yan Huizhu\(^67\) as Liu, and Zheng Chuanjian\(^68\) as Su. The transmission of this version of *Kneeling by the Pond* can be dated back to late Qing Dynasty.\(^69\)

\(^{65}\) The taped performance was accompanied by an older audio recording. The actors seen (Cai Zhengren as Chen, Zhang Jingxian as Liu, and Ji Zhenhua as Su) are all disciples of the three actors who are heard. As Kunqu is a genre in which all the singing and performing skills as well as character interpretations were passed on to disciples by masters through oral presentations and movement demonstrations, this version could be regarded as a faithful reproduction of the 1961 version, given the direct teaching relationship. [http://www.tudou.com/programs/view/qQ_zhhrMrvo/](http://www.tudou.com/programs/view/qQ_zhhrMrvo/)

\(^{66}\) Yu Zhenfei (1902-1993) was the son of Yu Sulu (1847-1930), a master of Kunqu singing. Yu Zhenfei learned singing skills from his father, and was trained by Shen Yuequan (1865-1936), a Kunqu sheng master, to learn his stage performance.

\(^{67}\) Yan Huizhu (1919-1966), daughter of a famous jingju (Beijing Opera) elderly male role type actor Yan Jupeng, is a famous female role type actress of jingju and Kunqu. She was the vice-president and instructor of Shanghai xiqu xuexiao (Shanghai traditional opera institution) from 1957 to 1966.

\(^{68}\) Zheng Chuanjian (1910-1996) was a famous Kunqu mo. He was trained in Suzhou kunju chuanxi suo (kunju education institution) as a member of the chuan zi bei (the chuan generation) .

\(^{69}\) According to Sang Yuxi’s record in kunju chuanzibei (the chuan generation actors of Kunqu), Yu learned “Guichi” from his master Shen Yuequan (1865-1936) in Hangzhou in 1921. Shen was the son of a Kunqu sheng master Shen Shouling (1825-1890) and one of the disciples of a Kunqu sheng master Lü Shuangquan (dates unknown) during the early period of Emperor Guangxu’s reign(1875-1908).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Makeup styles</th>
<th>Hangdang (Role types)</th>
<th>liamen (Subtypes)</th>
<th>Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junban (handsome make-up) dan</td>
<td>zhengdan</td>
<td>Married women, not romantic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>laodan</td>
<td>Older women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sandan/zuodan</td>
<td>Young males before adolescence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sidan/cisha dan</td>
<td>Women assassins or women being killed, often played by actors with martial skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wudan /xiaodan /guimen dan</td>
<td>Well educated, elegant and beautiful women of good family, very romantic, also called “boudoir” dan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>liudan</td>
<td>Lively cute young women, not as mature or respectable as wudan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tie</td>
<td>Secondary dan, sometimes be similar to liudan, or when there is a wudan as the leading role, a second dan of a similar role type but not as important will be tie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mo/laosheng sheng</td>
<td>xiaosheng /jinsheng</td>
<td>Leading male character in romantic stories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>guansheng</td>
<td>Young or middle-aged males, often married, with official positions, sometimes the emperors or deities in guansheng role would wear beards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>qiongsheng/xiepi sheng</td>
<td>Males in temporary poverty, but with great expectation in the future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>zhiwei sheng</td>
<td>Male warriors wearing Lingzi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mo</td>
<td>Older males</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wai/laowai</td>
<td>Males who are older than mo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fumo</td>
<td>Secondary mo, with a lower status than mo; or sometimes not playing any dramatic character, but appearing on stage in the opening scene to introduce the plots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumian (Painted face) jing</td>
<td>damian/zhengjing</td>
<td>Highly masculine males, often generals or high officials, with whole face painted in color other than white</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>baimian/baijing</td>
<td>Villains and traitors, with distinctive white make-up over the whole face, wearing rankou (artificial beard) except for the comic female role called jingdan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lata baimian</td>
<td>Painted face role with lower social position, with white make-up over the whole face with some painted wrinkles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fu/er/mian /fuchou</td>
<td>Villains and traitors, with a medium-sized patch of white make-up covering the area around the eyes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chou/xiaomian /xiao chou</td>
<td>Humorous characters with the lowest social position, having a small patch of white painting between the eyes, often wear funny-looking beards. Chou might also play comic female role called choudan or caidan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>za</td>
<td></td>
<td>Small characters, with optional role types according to troupe needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7: Evolution of role-types among Shihou ji characters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Ming Dynasty</th>
<th>Since Qianlong period (1735-1795) until the present day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HCT(^{70}) &amp; JGG</td>
<td>QNF &amp; SHJQW &amp; SHILSC(^{71})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CLYZ &amp; XXP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chen</td>
<td>sheng</td>
<td>sheng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liu</td>
<td>dan</td>
<td>dan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Su</td>
<td>xiaosheng</td>
<td>wai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qincao</td>
<td>laodan</td>
<td>xiaodan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Su yuangong</td>
<td>mo</td>
<td>za</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cangtou in Scene 2</td>
<td>jing</td>
<td>za</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cangtou in Scene 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magistrate</td>
<td>mo</td>
<td>mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magistrate’s Wife</td>
<td>jing</td>
<td>jing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth God</td>
<td>wai</td>
<td>wai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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\(^{70}\) Abbreviations are for Huancuitang & Jiguge, Cilin yizhi & Xuanxue pu, Qing Neifu & Shihou ji lian si chu & Shihou ji quwen, Zhui baiqiu, Zengji Liuye qupu & Jicheng qupu & Mengyuan qupu & Yuzhong qupu, Tingge xiangying lu, Kunju bioyan yide, Kunqu cidian & Kunqu jingbian jiaocai 300 zhong. Please see Appendix E for details.

\(^{71}\) Here Shihou ji quwen and Shihou ji lian si cu are actually identical stone-block lithographic printing copies published in Republic China. The texts are all handwritten. Because the content and format of the Republican version are almost the same with the Neifu Shihou ji, with only a few wrongly written characters, this handwritten copy might be based on some other handwritten copy of Neifu version instead of based on the Neifu copy itself. Quwen is the copy with the original cover, in the Shuanghongtang collection of Tokyo University, while the “lian si chu” is a copy in Fu Xihua’s collection, without original cover. The “Shihou ji lian si chu” is actually on an added cover to it in handwritten characters.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Ming Dynasty</th>
<th>Since Qianlong period (1735-1795) until the present day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HCT &amp; JGG</td>
<td>QNF &amp; SHJQW &amp; SHJLSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CLYZ &amp; XXP</td>
<td>ZBQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ZJLYQP &amp; JCQP &amp; MYQP &amp; YZQP</td>
<td>TGXYL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth Goddess</td>
<td>chou</td>
<td>chou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaoli</td>
<td>za</td>
<td>Not mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foyin</td>
<td></td>
<td>chou</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3 Detailed Studies of Three Characters

4.3.1 Chen Zao

Because of its husband-taming ending, when the new version of Shihou ji is staged today it is often regarded as a feminist play. For the 2009 production of a 3-scene Shihou ji by the Taiwan Kunju Company, a poster promoted the play as “overthrowing modern male chauvinism and revealing how women in imperial China already had their day in the sun.” The feminist theme of Shihou ji, though widely accepted in the twenty-first century, is actually a misreading of the four-scene play. The Neifu copy has indicated that this husband-taming version of Shihou ji must have taken shape during the Qianlong reign or earlier, at which time most Kunqu audiences were male. Female audiences entered the commercial theatre beginning in Republican China (1912-1949). Shi Tinghua, a Jingju (Peking Opera) fan from Japan, described the situation of theatres in the Republican period in the following manner: “female audiences were prohibited in the commercial theatres of Beijing. They were allowed recently during the time of the Republic, but their seats would be in a separated area upstairs, while the males were seated on the main floor.” (Shi, 125) Therefore, even with a completely different ending


Shi was actually a Japanese theatre aficionado called 辻武雄 (Takeo Tsuji), who lived in China during the late Qing and Republican periods. As a lover of Jingju (Peking Opera), he for the most part published critiques of performance as well as studies of Jingju under his pen name Shi Tinghua 辻聴花, meaning “listening to huabu (Jingju)”.  

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from the original *Shihou ji*, the four-scene version generated by Kunqu troupes and male audiences in Ming and Qing Dynasties is a play that, while perhaps offering a unique male perspective on domestic affairs, is not at all a feminist play.

In the original playscript, Chen is a *sheng*, the leading male role. In the *zhezixi* script, he is also a *sheng*, a male scholar. The male scholar role is the most important role type in the five main role types of *Kunqu*. The Chinese character of this role type, “生”, also has the meaning of “happening” or “causing to happen”. This designation implies that the character is the most important role of the whole play. Everything that happens in the play is centred on him and the development of the plot is based on his choices (Luo 1986, 64). In *Shihou ji*, therefore, it seems that his inability to control his wife is what makes the story happen. In “Guichi”, however, it is Chen’s breaking of his promise to Liu shi (made in the previous scene “Shuzhuang”) that has resulted in his being made to kneel by the pond. Chen’s friendship with the officious poet Su Dongpo, who invited him to go on a spring outing with the courtesan Qincao, led to Su’s admonishing Liu and angering her. In fact, Liu’s victory over Su is achieved, in part, because Chen does not choose to stand together with Su but yields instead to his wife. It would be unusual for the audience to think that in the male-dominated society of Song Dynasty China, the wife’s winning a debate with a famous literatus and official like Su had absolutely nothing to do with the support or protection of her husband. It is more

74 The five role types are *sheng* (young male scholar or official), *dan* (female role), *jing* (painted face role), *mo* (elderly male role) and *chow* (clown-like role). See Table 6 for details.
likely that they would imagine that Chen’s willingness to be submissive to his wife is what grounds the play.

As recorded in *Kunqu chuandai* (costumes of Kunqu), Chen’s costumes are a set of very standard pieces for the young scholar: the headgear in Pan Bizheng’s style, a *xuezi* with silk embroidery and pink costume trousers. Chen’s costumes show that he is a young scholar with no official position who is quite romantic. His immaturity and romanticism are shown by the light color of his trousers.

Chen is the key character in this play, and the plot develops according to his actions. As a *sheng*, Chen is also the character that the male audience would mostly identify with, as evidenced in theater critic Zhang Liaogong’s review of the Jingju master Mei Lanfang (1894-1961)’s performance of *Shihouji*: “In *Shihou ji*...Chen Zao is the most important character. The famous actor Wang Lengxian was best in the role of Chen. Zhu Qiufen, who played Liu, assisted [Wang] in performing [*The Lioness’s Roar*] and his performance rendered the show more delightful” (Zhang Liaogong 178). In another review of a performance of “Kneeling by the Pond” by Gu Chuanjie and Zhu

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75 The headgear of this style is common for scholars with no official position. Pan Bizheng is the lead male character of the Ming Dynasty *chuanqi* play *The Jade Hairpin* (TJH). TJH was extremely popular on the Kunqu stage and Pan became one of the most renowned and typical romantic young scholar roles. Thus, the hat for young male scholar roles was named after him and is called *Bizheng jin*.
76 *Xuezi* is a long coat, made of silk with or without embroidery, which both female and male characters wear under ordinary circumstances.
77 If a character is not very popular with the audience, he would not be staged as a *sheng* even if he is a scholar. Such a character might be staged as a *fu* to show the ambivalent attitude of the audience towards him.
78 Gu (1910-1965) was a *sheng* actor of the Chuanzibei (Chuan generation).
Chuanming, published in *The Player’s Press* (*Liyuan gongbao*) on November 5th, 1930, the author Jian Ying described Gu’s interpretation of Chen as a glamorous and unrestrained scholar who fears his wife because of love (Wu Xinlei 2005, 132). Obviously, Chen’s attachment to Liu is more important than his friendship with Su on the Kunqu stage, and his being henpecked is interpreted as a reaction out of love. Several lines are added to his stage dialogue to demonstrate his willingness to be obedient to his wife; this solves the problem between the husband and wife and adds romantic éclat to the punishments, as when Liu pulls his ear or commands him to kneel.

In the stage performance of “Kneeling by the Pond” by Yu Zhenfei, after being asked to kneel near the pond Chen performs a *cabi* and proudly declares, “I am quite good at kneeling (*Gui shi beiren de bendeng na*)!” (ZBQ 1931, 160) This added line, compared to the original reply from the *Huancuitang* version in the block-printed version (“Kneeling is easy,” *guime rongyi*), has a much more comic effect and reveals Chen’s cheekiness. When Su asks angrily, “How can you, a man, humble yourself to kneel to your wife?” (*Ji yi wei nanzi, zenke quxi yu furen?*), Chen’s reply goes beyond that of the original script. He replies, “I am quite happy to kneel to my wife. What concern is it of yours?” (*Wo zigan quxi, yu laoxiong shenme xianggan?*). These added lines, in which Chen claims to be “quite good at kneeling” and “quite happy to kneel,”

79 Using the index figure of right hand to touch the top of the nose quickly from right to left is used as a conventionalized movement indicating happiness and pride on the *Kunqu* stage.
show that he has no problem with showing deference to his wife. In this manner, Su’s subsequent rebuke of Liu then seems officious and unwarranted.

After Su fails to overcome Liu in argument, Chen obeys Liu’s instruction to expel Su from their home. He comes back immediately to comfort his wife by massaging her back. Chen tries to persuade Liu not to cane Su again by saying, “my dear wife, it is not right to beat Su. After all, he is too old.” (Niangzi, zizhan xiong shi da bude de. Ta lao le.)

Su Shi is not at all a very old man. Chen’s sarcastic comment about Su here is obviously based on Su’s role-type as laosheng (elderly male) with a long beard, which is very different from the original character design of Wang Tingne, as suggested in his Huancuitang edition.

4.3.2 Liu shi

In the original Ming Dynasty script, Liu shi is played by a dan, which means a leading female role; in the Qing Dynasty collection of zhezixi titled Zhui baiqiu (A Patched Cloak of White Fur), she has become a tie, or secondary female role. Kunqu troupes made Liu to be a secondary role. This indicates that in this instance the actors sincerely followed the playwright’s will of insulting Liu, as the secondary female role was normally not as graceful and dignified as the lead female roles in romantic plays. However, the troupes’ real comment on Liu’s character lies in the way she is costumed.

80 This “Su being old” claim is not from either the chuanqi or the Zhui baiqiu script, but preserved only in the oral performance on stage. Yu Zhenfei so includes it in the 1961 audio and all his disciples have followed him. I have not been able to trace the earlier use (if any) of this line.
The changing of Liu’s costumes suggests another possibility of interpreting this character on stage as a romantic and positive role.

When the Beijing Opera master Mei Lanfang played Liu in a four-scene version of Shihou ji\(^{81}\) at the Sanqingyuan Theatre in June 1918, the renowned critic Zhang Liaogong was in the audience. He noticed that Mei wore a long, respectable coat (\(pi\)) during the first act, “Shuzhuang”, to show the dignity of Liu, and changed to a short coat (\(ao\)) in the following three acts (179). Because Liu would cane both her husband and Su in the following acts, wearing a short coat would be more convenient than wearing a long decent one. Zhang mentioned that Liu was a \(tie\), a secondary dan, and according to the old tradition a \(tie\) should wear the \(ao\), a short coat, instead of the long, respectable \(pi\). Zhang mentions that Mei wore a \(pi\) in the first scene was because Liu shi “was a relatively respectable” character in that act, and changed to an \(ao\) in the following acts because “there would be many conventional movements to make” and it would be “inconvenient to wear a \(pi\)” (169). Zhang appreciated Mei’s efforts in improving the fundamental tone of this character. This can be taken as a piece of evidence that both the actor and the audience agreed that Liu’s aggressiveness toward her husband and Su shouldn’t change her image as a dignified lady.

\(Pi\) is an element of a respectable costume, being an overcoat for the leading female role, while \(ao\) is a shorter coat for a female role that is not as respectable.

\(^{81}\) As mentioned in Zhang’s notes, Mei’s shortened version of The Lioness’s Roar consisted of four scenes: Morning Toilette, Spring Outing, Kneeling by the Pond, and Three Fears.
Though Zhang mentioned an “old tradition” of a tie character wearing an ao instead of a pi, this tradition cannot be easily traced very far in the history of stage conventions, perhaps not even to the late Qing Dynasty. In his description of the costume ao in Zhongguoju de zezhi (The Organization of Chinese theatre) published in 1928, Qi Rushan notes:

...The ao did not become an element of standard [Chinese theatre] costuming until the Guangxu Emperor’s reign (1875-1908)... Women only wear this piece of clothing under very informal circumstances...any female characters before the Ming Dynasty shouldn’t wear this piece... It is a fashionable piece of clothing for the huadan only, while the qingyi and guimendan do not habitually wear it...only in the recent decades have there been some [characters] wearing it (48-49).

Qi’s description of the practice of wearing the ao makes it clear that it could not be an old tradition for the Kunqu Shihou ji, whose performance tradition can be traced back to late Ming, perhaps the first decade of seventeenth century. Liu being costumed in an ao must be a “new” and “recent” practice drawn from the Jingju stage of Republican China. In Fu Sinian’s discussion of theatre reform, he also mentions that the costume Liu wears in the scene of “[Chen Zao being] afraid of his wife” (meaning “Guichi”) looks more like shizhuang (contemporary clothes) than other pieces of

82 Fu was not an expert on traditional theatre but an initiator of theatre reform in Republican China. His interpretation of the traditional stage and conventions might not be correct, but his descriptions here supports Mei’s idea of ao as a piece of contemporary costume on the traditional theatre stage.
guzhuang (ancient costume), and “wearing the contemporary costume makes it more appropriate [when presenting a henpecking story] ...” (Fu Sinian 162). Fu, a layman where Chinese traditional theatre was concerned, noticed how the short coat helped to create the image of a shrew on stage.

However, the wearing of ao as a standard piece for the role type of tie seems to have been a practice begun in Republican China and lasting for only a short period of time. On the Kunqu stage, Liu was often staged as a more respectable dan with comparatively more decent costumes. If we rely on the memoirs of Zeng Changsheng (1892-1966), a Kunqu dan actor, Liu is clearly categorized as a fifth dan, a hibborn lady in the boudoir, traditionally the leading role of a romantic love story who typically wears highly respectable costumes. According to Zeng, Liu’s main costume elements in “Shuzhuang” are: a xuezi with silk embroidery and a long majia over it, with the sleeves rolled up (Zeng 36). In “Guichi”, Zeng describes the costume as a pi with a xuezi worn underneath (37). The basic pieces of Liu’s costume, as suggested here, are comparatively longer and more elegant, and therefore more suitable for a sophisticated and decent lady. In Rixia kanhua ji (A Record of Appreciating Flowers Under the Sun) by Xiao tiedi daoren (Daoist of the Little Iron Flute), there is a poem composed by the

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83 Zeng was a dan actor of the Suzhou Quanfu ban (all luck troupe) during the late Qing dynasty and was invited to manage the costumes of the Kunju chuanxi suo (Institute for the Preservation and Transmission of Kunju) in 1926.
84 Chen wears a standard xuezi for male characters. The female style for xuezi is similar. The function of this piece is similar to that for a shirt, which can be worn along or underneath some long formal coats.
85 Majia is a piece of sleeveless in-house clothing worn outside the xuezi to indicate that the character is enjoying her leisure at home. It is not a costume for any formal situation.
A few lines of poetry from Su Shi originated all these comic scenes. The lay Buddhist of Longqiu (Chen) suffers the reputation of being henpecked. [She] who plays with the parrot even before doing her morning toilette, still has great charm.” The audience found that Liu on stage was more like a pretty and attractive lady with “great charm” than a dreadful shrew. Staging Liu as a decent *fifth dan* instead of a *tie* was predictably more popular with audiences, and thus the *fifth dan* was kept as a standard role type for her character.

The changing of Liu’s costume from a short piece to a longer one is in accordance with the changing of her role type: if Liu is a secondary role, she should wear the short piece; if she is a respectable role, she should wear the longer piece. Zeng’s memoir of costumes on the Kunqu stage is based on his experience in Kunqu troupes throughout the late Qing dynasty and the Republic of China, and his evidence on the matter can be trusted. We can thus conclude that long costumes would have been the standard for Liu in his time. On balance, the suggestion is that during the late Qing, Liu shi was staged more as a graceful and dignified female character than as a shrew. This more uplifting image was achieved by Kunqu troupes and the role type of Liu was designated as that for the leading role of a romantic play during late Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China.
Hua Wenyi, a student of both Zhu Chuanming and Yan Huizhu, tried to reconcile the two versions of Liu’s costumes. During the first part of the play, while Liu is with Chen at home, she wears a long sleeveless garment called *majia* on her *xuezi*. She then takes off this piece and changes to the formal long costume, the *pi*, when she meets Su. This sleeveless piece of *majia* was used in the first part of the scene to make a distinction between the circumstances of leisurely chatting with her husband and formally receiving a guest of her husband.

The changing of the two pieces of costume in “Guichi” was designed by Hua to show Liu’s different images as housewife and dignified hostess. She intended to give the audience a more complete understanding of Liu in this single *zhezixi*, because under most circumstances “Guichi” is performed alone, not in combination with “Shuzhuang”. Audiences would thus not often have seen Liu in both costumes. By experimenting with the costume change, she intended to create a more detailed and complete image of Liu, which echoed Mei’s efforts eighty-seven years earlier.

### 4.3.3 Su Dongpo

Su Dongpo is a *xiaosheng* (secondary male role) in the original play script, which made him the same role type as for Chen. The playwright further reinforces the

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86 Zhu (1900-1974) was a famous actor in the Kunqu female role type. He was trained in Suzhou’s *kunju chuanxi suo* as one of the Chuanzibei actors. He became an instructor in the Shanghai *xiqu xuexiao* (Shanghai Traditional Opera School) beginning in 1954.

87 This is based on several conversations I had with Hua Wenyi when I visited her at Los Angeles in mid August, 2013.
proximity of Chen and Su by giving them similar characteristics: they are close friends and share almost the same attitude toward Liu. They thus form an alliance against the shrew. However, there is a rule of the Kunqu stage that all main characters appearing on stage in one scene must be of different role types. According to this logic, Su cannot be a xiaosheng, hence his role type is changed to a wai, also called laowai, a sub-category of the elderly male role mo. Wearing a black beard, Su on stage is no doubt a sermonising elder of Chen and Liu. The change of role type is not only for the purpose of following the stage conventions, but also serves to separate the viewpoints of Chen and Su: Chen, as a xiaosheng is almost invariably in a romantic relationship with a female on stage; while Su as an elderly character played by the wai never has to do with romantic associations. This places the two men in separate camps and can ally Chen with Liu against Su and his conservative principles.

Su’s costumes could be in the standard purple or blue of elderly characters, while the style of his rankou reveals the Kunqu troupes’ interpretation of this character. According to Xu Lingyun’s memoir, although a laowai such as Su would normally wear a man (full-style beard), what was traditionally worn by this character on the Kunqu stage was a cang san (grey beard in three tufts). Xu believed that Su should wear a

\[\text{rankou} \]

\[\text{cang san} \]

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88 *Man* is a style of rankou, or artificial beard, and is made of horsetail especially for the role type of wai in mo or for some of the painted face roles. The fullness of this style, to a certain degree, symbolizes the noble morality of the character or very old age (if white). The color of the rankou represent the age of the character: black, the youngest, white the eldest, and grey in between.

89 *San* is the more commonly used whisker style of beard used for mo; the character might be comparatively more gentle and frail-looking scholars or any other elderly male role.
cang man (grey full-style beard); the reason that Su often wore a cang san was because most of the Kunqu troupes had only white man and black man, and cang man was seldom prepared in the troupe as a regular piece (Xu Lingyun 90).

However, according to Zeng’s account, Su should wear a black full-beard (36), According to Xu, black man was one of the basic style of rankou owned by the troupes. The reality that Su Dongpo on stage, as a wai, didn’t wear the standard rankou, but a three-tufted beard might result from the troupes’ intention of not making Su a standard elderly character of moral rectitude and perfection. By making him wear an improper rankou, the image of Su was, to some degree, impugned. The downgrading of Su Dongpo’s beard style effectively changed his image from that of an eminent writer and righteous moralist into that of an officious and meddlesome old man.

The changes in costume accessories are not the only element that alters Su’s image on stage. Su’s performance increases his embarrassment. In the performance of “Guichi”, for example, from the moment he steps on stage, his behaviour is improper for an eminent poet. He enters Chen’s home without knocking on the door, saying, “As the gate is open, I’ll just go straight into the garden” (men’er kai zai ci, bumian jingru). He then sneaks behind Chen, who is kneeling by the pond, and eavesdrops. When Chen asks the deity to help him out, Su changes his voice and speaks to Chen from behind, “It is I, thy rescuing deity!” (dajiū ni de shendào zàici).” He then hides his face behind a fan and suddenly removes it when standing in front of Chen, shouting “mou!” to startle him.
Su behaves like a lowclass illiterate clown rather than a respectful elderly scholar and official, with this game of peek-a-boo. Upon hearing Liu shouting to Chen, Su is extremely frightened by her voice, facing the audience with his beard and water sleeves trembling wildly. Even his voice trembles while he tells the audience that Liu’s voice was “just like the roar of a lioness (youru shihou yiban)”. Through this aside, Su brings out the theme of the play: the lioness’s roar. His image as a gentle and calm literatus was already altered on stage in the first half of “Guichi”, even before he meets with Liu.

He then tries to admonish Liu by citing the classics in order to impress her with the Confucian principle that a wife should obey her husband, but Liu replies with some other citations from the Confucian classics and then says, “Respect toward the husband should not come only from the obedience of the wife; our dispute is because of the husband’s lack of righteousness in his behaviour” (qimei zhi jing qi du fu shun neng zhang, fanmu zhi xian zhi yin fugang buzhen). Zhang Liaogong suggests in his review of Wang Fengqin’s performance that the actor performing Su’s character should nod his head upon hearing these words, because “[Liu’s] statements do make sense and Su should be surprised that a shrew like her could be so knowledgeable and reasonable.” (170) The audience not only notices that Su has lost the first round of the argument, but according to Zhang the actor should also do a more distinctive performance to show not only the result of the debate but also Su’s recognition of Liu’s eloquence.

Each time Su wants to teach Liu a lesson, Chen tries to stop him, but Su always
replies, “There is nothing to worry about as long as you have me by your side (bubi
danxin, youwo zaici).” However, when Liu raises her cane to strike, Su sneaks away and
hides himself behind the seats, leaving Chen the trouble of calming his enraged wife. As
this happens twice, Su’s irresponsibility and Chen’s credulity become deeply implanted
in the audience’s mind.

According to Zhang Liaogong’s account, there was a satirical tradition on the
Kunqu stage that revealed the audience’s opinion of Su. The severely henpecked county
magistrate in “Sanpa” would be played by the same actor who played the part of Su in
previous acts, so the audience would see the actor yielding to the curses and beatings of
an ugly shrew wife. Although technically this is a separate character, there will certainly
be a mental association (Zhang Liaogong, 170). In the humorous intertwined fights of
the three couples, the dignity and righteousness of Su the poet would be dissolved
completely in the audience’s laughter. Though Su is not mocked like Foyin as portrayed
in “Youchun” by the Ningbo troupes, he is still a character who tries to “separate” the
couple and destroy their “tuanyuan” (amity) and who therefore deserves the audience’s
rebuke.
5 Who Holds the Power

The Jingju master Cheng Yanqiu (1904-1958) once criticised some chuanqi plays in the following way: “[They] merely serve the subjectivity of the literati but forget the needs of the audience” (150). The same problem lies in the original version of Shihou ji, in which the playwright Wang Tingne tries to promote his model of the ideal relationship between husband and wife, without even bothering to consider male pride.

However, the problem seems to have been resolved on the Kunqu stage by the practice of selecting scenes to be performed separately. The perfection of a play was achieved by the joint efforts of the actors and audience. Troupes formed a new xiao quanben according to the audience’s taste. Their efforts to reframe a new play, according to Lu Eting, can be divided into three categories: “selecting scenes, removing some of the arias, and editing the dialogue.” Among these, the last “is almost equal to a kind of creation” (1980, 108). All three kinds of editing can be found in the conversion of Shihou ji into a four-scene play, by comparing the original chuanqi text to those preserved in drama miscellanies. On top of those changes, the design of role types, costumes and performance skills, all of which encode meanings according to theatrical convention, also have crucial importance in forming a new play. Though this new play derives from the original chuanqi, it develops its own interpretation of the plot and characters, according to norms and values that can differ sharply from the original chuanqi.
In the process of scene selection and plot reframing in Kunqu, audiences were not bystanders. Without a doubt it was the actors who dealt with the technical problems, but no doubt the audience’s preferences also determined what changed and what would be kept on stage. This is similar to what happened in the Kabuki theatre: ‘Virtuoso actors require virtuoso audiences to appreciate their skill, and in this sense the Kabuki audience forms part of the performance. Unless an actor can be sure that a slight change in kata will be noticed and appreciated, there is no temptation to study and vary the parts.’” (Keene 21)

The theatre of Kunqu is no doubt an actor-centered one, as pointed out by Lu Eting and others, but it is in many ways also an audience centred one. Once the selected scene system came into being, power in the theatre shifted from the elite playwrights who owned their own troupes to the actors and audiences of the commercial theatre, which emerged in the Qing dynasty. What the audience preferred would be encouraged, and performances of a play would be maintained on stage as long as audiences were content to watch them. What shaped the Kunqu theatre was the audience. The troupes and actors would be able to share power with the audience as long as their performances were approved and appreciated. In that sense, the audience is the god of the theatre, as Luo Di has said.

Even after the formation of the “complete” version of Shihou ji, among the four zhezixi that comprised it, the most popular one has been “Guichi”, in which Liu-shi
actually wins the debate against Su Dongpo by virtue of her own wit and knowledge. The audience chose that scene for its extraordinary theatricality, as well as for the unique idea of “tuanyuan” as a domestic choice based on mutual understanding and consent between the couple. The selection of scenes found in drama miscellanies, as well as performance reviews and comments on actors, all seem to show that when audiences wanted to watch a “complete” version of Shihou ji they prefered the four-scene version, and this led to the disappearance of the thirty-scene chuanqi that Wang Tingne had written from the stage. When actors only had time for two zhezixi, they went for “Shuzhuang” and “Guichi”, which made these the most frequently staged zhezixi of Shihou ji. If there was time for only one scene, the choice has been “Guichi.”

“Guichi” is thus the most representative zhezixi in Shihou ji, in terms of both its theatricality and its subject—the revelation of the unique relationship between Chen and Liu. Frequency of staging tells a lot about the audience’s preference. Part of the reason that “Naoci” was changed into “Sanpa” and became the ending of the play was because it perfectly followed the values encoded in “Guichi”. At the end of “Guichi”, Su Dongpo is driven out by Chen according to Liu’s instruction; that is the “tuanyuan” of the sheng and dan. Therefore, the xiao quanben Shihou ji, as an enlarged version of “Guichi”, satisfied the audience in following the “Guichi” model. Su Dongpo still should be excluded from stage as an obstacle to the obligatory “tuanyuan,” and so the actor performing his character appears on the stage in the last scene as the local magistrate and gets beaten up.
After looking into the historical resources and literary origins of Wang Tingne’s play, it seems that the four-scene version of *Shihou ji* actually restored the story into a more reasonable construction, in that the characters in this new version are comparatively closer to the original ones. After two hundred years of modification by troupes and their audiences, the story has become more humanized on the Kunqu stage.


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Published Audiovisual Materials


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Appendices

Appendix A: Scene Summaries for *Huancuitang Shihou ji*

It is a pity that the whole *chuanqi* of *Shihou ji* has not yet been translated into English. These summaries are based on the original copy of the 30-scenes *Shihou ji* published by Wang Tingne in his *Huancuitang* collection in the early seventeenth century. The *Jiguge* version of *Shihou ji*, which was published in 1645, is essentially a reprint of the *Huancuitang* edition with only some slight differences of wording. As the plot is the same, I have only indicated where there are variances in scene titles between the two versions.

**Part One**

**Scene 1**

**Synopsis** (*Tigang*, *Tizong* in *Jiguge*)

The *mo* gives the outline of the play.

**Scene 2**

**Farewell** (*Xubie* 敘別)

6 arias

Chen Zao takes leave of his wife, Liu shi, and sets off from his hometown Huangzhou to the capital Luozhong. He plans to ask his friend Lü to help him seek an opportunity to start an official career.

**Scene 3**

**Visiting a Friend** (*Fangyou* 訪友)

8 arias

Lü is not in Luozhong, having been sent on a diplomatic mission. Chen Zao visits his friend Su Shi and Su’s lover Qincao, a courtesan.

**Scene 4**
**Lodging at a Temple** (Zhuxi 駐錫)

7 arias

The Buddhist monk Foyin arrives in Huangzhou and puts up at the Dinghui Temple. A little monk complains to Foyin that he has been taken advantage of by his master, the abbot of this temple. Foyin, indifferent to the monk’s laments, instructs the little monk to cultivate himself according to the religious doctrine.

**Scene 5**

**Luxurious Outing** (Haoyou 豪遊, Xiayou 狹遊 in Jiguge, meaning Outing with the Courtesans)

8 arias

Chen Zao takes a luxurious excursion with several courtesans and meets Su and Qincao on the road. The three enjoy themselves.

**Scene 6**

**Recalling with a Letter** (Shuzhao 書招)

6 arias

Liu hears from an old servant about Chen’s dissipated life in Luozhong and sends a servant with a letter to call Chen back home.

**Scene 7**

**Welcome-Back Banquet** (Guiyan 歸讌)

7 arias

Chen receives Liu’s letter. He is frightened at first but is glad when the servant mentions that Liu may already have obtained several concubines for Chen. At the welcome-back banquet, Liu introduces to Chen his four new concubines, whose ugliness astonishes him. Chen regrets returning home.

**Scene 8**

**Talking about Zen** (Tanchan 談禪)

8 arias
Su Dongpo is demoted to a position in Huangzhou. Foyin, Chen Zao and Qincao come to visit and celebrate the construction of his new cottage. Their talk starts from Zen but digresses to the subject of henpecking. Chen swears that he is not henpecked and that his wife is very obedient.

Scene 9
Extraordinary Jealousy (Qidu 奇妒)
8 arias

One day, Chen offers to assist Liu in her morning toilette. He praises her beauty by comparing her to a neighbor’s wife, causing Liu to feel jealous; she throws the mirror away. Chen then uses a fan to cool her down. The fan happens to be a gift given to Chen by “a young friend”, so Liu tears the fan because it seems to be a token of a suspicious relationship. A servant arrives with an invitation from Su Dongpo for Chen to accompany him and Qincao on a spring outing. Chen promises to Liu that there will be no courtesans in the group and agrees to be caned 100 times if he proves to be lying. Liu insists on caning him at least once before he leaves to remind him of his promise. It happens that Su’s servant sees the scene of Chen being caned, and mocks Chen for being henpecked. Though the title would be changed to “Morning Toilette” (Shuzhuang 梳妝), when performed on the Kunqu stage as a zhezixi, the plots and arias of this scene would remain unchanged. Only a few lines of dialogue were changed. It is also the first scene of the four-scene version of Shihou ji. A translation of it can be found in Wang Ban’s Laughter and Tears as scene 1, “At Her Coiffing”, in As the Lioness Roars. (110-127).

Scene 10
Appreciating Spring (Shangchun 賞春)
6 arias

While Chen, Su and Qincao are enjoying themselves outside the city, an old servant sent by Liu arrives to spy on Chen and remind him of his promise. Chen kneels down and begs him to keep the secret. Su tells Qincao that Chen must be henpecked, according to what his servant has reported to him. After Chen’s servant leaves, Su makes fun of Chen’s fear of
his wife while playing a drinking game and composing poems on the theme of the henpecked husband. Chen tries to defend himself and says his wife is very obedient. This scene is scene 2 of the four-scene play and is called “Spring Outing” (Youchun 游春). The stage script is also very similar to the original scene with only an aria sung by Qincao omitted. For a translation see Wang Ban, Laughter and Tears, 128-143.

Scene 11

Admonishing Liu (Jian Liu 諫柳)

9 arias

The next day of the spring outing with Su and Qincao, Chen is punished by Liu by being forced to kneel by the pond in their back yard. Su is shocked at Chen’s obedience to his wife when he pays him a visit. He tries to teach Liu a lesson about the proper behavior of a woman but is defeated by her arguments. After being driven away by Liu, Su returns and tries to convince Chen to marry a concubine so that he might have a male successor. Liu is annoyed by his suggestion and sends him off again. Su decides to take revenge. This is the most popular zhezixi of Shihou ji and the title, “Kneeling by the Pond” (Guichi 跪池), is almost a representative of the whole play. It serves as scene 3 in the four-scene version. Only a few lines of the dialogue are changed in the staged scripts and all the original arias are kept on stage. See Wang Ban, “Kneeling by the Pond”, 144-175.

Scene 12

Admonishing the Maid (Xunji 訓姬)

4 arias

Su tells his maid Xiuying that he will give her to Chen and wishes that she can bear a son for Chen’s family.

Scene 13

Disputes in the Temple (Naoci 鬧祠)

9 arias

Liu brings Chen to the county yamen and accuses him of not being loyal to his wife. The magistrate first wants to punish Liu for not being a submissive wife, only to be beaten by
his own wife. The two couples then visit the local temple to ask the earth god to try the case. The earth god is on the side of the husbands until the earth goddess, his wife, appears and beats him. The case dissolves into farce as the three wives beat their husbands.

This scene is the fourth scene of the shortened version of *Shihou ji* on the Kunqu stage. What happens in the court and temple in the original play is changed into a dream on stage, and when Chen awakens from the dream, he is converted into being an obedient husband. As a *zhezixi*, this scene is often referred to as “Three Fears” (Sanpa 三怕) or “Fears in a Dream” (Mengpa 夢怕). Sometimes, the first half is “Fears in a Dream” (3 arias), and the second is “Three Fears” (6 arias). The script of scene 4 in Wang Ban’s translation, titled “A Dream” (Meng Wu 夢悟) has been changed drastically from both the original scene and the staged script standardized on stage in the Qing Dynasty and Republican period, so it cannot be taken as a standard ending scene of *Shihou ji*. See Appendix B for translations of all seventeen arias of “Mengpa” and “Sanpa”, and Appendix C for a translation of “Naoci”.

**Scene 14**

**Giving a Concubine** (*Zengqie 贈妾*)

6 arias

Su invites Chen to his home and makes him marry Xiuying. Chen dares not take her home and installs her in one of his properties close to his own house.

**Scene 15**

**Boating at Red Cliff** (*Fanbi 泛壁, Chibi 赤壁 in Jiguge*)

8 arias

Su invites Foyin, Qincao and Chen to go boating at the Red Cliff. Chen arrives late but has to leave early because Liu has ruled that Chen must come home before the water spilled on the floor dries and the incense burns down. Su and Qincao make fun of Chen’s being henpecked before letting him leave. Qincao asks Foyin to teach her Zen Buddhism and the latter agrees to take her on as a disciple.
Part Two

Scene 16
Carrying a Lamp on One’s Head (Dingdeng 頂镫)

10 arias

Chen is late getting home, since the incense has burnt down and the water has dried. His punishment is to sit with a lamp on his head for a whole night. The next morning, Liu asks Chen to review his books in the study but Chen escapes to meet Xiuying. Liu becomes suspicious and finds out about Chen’s secret concubine by deceiving the old servant.

Scene 17
Becoming a Sheep (Bianyang 變羊)

6 arias

To prevent Chen from visiting his concubine again, Liu ties a string to his ankle. She holds the other end of the string to make sure he is at home all the times. A wizard passing by replaces Chen with a sheep and tells Liu that this is because Chen’s ancestors have become annoyed by her behavior. They will refuse to let Chen transform back to human form if she does not curb her jealousy. Liu is frightened and agrees to fast and stay indoors for three days.

Scene 18
Secret Pleasure (Toule 偷樂)

8 arias

During these three days, Chen enjoys himself at Xiuying’s place. He complains to Xiuying at length about his wife, while the latter tries to comfort him.

Scene 19
Returning to Human Form (Fuxing 復形)

9 arias

The wizard brings Chen back and makes Liu believe he has suffered during the three days of her fast. Chen demands that he be allowed to bring Xiuying
home. Once Liu refuses, he pretends that he will transform into a sheep again. Liu gives in.

Scene 20
Striving for the Husband’s Favor (Zhengchong 爭寵)
6 arias
Two devils, Oxhead and Horseface, are sent by Yama to take Liu’s soul away to the underworld to be punished for her shrewishness. Liu is jealous that Chen favors Xiuying and quarrels with them both. She suffers from her jealousy and becomes very sick. While giving medicine to Liu, Chen puts some wet paper underneath his hat to pretend that he is worrying and crying for her. Liu is angered by his deceit.

Scene 21
Complaining about the Wife (Suyuan 訴冤)
8 arias
Su visits. Chen complains about Liu and fills him in on the latest details. He regrets having ever married her. However, Su tells Chen that this is his destiny. It can be foretold from the lines in Liu’s hands that Chen will have a promising future career. Su also composes a poem on the subject of Chen’s being henpecked. Liu shouts upon hearing the two chatting, then suddenly loses consciousness.

Scene 22
A Soul Taken to Trial (Shedui 攝對)
10 arias
Liu’s soul is taken to the underworld court and is tortured by the judge when she refuses to plead guilty. She finally gives up after suffering many brutal bodily punishments, but the judge insists on beating her to death. Foyin appears and appeals to the judge so show mercy to Su and Chen. Liu’s life is
saved but Foyin, in order to teach her a lesson, asks the devils to show her around the underworld.

**Scene 23**

**Looking Around the Underworld** *(Mingyou 冥遊)*

7 arias

Devils cut out Liu’s left eye and break her right hand. Instead of stopping them, Foyin gives Chen a dressing down. The three then take Liu on a tour of the underworld and show her how all the other shrews are suffering from assorted very cruel tortures after their death. Liu is so frightened that she promises to be an obedient wife after returning to life.

**Scene 24**

**Thanks to the Master** *(Xieshi 謝師)*

7 arias

Liu comes back to life and tells Chen and Xiuying of her experience. She apologizes for being jealous and promises to serve Chen together with Xiuying as a good wife should. All of them thank Foyin for his help. Liu and Xiuying decide to become Foyin’s disciples and observe Buddhist practices at home.

**Scene 25**

**Childbearing** *(Shengzi 生子)*

5 arias

Xiuying gives birth to a son. Chen and Liu are both happy to have a male heir.

**Scene 26**

**Farewell Get-together** *(Zuxi 祖席)*

10 arias

Su is promoted and will soon leave for the capital. All of his friends come to his cottage to attend a farewell gathering. Su composes a poem for Foyin and a biography for Chen as well. Su promises to seek opportunities for Chen at
the court. Foyin tells Su that he is the reincarnation of a Buddhist master and will become an immortal soon. He also encourages the three ladies, Liu, Xiu Ying and Qin Cao to undertake a more diligent Buddhist practice.

Scene 27

Bringing up the Child (Fu’er 撫兒)
3 arias
Liu and Xiuying work together to raise their son and teach him to be a Confucian scholar.

Scene 28

Return to the West (Xigui 西歸)
3 arias
Foyin will return to Soul Mountain in the West, as he has fulfilled the task assigned him by the Buddha, of taming Chen’s jealous wife.

Scene 29

Recommendation at the Imperial Court (Tingjian 廷薦)
5 arias
Su recommends both Chen and his son to the emperor as being excellent talents. The emperor then issues an imperial edict summoning Chen to the capital to be an official and his son to be a reading partner of the crown prince.

Scene 30

Glory for All (Tongrong 同榮)
4 arias
Su comes to Chen’s home to present them with the imperial edict; Foyin also arrives to bring the three ladies to the West to be immortals because the Buddha is pleased with Liu’s transformation from shrew to good wife. Foyin also assures Su and Chen that all will reunite in the West after they have
finished their service at the court. Everyone is thankful to Foyin and happy about the future.
Appendix B: Translation of “Naoci” from Huancuitang

Dan: Liu  
Sheng: Chen  
Mo: County Magistrate  
Zao: Yamen runner(s)  
Jing: Magistrate’s wife  
Wai: Earth God  
Chou: Earth Goddess  

Dan (enters and says): If a person does not intend to harm a tiger [first], a tiger will not develop any intent to hurt the person. Because of my husband’s incapability, he repays my good intention with evil intention. I have been sick since Su sneered at me. It was all caused by Chen, that beast of mine. The more I think about this, the more resentful I feel.

【Bei duanzheng hao】 My personality is not at all eccentric, and it is all because that he relied upon the power [of Su]. It really got me into a huff. I will remember all the nonsense in his heart and certainly avenge this foe.  

【Gun xiuqiu】 I have thought through [the whole thing] and am burning in a rage. I shall fight against him. Why should I be afraid of going to the court? How can they beat a woman? There is no need to mention anything else, I shall [talk about] how he went to Luozhong, indulging in drunken stupor, abandoning his wife [in the hometown]. Since his return, I have not ever challenged him with any of my complaints, but that rascal [Su] makes vociferous allegations. How could I fail to know that a happy couple treats each other with gentleness and obedience? His friend’s goading is what has caused the problem. How can I forgive and forget this!

90 All qupai are indicated in the square brackets, such as 【Bei duanzheng hao】，and the the arias that should be sung would be marked in bold.
Well, well, well. In for a penny, in for a pound. I will wait till he comes. I will wait till he comes.

*Sheng* (entering): One needn’t ask if there is glory or gloom upon entering a room, just a glance at [her] face will speak the truth. My dear wife, you should take good care of yourself since you are ill. Why do you sit here, sullen and alone?

*Dan*: Let me ask you, why did Su cast those vicious words toward me the other day?

*Sheng*: He meant well, and was only trying to give you good advice. Don’t misunderstand him.

*Dan*: It must be you who want to overpower me with the support of your friend. It is a pity that the cane is not in my hand now. Let me bite a piece of flesh off you.

(*Dan intends to cane Sheng. Sheng gets flurried and runs away.*)

*Dan* (falls onto the floor and shouts): Fine. Fine. You intend for me to fall and die. Why don’t you just divorce me then? (*Dan catches Sheng and grabs him.*) Better to get it done in court than settle it between ourselves. Let’s wait till the *yamen* opens and I will make an accusation against you.

*Sheng* (kneels down and says): My wife, you fell down by yourself. It has nothing to do with me, Chen Zao. I am willing to ne beaten with the cane.

*Dan*: I certainly would not spare you [from the court].

(*Dan grabs the Sheng and they exit. Mo plays the magistrate and Za play the yamen runner, who follows the Mo onto the stage.*)

*Mo*: If the people all follow the law then I would be happy everyday, but if they break the law then I would be kept busy everyday. As a magistrate, I have my own problems. When I adjourn the court, my misery begins.

*Zao*: Your majesty, why do you suffer so badly, and why are you so afraid of returning from the courtroom?

*Mo*: My man, these are not words that I can share with you. Go see if there is any one who wants to make an accusation and bring him in.

*Dan* (drags Sheng and enters the stage): Your majesty, I want to make an accusation.
Zao (brings them in to meet the mo): Here is a woman dragging a man in. I guess the woman is the complainant.

Dan: I am the complainant.

Mo: Go ahead.

Dan: My name is Liu. This is my husband Chen Zao.

Mo: What could be the dispute between the couple? Zaoli, look behind the screen to see if Mistress is not there; then I can inspect this case.

Zao: Report to your majesty, the Mistress is not there.

Mo: Then Mrs Chen née Liu, please speak.

Dan: 【Shua hai’er】 My husband is bold and unconstrained, he broke his own promise and made trouble.

Mo: He must have been tempted.

Dan: It is Su Dongpo who asked a drunken beauty to seduce him.

Mo (very surprised): Scholar Su enjoys a very good reputation in the imperial court. How could he be a pimp?

Dan: It was because of his great reputation that I took no precautions against him. He incited my husband to drive me to death with words, so that he would be able to pursue other females just as he wishes.

Mo: How could this be true?

Sheng: Your majesty, my wife is speaking nothing but lies.

Dan: I lied about nothing! I am here to make an accusation. Please make a careful investigation and let me know your sentence.

Mo: Chen Zao, what do you say?

Sheng: 【Wu sha】 I swear that I am too kindhearted a man and yielded to Dongpo’s assertiveness. He made great efforts to teach ethics, intending to ease the jealousy of my wife.
Mo: This must be the truth. Great scholar! Great scholar!

Sheng: It is a pity that his concerns were all wasted. His sincere advice didn’t change the situation, on the contrary; I again was beaten with the cane and became a mass of bruises. There is nowhere that I can seek justice.

Mo (gnashing of his teeth): This woman is so hateful. Heaven will not tolerate it! Heaven will not tolerate it! Sheng: [She] would not escape the mirror-like justice. How can the law spare her?

Mo: 【Si sha】 The husband is gentle like a lamb while the wife is savage like a she-wolf. My belly fills with anger once I catch a glimpse of her. It is like the universe changed with the heaven becoming the earth, or the couple lost their love with the yin suppresses the yang. Which is more hateful is that [she] even slanders the scholar Su. This must be punished with penalty to restore the cardinal guides and constant virtues.

Jing (shouts from behind the stage): What cardinal guides and constant virtues [are you talking about]? Wait and see what I have to say!

Mo (falls off the seat): What can I do now? What can I do now? Mistress has heard it all.

Jing (plays the magistrate’s wife, rushes out onto the stage and pull up the dan): You stand aside. Let me beat this muddled thing. (Jing grabs mo with one hand and beats off his gauze cap with another hand) Kneel down!

Mo: Dear wife, my men are both here watching. Please leave me my dignity.

Zao: Mistress is in a rage now. We should withdraw. (Exit)

Jing (drags mo and condemn him): 【San sha】 How can you, a piece of donkey dung, be an official? How can you, a pot of paste, sit in the court? How can you bring in a verdict without even being able to tell black from white? (She points at the sheng) A dishonest man like him should be sent into exile three thousand miles away.

Dan: Your ladyship is quite right!

Jing (points at the dan): How can you condemn a good and virtuous wife like her?
Dan: Your ladyship is quite right!

Mo: Dear wife, please settle this suit as you like and do not nag me endlessly.

Jing: If I don’t speak, you would still show off your awesome prestige. You can only scare people in the court. People here never would know that once I get angry, you would koutou again and again to beg for pardon; once I stare at you, you would shiver like a falling leaf.

Mo: Your majesty, you have said enough. Let me run into the back hall. (He stands up and runs.)

Jing: The more you try to run, the more I will beat you.

(Jing beats mo and mo drags jing.)

Mo: Why did you beat me? I cannot fight you. Let’s bring the case to the earth god.

Jing: Let’s bring the case to the earth god.

Dan (drags the sheng): Let’s go together with Mistress to see the earth god, too.

(All of them reach the temple and kneel down.)

Mo: Please let me report to your highness, the earth god, Chen Zao is being maliciously persecuted by his wife. I just made a judgement in accordance with the law, but got beaten by my wife. I am innocent.

Jing: Earth god, my husband and Chen Zao colluded and perverted the law, so I voiced my discontent. Please give us a judicious judgement.

Wai (plays the earth god, enters and says): I have listened to your case for quite a while. You all stand up and listen to me. 【Er sha】 The official is reasonable.

Jing: What kind of reason does he have?

Wai: His wife is too hard-hearted.

Jing: I am not hard at all.

Wai: Then why did you make a scene at the court?

Jing: What is the harm of that?
Wai: Liu’s jealousy is really a wrongdoing, while the romantic tendencies of Chen are nothing unusual.

Sheng & Mo: Your judgement is quite fair.

Wai: You two, as wives, have become the laughing stock of all females. You should, from now on, listen to your husbands’ instructions carefully and submissively.

(Chou plays the earth goddess, rushes onto the stage and grabs the wai to beat him. Mo and sheng run away in panic.)

Wai (kneels down): My goddess, I have not said anything.

Chou (points at wai and scolds him): 【Yi sha】The most important thing of being a god is to be just, that is why you could enjoy the temple the incense burnt for you. How could you make such a biased judgement? You ignored that the water-like characteristics of women should be given precedence to, but indulged with your male ambition. My fists and slaps will loudly resound.

Wai: My goddess, please forgive me.

Chou: I will beat till you seek down for the underworld or up for heaven.

(Chou beats wai.)

Wai (grabs jing and says) She beats me because of you, so I will beat you.

(Wai beats the jing.)

Jing (grabs mo and says) He beats me because of you, so I will beat you.

(Mo beats dan.)

Dan (grabs sheng and says) She beats me because of you, so I will beat you.

(Dan beats sheng. All of them beat each other chaotically. Chou faints in anger and falls onto the floor.)

Jing & Dan: Don’t make the goddess sick with anger. Let’s help her up and take her in.

(Jing & Dan help chou up and quit the scene. Wai faints in anger and falls onto the floor. Mo & sheng help him up.)
Wai: 【Sha wei】 Don’t complain that you, as human, suffered this torture. I, as a god, have also been wounded. This disaster is like a bolt from the heaven. (Mo & sheng) She is a born scorpion, who knows no kindness at all. It is our destiny encountering this goddess of bad luck. From now on [we must] take such events in stride to avoid calamities. Once she is enraged, even the local earth god would feel like he is facing the “Yama” from the underworld. (They exit together.)
Appendix C: Translation of “Mengpa” in Zengji Liuye Qupu

Chen: Xiaosheng
Liu: Dan

(Xiaosheng enters): What is the purpose of my having been born in this world? I suffer greatly from my wife. If I know what I endure at the hands of my wife, why should I get married in the first place? My name is Chen Zao. It is my bad luck that my wife is a jealous virago. It must be my destiny, and I have been enduring this for some time. There is nothing I can do to change it, even by force. The only thing [I cannot endure] is that [she] cannot refrain from arguing with Scholar Su and swearing at him. Where is the dignity then? Sigh. I am also rather a manly person, why should a woman make me suffer? But wait. Though these are just the words out of anger, it could cause problems if she were to hear me. She has gotten tired of beating me and gone to sleep. Let me take a nap now for a while. I’ll wait and see how she will punish me once she wakes up. Indeed: Right after enduring beatings from the cane, let me go and have a dream now. (xiaosheng gives a yawn.)

(Er Jing Dan enters the stage): It has nothing to with whether the man is weak or not, women have flaunted their superiority from ancient times. You beast!

Xiaosheng: Well, my dear wife. Why are you here again?
Dan: Why did you ask Su to come and tease me yesterday?
Xiaosheng: Dear wife, Su came of his own accord. It was not my fault.
Dan: Ah! You beast! 【Tuo bushan】 You rely on the power and prestige of Su Dongpo to bully and oppress your wife. Concerning the family troubles, even an upright official would not be able to settle them. How can your friend be allowed to interfere into the affairs in our boudoir?

Xiaosheng: What pain from this beating!
Dan: Beating you with the cane is nothing. I wish I could bite you!
Xiaosheng: Ouch! Ouch!

91 Er jing is round 9 to 11 pm.
Dan: Dear neighbours, Chen Jichang is trying to push me over and kill me.

Xiaosheng: Dear wife, you tripped me. It has nothing to do with me.

Dan: Ah! You beast! 【Xiao liangzhou】 You hastily condemned and beat me, without thinking of the dignity of law.

Xiaosheng: What law?

Dan: You know only how to read books, but have never studied the law.

Xiaosheng: What does the law say?

Dan: There is a scene that allows me to accuse you in court.

Xiaosheng: Even if you brought me to the court, I am innocent.

Dan: How dare you claim to be innocent? The accusation of you maltreating your wife would be widely-known. The legislation is created by Xiao He and there is no chance that you can be spared from the punishment with a rod or exile.

Xiaosheng: My dear wife, please stop making a fool of yourself. Let me endure your canes from now on.

Dan: It is no longer a problem of the cane now! 【Yao pian】 In the past, your crime was minor, deserving only the punishment of flogging, but today I would have to set up the authority of wives. Even if you are as hard as the steel or as solid as the gold, I have a stove with red flame and you are certain to melt right away. Let’s go!

Xiaosheng: Ouch! Ouch!

(Both of them exit the stage.)
Appendix D: Translation of 17 Arias of “Mengpa” and “Sanpa”

“Mengpa” (Fears in the dream)

1
Liu

【Bei duanzheng hao】My personality is not at all eccentric, and it is all because that he relied upon the power [of Su]. It really got me into a huff. In my heart, I will take note of all his nonsense and certainly avenge this foe.

【北端正好】非是俺性情乖。只為他把威風仗。好教人氣滿胸膛。我將他胡言亂語都記在心兒上。算不了冤家帳。

2
Liu

【Gun xiuqiu】I have thought through [the whole thing] and am burning in a rage. I shall fight against him. Why should I be afraid of going to the court? How can they beat a woman? There is no need to mention anything else, I shall [talk about] how he went to Luozhong, indulging in drunken stupor, abandoning his wife [in the hometown]. Since his return, I have not ever challenged him with any of my complaints, but that rascal [Su] makes vociferous allegations. How could I fail to know that a happy couple treats each other with gentleness and obedience? His friend’s goading is what has caused the problem. How can I forgive and forget this!

【滾繡毬】細尋思。惱斷腸。試與他做一場。怕甚麼官司吿狀。終不然打拷婆娘。棄閨門結髮妻。戀笙歌入醉鄕。俺也不曾將惡氣十分衝撞。他反串無徒大肆強梁。俺豈不知夫妻恩愛須和順。自是他朋友扛幫惹禍殃。此恨難忘。

92 This translation is based on a collection of all the arias of “Mengpa” and “Sanpa” that had been published in the original chuanqi, miscellanies and qupus. Please see Table 5 for details.
3
Liu
【Tuo bushan】You rely on the power and prestige of Su Dongpo to bully and oppress your wife.
Concerning the family troubles, even an upright official would not be able to settle them.
How can your friend be allowed to interfere into the affairs in our boudoir?
【脱布衫】恁仗东坡官势强梁。倚威风强壓俺妻房。涉家务清官难断。俺闺阃怎容得朋友来结黨。

4
Liu
【Xiao liangzhou】You hastily condemned and beat me, without thinking of the dignity of law.
You will be widely-known for your shameful maltreatment of your wife. The legislation is created by Xiao He and there will be no possibility that you can be spared from the punishment with a rod or exile.
【小梁州】恁把俺打罵禁持直恁慌。却不道凛凛王章。恁把俺髮妻凌辱罪名扬。萧何创。問恁個徒流笞杖不容償。

5
Liu
【Yao pian】In the past, your crime was minor, deserving only the punishment of flogging, but today I would have to set up the authority of wives. Even if you are as hard as the steel or as solid as the gold, I have a stove with red flame and you are certain to melt right away.
【幺篇】恁從前罪小應笞杖。到今朝要整妻綱。饒恁似鑌鐵剛。堅金亢。俺自有紅爐烈火。不怕恁不傾烊。

6
Liu
【Manting fang】He, with a gang of scoundrels, has been reveling in the disreputable quarters of the city day and night, casting away the love between us. Any time I mention my fickle husband, I cannot restrain my anger. Why should I learn from the stupid Liang Hong, who
served her husband with great respect? What I should do is to seek justice from an official who is more upright than the judge Bao Longtu. Suddenly I heard the roll of drums. Let me take the night of light breeze and bright moon to bring my accusation of the local court.

【滿庭芳】他同着狐群狗黨。向花街柳巷。曉夜（嗖）猖狂。閃得俺結髮夫妻恩義都忘。但提起薄倖兒郎。按不住氣沖（嗖）千丈。怎學得蠢梁鴻齊眉舉案。須索向賽龍圖訴短論長。忽聽得鼕鼕鼓響。趨着這風清月朗。一總去訴理黃堂。

7
Liu

【Chao tianzi】Take whatever excuse you have to the court and see what the judgement will be. I am not filing a suit of adultery, why should I be afraid of losing face or being slandered by others. [You] again want to ask for Su’s help in front of the official. I will rely upon my own eloquence. A wife does not always have to echo her husband. Who knows but that the official himself may be a muddler? Seeing all these implements of punishment and the clear submission, I guarantee that you will see my true ability this time.

【朝天子】任伊家理長。到衙門發放。又不告姦情狀。怕什麼出乖露醜人誹謗。又要去央蘇老當官講。逞着那舌劍唇槍。顧不得妻隨夫唱。早難道坐黃堂也只是糊塗樣。看刑法樁樁。覷供招朗朗。管今番才識俺裙釵莽。

Sanpa (Three Fears)

8
County Magistrate

【Lihua’er】After ten years of hard study, I am lucky to be listed in the top rank of the imperial examination and have been assigned to become the magistrate of Huanggang. However, my headache starts the moment that I leave the courtroom. Sigh, my wife’s beating and scolding never stops.

【梨花兒】青燈十載。幸喜登黃甲。除授黃岡縣令多風月。若還退堂頭腦疼。咄。夫人打罵無休歇。
Liu

【Shua hai’er】 My husband is very bold and unconstrained, (my husband is very bold and unconstrained93), he broke his own promise and has made trouble. It is Su Dongpo who seduced him with a drunken beauty. It was because of his great reputation that I took no precautions against him. He incited my husband to drive me to death with words, so that he would be able to pursue other females just as he wishes. I have not said an untrue word. I am here to make an accusation. Please give it a careful inspection and let me know your sentence.

【耍孩兒】為丈夫生性多豪放。(為丈夫生性多豪放)。違約束甘心跳梁。蘇東坡勾引醉紅妝。因望重不甚隄防。他教我丈夫將言氣死糟糠婦。待要任意多求窈窕娘。此情真實非虛誑。特來控訴。乞示推詳。

Chen

【Wu sha】 I regret that I am too kindhearted a man, but am grateful for Dongpo’s assertiveness. He made great efforts to teach the ethics, intending to ease the jealousy of my wife. His sincere advice didn’t change the situation, on the contrary; I again was beaten with the cane and became a mass of bruises. There is nowhere that I can seek justice. [She] would not escape the mirror-like justice. How can she be spared from the law?

【五煞】念鯽生太善良。感東坡有主張。他欲化吾妻妒苦把人倫講他忠言未見囘天力。我藜杖翻遭遍體傷。此情無處伸冤枉。難逃明鏡。怎免王章。

County Magistrate

【Si sha】 The husband is gentle like a lamb while the wife is savage like a wolf. My belly fills with anger upon catching a glimpse of her. It is like the universe changed with the heaven

93 This line is repeated in the stage script. After Liu sings the first line, the magistrate would ask her to sing loudly and she would repeat the same line, only louder.
becoming the earth, or the couple lost their love with the yin suppresses the yang. What is more hateful is that [she] even slanders the scholar Su. This must be punished with penalty to restore the cardinal guides and constant virtues.

【四煞】這丈夫軟似羊。這婦人狠似狼。見了他肚裏先腫脹。乾坤有變天翻地。夫婦無情陰亢陽。把一個蘇學士無端謗。俺這裡須加刑憲。庶正綱常。

12
Magistrate’s wife

【San sha】How can you, a piece of donkey dung, be an official? How can you, a pot of paste, sit in the court? How can you bring in a verdict without even being able to tell black from white? (She points at the sheng) A dishonest man like him should be sent into exile three thousand miles away. How can you condemn a good and virtuous wife like her? You would still show off your awe prestige [if I don’t talk to you]. You can only scare people in the court. [They never know that] once I get angry, you would kowtow without stopping to beg pardon; once I stare at you, you would shiver like a falling leaf. （Once you get beaten till your flesh gets torn to shreds, you would develop a comprehensive understanding of the whole thing.）

【三煞】你這驢糞毬為甚官，麪糊盆坐甚堂。黑白不辨怎把人發放。似這欺心男子該流三千里。怎把賢德的夫人駡一場。恁便得志威風長。你只好在堂上諕人。卻不思我狠一狠。你頭如搗蒜。我豎一豎。你身似篩糠。（打恁個皮開肉綻，方曉端詳。）

13
Earth God

【Lihua’er】In all of this area, I am the most respectable personage, but upon seeing my wife, my soul flees with fear. I know not what kind of sin I have committed in my previous life that I am punished to be so oppressed in this life.

94 The underlining here indicates the lines in the original Huancuitang play that would be changed to the lines in brackets in qupu as a record of the standard popular stage performance.
【梨花兒】一方土地我為尊，見了夫人唬掉了魂，不知前世作何孽，嗏，留在今生做矮人。

14
Earth God
【Er sha】The official [‘s behavior] is reasonable. The wife is too hard-hearted. Then why did you make a scene at the court? Liu’s jealousy is really wrongful, while the romantic behaviour of Chen is nothing unusual. You two, as wives, would become laughing stock and bring shame to all other females. **You should, from now on, listen to your husbands’ instructions carefully and submissively.** (Once you get beaten up till you become quiet in the boudoir, you will be able to understand [your duty] completely.)

【二煞】做官的理自直。做妻的心太剛。緣何大鬧在公堂上。柳氏悍妬眞堪罪。陳慥風流不異常。你做夫人出醜妝牌牓。從此要小心聽令。拱手伏降。（你做夫人出醜在妝臺傍。打恁個閨閫安分。方見伸詳。）

15
Earth Goddess
【Yi sha】The most important thing of being a god is to be just, that is why you deserve the incense burnt for you at the temple. How could you make such a biased judgement? You ignored that the water-like characteristics of women should be given precedence, and have indulged only with your male ambition. My fists and slaps would be loud here. **Let me beat till you seek down for the underworld or up for the heaven.** (I will beat and there is no way to escape from me either up in the heaven or down in the underworld.)

【一煞】做神明全要公。在神祠好受香。如何斷事情偏向。全不管婦人水性須當讓。逞着你男子雄心越放佯。俺這裏拳頭巴掌聲聲響，打得你下尋地獄，上走天堂。（打得你上天無路。入地難藏。）

16
Earth God & Chen & Magistrate
【Sha wei】Don’t complaint that you, as human, suffered this torture. I, as a god, have also been wounded. This disaster is like descended bolt from the heaven. (Chen and magistrate) She is a born scorpion, who knows no kindness at all. It is our destiny to encounter this god of bad luck. From now on [we must] take things in stride to avoid calamities. Once she gets enraged, even the local earth god would feel like facing the living “Yama” from the underworld.

【煞尾】休道你做人受折磨。我爲神也損傷。這場禍害從天降。（末生）他是天生蜂蠆原非善。我們命遇鵲神定不祥。從今後逆來順受消災障。饒你是當坊土地。惹了他活見閻王。

17
Chen

【Qingjiang yin】What a strange dream. It must be that my soul has been wandering. The official is just as henpecked as I am, and the earth god is as well. Now I have developed the willingness of enduring the beating of her cane.

【清江引】一場怪夢真奇創。總是遊魂蕩。那官府也如斯。土地還一樣。我安心去受用青藜杖。
### Appendix E: List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Title</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BNZJ</td>
<td><em>Dingdiao kunchi xindiao yuefu Baneng zoujin</em>  &lt;br&gt;鼎雕昆池新調樂府八能奏錦</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLYZ</td>
<td><em>Xinke Jingban qingyang shidiao Cilin yizhi</em>  &lt;br&gt;新刻京板青陽時調詞林一枝</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DXYL</td>
<td><em>Dao Xian yilai liyuan jinian xialu</em>  &lt;br&gt;道咸以來梨園紀年小錄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBXQ</td>
<td><em>Guben xiqucongkan er’ji Shihou ji</em>  &lt;br&gt;獅吼記（古本戲曲叢刊二集）</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCT</td>
<td><em>Huancuitang xinbian chuxiang Shihou ji</em>  &lt;br&gt;環翠堂新編出像獅吼記</td>
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<tr>
<td>JBQY</td>
<td><em>Jubu qunying</em>  &lt;br&gt;菊部群英</td>
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<td>JCQP</td>
<td><em>Jicheng qupu</em>  &lt;br&gt;集成曲譜</td>
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<td>JGG</td>
<td><em>Jiguge Shihou ji</em>  &lt;br&gt;獅吼記（汲古閣）</td>
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<td>KJBYYD</td>
<td><em>Kunju biaoyan yide</em>  &lt;br&gt;崑劇表演一得</td>
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<td>KQJB</td>
<td><em>Kunqu jingbian jiaocai 300 zhong</em>  &lt;br&gt;崑曲精編教材 300 種</td>
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<td><em>Mengyuan qupu</em>  &lt;br&gt;夢園曲譜</td>
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<td>QNF</td>
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<td><em>Rixia kanhua ji</em>  &lt;br&gt;日下看花記</td>
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<td>SBXQ</td>
<td><em>Shanben xiqu congkan</em>  &lt;br&gt;善本戲曲叢刊</td>
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<td>SHJL</td>
<td><em>Shihou ji lian sichu</em>  &lt;br&gt;獅吼記連四詠</td>
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<td>SHJQW</td>
<td><em>Shijou ji quwen</em>  &lt;br&gt;獅吼記曲文</td>
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<td><em>Shijou ji (printed by Shanghai Kunjutuan)</em>  &lt;br&gt;獅吼記（上崑油印本）</td>
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<td><em>Shengpingshu zhilue</em>  &lt;br&gt;昇平署志略</td>
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<td>TGXLY</td>
<td><em>Tingge xiangying lu</em>  &lt;br&gt;聽歌想影錄</td>
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<td><em>Xiaohan xinyong</em>  &lt;br&gt;消寒新詠</td>
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<td><em>Xinjuan xiuxiang pingdian Xuanxuepu</em>  &lt;br&gt;玄雪譜</td>
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<td>YLY</td>
<td><em>Yue lu yin</em>  &lt;br&gt;月露音</td>
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<td><em>Yuzhong qupu</em>  &lt;br&gt;與翠全譜</td>
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<td>ZJLYQP</td>
<td><em>Zengji Liuye qupu</em>  &lt;br&gt;增輯六也曲譜</td>
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