

# **The Yangzhou Storytelling of**

## ***Rogue Pi Wu***

**A Case Study of Yang Mingkun and His Repertoire**

**LIU LIU 劉 琬**

**Faculty of Arts and Social Science**

**The University of Sydney**

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

## Abstract

Yangzhou *pinghua* is a genre of Chinese chantefables. It is a living tradition with a history of more than 300 years and is listed as China's intangible cultural heritage. The present research project is designed primarily as a case study of the Yangzhou *pinghua* performance of *Rogue Pi Wu* by Yang Mingkun, the ninth-generation heir of the Pu School of Pi Wu. This study combines methods borrowed from anthropological, linguistic, and literary fields to examine the history and performance of the Yangzhou *pinghua* repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu*.

Through observing both the performance tradition of the Pu School and the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* performed by Yang, this study finds that the Yangzhou dialect acts as a special channel through which Yang communicates with his audiences in a most effective and intimate way. This study also finds that Yang develops a powerful narrative strategy by skilfully integrating oral narrative with written narrative into a coherent whole. Based on these findings, among others, I argue that Yang achieves a special aesthetic effect for his version of *Rogue Pi Wu* by creatively preserving and developing the Pu School of Pi Wu.

## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>ONE</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Yangzhou: The Birth Place of Yangzhou Storytelling .....	2
1.2 The Basis of the Yangzhou Storytelling of Rogue Pi Wu .....	11
1.3 Literature Review.....	18
1.4 Methodology .....	30
<b>TWO</b> .....	<b>34</b>
<b>The Pu School of Pi Wu</b> .....	<b>34</b>
2.1 The Pu School of Pi Wu in History.....	35
2.2 Sources of Inspiration for Pu Lin’s Creation .....	66
2.3 Conclusion .....	76
<b>THREE</b> .....	<b>77</b>
<b>Performance Space and the Audience</b> .....	<b>77</b>
3.1 Yang Mingkun and the Pi Wu Story House.....	78
3.2 The Tradition of Yangzhou Story House.....	83
3.3 The Development of Audience in Yangzhou Storytelling .....	98
3.4 Conclusion .....	105
<b>FOUR</b> .....	<b>106</b>
<b>Narrative Features in Yang Mingkun’s Performance</b> .....	<b>106</b>
4.1 Preservation.....	107
4.2 Enrichment through Addition and Reduction .....	116
4.3 The Narration of Pi Wu in Yang’s Story .....	136
4.4 Conclusion .....	142

<b>FIVE</b> .....	<b>144</b>
<b>Phonetic and Syntactic Features of Yang Mingkun’s Performance Language</b> .....	<b>144</b>
5.1 Phonetic Features of Yang’s Performance Language .....	145
5.2 Syntactic Features of Yang’s Performance Language .....	156
5.3 Historical-linguistic Value of Yang’s Performance Language .....	165
5.4 Conclusion .....	172
<b>SIX</b> .....	<b>173</b>
<b>Lexical Features of Yang Mingkun’s Performance Language</b> .....	<b>173</b>
6.1 Diction.....	174
6.2 <i>Nong, Yalibuyaxia, Guaiguailongdidong and Huolodo</i> .....	182
6.3 Comedic Elements .....	188
6.4 Conclusion .....	209
<b>SEVEN</b> .....	<b>210</b>
<b>The Features of Acting by Yang Mingkun</b> .....	<b>210</b>
7.1 Speaking Styles.....	211
7.2 Mouth Acrobatics, Look, Hand, Body and Step .....	217
7.3 Conclusion .....	225
<b>EIGHT</b> .....	<b>227</b>
<b>A Conclusion</b> .....	<b>227</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>231</b>

## List of Tables

Table 2.1 Members of the Pu School.....	37
Table 4.1 Length of the three versions of texts.....	107
Table 4.2 Shared episodes.....	110
Table 4.3 Proportion of the various narratives.....	115
Table 4.4 Comparison of episodes in each unit.....	122
Table 4.5 Shared events.....	124
Table 5.1 Phonetic realisation of <i>zh-</i> , <i>ch-</i> , <i>sh-</i> and <i>z-</i> , <i>c-</i> , <i>s-</i> .....	146
Table 5.2 Phonetic realisation of <i>n-</i> and <i>l-</i> .....	147
Table 5.3 Phonetic realisation of <i>r-</i> .....	148
Table 5.4 Phonetic realisation of <i>-ng</i> and <i>-n</i> .....	148
Table 5.5 Syllables with two phonetic realisations in Yang's diction.....	150
Table 5.6 Set of abbreviated realisations of disyllable by Yang.....	151
Table 5.7 Phonological system of the Yangzhou dialect.....	152
Table 5.8 Initial realisation [n-] and [l-].....	153
Table 5.9 Finals in the Beijing dialect.....	154
Table 5.10 <i>-zi</i> in Yang's diction.....	157
Table 5.11 <i>-tou</i> in Yang's diction.....	158
Table 5.12 Collocations of verb <i>chi</i> .....	159
Table 5.13 Disyllabic and trisyllabic reduplication words in Yang's diction.....	161
Table 5.14 Address forms in Yang's diction.....	161
Table 5.15 Reduplication words in the Yangzhou dialect.....	163
Table 5.16 Address forms in the Yangzhou dialect.....	164
Table 5.17 Fragments of Mid-Chinese pronunciation (I).....	169

Table 5.18 Fragments of Mid-Chinese pronunciation (II).....	169
Table 6.1 Pu's verses and Yang's proses .....	177
Table 6.2 Number of dialect words explained in the three texts.....	179
Table 6.3 Words in the three texts .....	180
Table 6.4 Introduction to Pi Wu.....	181
Table 7.1 Phonetic features in square mouth and round .....	216

## List of Figures

Figure 1.1 A narrow lane restricted to one person .....	3
Figure 1.2 A wood hall built in the private garden in Qing times .....	5
Figure 1.3 Outside of the private garden built in Qing times .....	6
Figure 1.4 Yang Mingkun performs Yangzhou storytelling .....	11
Figure 1.5 Three versions of performance-style transcribed texts published in 2015, 1996, and 1985 respectively.....	16
Figure 3.1 A waiter dressed in the Qing style stands at the door of Pi Wu Story House; side wall to the gate of Pi Wu Story House.....	78
Figure 3.2 The audience in the Pi Wu Story House enjoying the traditional morning tea.....	78
Figure 3.3 The Stage in the Pi Wu Story House.....	79
Figure 3.4 The background of the stage in the Pi Wu Story House.....	80
Figure 3.5 Han pottery figurine performing storytelling/singing.....	83
Figure 3.6 Han wood figurine playing storytelling/singing.....	84
Figure 3.7 Map of Jiaochang.....	90
Figure 3.8 Jie Nan Story House.....	93
Figure 7.1 Yang Mingkun performs the story of Pi Wu.....	224



*Pi Wu Lazi*

皮五辣子



# ONE

## Introduction

Equally divided into three is the beauty of moonlight scenes of the world

Two of them are undoubtedly in Yangzhou.<sup>1</sup>

—Xu Ning 徐凝 (fl. 813)

As a genre of Chinese narrative art, Yangzhou storytelling (Yangzhou *pinghua* 揚州評話) appeared in Yangzhou between the late Ming 明 (1368-1644) and early Qing 清 (1616-1912) dynasties. The Yangzhou *pinghua* repertoire of *Pi Wu lazi* 皮五辣子 (*Rogue Pi Wu*) was created in Yangzhou around the Qianlong 乾隆 (1735-1796) era and has since been passed down to the present period. It is performed by Yang Mingkun 楊明坤 (1949-) today.

In this chapter, I will examine some historical aspects of Yangzhou city that is reflected in the narrative of *Rogue Pi Wu* recited by Yang Mingkun and the basics of the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu*. By referring to the historical documents related to Yangzhou *pinghua* and contemporary studies on the history of Yangzhou city, I aim to point out that Yang's repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* is of great research value to the study on Yangzhou storytelling. In addition, I will introduce the origin and value of this thesis and the methodology adopted for the present research.

---

<sup>1</sup> All translations of Chinese terms and texts in this thesis, unless otherwise indicated, are my own.

## 1.1 Yangzhou: The Birth Place of Yangzhou Storytelling

The repertoire of Pi Wu currently performed in the Yangzhou dialect by Yang Mingkun was created in the Qing Qianlong era. The narrative of the story is focused on the daily experiences of Yangzhou people in the Qing dynasty. The geographical features, economic and cultural status of Yangzhou during the Qing dynasty, and even the linguistic features of the Yangzhou dialect are reflected in the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu*.

Yangzhou has a history of more than 2,500 years. It is an inland prefecture-level city in the central part of modern Jiangsu 江蘇 province, situated on the north bank of the Yangtze 揚子 River and southeast of the Huai River 淮河. Known in history as “Huai zuo ming du” 淮左名都 or “a famed city to the east of the Huai River,” Yangzhou replaced the old name of Guangling 廣陵 during the Sui 隋 dynasty (581-618) to designate the area of what constitutes present-day Yangzhou. Constructed as a military base in 486 BC, Yangzhou was initially called Hancheng 邗城.<sup>2</sup> The Hangou 邗溝 Canal, known as the first waterway in history to connect the Huai and Yangtze Rivers, was constructed in the same year as Hancheng, also primarily for military purposes. The Han Canal is the oldest extant part of the Grand Canal of China, linking the Yellow River 黃河 and the Yangtze River.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Antonia Finnane, *Speaking of Yangzhou A Chinese City, 1550-1850*, (USA: Harvard University Press, 2004): 18-24, esp. 19; Wang Hong 王鴻, *Yangzhou sanji 揚州散記 (Random Notes on Yangzhou)*, (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 2002), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Wang, *Yangzhou sanji*, 50-2.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

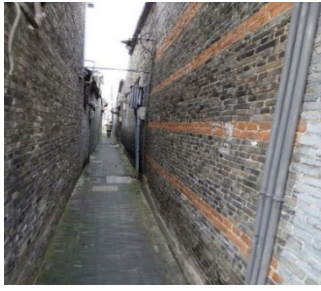


Fig. 1.1 A narrow lane restricted to one person. 01 August 2017.  
Guoqing road, Yangzhou.

The construction of Yangzhou in the early imperial period was mainly due to its strategic importance, and the city became a national centre of economy and culture during the late medieval period and remained so for more than one thousand year until the early nineteenth century. Yangzhou is one of the most famous historical and cultural cities in China. Its beauty and charm was portrayed by the great poet of the Tang 唐 dynasty (618-907) Li Bai 李白 (701-762) in *Huanghelou song Meng Haoran zhi Guangling* 黃鶴樓送孟浩然之廣陵 (“Seeing Off Meng Hao-ran at Yellow-crane Tower on His Going to the Broad Mound [Yang-chou]”), a heptasyllabic quatrain (*qiyan jueju* 七言絕句). The poem reads:<sup>4</sup>

My old friend farewell—West!—from Yellow-crane Tower;  
But in mist-and-flower April down to Yang-chou heads!  
His lone sail’s far silhouette dies into the azure air,  
And I only see the Yangtze flowing to horizon edge.

As one of the most beautiful historical cities in China, Yangzhou features many lanes, rivers, bridges and private gardens, as vividly described in Yang’s version of *Rogue Pi Wu*. The city is crisscrossed here and there by ancient lanes and streets paved with stone slabs and pebbles. There are more than 600 lanes within a small area of no more than seven square kilometres.<sup>5</sup> Some of the names of the lanes in Yangzhou are

---

<sup>4</sup> William Dolby (trans. with commentaries and annotations), *Three Hundred T’ang Dynasty Poems*, (Edinburgh: Carreg Publishers, 2006), vol.1, 153-54.

<sup>5</sup> Huang Jilin 黃繼林, *Yangzhou mingxiang* 揚州名巷 (*Well-known Lanes in Yangzhou City*), (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2005), 15; 34-40

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

recorded in *Rogue Pi Wu* as recited by Yang Mingkun, such as Mingwa 明瓦 Lane, Yiren 一人 Lane (Figure 1.1) and Baizi 百子 Lane.<sup>6</sup>

The Grand Canal connecting North China and South China has a significant impact on the development of Yangzhou from the Sui to the Qing dynasties. Over this long period, the advancement of waterway transportation, the salt industry and trade determined the economic position of Yangzhou in the imperial era. Yangzhou experienced two golden ages in history, one in the Tang and the other in the Qing era. During the Tang Dynasty, Yangzhou was the greatest commercial centre and port of trade in the country and also became the centre of salt monopoly government in the late Tang era.<sup>7</sup> This is reflected in the well-known folk saying, “Yangyi Yier” 揚一益二, which suggests that Yangzhou was the greatest commercial port with Yizhou 益州 (modern Chengdu 成都) coming second in place during the Tang era.<sup>8</sup> Yangzhou is located at the centre of the Jiang-Huai 江淮 area between the Yangtze and Huai rivers and situated at the junction of the Grand Canal and the Yangtze River. When shuttling between the northern and southern cities by waterway or land, commuters would have to pass by Yangzhou. Thus, Yangzhou partly owed its prosperity to the growing traffic between the north and the south. In the Tang times, “It became a hub of interregional and even foreign trade and played host to a large population of merchants from inner and western Asia.”<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Yin Boda 殷伯達, et al. (eds.), (transcribed from Yang Mingkun’s repertoire), *Pi Wu lazi 皮五辣子 (Rogue Pi Wu)*, (Nanjing: Jiangsu fenghuang wenyi chubanshe, 2015), 711; 294; 68.

<sup>7</sup> Wu Haibo 吳海波, “Qingdai Liang-huai yanye zhongyaoxing zhi dingliang fenxi” 清代兩淮鹽業重要性之定量分析 (“The Quantitative Analysis of the Importance of the Salt Industry of the Liang-huai Area under the Qing Dynasty”), *Sichuan ligong xueyuan xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 2 (2013): 2-3.

<sup>8</sup> Wei Minghua 韋明鏞, *Eeshisi qiao mingyue ye, Yangzhou 二十四橋明月夜, 揚州 (The Twenty-fourth Bridge at the Night with a Bright Moon, Yangzhou)*, (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2000), 232-33.

<sup>9</sup> Finnane, *Speaking of Yangzhou A Chinese City, 1550-1850*, 22.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

It was the waterway system that made Yangzhou the centre of north-south trade and communication in late Imperial China, which subsequently gave the false impression that Yangzhou was located in the wealthiest area south of the Yangtze River during the Qing dynasty, which was traditionally known as Jiangnan 江南.<sup>10</sup> In the story of *Rogue Pi Wu* recited by Yang Mingkun, when Pi Wu pretends to be a Guangdong merchant living in a luxurious ship to cheat others, no one questions his identity because during the Qing era, it is common to meet wealthy merchants in Yangzhou, given the convenient waterway transportation. The description of the prosperous port is as follows:<sup>11</sup>

Xiao Xizi goes to the most massive port and sees various types and sizes of boats floating on the river. [...] He says to himself, “Here are cargo ships, manned vessels, garbage ships, but where is the mansion-on-water (*shui gongguan* 水公館) of the Guangdong merchant?”

The phrase “mansion-on-water” implies that the boat is as luxurious and spacious as a mansion on land.



Fig. 1.2 A wood hall built in the private garden in Qing times. 01 August 2017. Dongguan 東關 Street. Yangzhou.

During the Qing dynasty, the salt monopoly provided the financial foundations for Yangzhou to become one of the most prosperous and wealthiest cities in China. According to

<sup>10</sup> Chen Xiaomei 陳曉梅 and Qingyang 秦揚, *Yangzhou mingshui* 揚州名水 (*Well-known Rivers in Yangzhou*), (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2005), 113-20.

<sup>11</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 620-21.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

the accounting details in the *Yanye timing beiji* 鹽業題名碑記 (*Tablet Inscription of Famous Names from the Salt Industry*) by Li Fayuan 李發元 (ca.1684-ca.1769), more than half of the Empire's salt tax revenue came from Yangzhou.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, the Grand Canal conferred importance on Yangzhou, the main port of the only north-south waterway route, as the centre of interregional communication and trade, as well as significantly contributing to the re-emergence of Yangzhou as one of the principal commercial cities in late Imperial China.<sup>13</sup> Liang-huai 兩淮 merchants had a stable, close relationship with the central government, and they were rich enough to be



Fig. 1.3 Outside of the private garden built in Qing times. 01 August 2017. Xuningmen 徐凝門 Street. Yangzhou.

considered as a private bank of the imperial court to fund natural disaster relief and the country's infrastructure.<sup>14</sup> Due to the emperors' travels to Yangzhou as favoured by the Emperors from the Qing dynasty, there was a strong influence from the north.

“With frequent travels by Qing emperors Kangxi and Qianlong, the typical architectural features of the Imperial Palace were incorporated into the construction of gardens in Yangzhou, including covered walkways, gazebos and pavilions.”<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> Wu, “Qingdai Liang-huai yanye zhongyaoxing zhi dingliang fenxi”, 3; Chen and Qing, *Yangzhou mingshui*, 120.

<sup>13</sup> Hu Ming 胡明 and Pan Baoming 潘寶明 (eds.), *Yangzhou Wenhua gaiguan* 揚州文化概觀 (*Outline of Yangzhou Culture*), (Nanjing: Nanjing chubanshe, 1993), 16.

<sup>14</sup> Wei, *Eeshisi qiao mingyue ye, Yangzhou*, 61-4; Wang, *Yangzhou sanji*, 39-40. The large area on both sides of the Huai River directly to the north of the Yangtze River is called Liang-huai. Yangzhou is one of the important cities of the Liang-huai area. Most of the Qing Liang-huai merchants are not locals of Yangzhou but come from Shaanxi 陝西, Shanxi 山西, Anhui 安徽, Zhejiang 浙江, Jiangxi 江西, Hubei 湖北 and other cities of Jiangsu.

<sup>15</sup> Finnane, *Speaking of Yangzhou A Chinese City, 1550-1850*, 198-99; Zhu Zhenghai 朱正海 and Wang Yu 王瑜, *Yanshang yu Yangzhou* 鹽商與揚州 (*The Salt Merchants and Yangzhou*), (Jiangsu: Guji chubanshe, 2001), 204-16.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

We can only imagine how luxurious these private gardens must have been in the Qing dynasty, as some even functioned as palaces for imperial travel. In the story *Rogue Pi Wu* told by Yang Mingkun, Pi Wu buys a luxurious garden house when he becomes rich. The narrative on the decoration in the garden house is as follows:<sup>16</sup>

This is a garden house built with nine suites. He goes through the first and second, and then the third. He is shocked to see chairs and long desks made of precious wood, and antiques and paintings. There are lots of porcelain, jade articles, carved wooden furniture and bronze wares in the third hall. Pi Wu looks around and says to himself, “Oh my god! The chairs and long desks, antiques and paintings here, any one of them is worth around twenty thousand taels silver.” [...] The fourth and fifth halls are decorated in the same style.

Above is a description of a private garden house in Qing Yangzhou: valuable antiques and paintings filled in the hall, the chairs and desks were made of precious wood, and exquisite halls and rooms were built in the garden (Figures 1.2 and 1.3). Nearly all the owners of these private gardens were salt merchants. Qing Yangzhou experienced its second golden period when salt merchants from Shanxi, Shaanxi, Anhui, Jiangxi, and Zhejiang arrived in Yangzhou to conduct business. The wealth these merchants brought to Yangzhou provided an excellent opportunity for garden builders to exchange their experiences and put their design skills into practice, significantly contributing to the now renowned Yangzhou garden arts. In addition, wealthy merchants were interested in decorating their gardens with valuable antiques and

---

<sup>16</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 664.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

paintings to exhibit their wealth. Hence, it is not surprising to find expensive furniture in Pi Wu's house.

During the Qing dynasty, the commercial activities of sojourning merchants strengthened the position of Yangzhou as a significant economic and cultural centre in the empire and also made Yangzhou the capital of luxury and consumption in China.<sup>17</sup> Merchants from near and afar came to Yangzhou to earn money. This is vividly described in the story of Pi Wu as follows:<sup>18</sup>

Yao Er, the boss of the fur shop, is from Shanxi; Wang Youcai, the owner of Fusheng Yuan teahouse, is from Nanjing 南京; Great-grandfather Wang Er, the owner of the pawn shop, is from Zhenjiang 鎮江.

However, it should be noted that very few Yangzhou residents were engaged in commercial activities with the sojourning merchants for profit.<sup>19</sup> In contrast to the wealthy provincial merchants, ordinary Yangzhou locals preferred to live a practical, low-profile life. The ordinary houses of Qing Yangzhou were simple, built according to the shape of the streets and lanes, adopting the concept of “Take things as they are.” With a few exceptions, most ordinary houses were built with a courtyard (*tianjing* 天井) inside for lighting, ventilation and drainage. Sometimes, the courtyard also

---

<sup>17</sup> Ke Ling 柯玲, *Minsu shiye zhong de Qingdai Yangzhou su wenxue* 民俗視野中的清代揚州俗文學 (*Look at the Folklore of Qing Yangzhou from a Folk-custom View*), (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 2006), 278-93; Sun Chuanyu 孫傳餘 (eds.), *Yangzhou mingyuan* 揚州名園 (*Well-known Gardens in Yangzhou*), (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2005), 14-20; Wu Jiankun 吳建坤, Zhao Lichang 趙立昌, et al. (eds.), *Yangzhou Mingzhai* 揚州名宅 (*Well-known Mansions in Yangzhou*), (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2005), 38-45.

<sup>18</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 629; 248; 511.

<sup>19</sup> Finnane, *Speaking of Yangzhou A Chinese City, 1550-1850*, 6-9.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

functioned as a drawing room. In Yang's narrative of *Rogue Pi Wu*, Wang Youcai, the owner of Fusheng Yuan teahouse, turns the courtyard attached to his house into a drawing room to accommodate more people. The description is: "Go through the hall, a small courtyard is found. In the yard, there are four big water vats. [...] Now, many people are sitting on the vat covers."<sup>20</sup>

Yangzhou's geographic features and Yangzhou dialect find vivid expression in Yang Mingkun's narrative of *Rogue Pi Wu*. As will be shown by a linguistic analysis in this thesis of the text of *Rogue Pi Wu* performed by Yang Mingkun, the development of the Yangzhou dialect has a close connection with several waves of the southward migration in history. The Yangzhou dialect developed from the interaction between the northern and southern dialects, especially the Wu dialects in the Sui and early Tang periods, and its growth had always been accompanied by such an interaction.<sup>21</sup> Following the collapse of the Ming dynasty, the Manchu Qing General Duoduo 多鐸 (1614-1649) ordered a ten-day massacre, killing almost eighty to ninety per cent of Yangzhou residents.<sup>22</sup> After this slaughter, large numbers of immigrants from the north and south of China arrived in Yangzhou. This was not the first large-scale migration to Yangzhou as several periods of southward migration to the Jiang-Huai area, including Yangzhou, had taken place since the late Western Jin 西晉 dynasty (AD 266-316). One such event happened when a repopulation policy was issued and applied in the Jiang-Huai area during the Southern Song 南宋 dynasty (1127-1279) to

---

<sup>20</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 248.

<sup>21</sup> Zhang Min, "Syntactic Change in Southeastern Mandarin: How Does Geographical Distribution Reveal a History of Diffusion?", in Ding Bangxin and Yu Aiqin (eds.), *In memory of Professor Li Fang-Kuei: Essays on Linguistic Change and the Chinese Dialects*, (USA: University of Washington, Republic of China 89), 228-29.

<sup>22</sup> Huang, *Yangzhou mingxiang*, 135; Wang, *Yangzhou sanji*, 34.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

obtain resources to strengthen defences.<sup>23</sup> The several waves of migration that took place from the Western Jin dynasty onwards greatly influenced the development of the Yangzhou dialect. Such linguistic evidence is apparent in *Rogue Pi Wu* performed by Yang Mingkun (see Chapter 5.3).

The modern Yangzhou dialect is one sub-dialect grouping of Jiang-Huai Mandarin.<sup>24</sup> The foundation of the Jiang-Huai Mandarin group known today was laid firmly by immigrants principally from the north in the late Northern Song 北宋 (960-1127) and early Southern Song dynasties.<sup>25</sup> The phonological system of the Yangzhou dialect follows that of the Mandarin dialect or the Northern dialect group, while retaining some phonetic features of the Southern dialects, such as literary and colloquial reading (*wenbai yidu* 文白異讀) and *rusheng* 入声 Middle Chinese (MC) entering tone.<sup>26</sup> It also presents unique features such as *podu* 破讀 reading.<sup>27</sup> These

---

<sup>23</sup> Zhou Yunzhong 周運中, “Nan Song shiqi de huaiyang yimin” 南宋時期的淮揚移民 (“Migration of Huai-Yang Area in the Southern Song Dynasty”), *Xungen* 1 (2007): 130-33; W. South Coblin, “Migration history and dialect development in the lower Yangtze watershed”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 3 (2002): 533.

<sup>24</sup> Zhang Bin 張斌, *Xinbian xiandai Hanyu* 新編現代漢語 (*New Edition of Modern Chinese Language*), (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2002), 5-7; Margaret Mian Yan, *Introduction to Chinese Dialectology* (Muenchen: LINCOM GmbH, 2006), 1-3; 60-86. There are seven major dialects within the Chinese language family: Mandarin, Wu 吳, Cantonese 廣東, Gan 贛, Hakka 客家, Min 閩 and Xiang 湘. The Mandarin dialect has four sub-dialect groups: Northern Mandarin 北方官話, Southwestern Mandarin 西南官話, Northwestern Mandarin 西北官話, and Jiang-Huai 江淮 or Lower Yangtze Mandarin 下江官話.

<sup>25</sup> Coblin, “Migration history and dialect development in the lower Yangtze watershed”, 534.

<sup>26</sup> In modern Chinese dialects, a syllable can have two different phonetic realisations: colloquial pronunciation, derived from the realisation of daily talking, and literary pronunciation, derived from the realisation of literary reading. Literary and colloquial pronunciations commonly exist in Southern dialects, especially in the Min and Wu dialect groups. At the present time, the Yangzhou dialect belongs to the Northern dialect group; however, it retains more than fifty syllables containing literary and colloquial pronunciations.

Entering tone is one of the four syllable types in the phonology in Middle Chinese. Although translated as “tone,” an entering tone is not a tone in the phonetic sense but a syllable that ends in a stop consonant or a glottal stop.

<sup>27</sup> *Podu* refers to the situation in which the tone, final or initial of a morpheme is changed when distinguishing different but related lexical or syntactic meanings of a morpheme, or two morphemes that share a phonetic realisation. Usually, *podu* phonetic realisation follows the phonological system of the modern Northern dialects

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

linguistic characteristics have won Yangzhou dialect a reputation of “being neither southern nor northern; being southern and northern as well” (*bu nan bu bei, yi nan yi bei* 不南不北, 亦南亦北) (see Chapter 5).

The repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* performed by Yang Mingkun is of great value to scholars of historical linguistics and dialectology. The narrative also reflects the social context of Yangzhou in the Qing dynasty, which provides a fascinating window into the daily life of the ordinary people of Qing Yangzhou.

### 1.2 The Basis of the Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*



Fig. 1.4 Yang Mingkun performs Yangzhou storytelling. 10 April 2016, Pi Wu Story House (Pi Wu shuchang 皮五書場), Dongguan Street, Yangzhou.

The repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* performed by Yang Mingkun is a form of Yangzhou *pinghua* and is a typical style of traditional Chinese performing arts. In Chinese scholarship, the term *shuochang* 說唱 (storytelling and story singing) belongs to the category of oral performance art (*quyi* 曲藝).

Yangzhou storytelling is included in the *quyi* category with other styles of oral performance art, such as Yangzhou plucked-string ballads (*xianci* 弦詞), Suzhou 蘇州 plucked-string chantefable (*tanci* 彈詞), Suzhou storytelling, and Jingjiang 靖江 scriptures telling (*jiangjing* 講經). Among the styles of Yangzhou narrative arts performance, Yangzhou storytelling is the most influential. It enjoyed popularity in Qing Yangzhou and is still performed today. It is a style of

---

group, and the original realisation retains the phonetic tradition of the Middle Chinese dictionary. See Wang Shihua 王世華, “Yangzhou kouyu zhong de podu” 揚州口語中的破讀 (“Podu Realisations in Oral Yangzhou Dialect”), *Yangzhou shiyuan xuebao shehui kexue ban* 1 (1986): 108-11.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Chinese chantefables listed as China's intangible cultural heritage.

Yangzhou storytelling refers to the professional performance of telling stories in prose without music accompaniment, predominantly in the Yangzhou dialect. Both Yangzhou and Suzhou storytelling feature a single storyteller seated at a table who performs without musical instruments, telling exciting tales of heroes and adventure. Differing from these two styles, Yangzhou and Suzhou chantefable feature pairs of storytellers who specialize in telling lengthy love stories that incorporate prominent singing roles accompanied by stringed instruments.<sup>28</sup> The props used by the chantefable storytellers include one or two large folding fans, a water glass, a handkerchief, and a small rectangular block made of jade, wood, or horn called talking stopper (*xingmu* 醒木).<sup>29</sup> The Yangzhou storytelling performance arena provides an example in point. In the story house (*shuchang* 書場) or teahouse (*chaguan* 茶館), the performer is dressed in traditional costume and tells a story while sitting behind a small square desk with a *xingmu* and a teapot on it and holds a folding fan (*zheshan* 摺扇) (Figure 1.4).<sup>30</sup> This is the setting of a typical Yangzhou storytelling performance.

The history of Yangzhou storytelling can be traced back to the Song 宋 dynasty (960-1279). During the Song period, professional storytelling flourished in the entertainment districts of urban centres in the capital cities of Bianliang 汴梁 (present-day Kaifeng 開封) and Lin'an 臨安 (present-day Hangzhou 杭州), Yangzhou, and

---

<sup>28</sup> Mark Bender, "A description of Jiangjing (telling scriptures) services in Jingjiang, China", *Asian Folklore Studies*, vol.60, 1 (2001):104.

<sup>29</sup> Mark Bender, *Plum and Bamboo: China's Suzhou Chantefable Tradition*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 5-6.

<sup>30</sup> All photos presented in the thesis are taken by the author.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Suzhou in the South.<sup>31</sup> Hu Shiyong 胡士瑩 (1901-1979) states that:<sup>32</sup>

*Pinghua*, following the tradition of the performance of historical tale-telling (*jiangshi* 講史) from the Song and Yuan dynasties, was very well developed in the Qing dynasty. Initially, the city of Yangzhou was the centre of *pinghua* performing arts, after which many other cities developed their own vernacular storytelling. However, the centre of *pinghua* performing arts remains in Yangzhou.

According to Hu, the *jiangshi* of the Song dynasty was the fountainhead of Yangzhou storytelling. Liu Jingting 柳敬亭 (1587-1670), Kong Yunxiao 孔雲霄 (fl. ca.1650) and Han Guihu 韓圭湖 (fl. ca.1600) were named as Yangzhou *pinghua* master storytellers by Li Dou 李鬥 (1749-1817) in the *Yangzhou huafang lu* 揚州畫舫錄 (*Reminiscences from the Pleasure Boats of Yangzhou*).<sup>33</sup>

The repertoires of Yangzhou storytelling are mostly adapted from Ming and Qing chapter-division novel (*zhanghui xiaoshuo* 章回小說). Yangzhou storytellers recreate stories of their own by incorporating and adapting splendid plots of these novels.<sup>34</sup> The most noteworthy of these are the *Shuihu zhuan* 水滸傳 (*The Water Margin*), the *Sanguo yanyi* 三國演義 (*Romance of the Three Kingdoms*), and the *Xiyou*

---

<sup>31</sup> Bender, *Plum and Bamboo*, 9-10.

<sup>32</sup> Hu Shiyong, *Huaben xiaoshuo gailun* 話本小說概論 (*General Introduction to Huben Fiction*), (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 614.

<sup>33</sup> Li Dou, *Yangzhou huafang lu* (*Reminiscences from the Pleasure Boats of Yangzhou*), (1797; reprint Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), 257.

<sup>34</sup> Chen Wulou 陳午樓, “Cong changpian xiaoshuo fazhan dao changpian pinghua” 從長篇小說發展到長篇評話 (“The Development of Full-length Novel to Full-length *Pinghua* Storytelling”), *Yangzhou shiyuan xuebao* 1 (1985): 108-12.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

*ji* 西遊記 (*Journey to the West*). Today, we often hear of Wang Shaotang 王少堂 (1899-1968) as a master storyteller. His repertoire has been revered as the Wang School of *The Water Margin*.

Only a few Yangzhou *pinghua* repertoires performed in Qing times were created independently from the tradition of Chinese fiction. Of the ten storytelling performances mentioned by Li Dou in his *Reminiscences from the Pleasure Boats of Yangzhou*, only three are new creations. These are the *Qingfengzha* 清風閣 (*Pure-Wind Dyke*), the *Feituo zhuan* 飛駝傳 (*Legend of Flying Hunchback*) and the *Yangzhou hua* 揚州話 (*Story of Yangzhou Dialect*).<sup>35</sup> In his *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction*, Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881-1936) explained the reason for the appearance of several newly created repertoires in Qing times. He said: “Men’s tastes change with the times, and as readers grew tired of old books, new trends developed.”<sup>36</sup> This also explains the reason for the emergence of newly created repertoires of Yangzhou storytelling in Qing times, namely *Legend of Flying Hunchback*, *Story of Yangzhou Dialect*, and *Pure-Wind Dyke*, the last of which has also been referred to as *Pi Wu lazi* or *Rogue Pi Wu* since 1985.

*Legend of Flying Hunchback* and *Story of Yangzhou Dialect* fail to survive, and only *Rogue Pi Wu* remains extant. It is hence an important representative of the repertoire created in Qing times. *Rogue Pi Wu* is also known as the “Pu School of Pi Wu” (*Pu men Pi Wu* 蒲門皮五). The present storyteller of the repertoire is Yang Mingkun, the ninth-generation inheritor of the Pu School. He is a national first-class actor and a member of the Chinese Artists Association. In 1990, he was recognized as

---

<sup>35</sup> Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 258.

<sup>36</sup> Lu Xun, *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1982), 336.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

one of the “Ten National Eminent storytellers” together with nine other artists, including Jiang Kun 姜昆 (1950-), Liu Lanfang 劉蘭芳 (1944-), and Tian Lianyuan 田連元 (1941-).

*Pure-Wind Dyke* can be read as an autobiography of the author; it also records the scenes of Yangzhou during the Qing dynasty. According to the story performed by Yang Mingkun, *Pure-Wind Dyke* is set in the Song dynasty.<sup>37</sup> It was initially created in Yangzhou by Pu Lin 蒲琳 (fl.1780) who lived during the reign of Qianlong. Also known as Pu Tianyu 蒲天玉, Pu Lin was the author and first performer of *Pure-Wind Dyke*. Pi Wu 皮五 is the nickname of the protagonist Pi Fengshan 皮鳳山 in *Pure-Wind Dyke*.<sup>38</sup> It is derived from the *fanqie* 反切 of the author’s surname Pu 蒲.<sup>39</sup> As Li Dou states in the *Yangzhou huafang lu*:<sup>40</sup>

Yangzhou storytelling is not difficult to perform but the existing repertoire is very familiar to the people. So based on his life experience, Pu wrote a story called *Pure-Wind Dyke* and the main character was named Pi Wu.

---

<sup>37</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 203.

<sup>38</sup> The full name of the protagonist is Pi Fengshan 皮奉山 in all versions of the text, but Hu Shiyong wrote it in the form of 皮奉三 in *Huaben xiaoshuo gailun*. 山 and 三 share identical phonetic realisation in the Yangzhou dialect.

<sup>39</sup> *Fanqie* is a style of notation used by Chinese scholars since the end of the Han 漢 dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) to indicate the pronunciation of a word. In a *fanqie*, one takes the initial of the first word and the final of the second word: the two pieces added together give the pronunciation of the word being glossed. See Michael A. Fuller, *An Introduction to Literary Chinese*, (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Asia Centre, 2004): 83-4. For example, we can use the initial of pí 皮 (Chinese surname; skin) and the final, the tone of wǔ 五 (five) to indicate the pronunciation of pǔ 蒲 (Chinese surname).

<sup>40</sup> Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 205.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*



Fig. 1.5 Three versions of performance-style transcribed texts published in 2015, 1996, and 1985, respectively (from left to right).

As shown above, the story of *Pure-Wind Dyke* is based on Pu Lin's life experiences in Yangzhou during the Qing dynasty. The geography and culture presented through his story reflects that of Yangzhou during the

Qing dynasty.<sup>41</sup> Fortunately, this narrative on Qing Yangzhou city has been well preserved and handed down to the present storyteller Yang Mingkun. Yang stated his view as follows:<sup>42</sup>

“I think as a *pinghua* storyteller, I should take the responsibility of propagating our Yangzhou traditional culture. Differing from other Yangzhou *pinghua* repertoires, the repertoire of Pi Wu was born in Yangzhou and deeply rooted in the traditional local culture. I should preserve it well in my generation and transmit it to my apprentices.”

The Yangzhou storytelling of *Pure-Wind Dyke/Rogue Pi Wu* also exists in written forms, some of which are performance-style texts.<sup>43</sup> This study will use three

---

<sup>41</sup> Liu Liu 劉琮, “Cong *pinghua Pi Wu lazi* kan Yangzhou chuantong wenhua” 從評話《皮五辣子》看揚州傳統文化 (“Traditional Yangzhou Culture as Seen from the Storytelling Repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu*”), (MA Thesis, Shanghai Normal University, 2007); Dong Guoyan 董國炎, “Lun *Qingfengzha* de yanbian he yiyi” 論《清風閣》的演變和意義 (“Discussion of the Significance of Evolution of *Pure-Wind Dyke*”), *Heilongjiang shehui kexue* 106 (2008):108; “Lun shijing xiaoshuo de shenhua fazhan—cong *Qingfengzha* dao *Pi Wu lazi*” 論市井小說的深化發展—從《清風閣》到《皮五辣子》 (“Discussion of the Development of Civil Fiction—from the *Pure-Wind Dyke* to *Rogue Pi Wu*”), *Ming Qing xiaoshuo yanjiu* 3 (2006): 100.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>43</sup> Rostislav Berezkin, “The Development of the Mulian Story in Baojuan Texts (14<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century) in Connection with the Evolution of the Genre”, (Ph.D. diss., the University of Pennsylvania, 2010): 34. According to Berezkin, the term “performance-style text” was suggested by Anne E. McLaren to describe the texts of the 15th century, or stories with passages in verse (*cihua* 詞話), discovered in the Xuan family tomb in Jiading county near Shanghai in



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

versions of these performance-style texts as primary materials (Figure 1.5).<sup>44</sup> All the storytellers of *Pure-Wind Dyke/Rogue Pi Wu* have their own unique features and distinctive aspects to their performance, but so far only Pu Lin, Yu Youchun 余又春 (1919-1995), and Yang Mingkun had their performances recorded in books or videos. The Fengxiaoxuan 奉孝軒 edition of *Pure-Wind Dyke* was published by Meixi zhuren 梅溪主人 (Master of Plum Spring) (ca.1711-1799) in the twenty-fourth year of the Jiaqing 嘉慶 (1796-1820) era of the Qing dynasty. The publisher was not familiar with Pu Lin's repertoire and the motive for publication was mainly profit based. As a result, the Fengxiaoxuan edition of *Pure-Wind Dyke* is different from Pu Lin's repertoire in many ways, ranging from storyline to theme.<sup>45</sup> The Huaxuanzhai 華軒齋 edition of *Pure-Wind Dyke* was published in the first year of Daoguang 道光 (1821-1850), which was based on Pu Lin's repertoire and reprinted in the thirteenth year of Tongzhi 同治 (1861-1875) era. In 1996, the Huaxuanzhai edition of *Pure-Wind Dyke* was reprinted.<sup>46</sup> Based on the repertoire of Yu Youchun, two books were published in 1985, titled *Rogue Pi Wu* and *Pure-Wind Dyke*, respectively. The year 2015 witnessed the publication of a text and video of *Rogue Pi Wu* based on the repertoire of Yang

---

1967. Berezkin applied this in the dissertation to designate the texts that reveal features of the traditional oral literature but have reached us only in written form. In the present research, I apply it to refer to the text transcribed from the Yangzhou *pinghua* repertoire of the *Qingfengzha* performed by Pu Lin and the *Pi Wu lazi* by Yu Youchun and Yang Mingkun.

<sup>44</sup> Wang Yingzhi 王穎芝, et al. (eds.), (transcribed from Pu Lin's repertoire), *Qingfengzha* 清風閣 (*Pure-Wind Dyke*), (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1996); Wang Cheng 王澄, et al. (eds.), (transcribed from Yu Youchun's repertoire), *Pi Wu lazi* 皮五辣子 (*Rogue Pi Wu*), (Nanjing: Jiangsu wenyi chubanshe, 1985); Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*.

<sup>45</sup> Dong, "Lun *Qingfengzha* de yanbian he yiyi", *Heilongjiang shehui kexue* 106 (2008): 106-7; Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 2.

<sup>46</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 5.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Mingkun. Yang Mingkun's oral performance of the *Pi Wu lazi* was recorded on video in 2015.<sup>47</sup>

Like other genres of Chinese chantefables, Yangzhou *pinghua* has a strong affinity with the tale-telling tradition in the Song dynasty and is still performed in Yangzhou today. Differing from most of the Yangzhou *pinghua* repertoires from the Qing dynasty which are adapted from the well-known traditional Chinese fiction, the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* was newly created in Qing times and has been successfully transmitted to present times. The Huaxuanzhai edition of *Qingfengzha* reprinted in 1996, the *Pi Wu lazi* published in 1985, and the *Pi Wu lazi* published in 2015 are the three texts transcribed from the repertoires of Pi Wu by Pu Lin, Yu Youchun and Yang Mingkun respectively.

As mentioned above, the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* is of great historical value in the fields of performance literature and dialectology. Also, Yang's repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* offers a good case study on the current status of Yangzhou *pinghua*, which is less researched.

### 1.3 Literature Review

Of all the research related to Yangzhou storytelling, the most noteworthy is the work conducted by Vibeke Børdahl. She devoted her work to observing and exploring the manner of master Yangzhou *pinghua* storytellers and the tradition of the repertoire of *The Water Margin* by Wang Shaotang and other members of the Wang school. In

---

<sup>47</sup> *Pi Wu lazi* (oral performance by Yang Mingkun), (Jiangsu Phoenix Electronic Audio and Video Publishing House, 2015). The complete video set consists of fifty discs.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

her work, Børdahl was also interested in revealing the interactions between the oral and written traditions in Chinese storytelling, novels and drama.<sup>48</sup>

To the best of my knowledge, eight articles concerning the storytelling of *Pure-Wind Dyke/Rogue Pi Wu* have been published so far; seven of which focus on the transcribed texts of *Pure-Wind Dyke* and *Rogue Pi Wu*. In addition, the *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji* 皮五辣子論文集 (*Collected Essays on Rogue Pi Wu*) was published to celebrate the publication of the text of *Rogue Pi Wu* transcribed from Yang Mingkun's repertoire in 2015.<sup>49</sup> While the Chinese word “lunwen” 論文 refers to academic papers or scholarly essays, all the essays in *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji* are non-research works concerning the story of Pi Wu, the life experiences of Yang Mingkun, and the Yangzhou dialect, with the only exception of an article titled “Shijing xiaoshuo de zhongyao daibiao” 市井小說的重要代表 (“The Major Representative of the Urban-culture Fiction”) by Dong Guoyan 董國炎, a scholar from Yangzhou University.<sup>50</sup>

The study of the Yangzhou *pinghua* of *Pure-Wind Dyke/Rogue Pi Wu* in performance has been overshadowed by a tendency to regard it as written literature. As Anne E. McLaren discussed, most scholars working on literary analysis are concerned with genre categorisation, sources, literary adaption and aesthetic the issues of *chantefables*.<sup>51</sup> From the studies by Dong Guoyan, Liu Chongyi 劉重一, Cao

---

<sup>48</sup> Vibeke Børdahl, “The Man-Hunting Tiger: From ‘Wu Song Fights the Tiger’ in Chinese Traditions”, *Asian Folklore Studies* 66 (2007); *Wu Song Fights the Tiger—the Interaction of Oral and Written Traditions in the Chinese Novel, Drama and Storytelling*, (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2013); “Storytelling, Stock Phrases and Genre Conventions—The Case of ‘Wu Song Fights the Tiger’”, in Vibeke Børdahl and Margaret B. Wan, *The Interplay of the Oral and the Written in Chinese Popular Literature*, 83-156 ; Vibeke Børdahl and Ge Liangyan, (eds., and trs., with editorial assistance by Wang Yalong), *Western Han: A Yangzhou Storyteller's Script*, (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2017)

<sup>49</sup> Song Hongfa 宋洪發, et al. (eds.) *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, (Nanjing: Jiangsu fenghuang wenyi chubanshe, 2015)

<sup>50</sup> Dong Guoyan, “Shijing xiaoshuo de zhongyao daibiao”, in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 195-213.

<sup>51</sup> Anne E. McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables*, (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 8-14.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Xiaoyun 曹小雲, Margaret Baptist Wan and Liu Liu, it is evident that the analysis of *Pure-Wind Dyke/Rogue Pi Wu* has been based on the literary rather than performance criteria. In their articles, Liu Chongyi, Cao Xiaoyun, Liu Liu, Dong Guoyan and Margaret Baptist Wan devoted their work to the regional features of the story of Pi Wu.<sup>52</sup> They explained a number of dialect words and aspects of local culture and customs found in the written text of *Pure-Wind Dyke* and *Rogue Pi Wu*. In the process, Wan also focused on the account found in the preface of *Pure-Wind Dyke* and considers the life experiences of the author and the publisher. However, their explanations merely serve as an introduction to understanding the regional features of the story. Indeed, Yangzhou dialect words act as a vital comedic element in the comical presentation of the story but the local culture and customs reflect the exact environment in which the story was created and transmitted.

Dong Guoyan explored the developmental progress of the story of Pi Wu by comparing the image of Pi Wu in *Pure-Wind Dyke* with that in *Rogue Pi Wu*.<sup>53</sup> Dong pointed out that the development of the story is a result of storytellers turning reality into plotlines. However, he did not substantiate his argument by referring to historical documents or the transcribed texts of *Pure-Wind Dyke* or *Rogue Pi Wu*. Moreover, he did not consider the social context of the storytellers and the demands of the audiences when exploring the characteristic features of the image of Pi Wu.

---

<sup>52</sup> Liu Chongyi, “Jianlun *Qingfengzha*” 簡論《清風閣》 (“A Brief Discussion of the *Pure-Wind Dyke*”), *Zhangzhou shiyuan xuebao* 1 (2007); Cao Xiaoyun, “*Qingfengzha* zhong de Yangzhou fangyanci shili” 《清風閣》中的方言詞釋例 (“Explanation of Dialect Words in *Pure-Wind Dyke*”), *Fuyang shifan xueyuan xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 93 (2003); Liu, “Cong pinghua *Pi Wu* lazi kan Yangzhou chuantong wenhua”; Margaret Baptist Wan, “Local Fiction of the Yangzhou Region: *Qingfengzha*”, in Olivová Lucie and Vibeke Børdahl (eds.) *Lifestyle and Entertainment in Yangzhou* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2009); Dong, “Lun *Qingfengzha* de yanbian he yiyi”; “Shijing xiaoshuo de zhongyao daibiao”.

<sup>53</sup> Dong Guoyan, “Lun shijing xiaoshuo de shenhua fazhan—cong *Qingfengzha* dao *Pi Wu* lazi”; “Lun *Qingfengzha* de yanbian he yiyi”; “Shijing xiaoshuo de zhongyao daibiao”.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Liu Chongyi and Margaret Baptist Wan draw our attention to the sources of inspiration Pu Lin used to create the story of *Pure-Wind Dyke* in the Qing era.<sup>54</sup> Liu compared the plotline in *Pure-Wind Dyke* with those in the well-known court-case fiction and argues that *Pure-Wind Dyke* is a legal case story. Wan listed some of the contemporary literary works available to Pu Lin and discussed the relationship between these works and the story of *Pure-Wind Dyke* through a comparative analysis of the plots. Based on this approach, the discussion is convincing and reliable.

The performance aspect in the Yangzhou storytelling of *Pure-Wind Dyke/Rogue Pi Wu* fail to receive as much attention as its literary aspects. This is particularly true when it comes to the analysis of the storyteller's narrative in the performance. While making significant contributions to the study of the storytelling of *Pure-Wind Dyke/Rogue Pi Wu*, the articles mentioned above treat Yangzhou storytelling primarily as written literature. However, Yangzhou storytelling is first and foremost a genre of performing arts. It is important to consider the performance aspects, such as the stylistic and linguistic features of the performance speech, the performance space, the composition of the audience or the intention of the storyteller in his recitation. Hence, this study will attempt to provide a comprehensive and in-depth observation of this art.

As a style of traditional Chinese performing arts, the performance aspect of Yangzhou storytelling is also significant. This research focuses on the factors and elements concerning performance speech, the performance space, and the storyteller's acting features and life experience. Børdahl has established a strong foundation in this

---

<sup>54</sup> Liu, "Jianlun *Qingfengzha*"; Margaret Baptist Wan, "Regional Fiction *Clear Wind Sluice (Qingfengzha 1819)*", in Altenburger Roland and Vibeke Børdahl (eds.), *Yangzhou, A Place in Literature, The Local in Chinese Cultural History*, (University of Hawaii Press, 2015); "Local Fiction of the Yangzhou Region: *Qingfengzha*".

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

regard. She paid close attention to the acting characteristics of the storytellers of the Wang School,<sup>55</sup> focusing on the five skills used by Yangzhou *pinghua* storytellers in their performance, namely mouth (*kou* 口), hand (*shou* 手), body (*shēn* 身), step (*bu* 步), and facial expression (*shén* 神). She examined the narrative devices and the speaking styles used by storytellers. In exploration of the traditions of the Yangzhou storytelling and speaking styles (*shuokou* 說口) of storytellers, she also analysed linguistic features of the Yangzhou dialect in terms of stylistics, phonetics, phonology, and grammar and observes closely the performance language used by storytellers.<sup>56</sup> She identified linguistic features specific to *pinghua* storytellers in their individual performances. Furthermore, based on the linguistic analyses, she interpreted the performance manner of Yangzhou *pinghua* storytellers as exemplified by the Wang School.

Vibeke Børdahl, Margaret Baptist Wan, Cathryn Fairlee, and Dong Guoyan considered the backgrounds of the storytellers, including their education and

---

<sup>55</sup> Vibeke Børdahl, "In Memory of Wang Xiaotang (1918-2000)", *Asian Folklore Studies* 59 (2000):174; "The Storyteller's Manner in Chinese Storytelling"; "The Voice of Wang Shaotang in Chinese Storytelling", *CHINOPERL Papers* 25 (2004):1-33; "Narrative Voices in Yangzhou Storytelling", *CHINOPERL Papers* 18 (1995):1-31.

<sup>56</sup> "Speaking styles" refers to various ways of speaking by performers in narrative arts performance, and it is related to the registers of narration. Round mouth (*yuankou* 圓口) and square mouth (*fangkou* 方口) are the two styles frequently adopted by Yangzhou *pinghua* storytellers.

Vibeke Børdahl, "'Square Mouth' and 'Round Mouth' in Yangzhou Storytelling", *Acta Orientalia* 52 (1991); "Yangzhou *pinghua* zhong de 'fangkou' he 'yuankou'" 揚州評話中的“方口”和“圓口” (“The 'Square Mouth' and 'Round Mouth' in the Yangzhou Storytelling”), *Fangyan* 2 (1994); "The Phonemes and the Phonological Structure of the Yangzhou Dialect", *Acta Orientalia* 38 (1997); "Grammatical Gleanings from a Yangzhou Storyteller's Tale", *Cahiers de linguistique asie orientale* 2 (1991); "*Wenbai yidu*: Literary and Colloquial Forms in Yangzhou Storytelling", *CHINOPERL Papers* 16 (1992-1993); "Narrative Voices in Yangzhou Storytelling"; *The Oral Tradition of Yangzhou Storytelling* (London: Curzon Press, 1996); "Professional Storytelling in Modern China: A Case Study of the Yangzhou *pinghua* Tradition", *Asian Folklore Studies* 56 (1997); "The Storyteller's Manner in Chinese Storytelling", *Asian Folklore Studies* 62 (2003)

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

performance experiences.<sup>57</sup> Fairlee gave a comprehensive introduction to all the storytellers known for narrating the story of *Pure-Wind Dyke* or *Rogue Pi Wu* generation by generation, including all the Pu School members. She introduced the storytellers' lives and performance experiences but did not refer to historical documents related to the master storytellers of *Pure-Wind Dyke* and the thoughts of the present Pu School member Yang Mingkun. The performance style of an individual storyteller has a strong connection to his life experiences. Indeed, members of the Pu School have the responsibility of preserving the tradition of the school, such as their speaking styles and mouth acrobatics. At the same time, their lives and performance experiences influence their performance styles in recreating the imagery of Pi Wu, developing the plotlines, and adjusting their speaking styles. This will be discussed in the present study.

Fei Li 費力 and Vibeke Børdahl also paid attention to the tradition of the story house in Yangzhou.<sup>58</sup> In their studies, they introduced the setting of the stage, the service provided in the story house, and the audience members. However, they did not explore the tradition by referring to historical documents, which would substantiate the discussion.

The aesthetic concerns for the Yangzhou storytelling performance are ignored. Although the above scholar focused on some aspects or factors of the performance, such as storytellers' life experiences, acting skills, performance space and speech, they

---

<sup>57</sup> Børdahl, "In Memory of Wang Xiaotang (1918-2000)"; "The Storyteller's Manner in Chinese Storytelling"; "The Voice of Wang Shaotang in Chinese Storytelling"; Wan, "Local Fiction of the Yangzhou Region: *Qingfengzha*"; "Regional Fiction *Clear Wind Sluice (Qingfengzha 1819)*"; Cathryn Fairlee, "Nine Generations of *Pi Wu lazi* in Yangzhou *Pinghua*", *CHINOPERL Papers* 29 (2011); Dong, "Shijing xiaoshuo de zhongyao daibiao".

<sup>58</sup> Fei Li, "The Traditional Style of Story houses in Yangzhou", in Lucie Olivová and Vibeke Børdahl (eds.), *Lifestyle and Entertainment in Yangzhou*, (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2009), 271-85; Vibeke Børdahl, "The oral tradition of Yangzhou storytelling".

## **The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

have ignored the relationship between these factors and the aesthetic effects of the repertoire in their studies on Yangzhou storytelling. However, it was the aesthetic effects of schools of repertoires that attracted a big audience in history and thus the traditions of Yangzhou storytelling survived during the past three centuries.

In this study, I will explore on how to construct a framework where the examination on the aesthetic effects, the tradition and the current status, the living performance features, and the performance-style text of the repertoire of Pi Wu of the Pu School are combined. I will focus on examining the storyteller's personal comments and fresh understanding of the repertoire, and his narrative strategies and goals in performance; and how to analyse the storyteller's three roles as being a member of the Pu School: a tradition bearer of the Pu School; an adapter to the inherited repertoire story of Pi Wu; and a performer of the repertoire of Pi Wu.

John Miles Foley's theoretical framework in his work *The Singer of Tales in Performance* evokes a convincing framework for understanding the Yangzhou storytelling, where Pu School's repertoire will be examined both synchronically—focusing on the live performance event by Yang Mingkun, and diachronically—focusing on the tradition of the Pu School as well as Yangzhou storytelling in general. The aesthetic effects of the repertoire of Pi Wu and how Yangzhou dialect works as a means of communication in Yang's performance will be examined.

Foley provides a new perspective to the present study on the Pu School of *Rogue Pi Wu* of Yangzhou storytelling. He applied a convincing theoretical framework for understanding the significance of verbal art in the *The Singer of Tales in Performance* by heavily drawing on two lines of thought—the Oral Theory and the ideas from the performance-oriented work coming from the school of Ethnography of



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Speaking.<sup>59</sup> In his work, he stressed the artistic effect of formulaic language; considered the formulas from the perspective of meaning-bearing units; characterized “performance as the enabling event” and “tradition as the enabling referent.” Foley also combined the notions of “structure,” “art” and “performance” in his framework, which turned our attention away from the immediate channel of communication to viewing the work itself, the result of encoding progresses and the subsequent basis for decoding by an audience sopped in the tradition.

The present study will focus on both the tradition of the Pu School and the present-day live performance event by Yang Mingkun. As Foley mentioned, “The single performance of a traditional oral work is both something unique, a thing in itself, and the realisation of patterns, characters, and situations that are known to the audience through prior acquaintance with other performances.”<sup>60</sup> Indeed, Yang Mingkun’s performance of the repertoire of Pi Wu is a reflection of the history of Yangzhou storytelling and also a realisation of the tradition of the Pu School. Yang’s choice of the story house as the place for his performance is in careful consideration of the development of Yangzhou story house since the Qing dynasty and the performance space specifically dedicated to storytellers for the past one thousand years, and of the change of the Yangzhou storytelling audience that has occurred since the Qing dynasty. Also, the tradition of Yang’s performance is the result of the development of the repertoire and performance techniques created by Pu Lin of the Qing dynasty, and of the development of the performance language—Yangzhou dialect since the Qing dynasty.

---

<sup>59</sup> John Miles Foley, *The Singer of Tales in Performance*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995)

<sup>60</sup> Foley, *The Singer of Tales in Performance*, 45.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

The present study will examine how Yangzhou dialect works in the communication between Yang and his audiences. In *The Singer of Tales in Performance*, Foley pointed out that the concept of “tradition” is “extra-textual”. To substantiate his claim, he referred to the ethnography of speaking. Thus, his approach in the study of the performers was to “appeal[s] to what lies beyond any collection of linguistic integers by insisting on the value-added signification of these integers as perceived by an audience suitably equipped to accord them their special values.”<sup>61</sup> Yangzhou dialect is the speaking register by Yang Mingkun in his performance of *Rogue Pi Wu*, which evokes the cultural background shared by Yang and his audiences. The dialect of Yangzhou and the cultural background shared by Yang and his audiences is a special channel allowing for the fluent communication between the two parties. Also, the Yangzhou dialect contributes considerably to the effect of Yang’s mouth acrobatics along with other means of communication such as facial expression and hand gestures. Only the audience familiar with Yangzhou dialect can decode and understand the comedic elements and effect of his mouth acrobatics.

It is necessary to examine the intertextual relationship between the three versions of performance-style text of Pi Wu. As Foley mentioned in his work *Traditional Oral Epic: the Odyssey, Beowulf and the Serbo-Croatian Return Song*, “we can view the text of any performance as the intersection of two lines of development: one the historical or diachronic, the other performance-centred or synchronic.”<sup>62</sup> In Foley’s research, the traditional rigid distinction between what is oral and what is written becomes less relevant. As he explained, “Text can no longer

---

<sup>61</sup> Foley, *The Singer of Tales in Performance*, 28.

<sup>62</sup> John Miles Foley, *Traditional Oral Epic: the Odyssey, Beowulf and the Serbo-Croatian Return Song*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 386-7.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

be separated out as something different by species from the oral tradition it records or draws upon; the question becomes not whether but how performance and document speak to one other.”<sup>63</sup> The repertoires performed by Pu Lin, Yu Youchun and Yang Mingkun have been published into textbooks. Yang’s performance had also been recorded on video. Although the live performance by Pu Lin and Yu Youchun cannot be fully enacted through the text, the two versions of the text of Pi Wu partly reflect Pu’s and Yu’s narrative strategies and aesthetic effects of their repertoires.

In the present study, a number of questions will be considered. How can this study determine the aesthetic effects of the repertoire of Pi Wu performed by Yang Mingkun, and how can the primary sources and the secondary sources be incorporated in this study? During my fieldwork in Yangzhou, I interviewed Yang Mingkun several times and was fortunate to have the opportunity to record down his personal comments on the repertoire of Pi Wu and the strategies he adopted in performance. Also, I documented the responses of the local audience during the live performances and asked them questions related to Yang’s performance, including their comments on Yang’s repertoire. During the fieldwork, I collected the historical records and contemporary accounts on Yangzhou storytelling and the repertoire of Pi Wu to present a more well-rounded study.

Mark Bender provided an effective approach to examine Jingjiang telling scriptures and Suzhou chantefable in his works *A description of Jiangjing (telling scriptures) services in Jingjiang, China* and *Plum and Bamboo: China’s Suzhou Chantefable Tradition*, respectively.<sup>64</sup> He focused on the aesthetic effects of the

---

<sup>63</sup> Foley, *The Singer of Tales in Performance*, 79.

<sup>64</sup> Mark Bender, “A description of Jiangjing (telling scriptures) services in Jingjiang, China”, 101-33; *Plum and Bamboo: China’s Suzhou Chantefable Tradition*.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

repertoire and the elements and factors related to the performance, including the performers, audiences, venues for the performance, repertoire, roles, and technical jargon. In describing the live performances, he focused on the various means of communication involved in the event and “the strategies, principles, and goals with which Suzhou storytellers concern themselves when performing their stories.”<sup>65</sup> In the study of the live performance, he used the “emic” terms such as storyteller’s *hanghua* 行話 (jargon), along with Western theoretical concepts.

However, Bender did not explore how the performer dealt with the repertoire through his strategies, principles and goals that he applied in performance. In addition, not specializing in linguistics, Bender did not consider the linguistic features of the repertoire and seek how linguistic signals work in a live performance as a means of communication. Although, he discussed the five criteria applied to evaluate the aesthetic effects of storytelling performance, detailed analysis of the live performance using these five criteria was not found.

In the present study, I will adopt Mark Bender’s approach to examine the Yangzhou storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*. I will focus on the artistic value of Yang’s repertoire by examining the relationship between the aesthetic effects of Yang’s repertoire and the core elements related to his performance, such as performance space, audiences, transmission model, performance language and acting style. In describing the live performance by Yang, I will focus on the verbal and nonverbal communication means, the strategies and goals that he applied in performance. In the course of analysis, I will use the emic thought—Yang’s comment on his repertoire and his answers to my questions on his performance as the hypothesis to examine how Yang handles the

---

<sup>65</sup> Bender, *Plum and Bamboo*, 68.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

inherited repertoire of Pi Wu and considers his strategies and goals that he applied in performance, and how Yangzhou dialect works as a means of communication between Yang and his audiences.

Inspired by Bender's ground-breaking study of Suzhou chantefable, I will examine the aesthetic effects of Yang's live performance by referring to the five secrets (*wujue* 五絕) to storytellers.<sup>66</sup> In the discussion concerning the aesthetic effects of storytelling, Bender provided a detailed explanation of the five secrets of storytellers, including credibility (*li* 理), intricate description (*xi* 細), novelty (*qi* 奇), interest (*qu* 趣), and flavour (*wei* 味).<sup>67</sup> The concept of *li* means that the story must have certain credible elements; *xi* is used to increase the credibility of a story, suggesting that events must be presented in a manner allowing for slight twists in the plot and the intricate workings of a character's mind should be revealed; *qi* refers to surprising twists in the plot, conflict situations and unusual characters; *qu* is regarded as a kind of "interest" created and sustained as the story proceeds. *Wei* is the result of the right combination of all the other aesthetic criteria and the proper melding of all means of communication into a pleasing whole.<sup>68</sup> Yang's repertoire of Pi Wu is called "marvellous storytelling" (*qishu* 奇書) in the Yangzhou storytelling industry and described as "a picture of the daily life of Yangzhou people" by contemporary scholars and audiences.<sup>69</sup> Yang has acquired the fame of "Yang School of Pi Wu" (*Yang pai Pi*

---

<sup>66</sup> Chen Ruheng 陳汝衡, *Shuoshu shihua* 說書史話 (*History of Storytelling*), (Beijing: Zuoji chubanshe, 1958), 176;157-70; Zhou Liang 周良, *Suzhou pingtan jiu wen chao* 蘇州評彈舊聞抄 (*Historic Records of Suzhou Chantefable*), (Nanjing: Jiangsu renming chubanshe, 1983), 112-13; Mark Bender, "The Storyteller's Art and 'Song Sigong'", *Journal of the Chinese Language Teacher's Association* 23 (1988): 58-60; Bender *Plum and Bamboo*, 51.

<sup>67</sup> Bender, *Plum and Bamboo*, 51.

<sup>68</sup> Bender, *Plum and Bamboo*, 51-2.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

*Wu* 楊派皮五) for his performance of *Rogue Pi Wu*. Thus, I will examine the aesthetic effects of Yang's performance of *Rogue Pi Wu* to explore the reason for the comment on Yang's repertoire and performance style. In the exploration, the "five secrets" to storytellers are five criteria by which to evaluate Yang's live performance.

It is hoped that this research will fill the gaps in the performance-based analysis of the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* and deepen our understanding on the aesthetic effects of the repertoire of Pi Wu and the degree of freedom or restriction of a storyteller in dealing with the inherited repertoire; contribute to the discussion of how the interplay of oral and written literature can take place in the storyteller's recreating process, and how linguistic signals work as a means of communication in the performance.

### 1.4 Methodology

This thesis deals with the Yangzhou storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu* with a focus on Yang Mingkun's performance. There are several reasons for selecting Yang's repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* as the subject of this study. Firstly, the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* in the Pu School is the oldest surviving Yangzhou *pinghua* that has been performed for almost three hundred years since its creation in the Qing Qianlong era (see Chapter 1.2). Secondly, it was created and performed in the Yangzhou dialect to provide a realistic picture of the everyday life of ordinary Yangzhou people in the Qing era, particularly those from the bottom strata. The analysis of Yang's performance speech will help us better understand the local culture and customs of Qing Yangzhou as well as in contemporary times (see Chapter 1.1). Thirdly, in the course of a few hundred years, storytellers of the Pu School preserved the original repertoire and performed in various styles. The protagonist Pi Wu and the plotline still enjoy

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

popularity in Yangzhou today. The Pi Wu Story House was built on Dongguan Street in present-day Yangzhou for a modern audience to enjoy the Yangzhou *pinghua* performance. Fourthly, I have local knowledge of Yangzhou because I was born and grew up there. I am familiar with and interested in the Yangzhou dialect, local culture and customs. My first-hand knowledge of and living experience in Yangzhou will be useful to my study of the Yangzhou *pinghua* repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu*.

For this research project, I select the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* performed by Yang Mingkun to observe the Yangzhou *pinghua* and the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* of the Pu School from a diachronic perspective, and to observe the status quo of the repertoire synchronically by analysing Yang's repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* from multiple perspectives.

This is a performance-based research project that involves anthropological, linguistic, and literary studies. The discussion as outlined in the eight chapters contribute to the understanding of the aesthetic effects of the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* performed by Yang Mingkun. Chapters 2 to 7, each chapter presents its aim at the very beginning through providing Yang's personal thoughts on the repertoire of Pi Wu and his narrative strategy applied in performance. Also, Yang's three roles—a tradition bearer of the Pu School, an adapter to the inherited story, a performer of the inherited repertoire as a member of the Pu school is considered in the thesis.

To conduct a comprehensive observation of the Yangzhou *pinghua* performance, I based my exploration on all the sources available to me. The data used in this study include those collected during my three research trips to Yangzhou from April 2015 to June 2019; historical and archival records, and contemporary scholarship on Yangzhou *pinghua*. During the fieldwork, I interviewed Yang Mingkun and observed his performance in person. I will also make reference to the video I recorded

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

in 2015 of Yang Mingkun's performance of *Rogue Pi Wu*. In addition, I will compare these with the three versions of performance-style texts transmitted from the repertoires of Pu Lin, Yu Youchun, and Yang Mingkun *Pure-Wind Dyke* and *Rogue Pi Wu* published in 1985, 1996, and 2015 respectively. (Figure 1.5).

I will begin my study by undertaking a historical inquiry into the development of Yangzhou storytelling and the tradition of the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* of the Pu School. In Chapter 1, I introduce some aspects of the Yangzhou storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu* and demonstrate how and why to conduct a research on it. Chapter 2 will explore how the term *kouchuan xinshou* 口傳心授 (transmitting by mouth and teaching from the heart) works as the model for the transmission of oral performance traditions of Yangzhou storytelling in general and *Rogue Pi Wu*. This will allow me to examine whether the repertoire of *Pi Wu* passed down to the present day in the Pu School still observes the traditional mode of transmission. Also, I will examine how the repertoire created by Pu Lin reflects the social context of Yangzhou in the Qing dynasty. In Chapter 3, I will focus on the performance context by taking Yang's live performance as a point of departure to explore the performance space tradition and audience of Yangzhou *pinghua* from a historical view. This will serve to explain whether the performance space contributes effectively to the traditional register for Yangzhou storytelling.

Following the observation of the Pu School of *Pi Wu* and the performance context of Yangzhou storytelling, Chapters 4 to 7 will focus on the notions of "register" and "communication" by conducting linguistic analysis on Yang's performance language, literary analysis on Yang's narrative strategy, and his style of acting. I aim to examine how Yang, a member of the Pu School, deals with the tradition of the Pu School and the strategies and goals he had in performance. In the course of analysis,



## **The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

Chapter 4 will first explore the textual relationship between the three versions on Pi Wu as well as the imagery of Pi Wu in Yang's version, which will help to examine whether Yang has achieved his goal in unfolding the inherited storyline of the Pu School. In Chapter 5, I will analyse how the Yangzhou dialect is used in Yang's speaking register in performance, either in the square mouth or the round, and highlight the value of his performance speech from a historical-linguistic point of view. In Chapter 6, I will identify how Yangzhou dialect serves as a vital communication method in Yang's narrative and examines whether Yang has achieved his goal in the use of the traditional performance diction of the Pu School. Chapter 7 will evaluate the acting features of Yang through the five *pinghua* performance skills and explore how Yangzhou dialect works with other methods of communication when mouth acrobatics is applied, which can inform us on how Yang uses the traditional performance techniques of the Pu School.

In the course of analysing the Yangzhou *pinghua* performance of *Rogue Pi Wu* by Yang, this thesis examines the aesthetic effects of Yang's repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu*. It also explores the relationship between the aesthetic effects of live performance event and the factors and elements related to performance, such as performance language and storyteller's strategy and goals used in performance.

## TWO

### The Pu School of Pi Wu

As mentioned by Yang Mingkun, the repertoire of Pi Wu of the Pu School is named “marvellous storytelling” within the Yangzhou storytelling circle. The reason for this term is that the repertoire reflects the traditional culture and customs of Yangzhou when it was created, and has been continued since.<sup>70</sup> In this chapter, I will examine the social context surrounding the original repertoire created by Pu Lin and the transmission model in the repertoire of Pi Wu of the Pu School.

The collective repertoires performed by Pu Lin and his eight generations of heirs, revolve around the protagonist Pi Wu. They are derived from the *Qingfengzha* or *Pure-Wind Dyke* created by Pu Lin, which is referred to as “Pu men Pi Wu.” Pu turned his own life experience into a story. He was skilled in verbal acrobatics in performance. Thus, he acquired a high reputation from performing the story in public. Pu’s story has been passed down for eight generations and has reached Yang Mingkun, who is the ninth-generation performer. This chapter will examine the mode of oral transmission of the Yangzhou storytelling in general and the Pu School of Pi Wu in particular. I will also discuss the performance tradition of the Pu School—how the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* was passed down from Yu Youchun to Yang Mingkun and then to Yang’s apprentices, along with the actual events and social contexts that motivated Pu’s creation. I first examine the members of the Pu School with their life experiences and performance features, which will help us to understand how Yang learnt the repertoire of Pi Wu from his master and later passed on to his apprentices.

---

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Finally, I examine the inspiration for Pu's creation of the story of Pi Wu from a historical viewpoint and explore how the narrative of *Rogue Pi Wu* provides a realistic picture of the daily life of Yangzhou people in Pu's time.

### 2.1 The Pu School of Pi Wu in History

Where did the term "Pu School of Pi Wu" come from? What is the tradition of the Pu School? How did the repertoire of Pi Wu transmit from Pu Lin to Yang Mingkun? These were the key questions I had in mind when I interviewed Yang Mingkun. In the period from 2015 to 2019, I interviewed him four times in Yangzhou. Based on Yang's accounts and related historical and official materials collected in Yangzhou, I attempt to provide a full picture of the historical development and the performance tradition of the Pu School. I will also conceptualize the transmission model of Yangzhou storytelling and explore how *kouchuan xinshou* works.

The requirements of becoming a member of the Pu School remains controversial. Fairlee listed all nine generations of storytellers who have specialised in the story of Pi Wu since Pu Lin. She also provided details of their life experiences and individual performance features.<sup>71</sup> However, not all the storytellers listed by Fairlee are officially recognized as members of the Pu School. When answering my query on the term "Pu men Pi Wu," Yang Mingkun commented:<sup>72</sup>

The term "Pu men Pi Wu" was set and used by the government in my master's generation. I cannot remember the exact date, but I remember the scene of filling out forms in my master's office. The

---

<sup>71</sup> Fairlee, "Nine Generations of *Pi Wu lazi* in Yangzhou *Pinghua*".

<sup>72</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

members of the Pu School are Pu Lin, Cheng Tiangong 陳天工 [ca.1736-ca.1850], Zhang Bingheng 張秉衡 [ca.1736-ca.1850], 季玉山 [ca.1782-ca.1871], Gong Wuting 龔午亭 [ca.1820-1890], Ding Shouting 丁壽亭 [fl.1850], Zhang Shaonan 張少南 [1870-1934], Yu Shaochun 余少春 [1894-1945], Yu Youchun and myself.

Is there any other storyteller who learnt and performed the repertoire of Pi Wu created by Pu Lin? Why were they not recognized as members of the Pu School? Yang Mingkun answered:<sup>73</sup>

In fact, members of the Pu School I mentioned before are representatives of contemporary storytellers who learnt and performed Pu's repertoire. Their repertoires were well received by contemporary audiences and enjoyed a high reputation within the Yangzhou storytelling circle. For example, I have three apprentices now and I taught them my repertoire. However, I have no idea who will become a master storyteller of the repertoire of Pi Wu. It depends on their ability and other factors.

Scholars and *pinghua* storytellers have not reached a consensus among themselves on the fifth- and sixth-generation inheritors. Some scholars, including Zhang Zujian 張祖健, support the view that Hu Deting 胡德亭 (fl.1850) and Liu Deting 劉德亭 (fl.1850) are the fifth and sixth inheritors, respectively, while others argue that they should be

---

<sup>73</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 June 2019.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Ding Shouting and Zhang Shaonan.<sup>74</sup> According to Yang Mingkun, “Yu Shaochun’s master is Zhang Shaonan,” not Liu Deting. In this study, I adopt Yang’s opinion because Yu Youchun, the son of Yu Shaochun and the master of Yang Mingkun, told Yang that Zhang Shaonan was the master of Yu Shaochun. Listed below in Table 2.1 are the known members of the Pu School and their apprentices:



Table 2.1 Members of the Pu School

<sup>74</sup> Zhang Zujian, “Ting Yang Mingkun shuo lazi shu, pin YangZhou pinghua liubian jingmiao” 聽楊明坤說辣子書, 品揚州評話流變精妙 (“Listening to Yang Mingkun Telling the Repertoire of a Rogue and Tasting the Subtlety of the Development of the Yangzhou *Pinghua*”), in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 42.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Based on the oral transmission model—*kouchuan xinshou* performed between master -and -apprentice, the repertoire and performance techniques of the Yangzhou storyteller are transmitted from generation to generation. *Kouchuan xinshou* is a Chinese traditional mode of cultural inheritance where knowledge is transmitted from master to apprentice or from teacher to student orally, rather than with the help of written text.<sup>75</sup> It is commonly used in the process of intangible cultural heritage inheritance due to the three common traits shared with intangible cultural heritage: immateriality, orality and performativity. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Yangzhou storytelling is included in the list of China’s intangible cultural heritage under the category of traditional Chinese performing arts. These characteristics make *kouchuan xinshou* all the more essential to guarantee that storytellers’ repertoires and performance techniques can survive in the following generations. Vibeke Børdahl has examined the transmission mode by specifically focusing on how the Yangzhou storytelling repertoire of *The Water Margin* transmitted for seven generations in the Deng School (Deng *men* 鄧門). Børdahl concluded that Yangzhou storytelling performance is clearly oral, and storytellers are educated through observing the mode *kouchuan xinshou* between master and disciple.<sup>76</sup> Also, she discovered that the Yangzhou storytelling terminology “school,” or *men* 門 (school), *pai* 派 (school) and *jia* 家 (school), is applied to indicate the classic repertoire and a special performance style is transmitted over several generations.<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>75</sup> Zhu Jieqiong 朱潔瓊, “‘Kou chuan xin shou’ de duochong jiedu” “口傳心授”的多重解讀 (“Multiple Interpretations of the Term ‘kou chuan xin shou’”), *Renmin yinyue* 6 (2010): 38.

<sup>76</sup> Børdahl, “A Case Study of the *Yangzhou Pinghua* Tradition”, 17.

<sup>77</sup> Børdahl, *The Oral Tradition of Yangzhou Storytelling*, 18; see also “The Voice of Wang Shaotang in Chinese Storytelling”, 5-8.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

According to Børdahl's findings mentioned above, the term "Pu men Pi Wu" indicates that the repertoire of Pi Wu and performance techniques created by Pu Lin have been transmitted to Yang Mingkun on the basis of *kouchuan xinshou* between master and disciple, and thus Pu Lin is the founder of the Pu School. However, Pu Lin and Gong Wuting are regarded as co-founders of the Pu School. Although Pu Lin created the repertoire of *Pure-Wind Dyke* and his two apprentices Cheng Tiangong and Zhang Bingheng inherited the repertoire, there are no historical records for the master-apprentice relationship between Chen, Zhang, Ji Yushan, and Gong Wuting. Moreover, Ji and Gong developed the repertoire of Pi Wu into two styles. Yang Mingkun stated in the interview that his repertoire was inherited from Gong.<sup>78</sup> Thus, I surmise that Gong was the founder of the Pu School of Pi Wu. Why is the term "Gong men Pi Wu" not adopted? Why is Gong Wuting's repertoire called "Gong School of Pi Wu" (*Gong jia Pi Wu* 龔家皮五)? I asked Yang these questions and he answered as follows:<sup>79</sup>

Before talking about the implication of *men* or *pai* of Yangzhou storytelling performance, we should understand that these two terms are derived from the audience's commentary on storytellers' performances, and we should distinguish them from each other. *Men* refers to excellent repertoire and *jia* or *pai* to personal performance style. For example, I am the ninth-generation inheritor of *Pu men*, since my repertoire was initially created by Pu Lin. I performed in my style, and people liked it very much. Thus, my performance style is called *Yang pai Pi Wu* or Yang School of Pi Wu. Another example is the well-known *Wang pai Shuihu* of *Deng men*. Wang Shaotang,

---

<sup>78</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>79</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

the fourth-generation inheritor of Deng Guangdou 鄧光鬥 [ca.1644-ca.1912], gained his fame of *Wang pai Shuihu* due to his excellent performance style.

According to Yang's explanation, the term "Pu men Pi Wu" merely indicates the modern repertoire of Pi Wu derived from Pu Lin's creation. At the same time, "Gong jia Pi Wu" suggests that Gong developed Pu Lin's repertoire of Pi Wu into a new style.

Gong Wuting's repertoire has been transmitted for five generations to Yang Mingkun by through the transmission mode of *kouchuan xinshou*. As shown in Table 2.1, the words *ting* 亭, *shao* 少, and *chun* 春 are used to indicate the master-apprentice relationship between Gong Wuting, Gong Xiaoting, Ding Shouting, Hu Deting, Zhang Shaonan, Yu Shaochun, Yu Youchun and Yang Xiaochun (Yang Mingkun), suggesting that the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* performed by Yang Mingkun was derived from Gong Wuting. Gong enjoyed the fame of "Gong jia Pi Wu" and was considered the best storyteller of *Rogue Pi Wu*.<sup>80</sup> Most of the storytellers during Gong's times aspired to have Gong as their master. However, Gong often said, "I have nothing to teach you. You do not have to learn something from me. You will find the way to be a successful storyteller with your power of understanding, but not by copying others."<sup>81</sup> He did not wish to see budding storytellers copy his repertoire and make a living simply by imitating his performance. He hoped someone would tell the story of Pi Wu in his own style. He recognized only his son Gong Xiaoting and his

---

<sup>80</sup> Taotan jiuzhu 桃潭舊主 (ca.1840-ca.1911) (the former Master of the Peach Pond), *Yangzhou zhuzhici chugao* 揚州竹枝詞初稿 (*First Draft of the Lyrics to the Tune of Bamboo Branches in Yangzhou*), in the *Yangzhou quyizhi* 揚州曲藝志 (*A Survey of the Oral Performance Art Performed within Yangzhou*), (Nanjing: Jiangsu wenyi chubanshe, 1993), 283.

<sup>81</sup> Ji Peijun 季培均, "Shijian yishu shengming" 時間藝術生命 ("Time, Arts, and Life"), in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 10.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

two apprentices, Hu Deting and Ding Shouting, as the inheritors of his repertoire, which was reflected in the shared character *ting* in their names. The master-apprentice relationship between Yu Shaochun, Yu Youchun and Yang Xiaochun (Yang Mingkun) is reflected in the shared character *chun* in their names.

As far as the schools of Yangzhou storytelling are concerned, storytellers do not strictly observe the *kouchuan xinshou* when transmitting their repertoire. According to Børdahl, “it was quite common for a student [of Yangzhou storytelling master] to frequent several masters and perhaps learn something from different schools.”<sup>82</sup> This is also the case with Zhang Shaonan, the sixth-generation heir of the Pu School, who inherited the gong and drum story-singing (*luogu shu* 鑼鼓書) performance techniques from his grandfather and father and was recognized by Ding Shouting as the inheritor of the repertoire of *Pure-Wind Dyke*. Indeed, the seventh-generation heir Yu Shaochun acquired his performance experience and techniques not only from his master Zhang Shaonan but also from his master’s master Ding Shouting, as well as Chen Yueqiu 陳月秋 (fl.1850).<sup>83</sup>

As shown in the discussion above, although Pu Lin created the repertoire of Pi Wu and the term “Pu School of Pi Wu” was adopted to designate all the repertoires of Pi Wu performed by the storytellers of nine generations, there is no existing evidence showing that the present repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* performed by Yang Mingkun has been inherited from Pu. However, according to the master-apprentice relationship reflected in the shared characters in the names of the members of the Pu School, the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* performed by Yang is derived from Gong through the oral transmission mode of *kouchuan xinshou*.

---

<sup>82</sup> Børdahl, *The Oral Tradition of Yangzhou Storytelling*, 19.

<sup>83</sup> Fairlee, “Nine Generations of *Pi Wu lazi* in Yangzhou *Pinghua*”, 115.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

The term *kouchuan xinshou* suggests that the master orally imparts the repertoire to his apprentice with the related performance techniques of the repertoire and the apprentice accepts what his master imparts to him with his own understanding. This traditional mode of oral transmission assures that the master's performance tradition can be successfully passed down to the apprentice. The master teaches his apprentice by telling and performing a passage from a story as a lesson for a day. The apprentice attempts to retell the passage to his master on the next day; this is called "return the text" (*huanshu* 還書). When listening to the apprentice retelling a passage, the master will correct the apprentice's wording, action and look by referring to his own performance tradition. As a result, the apprentice's performance tradition will not deviate from his master's. According to Børdahl, member of the Wang School performed the routine *huanshu* when learning the repertoire of *The Water Margin* from his master.<sup>84</sup> Ma Wei 馬偉, the apprentice of renowned storyteller Hui Zhaolong 惠兆龍 (c.a.1942-2011) said, "During the process of *huanshu*, he [Hui Zhaolong] paid close attention to my recitation. He corrected my narrative, my gesture and motion, my look, and my wording."<sup>85</sup>

What is the performance tradition of the Pu School? Has it survived through *kouchuan xinshou* and *huanshu*? When answering my question concerning the performance tradition of the Pu School, Yang Mingkun said:<sup>86</sup>

Indeed, there were two styles of performance derived from Pu Lin's performance of *Pure-Wind Dyke*: They are the upper river (*shanghe*

---

<sup>84</sup> Børdahl, "A Case Study of the Yangzhou Pinghua Tradition", 17.

<sup>85</sup> Ma Wei, "Wo de yanshi he cifu—Hui Zhaolong xiansheng" 我的嚴師和慈父 ("My Severe Teacher and Loving Father—Hui Zhaolong"), *Quyí* 5 (2017): 25.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

上河) branch, such as the performances prevalent in Zhenjiang and Yangzhou, and the lower river (*xiahe* 下河) branch, such as the performances prevalent in Gaoyou 高郵 and Baoying 寶應. My master and I performed in the latter style.

As there are no existing materials concerning these two branches except for Yang's account, we cannot learn more on this subject.<sup>87</sup>

At the core of the performance tradition created by Pu Lin are the Yangzhou dialect, mimicry and joking. From the very beginning, the storytellers of the Pu School narrated the story of Pi Wu in the Yangzhou dialect. Pu Lin created the story *Pure-Wind Dyke* and performed in the Yangzhou dialect of the Qianlong era.<sup>88</sup> Two contemporary scholars, Li Dou and Jin Zhaoyan 金兆燕 (1719-1791), noted that Pu was good at imitating minor characters (*xiao renwu* 小人物) of different industries and that he was a master of mimicry and jokes.<sup>89</sup> Pu lived in poverty as a boy and begged for a living. Later, he met an elderly woman who taught him gambling tricks; by applying these tricks, Pu became rich. He rented a house in Wuditai 無敵台 and became a neighbour to a woman who lived with her nephew. The woman's nephew practised reciting stories everyday at home and made a living through storytelling. Pu listened to his story many times and became interested in performing storytelling. Pu was illiterate and did not know any Chinese literary works because he had not received any school education. Therefore, he asked someone to read books to him. Fortunately, he had a good memory; once he had heard the stories, he was able to remember them.

---

<sup>87</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 204.

<sup>88</sup> Zhang, "Ting Yang Mingkun shuo lazi shu, pin Yangzhou pinghua liubian jingmiao", in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 41.

<sup>89</sup> Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 205; see also Dong "Lun *Qingfengzha* de yanbian he yiyi", 107.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

He did not like to imitate others' repertoires.<sup>90</sup> Thus, he created a setting for his *Pure-Wind Dyke* by drawing on a vernacular story titled “San xianshen Bao Longtu duanyuan” 三現身包龍圖斷冤 (“Judge Bao Solves the Case of Three Apparitions”) in the *Jingshi tongyan* 警世通言 (*Stories to Caution the World*).<sup>91</sup>

Pu Lin's disciples Zhang Bingheng and Chen Tiangong also recited the story of Pi Wu in the Yangzhou dialect. Zhang and Chen continued to perform Pu's story during the Jiaqing 嘉慶 (1760-1820) era. In the *Chuyuan xiaoxia lu* 樗園銷夏錄 (*Reminiscences of the Chuyuan Garden in Summer*) by Guo Lin 郭麐 (1767-1831), there is an account of the performance language applied in telling the story of Pi Wu in Qing Hangzhou:<sup>92</sup>

A Yangzhou storyteller good at telling the story of Pi Wu was going to perform in Hangzhou, and many people went to venue early before his performance. Later, when the storyteller spoke in pure Yangzhou dialect, the audience was very puzzled. They could not enjoy the performance but had to stay there. The storyteller and his fans did not share the same spoken language.

According to Guo Lin, the Qing storyteller mentioned in the account above might be either Pu Lin, Zhang Bingheng or Chen Tiangong. As noted in the above account, the Qing storyteller performed using the Yangzhou dialect even in Hangzhou. People from

---

<sup>90</sup> Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 205.

<sup>91</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 2; Liu, “Jianlun *Qingfengzha*”, 16-8; Wan, “Regional Fiction *Clear Wind Sluice* (*Qingfengzha* 1819)”, 192-3; “Local Fiction of the Yangzhou Region: *Qingfengzha*”, 177-204.

<sup>92</sup> Guo Lin, “Chuyuan xiaoxia lu”, in *Xuxiu Sikuquanshu* 續修四庫全書 (*The Continuation of the Complete Library in the Four Branches of Literature*), vol. 1179 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002): 1. 650.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yangzhou and Hangzhou could not understand each other if they spoke to each other in their own dialect, so his Hangzhou audiences could not understand the performance.

As mentioned above, *kouchuan xinshou* suggests a dynamic relationship between master and apprentice by emphasizing the importance of initiative and innovative ability of the apprentice in receiving and inheriting his master's performance tradition. The apprentice differs from his master in many ways and they do not share the same life experience. Naturally, the apprentice has a different understanding on his master's repertoire and there is a high likelihood that he will create a refreshing version. The master will anticipate if his apprentice's changed repertoire is a failure or success. For example, Yu Youchun declined to take Yang Mingkun as his apprentice at first since he thought Yang would change his repertoire too drastically.<sup>93</sup>

However, the newly adapted repertoires of Pi Wu performed by Ji Yushan and Gong Wuting made Pu Ling's repertoire more appealing to the contemporary audience. There is no historical record for the performance language by Ji, so it still requires further study to determine whether Ji performed in the Yangzhou dialect. Gong might adapt his phonetic realisations in his performance to the mandarin of his time and thus did not perform in the Yangzhou dialect as what Pu Lin did in his performance. Differing from Pu Lin, Gong was famous for his comical narration on Pi Wu and innovative ability in refreshing the repertoire but not for performing mimicry and jokes as what Pu Lin did in performance; Ji was famous for the fool language that he used in performance. Ji and Gong performed *Pure-Wind Dyke* during the periods of Daoguang 道光 (1782-1850), Xianfeng 咸豐 (1831-1861), Tongzhi, and Guangxu 光

---

<sup>93</sup> Fairlee, "Nine Generations of *Pi Wu lazi* in Yangzhou *Pinghua*", 118.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

緒 (1871-1908). Ji performed in this style with much improvisation, sarcasm, and foul language.<sup>94</sup> Local Yangzhou inhabitants said that Ji was the representative of the martial style of *Pi Wu* (*wu lazi* 武辣子). When I mentioned *wu lazi* to Yang Mingkun, he responded:<sup>95</sup>

In the so-called martial style performance, storytellers often used bawdy language. Zhong Songyan 仲松岩 performed in this style in my master's generation. I am not sure if he is still alive today, as he would be in his nineties if he is. In general, inhabitants of Yangzhou preferred the performance in the gentle style of *Pi Wu* (*wen lazi* 文辣子). My performance style is the gentle one.

According to Yang Mingkun, Gong Wuting created a new style that was different from *wu lazi*, and Yang performed in the new style.

Gong Wuting was very interested in fiction in his teenage years and later made a living by performing storytelling. He was an eminent creative storyteller. Among the contemporary repertoires, he showed a particular preference for *Pure-Wind Dyke*. Thus, he performed the repertoire during the Xianfeng, Tongzhi and Guangxu eras. Gong left Yangzhou for Taizhou and continued to tell the story of *Pi Wu* during the reign of Xianfeng when the rebels of the Heavenly Kingdom occupied Yangzhou city. After the war, Gong returned to Yangzhou to continue his performance of the story of *Pi Wu*.<sup>96</sup> Although Gong was not the creator of the story of *Pi Wu*, he performed it successfully through a steady flow of inspiration recreated over thirty years. He shaped

---

<sup>94</sup> Fairlee, "Nine Generations of *Pi Wu lazi* in Yangzhou Pinghua", 110-11.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>96</sup> Dong, "Shijing xiaoshuo de zhongyao daibiao", 195.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

the image of Pi Wu by expanding on the character's comical thoughts and behaviours. Thus, Gong's repertoire and performance style achieved a high reputation and became known as the Gong School of Pi Wu. "Gong Wuting lived in Yangzhou for thirty years, and he performed *Pure-Wind Dyke* in his special style every year."<sup>97</sup> His performance was very popular in Qing Yangzhou, which finds expression in a Yangzhou folk saying "You must have your meals without interruption so as not to miss out on Gong's performance" (*Yaoting Gong Wuting, chifan modating* 要聽龔午亭，吃飯莫打停). Zhu Huang 朱黃 (ca.1875-ca.1908) gave an account of Gong's high reputation in his *Gong Wuting zhuan* 龔午亭傳 (*Biography of Gong Wuting*): "At that time, anyone who went to Yangzhou without listening to the story narrated by Gong Wuting would have been laughed at when they returned home."<sup>98</sup> It is likely that Gong had adapted his phonetic realisations in his performance to the mandarin of his time; otherwise, provincial folk would have been unable to understand his performance.

A storyteller's fresh understanding of the repertoire that his master imparted to him will decide the way he would revise his master's repertoire. He may draw on his personal life experience, his knowledge from books or through his imagination. In this circumstance, the storyteller inevitably borrows heavily from the episodes from well-known novels in refreshing his repertoire. When his revised repertoire is well received by the contemporary audience, the storyteller will gain fame. Indeed, the two different styles of oral performance by Ji and Gong represent the two types of understanding of the image of Pi Wu: a martial Pi Wu in Ji's repertoire, and a comic one in Gong's. Gong's gentle style has been popular since its creation. By contrast, Ji's martial style

---

<sup>97</sup> Guo, "Chuyuan xiaoxia lu", vol. 1179: 1. 650.

<sup>98</sup> Zhu Huang, *Gong Wuting zhuan*, in Dong Yushu 董玉書 (1869-1952) (eds.), *Wucheng huaijiulu bulu* 蕪城懷舊錄·補錄 (*A Sequel to the Reminiscences from the Wu City*), (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 2002), 194.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

is rarely mentioned in historical documents. However, the significant contribution made by Ji to the story of Pi Wu should not be ignored. Yangzhou storytelling enjoyed a boom time in the Qing dynasty when new storytellers with their repertoires emerged rapidly. Each with his own style, Ji's martial Pi Wu and Gong's gentle Pi Wu, was able to satisfy audiences from various social classes, including the educated elite and court officials, the illiterate, even rogues and peddlers.<sup>99</sup> Thus, their performance styles were named *wu lazi* and *wen lazi* respectively by their audiences. According to Yang, "The so-called *wu lazi* and *wen lazi* were named by audiences. The storyteller himself did not give their performance any such title."<sup>100</sup>

As mentioned before, the master -and -apprentice relationship between Gong Wuting, Ding Shouting, Zhang Shaonan, Yu Shaochun, Yu Youchun and Yang Mingkun is apparent. Moreover, Yang Mingkun mentioned that Yu Youchun, Yu Shaochun and himself were educated through the traditional transmission mode *kouchuan xinshou*.<sup>101</sup> Thus, Gong's performance tradition was well preserved throughout the five generations.

The storyteller's subjective consciousness plays a more crucial role than the knowledge and skills that his master taught him in his performance career. Over the past three centuries, there have been at least twenty-four storytellers performing the story of Pi Wu.<sup>102</sup> Among them only nine storytellers are included in the Pu School. To a large extent, their abilities to perform and refresh their repertoires will determine whether they are accepted as a member of the Pu School. Gong Wuting educated Ding

---

<sup>99</sup> Dong Guoyan, "Lun Yangzhou pinghua de minsu shenmei" 論揚州評話的民俗審美 (Discussion of the Aesthetic Effects of Yangzhou Storytelling from the View of Folklore), *Yan Zhao xueshu, spring* (2008):103; "Lun *Qingfengzha* de yanbian he yiyi", 107.

<sup>100</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>101</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 June 2019.

<sup>102</sup> Fairlee, "Nine Generations of *Pi Wu lazi* in Yangzhou *Pinghua*".



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Shouting along with Gong Xiaoting, Zhang Jiesan 張捷三 (c.1850) and Hu Deting as the inheritors of his repertoire. Gong Xiaoting was Gong Wuting's apprentice and son, however he is not recognized as a member of the Pu School and there is little information about him. Also, we hear nothing of Hu Deting. As mentioned before, Gong Wuting himself focused on the storyteller's power of understanding and innovative ability and thus refused to accept anyone as his disciple. Zhang Jiesan was reputed as "little Gong Wuting" due to his fantastic mimicry of Gong Wuting's voice, gestures and words, but did not refresh his repertoire. As a result, Zhang was not allowed to share with his master the same character *ting* 亭 in his stage name.<sup>103</sup> We can imagine that Ding Shouting must have had a good sense of understanding and innovation ability. Otherwise his repertoire would not have been able to meet Gong Wuting's strict requirements. Later, Ding became the master of Zhang Shaonan.

Zhang Shaonan's performance language is possibly a mixed version of the Yangzhou dialect and the Hai'an dialect. He was a very popular storyteller in the Lixiahe 里下河 area, including Gaoyou, Zhenjiang, Taizhou 泰州, and Baoying.<sup>104</sup> He was very experienced in performing gong and drum story-singing in the Hai'an 海安 dialect. In his performance style, Zhang spoke smoothly when telling the story of Pi Wu, following the phonological system of the Jiang-Huai dialect group. The Jiang-Huai dialect group consists of three dialect sub-groups, including Hongchao 洪巢, Tairu 泰如 and Huangxiao 黃孝. The Yangzhou dialect belongs to the Hongchao sub-group and Hai'an 海安 of the Tairu. Zhang was a native Hai'an dialect speaker. When

---

<sup>103</sup> Fairlee, "Nine Generations of Pi Wu lazi in Yangzhou Pinghua". 114-5.

<sup>104</sup> Lixiahe is in the central part of Jiangsu province. It starts from the Inner Canal, directing eastward to the Chuanchang 串場 River; it starts from the Northern Jiangsu Irrigation Canal, directing southward to the Yangzhou canal.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

performing the story of Pi Wu, he may have adapted his native pronunciation to that of the Yangzhou dialect. His pronunciation is a mixed version of Yangzhou dialect and the Hai'an dialect. At any rate, his pronunciation follows the phonological system of the Jiang-Huai dialect group. Thus, his performance attracted many people from the Jiang-Huai area.

Yu Youchun, the son of Yu Shaochun, and Yang Mingkun share their performance traditions with Pu Lin and Gong Wuting. They perform the story of Pi Wu in the Yangzhou dialect; they are good at imitating Pi Wu, and perform in *wen* style. According to the recorded live oral performance by Yu Youchun and Yang Mingkun, both adopted Yangzhou dialect in their performances. "My master was good at imitating Pi Wu through facial expression and talking, and he said I was better than him," Yang said proudly, "My master's style and mine are the comic style inherited from Gong Wuting."<sup>105</sup>

We know little about Yu Shaochun. Although Yu Youchun inherited the repertoire of Pi Wu from his father Yu Shaochun, we cannot determine whether Yu Shaochun's performance is the same as Yu Youchun in performance tradition as the former repertoire was not recorded down in text or tape-/video-recording. Yu Shaochun was also born in Hai'an and became Zhang Shaonan's apprentice at the age of eighteen. He kept the repertoire of Pi Wu free from foul language. In addition, his performance enjoyed popularity in the Lixiahe area. His son Yu Youchun inherited his repertoire together with his performance techniques, and thereafter transmitted them to his apprentice Yang Mingkun.

---

<sup>105</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yu Youchun received his education at an old-style private school as well as a modern-style primary school. In contrast to other contemporary storytellers, he was literate. He was a smart learner and quickly mastered the repertoire. He performed by himself in public at the young age of twelve. He began his performance career by performing in both the rural and urban areas of Hai'an and Dongtai 東台. When his performance skills improved, he performed more often in big towns and cities. When he arrived in Zhenjiang, he attended a charity storytelling show. In the show, he performed *Pure-Wind Dyke* with well-known masters Kang Youhua 康又華 (1898-1951) and Lang Zhaoxian 郎照先 (fl.1920). His performance received high praise at the show, so he decided to live and perform in the cities of Zhenjiang and Yangzhou. In 1960, he became a full member of Yangzhou Oral Performing Art Company 揚州曲藝團. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), he could not continue to perform, and he gave up his plan to publish the repertoire of *Pure-Wind Dyke*. He was assigned to be a library assistant at a factory in the rural area of Yangzhou. In 1978, the Yangzhou Broadcasting Station was entrusted by the Shanghai Film Studio to record Yu's oral performance of *Pure-Wind Dyke*. He went back to work at Yangzhou Oral Performing Art Company in the following year. In 1985, his repertoire was transcribed into text and published under the title "Pi Wu lazi".

So far, I have discussed all the major members of the Pu School, describing their individual performance features. Also, I have conceptualized the model where the oral tradition of the Pu School of Pi Wu and Yangzhou storytelling in general was transmitted.

As Yang Mingkun is widely accepted as the only living heir of the repertoire of Pi Wu of the Pu School, I will focus on Yang Mingkun in the following section, exploring how he inherited the repertoire of Pi Wu from his master Yu Youchun. I will

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

also discuss how Yang adapted his master's repertoire innovatively without deviating greatly from his master's performance tradition, and how he taught his apprentices. This study will be based mainly on my interviews with Yang Mingkun during my fieldwork in Yangzhou and the narrative of *Rogue Pi Wu* recited by Yang and Yu Youchun.

The first question that came to my mind was whether the Pu School members have prompt book (*jiaoben* 腳本) to study during their apprenticeship? To this question, Yang Mingkun replied: "I do not have the so-called scripts, nor did my master." "We learnt repertoire by observation and memory."<sup>106</sup> He also shared his performance experience about how he had learnt the repertoire from Yu Youchun. In 1975, Yang Mingkun won a prize in an unofficial performance competition and was known to the public. His talent for creating and performing Yangzhou *pinghua* stories in the competition impressed the then Director Yangzhou Municipal Bureau of Culture; considering his talent, the director made an exception to recruit Yang as a full member of the Yangzhou Oral Performing Art Company. Before that, few people in the Yangzhou storytelling circles had known or noticed him. When working in the company, he respected both renowned *pinghua* storytellers, Wang Shaotang and Yu Youchun. He voiced his desire to be Yu's apprentice, but Yu refused his request and said, "I prefer to paint on a blank sheet of paper than alter a piece of drawing." When talking about his master Yu Youchun, Yang revealed his experience of formally acknowledging Yu as his master (*baishi* 拜師). His explanation is as follows:<sup>107</sup>

---

<sup>106</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>107</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

I worked as a professional storyteller together with my master Yu before I became his apprentice. When I voiced my desire to be his apprentice, Yu refused my request. [...] You know, I loved the repertoire of Pi Wu performed by Yu. So I asked to watch his performance and learn his repertoire without his permission. Interestingly, Yu refused to teach me in words but taught me in action. Before telling the story of Pi Wu, he needed to glance at the audiences and check me out. During the performance, he would stare at me for a while when applying his specific performance techniques. Thus, the day when I became his apprentice formally, I learnt all his repertoire along with his performance techniques.

As shown above, Yang has inherited the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* from Master Yu by observing Yu's living performances.

By observing and memorizing his master's performance, Yang Mingkun has learnt the core elements of his master's narration. This includes the main plot that comprises thirteen episodes, the features of the character Pi Wu, and the storyline of the legal case (see Chapter 4.1). Like Yu, Yang performs in Yangzhou dialect (see Chapters 5.1, 5.2 and 7.1), learning and enriching the performance skills employed by Yu (see Chapter 7.2). In addition, he has learnt and preserved the narration with Qing Yangzhou city as the backdrop. The tradition of the daily life of Yangzhou people in the past and present is well presented in Yang's narrative and thus his repertoire sounds *li* or credible. For example, the traditions of "eat wine" (*chijiu* 吃酒) and "drink wine" (*hejiu* 喝酒) in Yangzhou are different. *Chijiu* means an expensive dish served to

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

match the wine, while *hejiu* refers to a simple dish or no dish is served. An example of the usage of *chijiu* is as follows:<sup>108</sup>

The woman warms a pot of wine, takes a wine cup, a pair of chopsticks, and a small plate with soy sauce to a young man. Also, she serves a big bowl of pig trotter soup to him [...]. The young man sits down on a chair to eat wine (*chijiu*).

As pig trotter soup is not frequently served as a cuisine in Qing Yangzhou, the word *chijiu* is adopted here. *Hejiu* is more commonly used among the Yangzhou people, for example:<sup>109</sup>

Mama Zhang says to Pi Wu, “You want to drink wine (*hejiu*)! Why not say it directly? You said ‘open a dyke’ (*kai ba* 開壩), who knows what you want?” [...] Later, Mama Zhang serves sliced bean-curd to Pi Wu with his drink.

As demonstrated above, Mama Zhang uses the word *hejiu*, and by saying this, she means to offer Pi Wu only sliced bean-curd with his drink.

The tradition of playing games was very popular in Yangzhou in Qing times, which is also reflected in Yang’s performance of *Rogue Pi Wu*. The game may be played by asking riddles, connecting idioms, composing couplets or verses, telling stories or jokes, and so on. The riddle, for example, does not have a fixed pattern in terms of the number of syllables per line, the number of lines and other rhetorical

---

<sup>108</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 527-28.

<sup>109</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 38.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

devices, but usually has a rhyming pattern. Below is an example of a drinker's wage game riddle in the story:<sup>110</sup>

Wang Er says, "It is boring to drink without playing drinking games,  
so let us say something interesting."

Bag Nose says, "Good idea! Give us an example, please, my brother."

Wang Er is happy and says, "We give a speech in this form:

'Something that flies in the sky;

Something that grows up in the field,

an ancient person stands there, holding an antique book and reads  
aloud two lines of the book.'

Remember, every sentence should end in the same rhyme."

One of them says,

"Red-crowned crane (*he* 鶴) flies in the sky;

loquat (*pipa* 枇杷) tree grows up in the field,

Dong Zhuo 董卓 [d.192] stands there, holding the *Daxue* 大學

(*The Great Learning*) in hand. He reads aloud two lines of the

book, 'Gentlemen respect all the respectable people; the ordinary

people enjoy (*le* 樂) the happiness they have.'"<sup>111</sup>

In reciting the riddle shown above, Yang Mingkun reads *he* 鶴, *pa* 杷, *zhuo* 卓, *xue* 學, and *le* 樂 as [xaʔ], [p'aʔ], [tsuaʔ], [eiaʔ], and [laʔ], respectively. All the six syllables share a rhyme [aʔ]. Another example involving rhyming pattern is the celebration

---

<sup>110</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 155.

<sup>111</sup> There are no such two lines in *The Great Learning*.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

speech called *han eryizi* 喊二一子 in the local language. An example of such a speech is given below:<sup>112</sup>

One man says, “Guys, please give a celebration-speech to Pi Wu and his bride.”

Wang Er says, “I will do it! Pi Wu, listen to me, please!

*Tajin xingren fang*, 踏進新人房,

*Simian liangtangtang*, 四面亮堂堂,

*lainian sheng guizi*, 來年生貴子,

*bizhong Zhuangyuanlang*. 必中狀元郎.”

Walking into the wedding room, the light is bright on all sides. A baby will be born next year, and he will surely emerge first in the imperial civil service examination when he grows up.

As shown above, *han eryizi* is a type of speech given to celebrate a wedding ceremony; the rhyme occurs at the last syllable—*ang* [aŋ] marked in bold for every line except the third one.

Yang’s good memory and his observation of Yu’s performance do not fully explain how the repertoire of Pi Wu was transmitted from Yu to Yang. The storytellers might have some secret documents or personal notes to the narrative that are difficult to memorise, as Børdahl had discussed in her case study.<sup>113</sup> However, I surmise that Yang’s ability to re-create is a key factor in inheriting the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* from Yu. Yang’s view on what it takes to be a successful storyteller indicates that he values the creative ability of professional storytellers:<sup>114</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 200.

<sup>113</sup> Børdahl, “A Case Study of the Yangzhou Pinghua Tradition”, 17.

<sup>114</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

An oral performing arts performer who is merely imitative of others but unable to use his brain well is not a good performer. If he merely has speaking ability but no good writing ability, he is not a good performer. If he merely recites stories but does not portray the characters in stories, he is not a good performer.

As suggested by Yang, a good storyteller must have good creative ability, including making good use of his brain, and having the ability to write and read and to portray the characters well. He furtherly explained that a good storyteller should have the ability to create stories and characters by drawing on his personal experience and knowledge of Chinese literature. “Briefly speaking, creative ability is very important to us storytellers,” he added.

Indeed, in learning the repertoire of Pi Wu from his master, Yang makes good use of his creative ability. When learning the repertoire of Pi Wu from Yu, Yang was not Yu’s apprentice, so he did not do the routine *huanshu* and could not receive Yu’s guidance directly. In this scenario, Yang had to make use of innovative tradition to recite the story of Pi Wu. To cater to the contemporary audiences, Yang Mingkun uses many more colloquial words than Yu and makes the Yangzhou dialect a vital comedic element in his comical presentation, as will be discussed in Chapter 6. He also rearranges and enriches the narrative inherited from Yu by shaping Pi Wu as a good man by nature—a somewhat new image more readily received by contemporary audiences (see Chapters 4.2 and 4.3). His unique understanding of the story and careful observation of the daily life of contemporary Yangzhou people have led to a newly adapted narrative of Pi Wu.

Yang Mingkun recreates the repertoire of Pi Wu performed by Yu, which is well received by the audience. For example, he replaces a tongue twister called *tou’er*

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

*ci* 頭兒詞 (literally, “words suffixed with [the bound morpheme] ‘tou’”) with another called *zuidaluo shedagu* 嘴打鑼舌打鼓 (literally “Beat the gong by mouth and the drum by tongue”) in the same episode because the latter sounds more familiar to contemporary audiences than the former.<sup>115</sup> In the story, *zuidaluo shedagu* is created by Xiao Xizi on the way to Pi Wu’s house:<sup>116</sup>

On the way to Pi Wu’s mansion, Xiao Xizi speaks to himself for fun, “噹個啣噹, 噹個啣噹, 噹個啣噹噹. 東頭來了個小瞎子, 西頭來了個小癩子; 小瞎子手上抓住個臭襪子, 一手拎住個鞋拔子; 小癩子一手抓住個野鴨子, 還一手抓住個鞋拔子; 瞎子碰癩子還癩子碰瞎子, 瞎子打癩子還癩子打瞎子; 甩起來一刷子還兜起來一拔子, 打掉了臭襪子還打飛了野鴨子, 瞎子打癩子. 一刻兒功夫到公館門口了”。

*Dangge langdang, dangge langdang, dangge langdangdang* (onomatopoeia, sound of tapping the gong). A blind young man comes from the east with a pair of socks in one hand and a shoehorn in the other; a young rogue comes from the west with a wild duck in one hand and a shoehorn in the other. The blind man runs into the rogue. The rogue runs into the blind man at the same time. The blind man hits the rogue. The rogue hits the blind man, too. Hitting each other with a brush and then with a shoehorn, they lose the socks and the wild duck. The blind man hits the rogue. I have arrived! This is Pi Wu’s mansion. Very fast.”

---

<sup>115</sup> *Tou’er ci* and *Zuidaluo shidagu* used to refer to casual conversations between ordinary Yangzhou people. Now, *zuidaluo shedagu* has become a slang to refer to people talking nonsense.

<sup>116</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 684.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Xiao Xizi is an illiterate servant who has never received any formal education. His speech is nonsense but rhythmic and comical. First, each line ends with *zi* 子, as in *xiao xiazi* 小瞎子 (a young blind man), *xiao laizi* 小赖子 (a young rogue), *yazi* 鸭子 (duck), and *wazi* 袜子 (sock). Second, he starts his tongue-twister with a series of onomatopoeia, “*dangge langdang dangge langdang dangge langdang dang*,” which contributes to the rhythmic sense of the speech. Finally, the story in the tongue-twister sounds ridiculous, but also reflects that the speaker is in a happy mood. The *tou'er ci* narrated by his master Yu Youchun is replaced by Yang with *zuidaluo shedagu*. Each line of *tou'er ci* ends with the syllable *tou*. *Tou'er ci* is also created by Xiao Xizi in the version by Yu:<sup>117</sup>

Xiao Xizi used *tou'er ci* at his own will:

“有一個姑娘起早頭,拿了掃把頭,大門頭掃到房門頭,又掃到書桌頭,放下掃帚頭,洗臉梳油頭,梳過了頭,吃了三個大饅頭,提起籃子上街頭,迎面撞到個大癩頭;大癩頭擔了一擔蘿蔔頭,大姑娘向他稱了二斤蘿蔔頭,回家坐到廚房鍋灶頭,拿了碓子頭,點著草把頭,燒了節草把頭,煮熟了二斤蘿蔔頭,她走進到灶面頭,揭開鍋蓋頭來拿蘿蔔頭。”

A girl gets up very early! She picks up a besom, sweeps the floor from the gate of the house to the door of the room, and to the side of the desk. She puts down the besom, and washes her face and combs her hair. After combing her hair, she eats up three big steamed rice cakes, and then she picks up a basket on her way out. She runs into a person with a peanut-head. The person is carrying a

---

<sup>117</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 370.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

load of radish. The girl buys two *jin* 斤<sup>118</sup> of radish and goes back to the kitchen. She picks a piece of paper-roll, fires a bunch of hay, and throws them into the stove. After burning up a few bunches of hay, the radish is boiled. She goes to the kitchen, removes the pot cover and scoops out the cooked radish.

All the sentences in the above tongue-twister contain a word ending with the morpheme *-tou* 頭, as shown in *saoba tou* 扫把頭 (besom), *luobo tou* 萝卜頭 (radish), and *mangzi tou* 礮子頭 (a piece of paper-roll for lighting). The scene from daily life portrayed in the passage by Yu is not familiar to the audience and the items such as *saoba tou* and *mangzi tou* mentioned in the passage rarely appear in the daily lives of contemporary audiences. By contrast, *xiao xazi*, *xiao laizi*, *ye yazi* and *wazi* appear in the *zuidaluo shedagu*, which are commonly used words in the current lexicon of the Yangzhou dialect. In the year 2012 alone, Yang's performances attracted more than 390,000 people.<sup>119</sup>

Yang borrows his expression skills from other genres of performing arts in an effort to improve the repertoire of Pi Wu that he has inherited from his master. His views on storytelling provides a deeper insight on our understanding of the performing arts. He stated his views as follows:<sup>120</sup>

Storytelling is not an isolated genre of performing arts. To perform an individual piece of work with good taste for art, storytellers need to borrow acting skills and artistic expressions from literature and other genres of arts, such as singing and dancing, and fine arts

---

<sup>118</sup> *Jin*, a unit of weight (approximately half a kilogram).

<sup>119</sup> Ji, "Shijian yishu shengming", in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 7.

<sup>120</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

including painting and calligraphy, poetry, Kun opera (*kunqu* 昆曲), drama, fast-tale and so forth.

In the repertoire of Pi Wu, more than ten genres of oral performing arts are adopted by Yang, namely, *xiaochang* 小唱 (singing in dialect), *huaishu* 淮書 (Jiang-Huai storytelling), *daoqing* 道情 (ballad singing), *qiaoxiaopanzi changxiaodiao* 敲小盤子唱小調 (singing popular songs and beating small plates), *dagushu* 大鼓書 (big drum storytelling), *gebixi* 隔壁戲 (a form of comedy sketch prevalent in Qing dynasty Hangzhou—literally “next-door opera”), *jingju* 京劇 (Beijing opera), *yangju* 揚劇 (Yangzhou opera), and so forth.

Yang Mingkun performs more than the above-mentioned genres. For example, in accordance with the plot of *Rogue Pi Wu*, Yang plays *Hou'er shu* 猴兒書 (*Story of the Monkey*), sings folk songs and performs puppet shows. *Hou'er shu* refers to the Yangzhou storytelling repertoire of the *Journey to the West*; *hou'er* refers to Sun Wukong or the Monkey King, who plays a critical role in the story. The description of *Hou'er shu* in the story is as follows:<sup>121</sup>

A young storyteller taps a bamboo tube while jumping, *qibeng* 漆畚 (onomatopoeia: sound of tapping the bamboo tube) *qibeng qibengbeng*. The storyteller looks like a monkey indeed. His repertoire is the *Journey to the West*. He says, “Talk of Tang Sanzang 唐三藏, speaking of Tang Sanzang, I will tell you a story of Tang Sanzang. He rides a white dragon horse, Zhu Bajie leads

---

<sup>121</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 202.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

the horse's bridle, Monk Sha burdens the load, and the Monkey King follows them with a golden cudgel in hand.”

As demonstrated above, a young storyteller imitates the famous Monkey King vividly when telling the story of the *Journey to the West*. Yang mimics the younger storyteller performing *hou'er shu* when reciting the story of Pi Wu.

In the story, a young couple sings the Yangzhou folk songs “Zhuo poniang zuo dagua” 拙婆娘做大褂 (“Clumsy Wife Sews a Big Coat”) and “Yangliu qing” 楊柳青 (“Willows are Green”) at the temple fair to earn money.<sup>122</sup> The description of the performance in Yangzhou dialect is as follows:<sup>123</sup>

A man walks around and finds more and more people gathering around him, he then shouts to them, “We performers depend on parents at home and on friends when we are far away from home. We need to make a living by performing! If one of you gives us two hundred cash (*wen* 文),<sup>124</sup> we will sing for you. We will not charge until we have finished the performance. Otherwise, we cannot perform.”

Yang also sings these two songs in the Yangzhou dialect when reciting the passage above.

---

<sup>122</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 381.

<sup>123</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 380.

<sup>124</sup> *Wen* is a standard unit of currency made of copper and lead and minted (usually) by imperial decree. The value of the coins varied greatly over time, but their weight, size, and shape remained virtually the same for centuries. Approximately 1,000 *wen* per *liang* 兩. *Liang* is a unit of weight for silver used in monetary transactions, roughly equivalent to one ounce of silver. The value of the *liang* varied greatly over the Qing dynasty. In the *Peaking Gazette*, the *liang* is invariably translated as tael.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

The puppet show is particularly entertaining compared with other genres of local performing arts of Yangzhou, and its lovely puppets have a large fan base. There is a vivid description of a puppet show in the story:<sup>125</sup>

There are lots of people watching the puppet show. Some of them get squashed and almost cry for help. [...] A boy asks an old man, “You always come here to watch the show, so can you please tell me who is who among the many characters? Is he a Daoist priest? What are they singing? Elderly uncle, please tell us what the show is about.”

The old man says, “Oh ... oh ... this is ... uh ... this is a ...”

The boy says, “Don’t say ‘this’ or ‘that’! What is the story about? You told me you had watched this show many times, but I do not think you know much about it.”

Clearly, the old man has watched the puppet show many times. However, he cannot tell the boy anything about the story presented in the show. He is only interested in the puppets, not the story. When performing the dialogue between the old man and the young boy, Yang not only imitates how the two people talk but also explains what the puppet show is to his audience as he performs it.

Labour and diligence are crucial traits for a good storyteller. Yang Mingkun always makes good preparation for every performance ever since he began his performance career. “When making preparations,” he said, “I usually perform facing a mirror. At this time, I will play three different roles: a performer, a listener, and a judge.”<sup>126</sup> As the performer, Yang Mingkun repeatedly revises and improves his

---

<sup>125</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 382.

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

repertoire, hoping to move the listener who may laugh, cry, or become emotional. Playing the harsh judge is the most important role of the three, according to Yang, as he would judge his performer's role without mercy. The pickier he is as a judge, the better he will perform in future. When I asked him what it took to become a qualified inheritor of the Pu School, Yang replied:<sup>127</sup>

In listening to my storytelling, audiences can gain historical knowledge of Yangzhou city and the local tradition of daily life. They may find my story comical, but at the same time, they may gain a few insights from my narrative and comments. Also, I need to take the audiences' requisition into account in performing. Otherwise, I do not think I am a good storyteller.

Most importantly, he is always ready to take on board feedback from his audiences in the course of recreating the story of Pi Wu.

In 2013, Yang Mingkun recruited three apprentices and taught them his repertoire of Pi Wu. How does Yang determine whether the apprentice is the suitable candidate to become the heir of the repertoire of Pi Wu of the Pu School? Yang answered:<sup>128</sup>

To be my apprentice, they must be a fan of Yangzhou storytelling. I mean they should be interested in Yangzhou storytelling performance. Also, I will find out whether they can speak clearly and have a clear voice. However, if they do not have a clear voice, I will teach them the way to speak clearly and loudly.

---

<sup>127</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>128</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 June 2019.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Are all the three apprentices considered heirs of the Pu School? How did Yang teach them? Did Yang teach them by observing the traditional rule “orally transmitting and teaching from the heart?” Did his apprentices perform the routine *huanshu*? Yang explained how he taught his apprentices:<sup>129</sup>

I think they are all the heirs of my repertoire of Pi Wu of the Pu School of the tenth generation. Yes, I taught them through the traditional transmission model *kouchuan xinshou*. Normally, I taught them thirty minutes as a daily lesson where I performed and informed them of the key performance techniques. Most of the time, they observed my performance and memorize my narrative. Sometimes they recorded my teaching process on the phone to review and memorize what I said. On the next day, they would perform what I taught them the day before for around twenty-five minutes. I listened to them again and again while correcting their tempo, intonation and logical stress until they met my requirements, i.e. “One understands it the moment they hear it” (*ru er ji dong 入耳即懂*).

Who is the best among the three apprentices? Yang said he would not comment on this because nobody can say for sure who will be the favourite among the audience, and who can eventually become the tenth-generation inheritor of the Pu School twenty years later. It will depend on their performance and as the proverb goes: “The master leads the way, and the cultivation depends on the disciple himself” (*Shifu ling jin men, xiuxing zai ge ren 師父領進門，修行在各人*).<sup>130</sup>

---

<sup>129</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 June 2019.

<sup>130</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 June 2019.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

*Kouchuan xinshou* is the main transmission mode in Yangzhou storytelling. The life and performance experiences of the storytellers in the Pu School determine their personal performance features. Yang is a well-established storyteller, and his performance is held in high regard by his audience as “Yang School of Pi Wu”. His good memory and creativity have greatly contributed to his successful inheritance of the repertoire of Pi Wu of the Pu School.

### 2.2 Sources of Inspiration for Pu Lin’s Creation

The repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* of the Pu School is widely described as “a picture of the daily life of Yangzhou people.” In this section, I will examine the sources of inspiration for Pu Lin’s creation and explore why the story of Pi Wu presents a real-life picture of the daily life of ordinary Yangzhou people.

According to Liu Chongyi and Margaret Baptist Wan, written literary works such as *Sanxianshen Bao Longtu duanyuan* and *Fengyue meng* 風月夢 (*Dream of Drizzle and Moonlight*) are sources of inspiration for Pu Lin in his creation of the story of Pi Wu.<sup>131</sup> However, a close reading of his story *Pure-Wind Dyke* seems to indicate that the broad social context around the early Qing and Pu Lin’s life experience in Qing Yangzhou dominated Pu Lin’s creation.<sup>132</sup> Like most folk arts performers in Imperial China, Pu Lin was not in the contemporary educated elite circle, and thus his work was not included in the literature of the time. Before the Qing *Rogue Pi Wu*, both

---

<sup>131</sup> Liu, “Jianlun *Qingfengzha*”; Wan, “Regional Fiction *Clear Wind Sluice (Qingfengzha 1819)*”; “Local Fiction of the Yangzhou Region: *Qingfengzha*”.

<sup>132</sup> In this part, I exclusively base my textual analysis on the story of Pi Wu in the Huaxuanzhai edition of *Qingfengzha* reprinted in 1996. As I have discussed in Chapter 1, the Huanxuanzhai edition of *Qingfengzha* was transcribed from Pu Lin’s repertoire.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Ming novels *Jin Ping Mei cihua* 金瓶梅詞話 (*Plum in the Golden Vase with Parts in Verse*) and *Rulin waishi* 儒林外史 (*The Unofficial History of the Scholars*) are modelled on the daily lives of ordinary people and represent a world of everyday experience.<sup>133</sup> On a similar note, Pu Lin was inspired more by the social context of Qing Yangzhou, the urban popular culture—literally “market-and-street culture” (*shijing wenhua* 市井文化) and the mindset of Chinese people in traditional China than by the literati’s works such as *Jin Ping Mei cihua* and *Rulin waishi* when creating his story of Pi Wu.

The performers’ daily life experiences typically provide real-life material for their creations. Since traditional Chinese chantefables were produced for and by ordinary people and drew on their real-life experiences, they inevitably involved characters living at the bottom of society, such as rogues, beggars, thieves, and robbers, as well as various industries necessary to people’s daily lives. Pu’s narration in his repertoire of Pi Wu is not exceptional. Pu Lin lived in the Qianlong era when Yangzhou underwent its second golden age in history. In creating the story, Pu Lin focused his attention on people he was familiar with, the experiences he had, and the joys and sorrows of his life. In the *Qingfengzha*, he depicted a restaurant, a furniture store, a shop selling southern goods, a butcher’s shop, a public bathhouse, and a pawnbroker. He successfully portrayed various characters ranging from bosses to peddlers and itinerant vendors by depicting their daily conversations and mental activities. Details such as the simple and crude beddings, stove, bowls, chopsticks, and firewood used at the thatched cottage were also presented. He even mentioned the

---

<sup>133</sup> Shang Wei, *Rulin waishi and Cultural Transformation in Late Imperial China*, (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2003), 183.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

price of vegetables, the daily expenses of a family of three, and the tools for selling vegetables. He talked about the sad lives of the poor. In addition, he pictured the daily life experiences of the butcher, the bean-curd maker, and the knaves. His story centred on the social lives of the bottom strata of Qing Yangzhou where he lived.

When listening to the story of Pi Wu, we can learn about Pi Wu's crafty conduct and his interest in gambling, as well as Qing Yangzhou city where Pi Wu lived his whole life. Why did Pu Lin portray Pi Wu as a tricky but righteous rogue indulging in gambling? Why did Pu make an effort to depict pawnbrokers? Why did Pu include a murder case in the story?

Knaveishness, pawning, and gambling are the three major character traits that are possessed by Pi Wu and reflect some aspects of the urban culture of traditional China.<sup>134</sup> In the story of Pi Wu, Pi Fengshan is called “Pi Wu lazi” or “Rogue Pi Wu,” where *lazi* is a Yangzhou slang, meaning *wulai* 無賴 or “rogues.” Historically, these terms offer linguistic evidence suggesting that rogues had received attention at that time. For example, in his book *Fangyan* 方言 (*Dialect*), the Western Han philosopher and philologist Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53 BC-AD 18) defined the three words *yangwang* 央亡, *mochi* 嚙屎, and *huo* 媾 as *kuei* 獯, meaning “sly and roguish,” and a “sly and roguish person” who is sometimes referred in the area between the Yangtze River and the Xiang River as *wulai*.<sup>135</sup> The word *lazi* was also found in Cao Xueqin's 曹雪芹 (ca.1715-ca.1763) *Honglou meng* 紅樓夢 (*A Dream of the Red Chamber*), where it

---

<sup>134</sup> Lu Deyang 陸德陽, *Liurang shi* 流氓史 (*A History of Rogues*), (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1995); Qu Yanbing 曲彥斌, *Diandang shi* 典當史 (*A History of Pawn Brokerage*), (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1993); Ge Chunyuan 戈春源, *Dubo shi* 賭博史 (*A History of Gambling*), (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1995).

<sup>135</sup> Yang Xiong, *Fangyan*, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2018), 113.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

was used to describe the female character Wang Xifeng 王熙鳳. Grandmother Jia introduced Wang as a “popi poluohu” 潑皮破落戶 or “mischievous terror of the house,” which she further interpreted as *lazi* or “rogue” in the southern provinces of China, hence the nickname, Rogue Feng (Feng *lazi* 鳳辣子). Both words *poluohu* and *lazi* made their appearance in Song dynasty sources.<sup>136</sup>

Rogue Pi Wu is portrayed as a typical rogue who lived in the Qing era—a person who was deceitful, tricky, and always ready to fight with others, as shown in Pi Wu’s knavish behaviour in the story.<sup>137</sup> Pi Wu is called “Rogue Pi Wu” because he makes a living through trickery. Pi Wu buys a bed without paying a single coin (*qian* 錢).<sup>138</sup> He gets it through tricking the shop owner into believing that the iron bars contained in a bag he is holding to purchase the bed are taels of silver. Pi Wu also fights with Fu Da to get pork for free. He lives in a small room separated from the large room of Ni Si. One night, he disguises himself as a thief hiding in his room to entice Ni to break into his room to catch the thief. However, Pi Wu claims that Ni is a thief when Ni goes to his room looking for the thief. Pi says he will sue Ni unless Ni re-divides his large room and gives the larger half to Pi. Thus, Pi Wu gets a bigger living space by cheating Ni Si.<sup>139</sup>

The image of rogues is often associated with gambling in traditional China.<sup>140</sup> As discussed above, Li Dou recorded in the *Yangzhou huafang lu* that the author Pu Lin became rich by playing gambling tricks. In the story, Pi Wu is described as a rogue who plays tricks and indulges in gambling. Although Pi once lost his entire fortune at

---

<sup>136</sup> Lu, *Liumang shi*, 8.

<sup>137</sup> Lu, *Liumang shi*, 1-41.

<sup>138</sup> *Qian* is a unit of currency equivalent to one/tenth of an ounce or one hundred cash.

<sup>139</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 41; 56; 42.

<sup>140</sup> Lu, *Liumang shi*, 25.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

a gambling party, he continues gambling to the extent that he goes out gambling with his poor friends even on the night of his wedding.<sup>141</sup> Logically, Pi should have made a significant effort to rid himself of his gambling addiction after losing all his property. However, according to Pu's narrative, Pi Wu continues to gamble while living in poverty. One year after his marriage, Pi Wu makes his first big fortune at a gambling party held in Pan Caichen's house. During the game, gaming tricks are employed by Pi and Pan.<sup>142</sup> Pi's gaming conduct at Pan's house plays a pivotal role in his whole life, which leads to a run of good luck for him.

In the Ming and Qing dynasties, the gaming funds of rogues were often small. However, some gamblers became wealthy through crafty gambling. Tian Yiheng 田藝蘅 (1524-?) recorded in his *Liu qing ri zha* 留青日紮 (*Daily Records Inscribed on Bamboo Slips*) that rogues often engaged in gambling and their gaming funds could be spent only on food and drink.<sup>143</sup> When Pi Wu lives in poverty, his gaming funds is usually no more than two hundred cash coins (*liangbai wen* 兩百文). Tian also mentioned that gambling parties were rampant in the Ming era in Changshu 常熟, a county under the jurisdiction of Suzhou Prefecture, not far away from Yangzhou.<sup>144</sup> According to historical records from the Qing era, rogues living in the area around the Taihu 太湖 Lake or between Jiangsu and Zhejiang used to organise gambling parties on a boat where a sword and spear were hidden for the purpose of threatening gamblers.<sup>145</sup> In the story, one can find both poor people and rich people at gambling

---

<sup>141</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 47.

<sup>142</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 61-9.

<sup>143</sup> Tian Yiheng, *Liuqing rizha*, (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1992): 3.12-3.

<sup>144</sup> Tian, *Liuqing rizha*, 3.13.

<sup>145</sup> "Qiang chuan shi mo" 槍船始末 ("The Beginning and End of the Boat with Guns"), in Nanjing daxue Taiping Tianguo shi yanjiushi 南京大學太平天國史研究室 (Nanjing University's Office of Research on the History of the

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

parties. Pi Wu makes a big fortune through cheating and playing tricks in a gambling party organised by his father's friend, Pan Caichen. As indicated in the subheading "Eight knavish merchants gather together for gambling" (*Ba man jü du* 八蠻聚賭) in Pu's version of the story, Pan Caichen invites several wealthy merchants to his house to organise a gambling party, aiming to take their wealth by playing tricks with the aid of Pi Wu. While gambling, Pan and Pi communicate through code words and won a substantial amount.<sup>146</sup> They do not resort to the spear or the sword, but their tricks are just as sharp, as they cheat all of Yao Er's property in two days.<sup>147</sup>

Gambling is filled with trickery, such as "to let the enemy off to catch him later" (*yuqin guzong* 欲擒故縱) or "to put on a pompous and pretentious show" (*xuzhang shengshi* 虛張聲勢), which are often used by gamblers regardless of their social and economic status.<sup>148</sup> Characters in Pu's narrative also play these two tricks. Pan Caicheng asks Pi Wu to pretend to be a wealthy merchant living on a luxury boat, enticing others to attend the gambling party through the display of his luxury lifestyle and great fortune. Pan also requests Pi to refuse his invitation first and then accept reluctantly. On the day of the gambling, Pi follows Pan's advice to be late to the party and dressed as a wealthy merchant. Pi Wu's fancy food and clothes are depicted in detail through the dialogues of Pan and his servant. After the party, Pi gives Pan five thousand taels of real silver as his fee for organising the scam gambling party.<sup>149</sup>

---

Heavenly Kingdom) (eds.), *Jiang Zhe Yu Wan Taiping Tianguo shiliao xuanbian* 江浙豫皖太平天國史料選編 (*Selected Historical Documents from Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Henan and Anhui on the Heavenly Kingdom*), (Jiangsu: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1983), 125.

<sup>146</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 64-9.

<sup>147</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 68.

<sup>148</sup> Ge, *Dubo Shi*, 159-85.

<sup>149</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 65; 68.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Pawning is also part of the traditional Chinese “market-street” culture. Pawning originated from as early as the Southern and Northern Dynasties (420-589).<sup>150</sup> There were many descriptions of pawnbrokers or pawning behaviours in traditional Chinese vernacular literature, such as Yuan drama, Ming-Qing fiction and folk performance literature. Narratives addressed the practice of pawning in works of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties and documented the tradition of pawnshops. In the late Ming and early Qing eras, more than half of the pawnshops in the whole country were owned by people from Shanxi.<sup>151</sup> In the episode, when Pi does not have sufficient money, he often pawns his belongings such as pants, clothes, and his wife’s dowry in exchange for cash. For example, Unit 62 of the *Pi Wu lazi* on “Pawning a living treasure through trickery” narrates how Pi Wu cheats a pawn shop owner.<sup>152</sup> Pi Wu puts a live mouse into a black box and cheats the owner that the box contains a live treasure. The event happened in a pawn shop and many aspects of the pawning industry, such as methods to determine a treasure and the appearance of the high counter desk in the pawn shop, are narrated. When Pi becomes wealthy, he opens a pawnshop.<sup>153</sup> Why does he choose to run a pawnshop? In the Qing dynasty, the pawn industry enjoyed unprecedented prosperity and achieved a level as high as the salt and wood industries. Moreover, the imperial court charged only a small tax on pawnshops, which was much less than the other two industries. Pawnshops owners in Qing dynasty paid only a few silver taels to the government as annual tax, regardless of their business

---

<sup>150</sup> Yang Zhaoyu 楊肇遇, *Zhongguo diandang ye* 中國典當業 (*Chinese Pawn Industry*), (Shanghai: Shanghai shangwu yinshuguan, 1929), 1.

<sup>151</sup> Wei Juxian 衛聚賢, *Shanxi piaohao shi* 山西票號史 (*A History of Shanxi Banks*), cited in Zhang Zhengmin 張正明 (eds.), *Shanxi gongshangye shi shiduo* 山西工商業史拾掇 (*Gleanings from the History of Shanxi Industry and Commerce*), (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1987), 199.

<sup>152</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 508-15.

<sup>153</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 79-81.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

scale.<sup>154</sup> From this perspective, Pi Wu's decision to open a pawnshop reflects the status of the pawn industry in the Qing era.

The significance of the court case story chosen by Pu Lin lies more in the way that shows two ideas coexisting in the minds of ordinary people during Qing times: a righteous court official such as Bao Zheng is necessary to ensure peaceful life but divine retribution is also presented. The narrative of Pi Wu is modelled on the lives of Yangzhou people in the eighteenth century, but a court case included in the narrative is set in Dingyuan 定遠 Country (Anhui province today) during the Song dynasty. In addition, *Pure-Wind Dyke* is not told as a conventional court case story because there is no detailed account of criminal offences or the trial. Why did Pu narrate in this way? In the story, Pi Wu enjoys the blessing of mysterious power in gambling parties for several times and subsequently becomes wealthy. He avenges Sun Qiangshi and Sun Xiaoji who kills Sun Dali, the father of his wife Sun Xiaogu successfully with the help of Bao Zheng 包拯 (999-1062), commonly known as Lord Bao or Bao Gong 包公, a high-ranking official of the Northern Song dynasty famous in history for his great integrity and intelligence as demonstrated in his act of punishing corrupt officials and deciding difficult cases. Why is Pi Wu so lucky? Why does Bao Zheng who lived in the Song dynasty exist in a Qing dynasty story?

Classic Chinese court case stories and the iconic representation of Lord Bao, reflect the traditional mindset of the Chinese. Storytellers, dramatists, and novelists interweave their wishes into their creations, as commonly seen in the drama and traditional tale-telling produced in the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing eras. These works create an icon of an honest and upright court official (*qingguan* 清官), who punishes

---

<sup>154</sup> Qu, *Diandang shi*, 63.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

evildoers and corrupt officials for the ordinary people. The most famous honest and upright court official is undoubtedly Lord Bao, who appears in a variety of works from the Song era onwards and is modelled on the real Song court official Bao Zheng.<sup>155</sup> Whenever there is Lord Bao, there will be a court case in Ming-Qing literature. In the story of Pi Wu narrated by Pu Lin, Sun Xiaogu and their neighbours do nothing after discovering the criminal conducts of Sun Qiangshi and Sun Xiaoji but wait a long time for Bao Zheng to judge the case. Xiaogu avenges her mother-in-law and stepbrother with the help of Lord Bao.<sup>156</sup> Although the narration of his detection and trial occupies only a small portion of the story, the audiences of Imperial China, see Bao's judgment as representation of justice from the court and the Emperor as well.

Like his contemporaries, Pu Lin may have firmly believed in "divine retribution" when creating the story of Pi Wu. This concept was popular in traditional China and reflected in many Chinese literary works. It became one of the recurring motifs in traditional Chinese fiction since it emerged in the literati jottings (*biji* 筆記) of the Six Dynasties 六朝 (220-589).<sup>157</sup> In addition, it is well represented through the narrative of the murder case and highlighted by the description of Pi Wu's lucky experiences. Sun Qiangshi and Sun Xiaoji dispose of Sun Dali's body in the kitchen

---

<sup>155</sup> Zeng Ling 曾玲, "Baihua gong'an xiaoshuo zhong panguan xingxiang de fazhan he yanbian" 白話公案小說中判官的發展和演變 ("The Development and Changing of the Imagery of Judges in the Vernacular Court-Case Fiction"), *Wenzhou daxue xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 1 (2008): 95-6; "Lun Ming Qing gong'an xiaoshuo xingsheng de yuanyin" 論明清公案小說興盛的原因 ("Discussion of the Reasons for the Prosperity of the Court-Case Fiction in the Ming and Qing Dynasties"), *Zhongbei daxue xuebao* 3 (2007): 7-8; Wu Xiaoru 吳小如, "Shitan gong'an xiaoshuo de jige wenti" 試談公案小說的幾個問題 ("A Tentative Discussion of Some Issues Regarding Court-Case Fiction"), *Qiushi xuekan* 3 (1995): 78-9.

<sup>156</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 89-94.

<sup>157</sup> Guan Wenxian 管文仙, "Fojiao yu Zhongguo gudai xiaoshuo zhong de yinguo baoying muti" 佛教與中國古代小說中的因果報應母題 ("Buddhism and the Motif of Karmic Retribution in Ancient Chinese Fiction"), (MA thesis, Shanghai University, 2009): 8.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

well, covering the well by building a kitchen over it.<sup>158</sup> They believe their criminal conduct will remain undiscovered forever. However, to their shock, Sun Dali's spirit flies out of the kitchen to save his daughter Xiaogu and even calls for Lord Bao at night.<sup>159</sup> Evil cannot escape punishment. In the end, Sun Qiangshi and Sun Xiaoji are sentenced to death by Lord Bao.<sup>160</sup> The narrative of Pi Wu's life experiences highlights the evil nature of Sun Qiangshi and Sun Xiaoji. In contrast to the two villains who are sentenced to death, Pi Wu, with the help of mysterious power, wins a large fortune at gambling and chances upon an even greater one in his house.<sup>161</sup> From this point of view, Pi Wu is very lucky due to the blessings of heaven. Pi Wu is portrayed in Pu Ling's story as a man of good nature, who performs many good deeds and treats the poor well. As the proverb goes, "Virtue is its own reward." Pi Wu deserves to have good luck.

Pu Lin created the story based on his life experience in Qing Yangzhou. As one of the ordinary Yangzhou residents in the Qing era, he interwove what he had seen and heard in reality into the narrative of rogue Pi Wu. The traditional Chinese idea of "reward and retribution" is also reflected in his narrative of the murder case.

Indeed, the daily life experiences, the characterisation of Pi Wu and the court-case story as presented in Pu Lin's narrative are based on real events and social context of Qing Yangzhou.

---

<sup>158</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 27.

<sup>159</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 34; 88.

<sup>160</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 95-9.

<sup>161</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 58-60; 73-4.

## 2.3 Conclusion

Inspired by the contemporary social context and his life experience in Yangzhou during the Qing dynasty, Pu Lin created the story *Pure-Wind Dyke* and adapted it into Yangzhou storytelling for public performance. Gong Wuting developed Pu's repertoire into a more attractive one and thus became one of the two founders of the Pu School; his repertoire was developed and transmitted through the traditional oral transmission model *kouchuan xinshou* to Yang Mingkun. As the present inheritor of the repertoire of the Pu School's *Rogue Pi Wu*, Yang learnt the repertoire from his master—the eighth-generation heir of the Pu School—Yu Youchun and recreated it by incorporating narrative, rhetorical, theatrical, linguistic, thematic elements from various genres of literature and performing arts, thus forming a distinctive style of his own that is “Yang School of Pi Wu.”

## THREE

### Performance Space and the Audience

Yang Mingkun mentioned to me that he preferred to perform at the story house as he could feel the traditional atmosphere there. Although he has his own business and is busy with performance, Yang regularly performs Yangzhou *pinghua* at the Pi Wu Story House built and decorated in a traditional Chinese style.<sup>162</sup> In this chapter, I will examine the tradition of his performance arena and includes a historical overview of this aspect.

Yangzhou story houses emerged as a commercial performance space specifically for Yangzhou storytellers in the Qing dynasty. The performance of Yangzhou storytelling features the folding fan and talking stopper, which have become props for storytelling since the mid-Ming or earlier. This new genre of oral performing arts immediately attracted a strong interest from both the illiterate and the educated social elite after it emerged. This chapter aims to examine the tradition of the performance space and the audience composition of Yangzhou *pinghua* performance by referring to historical works and contemporary studies, and data collected from my participant-observation of Yang Mingkun's performance at Pi Wu Story House in Yangzhou. I will first describe what the Pi Wu Story House looks like, the audience watching Yang's performance at the Pi Wu Story House; and what Yang uses in his performance. Secondly, I will explore the historical development of the performance space for the storyteller and the Yangzhou story house. Also, I will discuss the props used in Yangzhou *pinghua* performance. Lastly, I will conduct a historical exploration

---

<sup>162</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

of the composition of the audience of Yangzhou *pinghua*, aiming to examine the development of audience of the repertoire of Pi Wu of the Pu School.

### 3.1 Yang Mingkun and the Pi Wu Story House

Traditional performance space considerably contributes to the traditional register where Yang Mingkun performs his repertoire of the Pu School. According to Foley, the material objects and physical arenas of performance associated with the storytelling arts can also be perceived as making up a “dedicated register” or physical idiom.<sup>163</sup> The Pi Wu Story House is the most well-known place in Yangzhou for watching the Yangzhou *pinghua* performance by Yang Mingkun, where the performance space considerably contributes to Yang’s captivating performance. Yang Mingkun regularly performs every weekend at Pi Wu Story House. In Qing Yangzhou, story houses were concentrated in the area between the Dongguan and Caiyi Streets.<sup>164</sup> The famous Pi Wu Story House is also located in Dongguan Street.



Fig. 3.1 A waiter dressed in the Qing style stands at the door of Pi Wu Story House; side wall to the gate of Pi Wu Story House. 31 July 2016. Pi Wu story house, Dongguan Street, Yangzhou.

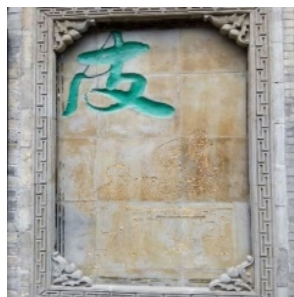


Fig. 3.2 The audience in the Pi Wu Story House is enjoying morning tea served in a traditional style. 31 July 2016. Dongguan Street, Yangzhou.

<sup>163</sup> Foley, *The Singer of Tales in Performance*, 7.

<sup>164</sup> Lei Mengshui 雷夢水 et al. (eds.) *Zhonghua zhuzhi ci 中華竹枝詞 (Chinese Bamboo-branch Songs)*, (Beijing: Beijing guji chubanshe, 1997), 76.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

On the last day of July in 2016, I went to Pi Wu Story House to watch Yang Mingkun's *pinghua* storytelling performance at eight o'clock in the morning. Pi Wu Story House is decorated in traditional Chinese style. The waiters were dressed in Qing gowns, wearing a hat with a fake pigtail. A waiter stood at the entrance to the story house to attract people walking along Dongguan Street to enjoy the *pinghua* performance (Figure 3.1). A black wooden board horizontally inscribed with four green characters 皮五書場, meaning "Pi Wu Story House," is hung above the gate. A vertical signboard is hung on either side of the gate, the board on the right reads "The storytelling narrates on the sour, sweetness, and bitterness of life" (*Pingshuo rensheng suantianku* 評說人生酸甜苦) and the board on the left "Dishes cooked in homemade style taste delicious" (*Jingpeng jiaxiu daokouxiang* 精烹傢饈到口香). Above each of the two vertical signboards is a red lantern hanging from the eaves. On the left side wall, next to the gate, there is a stone stela embedded in the wall, containing a large character 皮 in green on the top left corner and a painting in gold at the bottom half (Figure 3.1).

On entering the Pi Wu Story House, a few people were already sitting inside,



Fig. 3.3 The Stage in the Pi Wu Story House.  
31 July 2016. Dongguan Street, Yangzhou.

waiting for Yang to perform the storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu* (Figure 3.2). Most of them were Yangzhou locals as they spoke the Yangzhou dialect. Interestingly, several children aged around eight years old sat close to the stage talking about Pi Wu with their grandparents.

About thirty minutes before the performance, people walked around Yang's stage and took photos. The stage is set against the back wall of the house, facing the gate and surrounded by black wooden handrails. The stage

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*



Fig. 3.4 The background of the stage in the Pi Wu Story House.  
31 July 2016. Dongguan Street.

area is no more than four square metres. In the centre of the stage is a small square desk with a chair behind it (Figure 3.3). On the desk, there is a folding fan and a small black wooden talking-stopper. The desk and chair are covered with a bright blue cloth with pink peonies and purple butterflies embroidered on it. In a way, the bright blue, red, and yellow colours help the audiences recall the traditional Chinese cultural elements. Three oiled paper umbrellas are opened and hung upside down above the stage. On both sides of the picture, a Chinese red knot called *Zhongguo jie* 中國結 is hung along with three small lanterns (Figure 3.4). At the back of the stage is a picture frame with the characters “Shui bao pi” 水包皮 written, followed by the line below by “Guangling qin Yangzhou wei” 廣陵琴揚州味 written in a smaller font. Interestingly, the three characters 水包皮 can be read either from left to right or from right to left (Figure 3.4). The tradition of Yangzhou people daily life is vividly described as *Zaoshang pibaoshui, wanshang shuibaopi* 早上皮包水，晚上水包皮, meaning “to have morning tea in the morning and to have a bath in the evening.” The literary meaning of *pi bao shui* is “skin contains the water” and that of *shui bao pi* “water envelops the skin,” the former being a metaphorical reference to “tea (water) going into the body” and the latter “a person in a bathhouse pool.” Thus, the three characters serve as an introduction to the traditional Yangzhou daily life.

In the Pi Wu Story House, traditional Yangzhou morning tea with steamed desserts are served every morning. Customers were served traditional Yangzhou morning tea with steamed desserts. They sat around tables and enjoyed food and tea



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

while waiting for Yang's performance. They would not need to pay for watching Yang's performance, but payment is required for the tea and dessert. The tradition of Yangzhou people enjoying morning tea and having a bath in the evening is reflected in the story of *Rogue Pi Wu* recited by Yang. For example, Pi Wu speaks of morning tea when encouraging bystanders to donate money to an old homeless lady. He says:<sup>165</sup>

You guys, when you have morning tea in the teahouse tomorrow,  
please order noodles instead of dessert, or a bowl of congee instead  
of sesame seed cakes. Give the money you have saved to this old  
lady.

Traditionally, steamed desserts and sliced bean-curd salads are offered for morning tea; tea food (*chashi* 茶食), namely various flavours of dim sum, are offered for late afternoon tea (*wancha* 晚茶). For example, in the narrative of Pi Wu recited by Yang, Pi Wu goes to a teahouse and says to himself, "Steamed rice cakes are sold here, and the morning tea. Excellent!"<sup>166</sup>

Yang Mingkun enjoyed morning tea with his old friends in the Pi Wu Story House before going up on stage. They sat at a round table, talking and laughing, and exchanging news. At around 7:55 AM, he took a cup of tea and went to the stage, adjusted his microphone and took off his glasses. Next, he started his story with his real experiences in Australia and Europe and subsequently introduced traditional Yangzhou culture when he inserted two episodes of Pi Wu. As usual, Yang was

---

<sup>165</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 347.

<sup>166</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 248.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

dressed in traditional clothes as for performance, sat behind the desk and performed his story vividly.

According to Yang, he rarely performs the complete repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* in the Pi Wu Story House. Only the episodes of Pi Wu that typically embody the Yangzhou local cultural are incorporated into his current repertoire and performed as part of his newly created narrative about the current happenings.<sup>167</sup> Thus, the audiences in Pi Wu Story House will get the opportunity to enjoy Yang's repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* in his newly created story. For example, he tells how an old woman has her congee when introducing Yangzhou traditional morning tea; he explains to his audience the skills of the massage master of a public bathhouse when interpreting Yangzhou traditional service in public bathhouses. He portrayed two figures in the story of *Rogue Pi Wu*, including Mama Zhang, and the master of a public bathhouse called "Baiyu Tang" or "White-Jade Hall." Below is the description of the massage service at the public bathhouse in Qing Yangzhou:<sup>168</sup>

The massage master pounds the back of the customer while counting the number of strikes. His massage skills are excellent. Why? Let us see how he massaged Pi Wu's back. He thumped his back in several styles. The first style is called "A crested myna takes a bath" (*bager'r xizao* 八哥儿洗澡), and then "A magpie stands on the branch of a plum tree" (*xique dengmei* 喜鹊登梅), then "A wild duck searches for food" (*yeya taoshi* 野鸭淘食) and "A hundred birds pay homage to the phoenix" (*bainiao chaofeng* 百鸟朝凤),

---

<sup>167</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>168</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 112.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

and the last is “The phoenix nods three times” (*fenghuang san diantou* 凤凰三点头).

The massage service provided at the Yangzhou public bath house features the traditional customs practised by Yangzhou locals. According to Yang, nearly all the audiences want to experience Yangzhou massage services after listening to the passage above in the Pi Wu Story House. Yang stated in the interview, “My repertoire is comical. People laugh all the time when listening to my story. Why do they come here to listen to my storytelling? They want to be happy. In my performance and recreation, the audience’s request is priority.”<sup>169</sup> During Yang’s sixty-minute performance, the audiences responded to him with delight and excitement.

It is noticeable that Yang always uses a folding fan and a talking stopper in the performance. The Pi Wu Story House and the performance stage inside are in traditional Chinese style; and the waiters in the story house are all dressed in Qing style. Most of the audience members are locals of Yangzhou.

### 3.2 The Tradition of Yangzhou Story House



Fig. 3.5 Han pottery figurine performing storytelling/singing. 31 December 2002. Wuhou Memorial Temple, Chengdu. Photo by Zhao Xiaohuan

Yangzhou story houses evolved from teahouses in Yangzhou in Qing times and have since served as commercial performance spaces for Yangzhou storytellers. Thus, it is not surprising that the waiters in the present-day Pi Wu Story House are all attired in a typical Qing style. Storytelling is a genre of Chinese

<sup>169</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 31 July 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*



Fig. 3.6 Han wood figurine playing storytelling/singing. 1 June 2019. The Han Dynasty Tomb Museum, Yangzhou.

oral performance art with its history datable to the Han dynasty (202-220).<sup>170</sup> Since the 1950s, Chinese archaeologists have discovered about 100 pieces of Han pottery figurines performing storytelling/singing, most of them excavated from burial sites in Sichuan 四川 as shown in Figure 3.5 with occasional finds from Han tombs in other parts of China such as the one from Huyang 胡杨 Han Tomb in Yangzhou (e.g. Figure 3.6). Generally referred to as “pottery figurines that beat drum while performing storytelling/singing” (*jigu shuochang yong* 擊鼓說唱俑) in Chinese archaeology, these figurines are material evidence for the prevalence of oral performance during the Han dynasty.

Where did storytellers perform when storytelling first emerged? How did story houses emerge and become a specific performance space for Yangzhou storytellers? How did Yangzhou storytellers charge the fee for their performances in the story house during the Qing dynasty?

The earliest recorded commercial theatre, where professional entertainers and performers including storytellers had their regular performances, emerged in the Song dynasty. The performance space was a designated area surrounded by handrails known as *bolan weixi* 搏欄為戲 was designated for oral and theatrical performance in the entertainment quarters.<sup>171</sup> Most such spaces were named either with the word “shed” (*peng* 棚), as in “musical shed” (*yuepeng* 樂棚), or with the word “rail” (*lan* 欄), as in

---

<sup>170</sup> Li Xuemei 李雪梅 et al. *Zhongguo guci wenxue fazhan shi* 中國鼓詞文學發展史 (*History of the Development of Chinese Drum-lyric Literature*), (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2012), 32-3.

<sup>171</sup> Chen Ruheng, *Songdai shuoshu shi* 宋代說書史 (*The History of the Storytelling of the Song Dynasty*), (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyu chubanshe, 1979), 20.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

“balustrade” (*goulan* 勾欄);<sup>172</sup> these entertainment quarters were scattered in the capital cities of Song dynasty such as Bianliang 汴梁 (modern Kaifeng), Lin’an 臨安 (modern Hangzhou) and Chengdu 成都 were called “tile” (*wa* 瓦 or *wazi* 瓦子).<sup>173</sup> Also known as tile-roofed market (*wasi* 瓦肆 or *washi* 瓦市), entertainment quarters varied in size and scope. Some quarters were so large that they contained more than ten balustrade theatres. One good example was the Beiwa 北瓦 Entertainment Quarters in Lin’an the capital of the Southern Song dynasty, which contained thirteen balustrade theatres, two of which were devoted to storytelling.<sup>174</sup>

During the Song dynasty, storytellers performed in the teahouse on a regularly basis. For example, Mother Wang’s Family Teahouse (*Wang mama jia chasi* 王媽媽家茶肆) in Lin’an was also known by its nickname as “The Tea Room with a Cave-load of Ghosts” (*Yiku gui chafang* 一窟鬼茶坊) as storytellers usually performed the famous story “A Cave-load of Ghosts” in it.<sup>175</sup> Similar examples are found in the famous Song literati jottings titled *Yijian zhi* 夷堅志 (*Records of Yijian*) by Hong Mai 洪邁 (1123-1202).<sup>176</sup>

In the Ming dynasty, folk arts performers including storytellers started to perform regularly in Buddhist temples and Daoist monasteries and in the open-air

---

<sup>172</sup> Meng Yuanlao 孟元老 (ca.960-ca.1127) *Dongjing meng hua lu* 東京夢華錄 (*Recording Dreams of the Prosperity in the Eastern Capital*), (Beijing: Zhongguo shangye chubanshe, 1982): 8. 53; 2.15.

<sup>173</sup> Nai Deweng 耐德翁 (fl.1125), *Ducheng jisheng* 都城紀勝 (*Recording the Splendours of the Capital*), (Beijing: Zhongguo shangye chubanshe, 1982), 8; Xihu Laoren 西湖老人 (ca.1127-ca.1279), *Xihu laoren fansheng lu* 西湖老人繁勝錄 (*Records of the Grandeur by An Old Man of the West Lake*), (Beijing: Zhongguo shangye chubanshe, 1982), 16.

<sup>174</sup> Xihu Laoren, *Xihu laoren fansheng lu*, 16.

<sup>175</sup> Wu Zimu 吳自牧 (ca.1127- ca.1207), *Meng liang lu* 夢梁錄 (*Records of a Pipe Dream*), (Shanghai: guji chubanshe, 1956): 16. 262.

<sup>176</sup> Hong Mai, *Yijian zhi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981): 4.3. 991.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

markets. During the reign of Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (r.1368-1398) and Zhu Di 朱棣 (r.1402-1424) in the early Ming dynasty, the imperial government implemented a series of economic, political, and cultural policies to strengthen its regime. Subsequently, various genres of folk arts including storytelling were forbidden. Later, in the mid-Ming period, an increasing number of markets appeared owing to eased policies so storytellers could continue to perform regularly in the entertainment quarters like their predecessors in the Song dynasty.<sup>177</sup> Buddhist and Daoist temples and monasteries became their regular performance spaces as well. Thus, storytelling performance also enjoyed popularity from the late Ming to the early Qing period. Storytelling became a predominant form of mass entertainment in the late Ming and early Qing dynasty, for which evidence abounds in literary works from this period.<sup>178</sup>

The Kangxi era (1662-1722) of the Qing dynasty witnessed the rise of two distinctive groups of storytelling, i.e., the Southern storytelling (*nanfang pinghua* 南方評話) and the Northern storytelling (*beifang pingshu* 北方評書). Yangzhou was the centre of the Southern group.<sup>179</sup> In southern China, storytellers performed outdoors only occasionally. In the market, under the shade of a big umbrella or a large piece of cloth, storytellers sat behind a desk and held a folding fan when performing.<sup>180</sup> However, in northern China, the storytellers usually performed outdoors. Until the late Qing period, it became more common to perform indoors. Influenced by the tradition

---

<sup>177</sup> Zhang Li 張利, “‘Shuihu’ pinghua (pingshu) yu shuohua chuanguong yanjiu” 《水滸》評話（評書）與說話傳統研究 (“Study on the *Pinghua/Pingshu* of *The Water Margin* and the Tradition of Storytelling”), (Ph.D. diss., Yangzhou University, 2012), 74.

<sup>178</sup> Zhang, “‘Shuihu’ pinghua (pingshu) yu shuohua chuanguong yanjiu”, 76-7.

<sup>179</sup> Hu, *Huaben xiaoshuo gailun*, 614.

<sup>180</sup> The tradition of outdoor storytelling is reflected in the following two paintings: Zhang Hong 張宏 (1577-1652), “Zaji youxi tu” 雜技遊戲圖 (“Picture of Acrobatics and Games”); “Shuo lutian shu” 說露天書 (“Performing Storytelling in the Open Air”), in the *Tuhua ribao* 圖畫日報 (*Pictures Daily*), (Shanghai Pictures Daily, 1909)

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

of performing indoors in the south, northern storytellers began to perform in teahouses and story houses.<sup>181</sup>

The tradition of Yangzhou teahouse dates back to the Tang dynasty. The rich and sophisticated tea culture in Yangzhou is also traceable to the Tang dynasty when Yangzhou was the transport junction connecting the north and south. Back then, Yangzhou was also the distribution centre for salt, tea and jewel merchants, and its water for tea, particularly the water at Yangzhou Da Ming 大明 Temple enjoyed the fame as “the fifth most flavourful of the Tang Dynasty.”<sup>182</sup> Subsequently, when fresh spring tea was available on the market, merchants, court officials and literati gathered together at Yangzhou to enjoy the tea brewed with fresh tea leaves and sweet-tasting water. Later, teahouses started to emerge in Tang Yangzhou as there was an increasing number of people who regularly went to Yangzhou to enjoy the tea.<sup>183</sup> The tea business in Yangzhou flourished most of the time from the Tang up to the Qing dynasty with a short period of recession during the Song dynasty.<sup>184</sup>

Historical records suggest that Yangzhou *pinghua* storytellers performed in the teahouse since the early Qing period. Storytellers performed in a teahouse or story house regularly in the south of China since the late Ming dynasty, particularly in present-day Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces. According to Guo Lin, “Storytellers played regularly in the teahouse. People needed to go there early before the

---

<sup>181</sup> Zhang, “‘Shuihu’ pinghua (pingshu) yu shuohua chuangtong yanjiu”, 77.

<sup>182</sup> Zhang Youxin 張又新 (fl. 813), Xu Xianzhong 徐獻忠 (1469-1545), Zhou Lujing 周履靖 (1549-1640), Tian Yiheng, *Jian chashui ji* 煎茶水記 (*Memory on Brewing Tea*), (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), 5.

<sup>183</sup> Huang Jilin, “Cong ‘pi bao shui’ shuoqi—Yangzhou de cha wenhua ji qita” 從“皮包水”說起—揚州的茶文化及其他 (“Starting from ‘Skin Moves around Water’ to Talk about the Tea Culture and Other Issues”), *Dang’an yu jianshe*, 12 (1999):51.

<sup>184</sup> Ju Min 居敏, “Yangzhou gudai chaguan yu xiandai chaguan zhi bijiao” 揚州古代茶館與現代茶館之比較 (“The Comparison on the Yangzhou Teahouse in the Past and Present”), (MA thesis, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, 2011): 14-5.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

performance. Otherwise, there would be no room for them to even stand and watch the performance.”<sup>185</sup> Liu Jingting, one of the pioneers of Yangzhou *pinghua*, used to perform *pinghua* in the Yangzhou Hongqiao 虹橋 teahouse around the early Qing period. Liu is quoted by Li Dou in the *Yangzhou huafang lu* as saying:<sup>186</sup>

“I used to tell the story of the Southern Ning (Ning Nan 甯南) with Liu Jingting in Hongqiao Teahouse. We hit the desk to create the rhythm for performance.” Thus, storytelling performance is called “tea desk” (*chazhuozi* 茶桌子).

In Chinese, the terms *chaguan* 茶館, *chashe* 茶社, *chashe* 茶舍, *chalou* 茶樓, and *chafang* 茶坊 all refer to “teahouse.” However, most Qing Yangzhou teahouses had the word “yuan” 園 (garden) in their names as they were usually built within a garden.<sup>187</sup> For example, Li Dou listed some of the teahouses in Qing Yangzhou in his *Yangzhou huafang lu*, such as Yechun Yuan Garden 冶春園, Fengle Yuan Garden 豐樂園, Xiao Fanghu 小方壺 or “Little Square Pot.”<sup>188</sup> Teahouses in *Rogue Pi Wu* also had beautiful names, such as Fusheng Yuan Garden 複盛園 and Guangsheng Luxurious House 廣盛居.<sup>189</sup>

---

<sup>185</sup> Guo, “Chuyuan xiaoxia lu,” vol. 1179: 1. 650.

<sup>186</sup> For an account concerning Liu Jingting, please see Børdahl, *Lifestyle and Entertainment in Yangzhou*, 179. Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 262.

<sup>187</sup> Ke Ling, “Su wenxue de diyu gexing yu dushi xiaofei qingjie—Qingdai Yangzhou de gean guanzhao” 俗文學的地域個性與都市消費情結—清代揚州的個案關照 (“The Regional Characteristics of Popular Literature & Urban Consumption—The Case Study of Yangzhou in Qing Dynasty”), (Ph.D. diss., East China Normal University, 2005), 132.

<sup>188</sup> Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 23; 26-7.

<sup>189</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 123; 225.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

In the Qing dynasty, Yangzhou story houses emerged to cater to the needs of the audiences in the teahouses, acting as a performance space specifically for Yangzhou storytellers.<sup>190</sup> There appeared to be three types of teahouses in Yangzhou during the late Ming era: the pure teahouse (*qing chasi* 清茶肆), where only tea was served, the meat-dish teahouse (*hun chasi* 葷茶肆), where tea and dishes were served and the story teahouse (*shu chasi* 書茶肆), the last of which directly derived from the pure teahouse.<sup>191</sup> In the *shu chasi*, customers enjoyed tea in the morning and Yangzhou *pinghua* and ballad singing (*tanci* 彈詞) in the afternoon. The *shu chasi* owner invited storytellers to perform regularly in his teahouse, and he charged the audience a fee for the tea and performance. On the occasion when there was no performance, *shu chasi* acted as *qing chasi* serving tea. In this case, regular customers were not happy as they were addicted to storytelling performances and had to enjoy every day. Later, to satisfy their needs, the owner promised to provide a storytelling performance in the *shu chasi* throughout the year. The storytellers successfully attracted a big audience to the *shu chasi*, which later developed into *shuchang* or story house, a place used for storytelling performances in the Qing dynasty.<sup>192</sup> According to Li Dou, “A significant number of story houses were located in each and every street and lane in Yangzhou.”<sup>193</sup>

The increasing number of story houses was closely related to the popularity of the Yangzhou storytelling industry in the Qing era. At the beginning of the Qianlong era, a poem in the *Yangzhou zhuzhi ci* 揚州竹枝詞 (*Yangzhou Bamboo-branch Songs*)

---

<sup>190</sup> Ke, “Su wenxue de diyu gexing yu dushi xiaofei qingjie”, 133.

<sup>191</sup> Cao Yongseng 曹永森, *Yangzhou fengsu* 揚州風俗 (*Yangzhou Traditional Customs*), (Jiangsu: Suzhou daxue chubanshe, 2001), 22.

<sup>192</sup> Ke, “Su wenxue de diyu gexing yu dushi xiaofei qingjie”, 132-3; *Minsu shiye zhong de Qingdai Yangzhou su wenxue*, 205.

<sup>193</sup> Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 207.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

by Dong Weiye 董偉業 (fl.1740) described the success of Yangzhou *pinghua* of the time: “*Pinghua* storytellers and *tanci* players performed *Stories of Sui-Tang Heroes* whenever they go; The good and brave men and heroes came from a different part of the country. They performed in the Zhuge Garden and Shuili Lane; And the Maitreya-Temple Lane turns into a cockpit.”<sup>194</sup> The last two lines named the landmark buildings in Qing Yangzhou that were all located around Dongguan Street. They are *Zhugue* 諸葛 Garden, *Shulidao* 疏理道 Lane, *Maitreya* 彌陀 Temple, and *Douji chang* 鬥雞場 or “Cockpit.” Although Dongguan Street was short and narrow, there were four story houses illustrating its popularity among the locals.

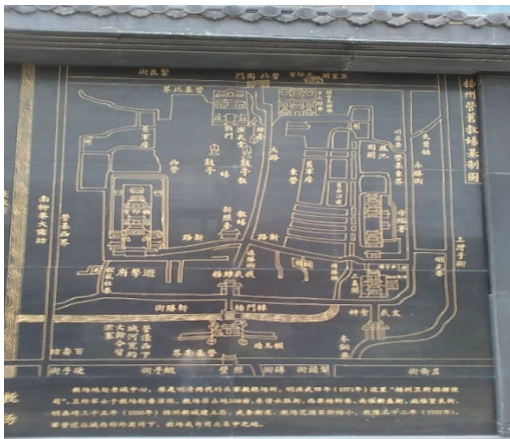


Fig. 3.7 Map of Jiaochang. 01 August 2017. Guoqing Street, Yangzhou.

In the late Qing era, there were sixteen story houses in Yangzhou, six of which were located near the military drill ground called “*jiaochang*” 教場 (Figure 3.7).<sup>195</sup> *Jiaochang* was the entertainment centre of Yangzhou city, filled with clusters of story houses, tea houses, wine shops, fortune tellers and folk arts performers. The

daily scenes of *Jiaochang* in late Qing were recorded in the story of *Pi Wu* narrated by Yang Mingkun:<sup>196</sup>

*Jiaochang* was initially built to train the army. Indeed, military instructors rarely went to *Jiaochang*. In the beginning, only fortune

<sup>194</sup> Lei, *Zhonghua zhuzhi ci*, 1311.

<sup>195</sup> Ke, *Minsu shiye zhong de Qingdai Yangzhou su wenxue*, 206.

<sup>196</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 2.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

tellers came here to set up stalls. Later, martial art performers, folk song singers, and jugglers also came here to set up stalls.

As there are many folk arts performers here, people are attracted to come here to watch their performances. People who want to buy or sell something, or who are carrying a load or pushing a cart, or the peddlers selling buckets or vegetables flock here. In the afternoon, peddlers are busy cooking wontons, rice dumplings, sesame seed cakes, and congee. A great variety of food is found here. The rich come here and say, “There are lots of people here every day. The square is an awesome place for my business.” Tea houses and wine shops are built in sequence at Jiaochang. As a result, Jiaochang becomes a busy area. During festivals, it gets even more crowded here.

In 1767 or the thirty-second year of the Qianlong era, Jiaochang was still used as a base for army training. It was not until the late Qing era that Jiaochang became a commercial and entertainment centre of Yangzhou. The account presented above is absent from Pu Lin’s repertoire as Jiaochang was an army training centre in his time. It was added by subsequent generations of storytellers of the Pu School.

Since the early Qing period, Yangzhou storytellers performed not only in teahouses and story houses but also on pleasure boats and in private houses—a popular form of performance known as *tanghai shuchang* 堂會書場. There were many pleasure boats used for storytelling on the Baozhang 保障 River of Yangzhou, where performers sang, recited, or played musical instruments, as vividly described by Li Dou in his *Yangzhou huafang lu*:<sup>197</sup>

---

<sup>197</sup> Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 253.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

The boat where performers staged their show was ahead of the boat that accommodated the audiences. The former floated upstream but the latter went down stream. Thus, the audiences could visibly enjoy the performance very well. Pure singing sounded the best among the performance, and in the second place were singing or telling accompanied by multi-repetition wind and percussion ensemble, such as gongs and drums, a form of local comedy sketch—literally “hitting on horseback” (*ma shang zhuang* 馬上撞), folk singing, a genre of local opera prevalent in Jiangnan (*tanhuang* 灘簧), comic dialogue, storytelling and the like.

In the *Qing baileichao* 清稗類鈔 (*Classified Collection of Qing Dynasty Anecdotal Accounts*), Xu Ke 徐珂 (1869-1928) described two Yangzhou storytellers performing in a private mansion, “There were many storytellers in Yangzhou. For example, a blind woman and an old man, with a lute in five *chi* 尺<sup>198</sup> high, went to the residences of wealthy families to perform.”<sup>199</sup>

From the above descriptions, we know that Chinese storytellers were beginning to have their own performance space during the Song dynasty. Since the early Qing era when Yangzhou *pinghua* emerged as a genre of vernacular performing arts, Yangzhou *pinghua* storytellers already had the tradition of performing in the teahouses.

Compared with the Pi Wu Story House, the Yangzhou storyteller’s performance space and stage were simpler in the Qing dynasty. Lin Sumen 林蘇門 (ca.1748-1809) offered a description of the stage of the time in *Hanjiang sanbai yin* 邗江三百吟 (*Three Hundred Songs on the Han River*), “In a rented house, storytellers are invited to perform. The storyteller performs by sitting on a chair on stage. The

---

<sup>198</sup> *Chi*, a unit of length (approximately one third of a metre).

<sup>199</sup> Xu Ke, *Qing baileichao* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), 4953.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

stage looks like a small square desk.”<sup>200</sup> The performance stage for storytellers in Qing Yangzhou was very simple and small. The stage in Hangzhou was no better. In the *Hangsu yifeng* 杭俗遺風 (*Surviving Customs of Hangzhou*) by Fan Zushu 范祖述 (ca.1840-ca.1912), there is an account of the performance stage in Hangzhou, “Put a piece of a broad plank on two long benches to build a high stage (*gaotai* 高臺), and then put a small desk and a chair on it.”<sup>201</sup> The so-called high stage built with benches and a plank was a common performance stage for storytellers in Hangzhou.

In the early years of People’s Republic of China, the layout of Yangzhou story



Fig. 3.8 Jie Nan Story House. 02 August 2017.  
Dongguan Street, Yangzhou.

houses was simple, which remained so until the 1990s. In a hall without decoration, a large stage faced the only entrance and long benches were set between the stage and the entrance. During the performance, only water was served.<sup>202</sup> In contrast

to the simple style, present-day story houses are much more attractive, as exemplified by Jienan 街南 Story House (Figure 3.8) and Pi Wu Story House.

The talking stopper and the folding fan are the two essential props for Yangzhou *pinghua* performance. The earliest known mention of talking-stoppers appears in a Ming vernacular novel titled *Pingyao zhuan* 平妖傳 (*Quelling the Demons’ Revolt*), where a blind storyteller Qu 瞿 is described as beating his air bat (*qipai* 氣拍) when performing *pinghua*. The lines from the novel are as follows:<sup>203</sup>

---

<sup>200</sup> Lin Sumen, *Hanjiang sanbai yin* (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe 2005):8. 109-10.

<sup>201</sup> Fan Zushu, *Hangsu yifeng* (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1989), 50.

<sup>202</sup> Fei, “The Traditional Style of Storyhouses in Yangzhou”, 271-85, at 274-75; 280.

<sup>203</sup> Luo Guanzhong 羅貫中 (1330-1400) and Feng Menglong 馮夢龍 (1574-1646), *Pingyao zhuan* 平妖傳 (*Taming Devils*), (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981), 101.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

He [Qu] was asked to sit outside doors behind a small desk, on which there was a small air bat (*qipai*). Behind the curtain, Mei Er sat in the centre of the house. [...] Qu cleared his throat immediately, beat his air bat on the desk and narrated a four-line verse.

Thus, we know that the “air bat” in the passage above should be what has come to be known as “talking-stopper,” which is also called dividing ruler (*jiechi* 界尺) as mentioned by Zhang Dai 張岱 (1597-1685) in his *Tao'an meng yi* 陶庵夢憶 (*Recollection of Tao'an's Past Dreams*):<sup>204</sup>

Yang Yumin played a three-stringed plucked instrument, Luo San sang songs, and Lu Jiu played a vertical bamboo flute. Yumin took out a small dividing ruler (*jiechi*) and sang the story of *Plum in the Golden Vase* to the Northern tune.

The talking-stopper became a distinctive feature of storytelling performance in the late Ming, although it had not had a specific name back then, as noted in “Kouzhhan zeng Liu Jingting ershou” 口占贈柳敬亭二首 (“Two Orally Composed Poems Given to Liu Jingting”) by Li Liangnian 李良年 (1653-1694): “Happenings from the Kaiyuan era appear one after another before the lamplight/they are all submerged in the shadow of light and the noise of playing chess.” His explanatory note to this line reads, “The elderly man applied mouth acrobatics on beat, with a piece of chess and a fan.”<sup>205</sup> In the note, “chess” and “fan” appeared in the storytelling performance by “the elderly

---

<sup>204</sup> Zhang Dai, *Tao'an meng yi*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji chubanshe, 1982): 4. 30.

<sup>205</sup> Li Liangnian, *Qiu Jing shanfang ji* 秋錦山房集 (*Collected Works of Qiu Jin from His Mountain Studio*), in *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* 四庫全書存目叢書 (*The Selected Collection of the Complete Library in the Four Branches of Literature*), vol. 251 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2011): 3.51.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

man.” The word *qi* or “chess” here most probably refers to the talking-stopper used by Liu Jingting, who is referred to as “the elderly man” in the poem.

The wooden plaque hung above the gate of Pi Wu Story House was inscribed with the title of the story house—“Pi Wu shuchang.” A wooden plaque inscribed with the four Chinese characters *xingshi liangyan* 醒世良言, meaning “good words to awaken the world,” was hung above the gate of the story house in Qing times, as storytellers usually made comments on contemporary and historical figures and events including moral lessons in their narratives.<sup>206</sup> Among the audiences in the story house of the Qing times were illiterate peddlers and caterers and rogues. In the eyes of these people, storytellers were teachers from whom they learnt knowledge and culture, so they called storytellers respectfully as *xiansheng* 先生 or “teacher” rather than *xizi* 戲子, a word with derogatory sense that was frequently applied to players and performers of other folk arts in traditional China.

In the Pi Wu Story House, audiences enjoy Yang Mingkun’s performance for free as they have been charged a fee for morning tea and steamed desserts. During the Qing dynasty, audiences in the story house would be charged fees for both the storytelling performance and services. The storyteller and the owner of the story house collaborated to make money. For example, there would be two big bowls placed on the storytelling stage, one for collecting the fee for extra performance (*xiaozhuan qian* 小轉錢) and the other for collecting admission charges for a regular performance. Typically, the waiter would come out to serve the customer a cup of tea as soon as he sat down in the story house. After a while, candies and snacks were served on the table for the customer. The customer could choose to pay immediately or three times a year.

---

<sup>206</sup> Ke, *Minsu shiye zhong de Qingdai Yangzhou su wenxue*, 273.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

At the time when the storyteller tapped the talking stopper on the desk, the waiter would shout “opening mouth” (*kaihou* 開口) to remind the audience to pay attention to the storytelling. After the storyteller recited the beginning of the story, a waiter would carry a big bowl to collect the performance fees from the customers. At the same time, other waiters served customers towels for cleaning their faces and tips were collected. After collecting the fees, the waiter returned the big bowl to the stage. The storyteller continued to recite his story. The whole performance was divided into four or six parts, which would determine the number of times fees would be charged. Occasionally, if the customers were fascinated by the story and wanted to listen to another round of performance, they would shout “turning over” (*dazhuan* 打轉). At this time, a waiter charged the *xiaozhuan qian* by holding to another big bowl. When the waiter shouted, “please come here early tomorrow” (*mingri qingzao* 明日請早), it was an indication that the performance had ended. After all the customers had left, the storyteller would gather all the *xiaozhuan qian* in one big bowl. The owner would come out and pour out all the money into another big bowl on the desk. The storyteller and the owner would then divide their earnings equally.<sup>207</sup>

From time to time, the tradition of fee-charging in the story house, as well as the rule of profit-sharing between the storyteller and the owner would change. *Yangzhou huafang lu* offered, an account of the type of fee-charging and profits-sharing rule:<sup>208</sup>

Dadongmen 大東門 story house was next to the toilet of the Shrine to Master Dong [Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (170-104 BC)]. The performance

---

<sup>207</sup> Ke, *Minsu shiye zhong de Qingdai Yangzhou su wenxue*, 273-4.

<sup>208</sup> Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 207.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

stage was at the centre of the story house, surrounded by seats. An advertisement was hung above the gate of the story house on which the storyteller's name was written horizontally and vertically were four characters *kaijiang shuci* 開講書詞 (open for storytelling). The landlord and the storyteller took turns to collect fees on odd days and the even days. This type of story house was found in every street in Yangzhou.

In his *Hanjiang sanbai yin*, Lin recorded a fee-charging mode in a Qing story house:<sup>209</sup>

After performing three or four sessions, the audience was charged a fee of around ten *wen* during the break. The money collected in the story house would be distributed according to the commercial rule specifically applied in the evening performance.

It is clear from the above account that story houses in Qing Yangzhou became a popular commercial performance space for storytellers, where storytelling was the only entertainment for customers. Story houses built their business chain: they provided advertisements for storytellers and established a principle of sharing benefits between the story house owner and storyteller.

Based on the discussion above, I discovered that entertainers and performers already had regular performing spaces as early as the Song dynasty. In the Qing dynasty, the increasing requisition demand by customers in tea houses to enjoy Yangzhou *pinghua* performance and the development of the tradition of fee-charging for *pinghua* performance stimulated the emergence of the story house—a regular commercial performance space for Yangzhou storytellers. From the mid-Ming era onwards, the use of the folding fan and the talking stopper became more common in

---

<sup>209</sup> Lin, *Hanjiang sanbai yin*, 109.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

storytelling performances. In the early Qing period, the two props already appeared in the storytelling performance by Liu Jingting—the forefather of Yangzhou *pinghua*.

### 3.3 The Development of Audience in Yangzhou Storytelling

For more than three centuries, Yangzhou storytelling had been performed since the late Ming and early Qing times. The masterly repertoire of Pi Wu, initially created around the Qinglong era in the Qing dynasty, has been performed by nine generations storytellers of the Pu School. Thus, it can be said that the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* of the Pu School had witnessed the development of Yangzhou storytelling and its supporting audience from the Qianlong era onwards.

The audience of Yangzhou storytelling changed according to the social change in China.<sup>210</sup> In the Pi Wu Story House, most of the audiences are the locals of Yangzhou. In the Qing dynasty, however, Yangzhou storytelling performance was not only enjoyed by the people of Yangzhou but also by those who came from neighbouring provinces and cities. The members of the Yangzhou storytelling audience ranged from court officials, merchants, literati to the illiterate such as rogues, peddlers in the periods of Kangxi 康熙 (r.1661-1722), Yongzheng 雍正 (r.1722-1735), and Qianlong. With its salt monopoly and hydraulic management, Qing Yangzhou enjoyed great cultural and economic prosperity from 1660 to 1799. This was also the time when the ten master Yangzhou storytelling repertoires listed by Li Dou emerged. One of them was Pu Lin's *Pure-Wind Dyke*. In China, oral performing arts were not

---

<sup>210</sup> Sun Longfu 孫龍父, “Yangzhou pinghua de lishi fazhan” 揚州評話的歷史發展 (“Historical Development of the Yangzhou Storytelling”), in Song et al (eds.) *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 317-42.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

only meant for the people who could not read.<sup>211</sup> Prosperous Yangzhou attracted people from near and afar. Merchants, literati, artisans, sailors, retired court officials, and peddlers came to live in Yangzhou. Apart from the new residents, high-level court officials, rogues, Buddhist monks, and Daoist priests passing by Yangzhou were also attracted to Yangzhou for a long sojourn. They formed a special audience group.

During the prosperity period of Yangzhou in Qing dynasty, the development of Yangzhou storytelling was largely due to the support of wealthy residents from Yangzhou. By supporting local folk arts activities, some wealthy residents wanted to show off their wealth or to highlight their exalted social status. Li Dou outlined the daily life of the rich as follows: “The affluent of Yangzhou loved to sleep in the daytime. They slept from morning to evening and had fun from day to day.”<sup>212</sup> It is possible for the wealthy to enjoy the performing arts every day.

The word *xiao jinguo 'r* 銷金鍋兒 refers to a luxurious place first appeared in the *Wulin jiushi* 武林舊事 (*Past Events in Hangzhou*) by Zhou Mi 周密 (1232-1298), in which it was used to refer to the West Lake in Southern Song Lin'an.<sup>213</sup> Later, Wang Hang 汪沆 (fl.1736) used it in his poem to refer to *The Thin West Lake* (*Shou xihu* 瘦西湖) in mid-Qing Yangzhou.<sup>214</sup> According to Li Dou, a wealthy merchant bought pieces of gold foil made from ten thousand taels of gold, and then went to the top-level of the tower located in the Jinshan 金山 mountain. He tossed the gold foil according the direction of the wind, hoping to spend ten thousand taels of gold in one toss.<sup>215</sup>

---

<sup>211</sup> Børdahl, “A Case Study of the Yangzhou Pinghua Tradition”, 7-32, at 9.

<sup>212</sup> Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 252.

<sup>213</sup> Zhou Mi, *Wulin jiushi*, (Beijing: Zhongguo shangye chubanshe, 1982): 3. 43.

<sup>214</sup> Ke, *Minsu shiye zhong de Qingdai Yangzhou su wenxue*, 284.

<sup>215</sup> Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 150.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Also, it was common practice among the wealthy people to invite famous storytellers to perform on ceremonial occasions at their residences. Usually, they paid the performers a high price. Li Dou recorded the performance by a famous artist on a private pleasure boat, “After performing one session on a boat, the artist was given one thousand taels of gold or silver.”<sup>216</sup>

Besides highlighting their exalted social status, there was also political motivation in spending money on the performers by the wealthy salt merchants in Yangzhou. In the eighteenth century, “the salt merchants who played a crucial role in the economic development of Yangzhou, were enthusiastic patrons of the arts.”<sup>217</sup> While Yangzhou salt merchants were extremely wealthy, they were actually put at the service of the Emperor. They could not participate in the political life of the imperial court as the royal aristocrats did. They did not have enough political power to ensure a better life for themselves in the future. Thus, these salt merchants resorted to strengthen their relationship with the Emperor and court officials by organising parties at luxurious gardens and entertaining them with meals, music and theatrical performances, and other forms of folk arts. Well-known storytellers were often invited to perform for the royal and noble at the parties.

The ordinary people, including the poor and rogues, also contributed to the development of Yangzhou storytelling. The activity of enjoying folk arts performance at a private house or story house initially created by the wealthy prevailed amongst the Yangzhou people. Ordinary families invited storytellers to perform at ceremonies held in the private houses while the poor usually patronized a story house to enjoy a round

---

<sup>216</sup> Li, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, 275.

<sup>217</sup> Colin Mackerras, “Yangzhou Local Theatre in the Second Half of the Qing”, in Lucie Olivová and Vibeke Børdahl (eds.), *Lifestyle and Entertainment in Yangzhou* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2009), 212.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

of storytelling. In the preface of “Shuchang si shou” 書場四首 (“Four Poems on the Story House”) in *Hanjiang sanbai yin*, Lin Sumen offered a description of storytelling performance at a private residence in Qing Yangzhou:<sup>218</sup>

Traditionally, when having festivities and offering banquets, both the wealthy and ordinary families would hire famous storytellers or ballad singers to perform at their residences for on whole day. Performers would receive three to five coin up to one to two taels of silver at most.

The rogues were also attracted to Yangzhou storytelling. According to Lin Sumen, half the audience members in the story house were the poor and rogues. Lin recorded this phenomenon in the *Hanjiang sanbai yin* as follows:<sup>219</sup>

Rent a vacant room and hire two or three workers. Put a desk in the room as a stage. Performers can sing or talk on stage. More than half of the audiences are the poor and rogues, they sit on long benches around the stage and listen to the performer attentively.

In the late Qing era, wealthy Yangzhou salt merchants disappeared fast from the Yangzhou story houses due to their loss of monopolies in selling and purchasing salt across the empire at high profitable prices. Ordinary people of the Lixiahe area and southern Jiangsu played an increasingly important role in the development of Yangzhou storytelling. The famous storyteller Gong Wuting of the Pu School, Deng Guangdou and Li Guohui 李国辉 (fl.1850) were among the most influential storytellers of Yangzhou storytelling of the time. In the late Qing period, many

---

<sup>218</sup> Lin, *Hanjiang sanbai yin*, 109.

<sup>219</sup> Lin, *Hanjiang sanbai yin*, 109.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

storytellers left Yangzhou for nearby cities to make a living. Owing to the reformation of the salt management system implemented by the imperial court, the replacement of sea transportation by inland waterways, and the chaos and destruction caused by the Heavenly Kingdom Rebellion, Yangzhou lost its economic status it had enjoyed for centuries since the Tang dynasty. As a result, the wealthy merchants moved to the Lixiahe area along with their fortunes. Folk arts, including various genres of oral performing arts, were significantly affected. Owing to its simple performance requirements, Yangzhou storytelling had a better fate compared to the other genres.<sup>220</sup> A small desk, a talking-stopper, and a folding fan were adequate for a storyteller to perform. Besides, the storyteller did not charge the audiences heavily. Thus, ordinary people could afford to enjoy storytelling as their daily entertainment. At this time, the audience members of Yangzhou storytelling increasingly comprised residents living in Yangzhou and the Lixiahe area, including those from Yangzhou, Yanfu 鹽阜, Taizhou, and Dongtai 東台. As the audience increased, so did the storytellers. In the Xianfeng era, the number of Yangzhou storytellers reached more than 300. In the Tongzhi and Guangxu eras, Yangzhou storytelling performance also enjoyed popularity in Zhenjiang, Nanjing, Shanghai, and north-eastern Anhui.<sup>221</sup>

After the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911, the financial centre of China moved to the Jiangnan area south of the Yangtze River. As a result, most of the Yangzhou storytelling performers migrated to Shanghai and Nanjing to seek a better life. In 1933, master storyteller Wang Shaotang made his first performance in Shanghai, which

---

<sup>220</sup> Ke, *Minsu shiye zhong de Qingdai Yangzhou su wenxue*, 320; Sun Fulong 孫龍父, “Yangzhou pinghua de lishi” 揚州評話的歷史 (“The History of Yangzhou Pinghua”), in Song et al. (eds.) *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 331-32.

<sup>221</sup> Ke, *Minsu shiye zhong de Qingdai Yangzhou su wenxue*, 320.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

earned him a high reputation in Yangzhou storytelling.<sup>222</sup> Contemporary famous storytellers include the Pu School storyteller Yu Shaochun, Wang Yutang 王玉堂 (fl.1911), Kang Guohua 康國華 (1853-1916), and Dai Shanzhang 戴善章 (1880-1938). In the Republican era (1912-1949), the audience of the Yangzhou storytelling mainly consisted of people from Yangzhou, Shanghai and residents from southern Jiangsu, including those from Zhenjiang and Nanjing. As Zhenjiang and Yangzhou face each other across the Yangtze River, they share a common culture and customs. Moreover, Yangzhou dialect and Zhenjiang dialect share many phonetic similarities. During the Republican era, Zhenjiang was designated as the capital city of Jiangsu province. In this circumstance, Yangzhou storytelling performers preferred to perform in Zhenjiang. During this period, there were thirty-eight Yangzhou storytelling story houses at Zhenjiang.<sup>223</sup> In 1938, the Japanese army occupied Yangzhou city. During the anti-Japanese war, there were only about forty storytellers in Yangzhou.<sup>224</sup>

Yangzhou storytelling continued to be performed in the People's Republic of China (1949-). Two members of the Pu School Yu Youchun and Yang Mingkun, Wang Litang 王麗堂 (1940-), Li Xintang, and Hui Zhaolong 惠兆龍 (ca.1941-2011) were leading performers of Yangzhou storytelling. Since 1949, the majority of the audience of Yangzhou storytelling were Yangzhou locals. The new regime significantly contributed to the recovery of the Yangzhou storytelling industry. For example, in 1960, Yangzhou Oral Performing Art Company recruited a group of young

---

<sup>222</sup> Jia Zhenjin 賈振金, "Bamai Yangzhou pinghua shengtai jianshe" 把脈揚州文化生態建設 ("Feel the Pulse of the Ecological Construction of the Yangzhou *Pinghua*"), in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 135.

<sup>223</sup> Jia, "Bamai Yangzhou Pinghua shengtai jianshe", in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 135.

<sup>224</sup> Jia, "Bamai Yangzhou Pinghua shengtai jianshe", in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 136.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

storytellers and several story houses were set up in Yangzhou city. Before 1966, twenty-seven Yangzhou storytelling repertoires were transcribed into text.

As Yang Mingkun observes, Yangzhou storytelling is faced with the crisis of a disappearing audience.<sup>225</sup> The current audience members are ageing rapidly and the younger generation is not too interested in Yangzhou storytelling. However, the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* performed by Yang Mingkun is a notable exception. Currently, there are no more than twenty professional Yangzhou storytelling performers and only fifteen story houses in Yangzhou, most of their performances are free of charge. According to a 2015 survey conducted by a group of students from Yangzhou University, the average age of the audience of Yangzhou storytelling is fifty-five.<sup>226</sup> My fieldwork on Yangzhou storytelling further substantiated this point: most of the audience members are in their sixties, seated with their grandchildren and nearly all of them are local inhabitants.

Based on the exploration above, I found that during the prosperous period in Qing Yangzhou, the wealthy played an important role in stimulating the development of Yangzhou storytelling among the diverse audience of Yangzhou storytelling. Most of the time, they wanted to show off their wealth and strengthen their relationship with court officials by organising performance parties and inviting well-known performers who were paid at a high price. In the nineteenth century when Yangzhou no longer enjoyed its “Golden Age,” ordinary residents in Yangzhou and neighbouring cities comprised the majority of the audience members of Yangzhou storytelling. The wealthy played a diminishing role compared to the Qing dynasty. With the support of

---

<sup>225</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>226</sup> Ji, “shijian yishu shengming”, in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 14; Jia, “Bamai Yangzhou Pinghua shengtai jianshe”, in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 138.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

ordinary people, Yangzhou storytelling continued to be performed into the twenty-first century. From 1949 onwards, the majority of the audience of Yangzhou storytelling were locals.

### 3.4 Conclusion

The performance space and props used by Yang Mingkun effectively contribute to the traditional register. The setting of Yang's performance at Pi Wu Story House was set up based on the development of Yangzhou story house, the performance space designated for storytellers in the past and the change of audience during the development of Yangzhou storytelling. The Pi Wu Story House, the performance space of Yang Mingkun is decorated in a traditional Chinese style and the waiters are also dressed in a Qing style so as to reflect the history of Yangzhou story house that has become the regular commercial space specifically catered for Yangzhou storytellers since the early Qing dynasty. However, the composition of the audience and tradition of fee-charging for performance and the service served in the Pi Wu Story House differ from that of the story houses in the Qing era. Most of Yang's audiences in the Pi Wu Story House are the locals of Yangzhou, as the residents living in Yangzhou has formed the bulk of the audience of Yangzhou *pinghua* performance since 1949. By contrast, the economic status of Yangzhou during the mid-Qing dynasty attracted a diverse audience to Yangzhou storytelling.

## FOUR

### Narrative Features in Yang Mingkun's Performance

“I want to deliver a more comical story of Pi Wu to my audiences. Why does the audience want to listen to my story? They just want to be happy as they knew that the story of Pi Wu is funny through the earlier performance. Pi Wu is a rogue but a man of good nature in my story.”<sup>227</sup> This was the remark by Yang Mingkun when asked about his performance. In this chapter, I will examine whether he has achieved his narrative goals in unfolding the story and explore the degree of freedom or restriction in transmitting the inherited story of Pi Wu.

The three transcribed versions of the performance-style texts from the repertoires of Pu Lin, Yu Youchun and Yang Mingkun vary in length but share a common storyline that revolves around the central character Pi Wu. Yang knows that most of his audience members are interested in the funny episodes of Pi Wu and sees the need for new explanations of past incidents and new comments on the events in the story. Thus, he is recreating the story. In this chapter, I will compare the continuity of the tradition between the three versions and explore the newly created narrative by Yang. I will also investigate why the modern audience effectively accepts the traditional story of *Rogue Pi Wu*. Firstly, I will explore the main plot shared by the three versions; I will then conduct a comparative literary analysis of the narrative emphasis of the three storytellers. Secondly, I will examine how Yang develops his version of the story by extending Pu's and Yu's narratives. By carrying out a comparative analysis of the narrative content of the three texts, I will highlight the

---

<sup>227</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

three main ways in which Yang extends the inherited story. Next, I will examine the characteristics of Pi Wu as presented in Yang's version of the story, aiming to explore why the contemporary audience effectively accepts the characterisation of Pi Wu and the story. Finally, I will explain why Yang narrates the story of Pi Wu in a comical way without changing the main plot in Pu Lin's version.

### 4.1 Preservation

*Rogue Pi Wu* was first created and performed in Yangzhou *pinghua* by Pu Lin in the Qing era. It has been performed over the past three centuries. However, as mentioned in Chapter 1, only three transcribed versions of the story have survived: the Huaxuanzhai edition of *Pure-Wind Dyke* transcribed from Pu Lin's repertoire, which was reprinted in 1996; *Rogue Pi Wu* from Yu Youchun's repertoire, published in 1985; and *Rogue Pi Wu* from Yang Mingkun's repertoire, published in 2015. The last two versions are derived from the first and much longer than the original.

I will compare the length of the three texts in terms of the number of characters and *hui* 回 (round) or narrative units (Table 4.1).

	Pu's <i>Pure-Wind Dyke</i> , 1996	Yu's <i>Rogue Pi Wu</i> , 1985	Yang's <i>Rogue Pi Wu</i> , 2015
Characters	187,000	379,800	1,200,000
Units	32	42	100

Table 4.1 Lengths of the three versions of the texts

As seen in the table above, the three texts show considerable differences in length in terms of the number of characters and narrative units. Yang and his master Yu might have extended and enriched the original story created by Pu. The length distinction between the three versions might be a result of publishing decisions. Due to developed publishing techniques, Yang Mingkun's repertoire has been textualized in the

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yangzhou storytelling register, employing newly coined characters and the characters borrowed from Standard Chinese (see Chapter 6.1). As Bender discussed in his work, “If all of the repetitions, asides, anecdotes, songs, and elaborations on the plot in the long-story form were included, the length of the written texts would expand tremendously.”<sup>228</sup> The truth of the text transferred from Yang’s repertoire is much longer than the other two versions. However, Pu’s and Yu’s repertoire might have been changed in many ways by editors in the textualization process due to contemporary publishing techniques (see Chapter 6.1). Thus, Pu’s and Yu’s repertoire might have been as long as or longer than Yang’s but later shortened for the convenience of publishing.

Yang Mingkun mentioned the term “the story road” (*shu lu zi* 书路子), which was used among the Yangzhou storytellers and Suzhou storytellers to refer to the storyline of a repertoire. When storytellers choose a story to be unfolded in performance, they can enhance their performance experience by highlighting the imagery and extending the narrative on the story. However, they cannot stray too far away from the tradition. This is the restriction of the storyteller in transmitting the inherited repertoire.<sup>229</sup> What is the main story plot of the Pu School?

Regarding the main plot of the story, there is a clear line of succession between the stories in three versions. A close examination of the three transcribed texts indicates that the imagery of Pi Wu and the embedded court-case episode had been transferred from Pu Lin to the present-generation inheritor Yang Mingkun along with a number of episodes.

---

<sup>228</sup> Bender, *Plum and Bamboo*, 71.

<sup>229</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016; Bender, *Plum and Bamboo*, 72-7.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

As far as the transcribed text from Yang's repertoire is concerned, the story begins with a court case and covers a main part of Pi Wu's life while paying close attention to the daily lives of the ordinary folks of Yangzhou during the Qing dynasty. As mentioned earlier, Pi Wu is a rogue who is indulged in table gambling, frequents pawnbrokers and has a knavish personality. Yang's narrative of Pi Wu is divided into five sections in terms of Pi's life experiences: "marriage" (*chengqin* 成親), "impoverishment" (*hunqiong* 混窮), "celebration of the Spring Festival" (*guonian* 過年), "change of fortune for the better" (*zhuanyun* 轉運) and "reward and retribution" (*shan e zhong you bao* 善惡終有報). Each section consists of about twenty self-contained episodes, involving people from all walks of life such as butchers, shop owners, peddlers, merchants and court officials. Generally, the narrative unit in Yang's repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* demonstrates itself as a self-contained episode. Yang's narrative involves every aspect of social, cultural and religious life and events such as the End-of-Year (*laba* 臘八) Festival, wedding ceremonies, murder, bribery and table gambling. Each unit centres on a small subject and elaborates on traditional customs, business practices and family life of the residents who are from the bottom of the society. Characters such as Pi Wu, Ni Si, their wives and Mama Zhang make frequent appearances throughout the story and, in each new unit, new characters are introduced to the story centring on Pi Wu's conduct.

The main plot in Pu's and Yu's transcribed texts mentioned above also has been examined. Based on the examination of the main plot in the story of Pi Wu in the three versions, I find that thirteen shared episodes encompass all the themes in the shared main plot (Table 4.2).

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

1	Sun Dali, who offers much help to Pi Wu, is killed by his wife Sun Qiangshi and stepson Sun Xiaoji
2	Mama Zhang advises Sun Xiaogu to marry Pi Wu
3	Pi Wu rents a room for the wedding
4	Pi Wu gets a bed through trickery
5	Pi Wu takes a bath before the wedding ceremony
6	Pi Wu prepares for the feast on the marriage day
7	Pi Wu thinks of being an emperor when drunk
8	Pi Wu gets sticky rice cakes through trickery
9	Pi Wu celebrates the Spring Festival
10	Pi Wu is blessed with a big fortune by the spirit of a toilet lid
11	Pi Wu buys a house with a big fortune
12	Pi Wu opens a pawnshop
13	Lord Bao judges the murder case of Sun Dali

Table 4.2 Shared episodes

The thirteen episodes, which constitute the main plot of the Pu School, has remained unchanged since its creation by Pu Lin. When talking about how a storyteller transmitted the tradition, the famous Suzhou chantefable performer Jin Shengbo 金聲伯 (1930-2017) said, “He changes the things that can be changed and does not touch the things that cannot be changed.”<sup>230</sup> The thirteen episodes form the core narrative tradition of the Pu School because the Pu School members have performed but not altered it over the past nine generations.

The main plot of the Pu School is filled with dramatic twists and turns, indicating the relationships between the major characters Sun Dali, Sun Qianshi, Sun Xiaoji, Pi Wu, Sun Xiaogu and Mama Zhang through the narration of their daily life experiences. Hence, the story narrative feels close to the everyday life of the ordinary folks and making it more appealing to the audience. Ten of the thirteen episodes centre on the knavish conduct of Pi Wu and two other episodes on the murder committed by Sun Qiangshi and Sun Xiaoji.

---

<sup>230</sup> Quoted in Bender, *Plum and Bamboo*, 76.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Episodes 1 and 13 focus on a court case. Considering that the traditional mode of transmission of Yangzhou *pinghua* is through word-of-mouth from the master to the apprentice, the three transcripts show that the storytellers of Pu's school have preserved the court case theme for over three centuries. Otherwise, it would be impossible to identify the court case story frame in Yang's version initially created by Pu Lin. In the court case, Sun Dali, the father of Sun Xiaogu, is murdered by his new wife Sun Qiangshi and his stepson Sun Xiaoji, as the duo fear their adultery will be exposed. Sun Qiangshi and Sun Xiaoji throw Sun Dali's body into a well in the kitchen and then cover the well by building a cooking stove over it. They think that their crime will go undiscovered forever. Sun Xiaogu's intuition leads her to suspect that her stepmother and stepbrother play a role in her father's sudden death.

The court case narrative is not concerned with the process of investigation but merely presents the initial and final part of the case. Each of the three texts begins with the evil crime of Sun Qiangshi and Sun Xiaoji killing Sun Dali. A few days after the murder, Sun Qiangshi asks the matchmaker Mama Zhang to arrange the marriage of Sun Xiaogu, the only daughter of Sun Dali, to a villain, intending to kill her. However, Mama Zhang suggests that Pi Wu marry Xiaogu in order to save her. Episode 2 explains Zhang's plan in detail. In Mama Zhang's mind, Pi Wu is a rogue but a man of good character. In the subsequent episodes, the murder case is never mentioned. It is not until the end of the story that the case is mentioned again, centring on the trial by Judge Bao. The court case is not the most important part of the story but, as discussed in Chapter 2, it is necessary to express a pedagogical message as it helps to deliver the Chinese moral idea that "the evil is punished with evil."

As outlined in Episodes 3-10, Pi Wu has been portrayed him as a rogue, indulging in gambling and frequenting pawnbrokers. As Pi Wu frequents the

## **The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

pawnshops, pawning forms a part of his daily life. In each of the three texts, the narrative of his pawning is elaborated across the eight episodes. Episodes 3-6 narrate how Pi Wu prepares for his wedding ceremony by tricking others. Pi Wu tricks his honest neighbour and best friend Ni Si into renting a room for the wedding ceremony. In addition, he tricks the owner of a furniture store where he buys a new bed with a pack of iron instead of a few taels of silver. Before attending his wedding ceremony, he goes to a public bathhouse to wash off the dirt and steals the new suit of an unknown rich man who is enjoying his bath. His most scheming act is that he asks the honest Ni Si to invite people from the streets, both known and unknown to him, to attend his wedding feast so that he can collect as many cash gifts as possible. Pi Wu asks Ni Si to inform all the attendees that “three bowls of dishes are set for having cooked rice; nine bowls of dishes for drinking.”<sup>231</sup> Pi Wu serves only three dishes and a large jar of wine at the feast; the dishes offered are merely salted vegetables, bean curd and sliced pork, and the wine is diluted with water.

Episodes 7-9 portray Pi Wu’s daily knavish behaviour after his marriage as well as the traditional customs of the Spring Festival in Yangzhou. One day, he drinks so much that he barely recognizes his wife, so he calls himself the “emperor” and kicks Sun Xiaogu who is opening the door to let him in. Sun Xiaogu feels so sad that she plans to hang herself from a tree by the river. Fortunately, she is saved by the ghost of her father. The next day, Pi Wu cheats the owner of a newly opened sticky rice cake shop and takes away the food without paying. Episode 9 narrates how Pi Wu spends the Spring Festival with his wife and friends. As usual, he plays tricks while pretending to buy a number of items. However, the narrative that covers the whole festival,

---

<sup>231</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 131.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

including the End-of-the-Year Festival, becomes the most alluring part in this episode. Yang's description of the traditional way of celebrating the Spring Festival in Yangzhou is very interesting and informative. In his narrative, the celebration of the Spring Festival in old times starts with a kind of rice congee with nuts (*laba zhou* 臘八粥) and dried fruit eaten on the twenty-eighth day of the twelfth lunar month—and is followed by shopping for New Year food and items, ranging from Spring Festival couplets (*chunlian* 春聯) and New Year pictures (*nianhua* 年畫) to nuts, dried fruits, snacks and tea foods, which will last until the first day of the Lunar New Year. For example, the ingredients of *laba* congee are detailed below:<sup>232</sup>

For the ingredients, the quality of the *laba* congee is divided into three levels. The first level consists of expensive ingredients like longan, dates, peanut, white agaric, ginkgo, chestnut and rice; the second consists of dates, peanut, soybean, a small quantity of ginkgo nut and chestnut; the third consists of sweet potato, carrot, green vegetables' roots and small dates.

On the Laba Festival, the eighth day of the twelfth month, the street is crowded as people flock to the Dongyue Temple with their empty bowls and pots. Anyone with chopsticks who is inside the temple can enjoy the *laba* congee for free.

Immediately following the End-of-the-Year Festival, on the fifteenth day of the twelfth month, people offer sacrifices to Chenghuang 城隍, the City God. The narrative of this event reads as follows:<sup>233</sup>

---

<sup>232</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 317.

<sup>233</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 560.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Pi Wu sees many people running to the City God Temple with their baskets; in the basket, there is incense and yellow bags bearing the phrase, “pilgrim to the mountain to offer incense to the gods” (*chao shan jin xiang* 朝山進香). Pi Wu is reminded to offer incense to the City God on that day.

Yangzhou people used to sacrifice to the Kitchen God (*zaoshen* 灶神) or *songzao* 送灶 seven days ahead of the Spring Festival. Traditionally, *zaofan* 灶飯 (literally “kitchen rice”) and *zaotang* 灶糖 (literally “kitchen sugar”) are necessary offerings made to the Kitchen God. The description of *zaotang* is given below:<sup>234</sup>

Pi Wu buys a *zaotang* shaped in five sugar layers with green and red flowers on it, which is inexpensive. The best *zaotang* has thirteen sugar layers with gold flowers on it and it looks like a golden pagoda. When holding the cheap *zaotang*, Pi Wu sees a person holding the best one coming towards him. He says to himself, “How beautiful his *zaotang* is! Mine is ugly! Let me change them, his *zaotang* shall be mine and mine will go to him.”

Episodes 2, 10 and 11 narrate how Pi Wu is rewarded for his good deeds. The Chinese belief in “the good is rewarded with good” (*hao you hao bao* 好有好報) is well presented through the narrative of Pi Wu’s change to good conduct. Pi Wu is a rogue but kind-hearted by nature. He never cheats the poor but instead helps them by playing tricks on the rich. After the matchmaker Mama Zhang tells Pi Wu the truth about Sun Dali’s death and his daughter’s dangerous situation at home, Pi Wu agrees

---

<sup>234</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 433.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

to marry Sun Dali's daughter to save her from her stepmother and stepbrother. Pi Wu and Sun Xiaogu experience many hardships during the course of their lives before their marriage, but they are blessed by a mysterious power and eventually enjoy a good life. Blessed by the spirit of the toilet lid and Heaven, Pi Wu wins a large fortune. He buys a large house at a low price because the house is said to be haunted. Later in this house, Pi Wu accidentally discovers a vast fortune buried in the yard under the guidance of a wild spark.

Although the legal case and the characteristics of Pi Wu are observed in the three transcribed texts, the extent of the narratives of the court case, Pi Wu's pawning and table gambling, and his knavish behaviour differs considerably. As indicated in Table 4.3, 26% of Pu's narration concerns the court case and only 6.3% concerns Pi Wu's pawning conduct. In contrast to Pu and Yang, Yu is more concerned with Pi Wu's knavish behaviour. Almost half of Yang's narration deals with the daily life experiences of Yangzhou residents and 32.4% with Pi Wu's knavish conduct. Compared to Pu's narration, Yang's and Yu's narrations of the court case drop to 5.2% and 11.9%, respectively.

	Court case	Pawning	Gambling	Knavish behaviour	Daily life experiences
Pu's <i>Pure-Wind Dyke</i>	26%	6.3%	32.5%	25.6%	9.6%
Yu's <i>Rogue Pi Wu</i>	11.9%	4.8%	7.1%	42.9%	33.3%
Yang's <i>Rogue Pi Wu</i>	5.2%	4.3%	10.5%	32.4%	47.6%

Table 4.3 Proportion of subject matter in the Pi Wu narrative

As demonstrated in Table 4.3, the three storytellers have different emphases with regard to the subject matter in the narrative. Both Yu and Yang focus on narrating the knavish behaviour of Pi Wu and daily life experiences in Yangzhou, while in the original creation, Pu primarily focuses on the gambling, the court case and the knavish

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

behaviour. In the transcribed texts by Yu and Yang, the narrative centres on the funny incidents in Pi Wu's daily life as well as his knavishness. Subsequently, the story *Pure-Wind Dyke* was re-titled *Rogue Pi Wu* in 1985 during the generation of Yu Youchun.

The main plot is made up of thirteen episodes and the embedded court-case story, which is shared by all three versions of the story of Pi Wu and lies at the core of the narrative of *Rogue Pi Wu* recited by Yang Mingkun. Although they share a common plot, the three versions are distinct in narrative emphasis.

### 4.2 Enrichment through Addition and Reduction

According to David Rubin, the oral performance includes unfolding a story reinforced by the story line, and the details of the imagery and what they conjure also play an important role in organising the story material.<sup>235</sup> The performance by Yang Mingkun presents a good example to illustrate Rubin's theory in unfolding his story.

As shown in Table 4.1, compared to the 100 units in the text transcribed from Yang's repertoire, Pu only has 32 and Yu 42. Yang stated in an interview in 2016, "I prefer to tell a comic story of Pi Wu to the contemporary audiences. In re-creating the story of Pi Wu, I focus on portraying the distinct features of individuals through their speech and behaviours."<sup>236</sup> In the following section, I will examine how Yang arranges his narrative in 100 units and how he deals with the narrative of the event shared by the three versions.

A close reading of the three versions shows that the units in Yang's version mainly deals with Pi Wu's knavish conduct. Yang's narrative innovation is shown in

---

<sup>235</sup> David Rubin, *Memory in Oral Traditions: The Cognitive Psychology of Epic, Ballads, and Counting-Out Rhymes*, (Oxford: Oxford University, 1995): 59-60.

<sup>236</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 31 July 2016.

## **The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

his skilful weaving of the otherwise loosely connected episodes by focusing on the protagonist Pi Wu. When telling the story of Pi Wu, Yang adopts a conventional plot-orientated structure with Pi Wu as the main character. Clearly, Pi Wu plays a pivotal role in the overall structure of the narrative, which allows the addition or deletion of an episode or unit without affecting the main plot shared by the three versions of the story of Pi Wu. This narrative strategy has enabled Yang to use his imaginations freely to enrich and renew their repertoires without changing the original style and plotline.

The story in Yang Mingkun's version has developed into a comical biography of Pi Wu. The funny and knavish behaviours of Pi Wu and other figures in the story are more vividly portrayed in Yang's story compared to those of the other two storytellers. Yang omits all the parts that do not focus on Pi Wu and adds new funny texts about him, developing the original story into a biography of Pi Wu. For example, the episodes in Units 1-2 by Pu, as well as Unit 6 by Yu, in which Pu and Yu introduce the family of Sun Dali and the murder case at his house in detail, are absent from Yang's story. Not only does Yang omit some elements, he extends the other parts in order to create a comical narrative of Pi Wu. For example, the narrative in Units 93 and 94 focuses on the knavishness of Pi Wu, which is absent from both Pu's and Yu's versions.

Furthermore, Yang develops in two ways the facetiousness that already existed in Pu's and Yu's texts in two ways. First, he extends the narrative of the comical characters. As shown in Table 4.4, Unit 32 in Yu's text is separated into Units 74-75 in Yang's version; Unit 21 in Yu's version is separated by Yang into Units 53-54 and 58; Unit 13 in Pu's version is divided into Units 13-24. In these extended units, comical characters involved in the story are sophisticated, depicted by Yang through their talking, appearance and daily life experiences. Second, he rearranges the comical

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

presentation in Pu's and Yu's versions, extending the narrative of the funny incidents. Units 35-38 in Yang's version develop from Units 14-15 in Yu's version as well as Units 16-17 in Pu's. The narrative of Units 16-23 in Yu's version develops into 13 independent units in Yang's version, ranging from Unit 35 to Unit 62. In these extended units, Yang does not focus on elaborating the characters involved but on rearranging the original chronological order of the funny incidents that already existed in Pu's and Yu's versions. Meanwhile, his narrative emphasis shifts from the details of the characters to how and why the funny incidents occur. Hence, the distribution of the comical presentation in Yang's performance is more balanced than the other two versions.

To understand the differences in the narrative arrangements between the three storytellers, I compare the narratives in each unit of the three texts as illustrated in Table 4.4 (S: Share; PS: Partly share; A: Absent; the number attached to S and PS indicates the unit in which the shared narrative occurs in Pu's and Yu's versions).

Yang Mingkun, <i>Rogue Pi Wu</i> , 2015	Pu Lin, <i>Pure-Wind Dyke</i> , ca. 1711-ca.1799	Yu Youchun, <i>Rogue Pi Wu</i> , 1985
1. "Foresee ill omens through face reading" ( <i>Xiangmian de xiongzhao</i> 相面得凶兆)	A	A
2. "Midnight murder" ( <i>Sangming sangengtian</i> 喪命三更天)	PS-7	PS-1
3. "Getting a bad son-in-law at the price of one hundred taels of silver" ( <i>Baiyin de exu</i> 百 銀得惡婿)	S-9	
4. "Pi Wu's family background" ( <i>Pi Wu de shenshi</i> 皮五的身世)	A	A
5. "Swindling two hundred coins at one time" ( <i>Yi'e erbaiwen</i> 一訛二百文)	A	A
6. "Benefactor Sun Dali" ( <i>Enren Sun Dali</i> 恩 人孫大理)	PS-11	PS-1
7. "Mama Zhang goes matchmaking" ( <i>Zhang mama quanhun</i> 張媽媽勸婚)	PS-17	S-2
8. "Renting a wedding room at the Eastern Gate" ( <i>Dongmen zu hunfang</i> 東門租婚房)	S-12	S-3
9. "Losing all the silver taels in gambling" ( <i>Shuguang nangzhong yin</i> 輸光囊中銀)	A	A
10. "Getting a bed through trickery" ( <i>Qianyan pian bengchuang</i> 巧言騙繡床)	PS-12	PS-4
11. "Passing off metal scraps as silver" ( <i>Tieshi chongyinzi</i> 鐵屎充銀子)	A	

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

12. "Cheating Ni San by pretending to be a pig" ( <i>Zhuangzhu pian nisan</i> 裝豬騙倪三)	A	S-5
13. "Taking a free bath" ( <i>Xiba baida zao</i> 洗把白大澡)	S-13	PS-6
14. "Creating a great commotion at the Baiyu Bathhouse" ( <i>Danao Baiyu Tang</i> 大鬧白玉堂)		
15. "The unlucky Aunt Wang" ( <i>Wangdasao daomei</i> 王大嫂倒楣)		
16. "Announcing the wedding news through invitation cards" ( <i>Xitie baoxishi</i> 喜帖報婚事)		
17. "Preparing the wedding feast with limited funds" ( <i>Qiongchou xijiuyan</i> 窮籌喜酒宴)		
18. "Collecting favour on the streets" ( <i>Yanjie shou renqing</i> 沿街收人情)		S-8
19. "Lying about the dishes" ( <i>Dahua kongtoucai</i> 大話空頭菜)		S-9
20. "Enjoying preserved vegetables despite poverty" ( <i>Kule qiong suancai</i> 苦樂窮酸菜)		
21. "Mama Zhang lies to Sun" ( <i>Zhangmama pianjia</i> 張媽媽騙嫁)		
22. "Sun Xiaogu sits on a sedan chair" ( <i>Sun Xiaogu zuojiao</i> 孫孝姑坐轎)		
23. "Two rogues misbehave" ( <i>Liang hunzi shuangheng</i> 兩混子耍橫)		
24. "The sedan chair runs into a coffin" ( <i>Huajiao yu guancai</i> 花轎遇棺材)		
25. "The wedding night" ( <i>Dongfang huazhu ye</i> 洞房花住夜)	S-14	PS-10
26. "Mama Zhang comforts Xiaogu" ( <i>Zhang mama quan Xiaogu</i> 張媽媽勸孝姑)		PS-11
27. "The heart turns colder than the bitter winter" ( <i>Xin bi yandong han</i> 心比嚴冬寒)		
28. "Loneliness and the cold attitude of the newlyweds" ( <i>Xinhun jimo leng</i> 新婚寂寞冷)		
29. "The night watchman rescues Xiaogu" ( <i>Gengfu jiu Xiaogu</i> 更夫救孝姑)		
30. "Providing timely help" ( <i>Xuezhong song wennuan</i> 雪中送溫暖)		
31. "The fragrant and delicious sticky rice cakes" ( <i>Fantuan xiang you tian</i> 粉團香又甜)	S-15	S-12
32. "Cheating Boss Wang" ( <i>Wang laoban beirao</i> 王老闆被繞)		
33. "Disturbance in the moment of calm" ( <i>Wushi qi fengbo</i> 無事起風波)	A	
34. "Asking for business advice" ( <i>Taojiao shengyi jing</i> 討教生意經)	A	
35. "Getting vegetables through trickery" ( <i>Zhade yidiancai</i> 詐得一點菜)	PS-16	PS-14
36. "Rogue Pi Wu sells the vegetables" ( <i>Pi Wu lai maicai</i> 皮五來賣菜)		PS-15
37. "Coming across an elderly woman" ( <i>Yujian nu nainai</i> 遇見女奶奶)		
38. "Asking for money by faking death" ( <i>Zhuangsi tao yaoqian</i> 裝死討藥錢)	PS-17	
39. "First-class laba congee" ( <i>Toudeng Laba zhou</i> 頭等臘八粥)	A	S-17
40. "Looking for ointment in a medicine shop" ( <i>Yaodian zhao gaoyao</i> 藥店找藥膏)	A	A
41. "Half jin of longjin tea" ( <i>Banjin longjin cha</i> 半斤龍井茶)	A	A

The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

42. "Helping an old woman through clever tactics" ( <i>Zhijiu laonainai</i> 智救老奶奶)	A	PS-16
43. "Good and evil each have their way" ( <i>Zhengxie jie youdao</i> 正邪皆有道)	A	
44. "A shop assistant delivers rice" ( <i>Dianxiaoer songmi</i> 店小二送米)	A	A
45. "Setting off firecrackers and selling firewood" ( <i>Fang paozhang maicai</i> 放炮仗買菜)	A	A
46. "Temple fairs at the City God temple" ( <i>Cheng Huang miao xianghui</i> 城隍廟香會)	A	PS-20
47. "Competition with a Northerner" ( <i>Yu kuaizi jiaoliang</i> 與侑子較量)	A	
48. "Telling news thoughtlessly" ( <i>Xinkou shuoxinwen</i> 信口說新聞)	A	A
49. "Running away with a pair of shoes" ( <i>Paochu yishuang xie</i> 跑出一雙鞋)	A	A
50. "Young wife sits on the dinner table" ( <i>Xiaoxifu shangzhuo</i> 小媳婦上桌)	A	S-19
51. "No money to shop for New Year goodies" ( <i>Wuben ban nianhuo</i> 無本辦年貨)	PS-17	PS-21
52. "Writing couplets for fun" ( <i>Douqu xie chunlian</i> 逗趣寫春聯)		S-26
53. "Obtain malt sugar thrice by trickery" ( <i>San e zaertang</i> 三訛灶兒糖)	A	PS-21
54. "The Kitchen God ascends to Heaven" ( <i>Zaolaoye shangtian</i> 灶老爺上天)	A	
55. "Sun Xiaoji plays dirty tricks" ( <i>Sun Xiaoji shuajian</i> 孫孝繼耍奸)	A	A
56. "Mao Delong comes to the rescue" ( <i>Mao Derong dajiu</i> 毛德龍搭救)	A	A
57. "Commotion at the Wuyun Pawnshop" ( <i>Huonao Wuyun Zhai</i> 活鬧伍雲齋)	A	A
58. "Buying tea snacks on credit" ( <i>Shezhang mai chashi</i> 賒帳買茶食)	A	PS-21
59. "Butcher rogue Zhang San" ( <i>Tufu Zhang San la</i> 屠夫張三辣)	A	PS-23
60. "Going all the way to buy pork" ( <i>Ping laoming darou</i> 拼老命打肉)	A	
61. "Saving two people at the same time" ( <i>Yi jiu liangtiao ming</i> 一救兩條命)	A	A
62. "Pawning a living treasure through trickery" ( <i>Sheji dang huobao</i> 設計當活寶)	A	S-18
63. "Spending the end of the year with joy and sorrow" ( <i>Beixi guo nianguan</i> 悲喜過年關)	A	PS-27
64. "Distributing money to the poor" ( <i>Saqian jiu qiongren</i> 撒錢救窮人)	A	
65. "Playing dead at the City God temple" ( <i>Cheng Huang miao zhuangsi</i> 城隍廟裝死)	A	PS-28
66. "Committing suicide on the first day of the New Year" ( <i>Chuyi xun duanjian</i> 初一尋短見)	A	
67. "Pawning a toilet lid for money" ( <i>Ya magai jieqian</i> 壓馬蓋借錢)	PS-18	PS-29
68. "Fortune has changed for the better in the gambling house" ( <i>Duchang zhuan haoyun</i> 賭場轉好運)		
69. "Pretending to be a rich man" ( <i>Jiachong da caizhu</i> 假充大財主)	PS-19	PS-30



The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

70. "Tricking four robbers at the gambling game" ( <i>Zhadu si qiangdao</i> 詐賭四強盜)		
71. "Stealing Pure-Wind Dyke at night" ( <i>Yedao Qing Feng zha</i> 夜盜清風闌)	A	A
72. "Sun Xiaoji reports a case" ( <i>Sun Xiaoji baoan</i> 孫孝繼報案)	A	A
73. "Persuading gangsters to take the right path" ( <i>Quan fei zou zhengdao</i> 勸匪走正道)	A	A
74. "Changing to be an upright man" ( <i>Gaizuo Zhouzhengren</i> 改做周正人)	A	S-32
75. "Taking initiative to pay debt" ( <i>Zhudong huan jiuzhai</i> 主動還舊債)	A	
76. "Pan Caichen organises a gambling party" ( <i>Pan Caichen yaodu</i> 潘彩臣邀賭)	PS-19	
77. "Hard to quit gambling" ( <i>Duyin hen nanju</i> 賭癮很難拒)	A	
78. "Inviting a big boss thrice" ( <i>San qing da laoban</i> 三請大老闆)		
79. "Pretending to be special guest from Guangdong" ( <i>Zhuang Guangdong teke</i> 裝廣東特客)	PS-19	S-33-34
80. "Eight rogues gather for gambling" ( <i>Baman judu</i> 八蠻聚賭)	PS-20	
81. "Pan Er counts the gambling debts" ( <i>Pan Er suanzhang</i> 潘二算帳)		
82. "Selling the "demon house" ( <i>Maile yaoguai fang</i> 買了妖怪房)		
83. "Tidying up the new house" ( <i>Shoushi xin fangzi</i> 收拾新房子)		
84. "Rogue Pi Wu moves to a new house" ( <i>Pi Wu la banjia</i> 皮五辣搬家)	PS-22	S-35-36
85. "The new house is haunted by a demon" ( <i>Gongguan you yaoguai</i> 公館有妖怪)		
86. "Chance discovery of a large fortune" ( <i>Yiwai fa hengcai</i> 意外發橫財)		
87. "A ghost haunts in Pan's house" ( <i>Panjia nao huogui</i> 潘家鬧活鬼)	A	A
88. "A dead fish comes back to life" ( <i>Siyu da fanshen</i> 死魚大翻身)	A	A
89. "Hungry robbers cause trouble" ( <i>Jihuangzei hongshi</i> 饑荒賊哄事)	PS-26	A
90. "The toilet lid covers the dispute" ( <i>Matong gai fengbo</i> 馬桶蓋風波)	A	PS-37
91. "Rogues cause trouble at a pawn shop" ( <i>Lanshi naodangpu</i> 爛事鬧當舖)	A	
92. "Madam Sun Qiangshi reunites with her relatives" ( <i>Sun Qiangshi renqin</i> 孫強氏認親)	A	S-38
93. "Little Liuzi presents a treasure" ( <i>Xiao Liuzi xianbao</i> 小六子獻寶)	A	A
94. "Sun Qiangshi eavesdrops" ( <i>Sun Qiangshi ting qianggen</i> 孫強氏聽牆根)	A	A
95. "The county magistrate sells Pi Wu's criminal records" ( <i>Xianlaoye maijie</i> 縣老爺賣結)	PS-25	
96. "Imperial envoy Bao Longtu" ( <i>Qingchai Bao Longtu</i> 清差包龍圖)		S-40-42
97. "Throwing the secret code into the box" ( <i>Zhuangxiang tou anyu</i> 裝箱投暗語)	S-28-31	
98. "Appreciating the view from a hall" ( <i>Mentang kanfengjing</i> 門堂看風景)		

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

99. “Lord Bao deciphers the secret code” ( <i>Baogong jie anyu</i> 包公解暗語)		
100. “The good will be rewarded and the evil punished” ( <i>Shan 'e zhong youbao</i> 善惡終有報)		

Table 4.4 Comparison of episodes in each unit

As shown in Table 4.4, Yang focuses on enriching the already existing narrative concerning Pi’s trickery when extending his story. For example, in Pu’s text, Episode 8 is presented as a comical episode as shown in Table 4.2, “Pi Wu gets sticky rice cakes through trickery.” The brief narrative in this episode is present in Pu’s transcribed text in around 700 Chinese characters. However, Yang expands the narrative into two units, i.e. Units 31 and 32. As indicated in the headnotes of Units 31 and 32 in Yang’s transcribed text, “Sticky rice cake is delicious and sweet” and “Pi cheats Boss Wang,” the two units elaborate on the different tastes of the sticky rice cakes in Wang’s shop as well as on how Pi Wu obtains the rice cakes from Wang by trickery. Yang’s narration of these two episodes has a length of 14,400 words. Unit 32 is dedicated to the process of Pi Wu cheating the Boss Wang; it is extended from the initial presentation by Yang through the inclusion of the dialogue between Pi Wu and Boss Wang and the description of the business environment in Wang’s shop. When narrating this episode, Pu merely focuses on depicting the characters’ appearance and conduct with no particular emphasis on the narrative. In contrast to Pu’s style, in the episode where Pi Wu plays tricks on Wang by making use of Wang’s family information, Yang emphasises and details the cheating process. For example, when explaining how Pi Wu intentionally repeats Boss Wang’s family information to deceive him, Yang applies the rhetoric of repetition in his narration. When listening to the repetition, the audience begins to think of Boss Wang and may even realise that Pi Wu is going to cheat Wang by repeating the information. Unlike Yang’s elaborated

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

narrative, Pu uses only one sentence to cover the lengthy dialogue: “Pi and Wang chat for a long time.”<sup>237</sup>

Yang Mingkun deals with the original narrative in the story of Pi Wu in three ways and thus his narration furtherly meets the aesthetic effect *li*. I have chosen one event shared in the three versions of the story of Pi Wu, “The wedding ceremony of Pi Wu,” which is further broken down into several individual events as listed in chronological order in Table 4.5 (Italics: events shared by Pu, Yu and Yang; \*\*: events shared by Yu and Yang). The narrative of the shared event exists in Units 13-29 in Yang’s transcribed text, in Units 6-11 in Yu’s text, and in Units 13 and 14 in Pu’s text.

Shared episode: Wedding ceremony of Pi Wu		
Pu (creator) events of Units 13–14	Yu (8 <sup>th</sup> inheritor) events of Units 6–11	Yang (9 <sup>th</sup> inheritor) events of Units 13–29
<p>a. Pi <i>announces the news of his forthcoming wedding and extorts from strangers the money and items necessary for the marriage.</i></p> <p>b. Pi <i>takes a bath</i> and cut his hair before the marriage ceremony.</p> <p>c. Pi and his guests <i>enjoy the feast at his wedding.</i></p> <p>d. <i>Mama Zhang comforts the bride Sun Xiaogu.</i></p> <p>e. <i>Pi thinks of himself as the emperor when drunk.</i></p> <p>f. <i>Sun Xiaogu intends to commit suicide</i> when her father’s spirit comes to her rescue.</p> <p>g. Pi knocks over the bowl with soya bean milk in it. He obtains the soya bean milk for Sun Xiaogu through trickery.</p>	<p>a. Pi <i>takes a bath</i> and gets a new suit through trickery.</p> <p>b. Ni <i>announces the news of Pi’s wedding.</i></p> <p>c. Strangers offer items necessary for Pi’s wedding owing to his knavish behaviours.</p> <p>**d. Pi brags about the dishes to be served at his wedding.</p> <p>e. <i>The poor enjoy the feast</i> with a gang of rogues at Pi’s wedding.</p> <p>**f. <i>Mama Zhang</i> persuades Sun Xiaogu to marry Pi and <i>comforts her.</i></p> <p>**g. Two rogues stop Sun’s wedding sedan chair spitefully.</p> <p>**h. Sun’s wedding sedan chair clashes with a funeral procession.</p> <p>i. <i>Pi thinks of himself being the emperor when drunk.</i></p>	<p>a. Pi <i>takes a bath</i> and gets a new suit through trickery.</p> <p>b. Ni <i>announces the news of Pi’s wedding.</i></p> <p>c. Pi and Ni discuss the items needed for the wedding feast.</p> <p>d. Pi collects cash gifts from strangers in the streets.</p> <p>**e. Pi brags about the dishes to be served at his wedding.</p> <p>f. <i>The poor enjoy the feast</i> with a gang of rogues at Pi’s wedding.</p> <p>**g. <i>Mama Zhang</i> persuades Sun Xiaogu to marry Pi and <i>comforts her.</i></p> <p>**h. Two rogues stop Sun’s wedding sedan chair spitefully.</p> <p>**i. Sun’s wedding sedan chair clashes with a funeral procession.</p> <p>j. <i>Pi thinks of himself as the emperor when drunk.</i></p>

<sup>237</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 50.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

	j. <i>Sun is going to commit suicide but is rescued by the ghost of her father.</i>	k. <i>Sun intends to commit suicide but is rescued by a night watchman.</i>
--	---	---

Table 4.5 Shared events

A comparison of the shared events in the three texts of the narrative shows three ways by which Yang extends his narration:

1. Providing a detailed depiction of everyday life experiences, such as a description of a daily scene, including the conversations and inner thoughts of the main characters;
2. Supplying new explanatory notes on an incident;
3. Giving new comments on an event or conduct.

As shown in the table above, Yang's narrative of the event shared among the three versions is the longest comprising eleven incidents, while Pu's is the shortest comprising seven incidents. The shared event of the "Wedding ceremony of Pi Wu" begins with "Announcing the news of Pi's wedding" and ends with "Sun's suicide attempt," as shown in the italicised lines. Of the many incidents, only six are shared by all the three storytellers and four by Yu and Yang exclusively.

Yang's narration on Pi Wu sounds more believable when compared with the other two versions. Incidents c, d and j are narrated by Yang. Events c and d developed from event c were provided by Yu. Yang extends the narration by elaborating on the daily lives and conversations between several ordinary people in the street. Yu narrates event c by describing how Pi Wu demands cash gifts from acquaintances and strangers he meets on the streets. In his narration, there is no dialogue between Pi Wu and the

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

other characters, only a description of the business atmosphere in the street. The description by Yu is as follows:<sup>238</sup>

Here is the best site on this street. Grand shops are situated on both sides of the street. People from all directions will pass through this street. [...] All the pedestrians run away when they see Pi Wu sitting there.

Yu's simple presentation is extended in Yang's transcript through the dialogue of the pedestrians in the street. Yang's presentation includes the daily conversations of Yangzhou residents as follows:<sup>239</sup>

“*Ai* 哎 (interjection)! *Hehe* 呵呵 (onomatopoeia for laughter)! You are ...”  
“Yes! You are right.”  
“Did you come here to collect money for your boss?”  
“Yes. My boss sends me here to collect money. It will not take long.”  
“Enjoy morning tea here when you are back!”  
“Sure!”  
“Oh, Pi Wu is here!”  
“Leave here!”  
“*Yiwei* 咦喂 (interjection)!”  
Everyone starts using code words when they see Pi Wu sitting at the gate of the city; they pout and glance at the gate, raise their arms to scratch the skin, and then shake hands with five straight fingers.  
“Have you seen Pi Wu?”

---

<sup>238</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 71.

<sup>239</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 137.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

“Ai!”

“Let’s change our schedule! Drink tea first and then go out of the city!”

How do code words work? The following presentation in the story explains this:<sup>240</sup>

While staring at his boss, the waiter gives out a code by scratching his face with his fingers and subsequently shows five fingers. Scratching the skin and showing the number five, the boss is secretly informed by the waiter that Pi Wu is coming.

Pi Wu’s surname is Pi, meaning “skin,” and his nickname is Wu meaning “five.” When scratching his face, the waiter sends out the information “skin” to his boss and the information “five” by showing five straight fingers. The waiter successfully communicates with his boss using hand signs.

As shown above, although Yang does not directly describe the busy scene on the streets as Yu does, he hints at it through the conversations between the unnamed characters. “Enjoy morning tea here” indicates that the dialogue takes place in a teahouse and “My boss sends me here to collect money” suggests that the business is located on the streets. The teahouse and the market must have attracted many people so the street would have been busy. The short sentence “leave here!” and “code words” used between pedestrians show that Pi Wu is considered a threat to others. The conversations and activities of the pedestrians on the streets not only suggest the ongoing commercial activities but also reflect the responses of the pedestrians on seeing Pi Wu.

---

<sup>240</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 249.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yang is highly skilled at description. Take event g in Pu's text for example, Pu Lin introduces in two lines the reason why Pi Wu plans to obtain two bowls of soybean milk for Sun Xiaogu and himself. Yu presents the dialogue between Pi Wu and Sun Xiaogu in no more than twelve lines. By contrast, Yang extends Yu's dialogue to twenty-eight lines as follows (S: Sun Xiaogu; P: Pi Wu):<sup>241</sup>

S: "To eat? Eat what? We do not have water to drink."

P: "Let me think about it! *Yi* 咦 (interjection), now, we have one thing to eat, what is it? The first pot of soybean milk at the bean curd store must be ready by now. Go to the store and get a bowl. It warms your hand and fills your stomach, and it quenches thirst, doesn't it? *Nainai* 奶奶 [reference to his wife], do you like to drink soybean milk?"

S: "Soybean milk is good for the health and beauty. When I was a girl, my mother bought it for me every day."

P: "Oh, do you like it?"

S: "Yes, I like it!"

P: "I will go out right now to bring a bowl for you."

S: "Where do you want to go now?"

P: "There are many bean curd stores. Hahaha, the first pot of soybean milk must be ready by now."

S: "You do not have money!"

P: "I do not need to pay for it. *Nainai*, you look down on me! Every bean curd store owes me money! I do not ask them to return the money, but only a bowl of soybean milk at their store. They should smile and give me a bowl. No problem, no problem."

S: "Really?"

---

<sup>241</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 238-39.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

P: “Why would I boast?”

S: “Go to the store and bring me a bowl of soybean milk and a bowl of fire. I want to warm my socks by the fire.”

P: “*Nainai*, you really know how to enjoy happiness.”

S: “*Pochinigegui* 潑嚙你個鬼 (a form of interjection)! Enjoy happiness by living with you?”

P: “Oh, OK!”

S: “Take two big bowls from Ni Si!”

P: “I do not want to ask him to get up early!”

S: “We do not have big bowls!”

P: “*Nainai*, I have told you, they owe me money! I will use their bowls! No worries! Wait for me, I will come back soon!”

We can see that Yang’s extension is realised through elaborating on the details of daily encounters. In event j in Yang’s text, as well as event i in Yu’s and e in Pu’s, Pi Wu is drunk in a lamb-soup restaurant, so Yang presents the kitchen scene at the restaurant, and even the dishes served there:<sup>242</sup>

A chef is busy cooking in the steam kitchen. *Pi-a-pa-de* 劈啊啪的 (onomatopoeia of the sound of sizzling oil in the pot), it is very noisy. Not a single customer is found in this restaurant. Why is the chef busy cooking? What’s going on? The owner tells the truth. The chef pretends to be busy even though he has nothing to do. The busy scene in the kitchen is a living advertisement for the restaurant. It is the truth. The fire in the stove burns intensely as the chef stands nearby holding a spatula and a spoon. *Kucha dang* 窟嚓當 (onomatopoeia of the sound of a spatula crashing with a spoon),

---

<sup>242</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 219.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

*kuccha dangdang*. When the spatula is fire red, the chef pours cold water from a spoon onto the spatula. *Cha* 嚓 (onomatopoeia of cold water making a hissing sound in contact with the hot spatula). Steam permeates the kitchen, giving the impression that the chef is very busy cooking. After going inside, Pi orders many dishes: lamb cake, cold sliced lamb, lamb's heart and liver, grilled lamb, lamb soup, lamb meatball, and fried lamb's gut. All the dishes are made with lamb, as this is a lamb soup restaurant. Apart from the dishes, two *jin* of liquor are also served.

Pu and Yu do not provide as much detail as Yang does in his narrative; they only mention the restaurant where the lamb soup is served. In Yang's narration, he first tells the audience of the situation in the kitchen from the viewpoint of the restaurant owner. Then, he describes the busy kitchen using three onomatopoeia: *pi-a-pa-de*, *kucha* and *dang*; he also lists out most of the dishes on the menu to the audience. Indeed, Yang's narration is based on a real scene in a restaurant in Yangzhou.

The explanation added by Yang contributes to the appeal of his narration. Apart from the detailed narrations of the daily life experiences in Yangzhou, Yang adds new explanations for dialect words or traditional customs in the story as the audience may not have the correct understanding of these. For example, in event g in Yang's text, when talking of Mama Zhang discovering Sun Xiaogu weeping in the bedroom, Yang explains the dialect word *qi* 泣 (weep) as follows:<sup>243</sup>

---

<sup>243</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 163.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

姑娘正在房中泣住呢。泣(吃)啊? 泣(吃)什麼東西啊? 泣(吃)下午還是吃晚飯? 這個“泣”不是“吃東西”的“吃。”什麼“qi”? “哭泣”的“泣。”哭分三種: 哭, 泣, 嚎。泣是有眼淚水, 它沒得聲音。泣是最痛苦不過啊。

The girl [Sun Xiaogu] is weeping (*qi*) in her bedroom. Is she weeping (*qi* 吃)? What is she eating/weeping for? Is she weeping/eating in the afternoon or eating her dinner? Actually, the *qi* here means “weep” not “eat.” It is the *qi* in the word *kuqi* 哭泣 (cry). There are three kinds of *ku* 哭 (cry): *ku* 哭 (cry), *qi* (weep) and *hao* 嚎 (wail). *Qi* refers to weeping tears silently; *qi* is an expression of utmost sadness.

Clearly, the pun results from *qi* 泣 (weep) being homophonous with *qi* 吃 (eat),<sup>244</sup> and *qi*, *ku* and *hao* represent three types of crying in the Yangzhou dialect. However, *ku* has replaced *qi* in the modern Yangzhou dialect as *ku* expresses the lexical meaning of *qi*. Concerning *qi*, Yang explains this by comparing with another word *chi* or eat, as *chi* and *qi* share the same phonetic realisation in the Yangzhou dialect. With Yang’s explanation, the audience understands the meaning of *qi*, as well as distinguishing it from the homonym *chi*. However, Yu does not provide such an explanation.

It has become the distinct style of Yang to provide explanations of terms or behaviours in the story that are not familiar to contemporary audiences. In event i in Yang’s text, when talking about Zang Jia and Wai Jia carrying a sedan chair to collect Sun Xiaogu, Yang supplies a new explanation for the phrase “three steps up and three steps down,” as follows:<sup>245</sup>

---

<sup>244</sup> In the Mandarin Chinese, the word for “eat” is 吃 pronounced as [tʂh], but as [tɕ’i] in the Yangzhou dialect. The word for “weep” in the Mandarin Chinese is 泣 pronounced as [tɕ’i] in the Yangzhou dialect.

<sup>245</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 161.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

The sedan chair acts as a tricycle or taxi of our time. The sedan carriers can move through the crowd and avoid running into pedestrians. Drivers can use the horn to warn them when driving. In the past, the street was narrow and crowded with men and women coming and going, some of them carry bulky items, some pushing a cart, some taking a basket or carrying baggage. In this circumstance, the sedan carrier in front has to alert the carrier at the back to be careful, as the back carrier cannot watch his steps due to the sedan chair before him.

With Yang's explanation of the position of the two sedan carriers and the situation on the street, the audience can easily understand the reason why Zang Jia warns Wai Jia. Without Yang's detailed explanation, the audience may be puzzled by Zang Jia's verbal warning.

Yang also extends his repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* by providing an account of the historical development of the story of Pi Wu. In event f in Yang's text, Yang introduces the origin of his repertoire and the relationship between his repertoire and that of Pu Lin. His interpretation is as follows:<sup>246</sup>

Pu Lin created his story *Pure-Wind Dyke* in the Qing dynasty but his story was set in the Song dynasty. It is said that Pu modelled the story on his own life experience in Yangzhou. He was born rich but indulged in gambling. Thus, he lost all his fortune and became a beggar. By chance, he became rich as before and lived a good life. As he lived in poverty for many years, he knew how the poor lived. He had a taste of both joy and suffering in life. He boasted of his

---

<sup>246</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 203.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

high reputation in performance, so he accepted two apprentices and transmitted his repertoire to them. My repertoire is inherited from one of them and I am regarded as the ninth-generation inheritor.

Yang provides the interpretation above when explaining the historical tradition of pasting red double happiness (*hong shuang xi* 紅雙喜)<sup>247</sup> on the windows in Pi Wu's wedding room. He informs the audience that the tradition of pasting *hong shuangxi* originated no earlier than the Ming dynasty. However, at the very beginning of the story, the storyteller tells the audience that Pi Wu lived in the Song dynasty. In pointing out the anachronism in the narration, Yang speaks of the origin of his repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu*. His explanation clarifies that the story of Pi Wu was created in the Qing era so that the audience is aware of the origin of *Rogue Pi Wu*.

A striking feature of Yangzhou *pinghua* is that storytellers often offer comments when telling a story in the performance. For example, as indicated in the headnote to Unit 86, "Chance discovery of a big fortune," this story centres on Pi Wu obtaining a large fortune by chance in his backyard, guided by the fire at night. When talking of Pi's experience of obtaining the large fortune at night, Yang gives his comment on the tradition as follows:<sup>248</sup>

Everyone here is listening to my story for fun. What I said in the performance is not reliable. Do not follow what I said on stage! Do not believe you will get a big fortune when you see a spark of light at night. Don't we need to work? Don't think you will become rich

---

<sup>247</sup> The word *hongshuangxi* refers to a piece of red paper cut in the shape of two Chinese graphs 喜 combined to make a compound ideograph 囍, meaning "double happiness."

<sup>248</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 694.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

by holding a knife and wandering in a dark place looking for a spark. Of course, you can do what I said, but you may just see the spark of a cigarette. We cannot be rich in this way.

Yang not only tells the audience that what he says in his performance will not happen in real life but also emphasises the importance of being industrious. He reminds his audience that there is no such thing as “reaping without sowing.” This comment is close to heart and appeals to the audience.

From time to time, Yang also comments through the monologues of individual characters. For example, Mama Zhang has a long monologue after she suggests that Sun Qiangshi has permitted Pi Wu to marry her stepdaughter Sun Xiaogu. Her monologue is Yang’s comment on Mama Zhang’s plan. It reads as follows:<sup>249</sup>

I have something to say: You [Sun Qiangshi] the bad woman! You have the desire to make Sun Xiaogu poor and sad. You want Sun Xiaogu to freeze to death. However, I will treat her as my daughter. I will support her even if Pi Wu will not. [...] Pi Wu is a rogue now but he will not be the same in the future. I believe he will become a better man. As the proverb goes, “Even cannon fodder has a moment of giving off heat” (*paohui hai you ge fa re de shihou* 炮灰還有個發熱的時候). As the folk saying goes, “A prodigal who returns is more precious than gold” (*langzi huitou jinbuhuan* 浪子回頭金不換). Pi Wu is poor now but he will not be poor all the time. As the folk saying goes, “three years on the eastern side of the river and three years on the western side of it” (*sannian hedong zhuan hexi* 三年河東三年河西). It refers to “dramatic changes taking place in a

---

<sup>249</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 17.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

person's life.”). He should be rich in the future. Sun Qiangshi, you believe Sun Xiaogu will be poor. You are wrong in thinking like this.

Yang does not directly comment that Mama Zhang is a kind-hearted woman and that her plan is good in the long run. He expresses his attitude through Mama Zhang's monologue. When listening to the presentation shown above, the audience understands that her plan is good in the long run, which may appear to be bad to Sun Xiaogu. Although Pi Wu is a rogue, Zhang believes he is a man of good character, and he will not be a poor rogue for the rest of his life. Moreover, only when Sun Xiaogu is married to Pi Wu, can be saved from the evil Sun Qiangshi.

In addition to extending the existing comical episodes, Yang has also created comical events that centre on Pi Wu. However, the narrative on the newly created events is no more than 2% of Yang's entire narration. Unit 48 “Telling news thoughtlessly” and Unit 49 “Running away with a pair of shoes” narrate the comical event concerning Pi Wu, which, however, does not occur in either Pu's version of the text of Pi Wu or Yu's. I will discuss these two units in Chapter 6 as they are based on the two types of realisation of the word *pao* 跑 in the Yangzhou dialect. However, there are no more newly created comical events centring on Pi Wu in Yang's repertoire.

The biggest difference between the three texts lies in the ending of the story. When I asked Yang whether he borrowed the episode from fiction or drama, he said he was inspired by the ending shared by fictional works created in the Ming and Qing dynasties.<sup>250</sup> In Pu's version, Pi Wu lives to eighty years old and has a big family with several grandsons. In Yu's version, Pi Wu disappears immediately after the Emperor

---

<sup>250</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 June 2019.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

commands his guards to arrest him. In Yang's narrative, Pi Wu becomes a monk and dies at 103 years old. Why does he arrange Pi Wu to become a monk? According to Yang, the episode of the protagonist becoming a monk from the traditional Chinese fiction created during the Ming and Qing dynasties is the source of inspiration for his rewriting of the ending of the story of Pi Wu.<sup>251</sup> The Qing novel *Dream of the Red Chamber* is an example.<sup>252</sup> Jia Baoyu, one of the protagonists, eventually becomes a monk after disappearing in the vast snow at the end of the novel. It is because Jia has experienced the joys and sorrows of life to the full. In each of the three versions of the story of Pi Wu, Pi Wu is born in a wealth family but lost his parents in his teenage years. Later, he loses a big fortune in a gambling party organised by his father's friends. As a result, he becomes a rogue in shock poverty. Blessed by a mysterious power, he is married with a nice girl and wins a big fortune in a gambling party and becomes wealthy again. While he is enjoying the happiness brought about by his fortune, the emperor orders to arrest him. In terms of life experience, the image of Pi Wu resembles that of Jia Baoyu as their lives change radically. It is reasonable that Yang innovatively lets his hero have the same final disposition as Jia Baoyu.

Yang Mingkun unfolds the main plot of the Pu School into a comical biography of Pi Wu. Yang focuses on extending the comical episodes that already existed in the two versions of performance-style texts based on Pu Lin's and Yu Youchun's repertoires respectively. In Yang's extended narrative, elaboration is given on the scenes, items and characters, there are explanations of dialect words and traditions,

---

<sup>251</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 June 2019.

<sup>252</sup> Chen Shihai 陳世海, "Yangzhou pinghua *Pi Wu lazi de gongxing jingyan yu gexingjiazhi*" 揚州評話《皮五辣子》的共性經驗與個性價值 ("General Experience and Individual Value for the Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*"), in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 21.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

comments on characters and events. These are all absent from Pu's and Yu's narrations. Hence, Yang's narrative sounds more appealing to the contemporary audience.

### 4.3 The Narration of Pi Wu in Yang's Story

For an oral performance to succeed, Rubin argues that concrete details make stories more accurate, thoughtful, and believable.<sup>253</sup> Indeed in Yang's version, the narration of Pi Wu becomes more concrete and the social relationships related to this protagonist becomes clearer. Hence, his repertoire is subsequently well received among the contemporary audiences.

As suggested by the title *Rogue Pi Wu*, Pi Wu is a rogue in the story narrated by Yang Mingkun. Although his story is full of comical presentation, it focuses on Pi Wu's knavish conduct and the story is almost a biography of the rogue. The audience loves to listen to Yang's story and is receptive to the narration of Pi Wu. The vivid portrayal of Pi Wu and the characters connected to Pi Wu in Yang's story explains why contemporary audiences readily accept the story.

The description of Pi Wu reflected in the narrative recreated by Yang Mingkun is positive. The audience can also learn about the friendship and neighbourhood depicted through Pi Wu's daily life experiences. Although known as a rogue, Pi Wu is portrayed by Yang Mingkun as a man with a good conscience. As discussed above, one of the three ways in which Yang extends his presentation is by providing a detailed depiction of everyday life, such as the description of conversations. Yang is skilled at shaping the image of Pi Wu through his conversations with others. For example, in Unit 7, "Mama Zhang goes matchmaking," Mama Zhang asks Pi Wu to marry Sun

---

<sup>253</sup> Rubin, *Memory in Oral Traditions*: 55-6.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Xiaogu, the daughter of the court official Sun Dali. Pi Wu is a poor rogue who lives in a ruined temple and has no family or relatives. He finds it unbelievable that one day the daughter of a court official will become his wife. On hearing the news, he is not overjoyed but worries about Xiaogu's future. Considering his present living situation, he says to Mama Zhang in a seriously and calm tone, "Mama Zhang, how can you come up with such a bad idea? Xiaogu must not be married to me. How can I support her when we get married? If she lives with me [on the streets], she will freeze or starve to death. For this, I owe a lot to my elder uncle Sun. *Wooo* (sounds of crying) ..." <sup>254</sup>

His response to Mama Zhang suggests that he is a thoughtful man. This conversation is absent from Pu Lin's and Yu Youchun's versions. Although Yu mentions that Pi Wu does not agree with Mama Zhang's idea of the marriage to Xiaogu, he does not provide any conversations between Mama Zhang and Pi Wu to highlight that Pi Wu is a man of conscience. Thus, in contrast to the narration of Pi Wu in Pu's and Yu's versions, Pi Wu is presented as a man with a conscience through his conversations with Mama Zhang in Yang's version.

Although he is known for his knavishness, Pi Wu never does bad things to poor or good people. As discussed above, Pi Wu is presented as a knavish rogue by Pu, Yu and Yang in their stories. As shown in Table 4.3, 32.4% of Yang's narration and 42.9% of Yu's include the knavish conduct of Pi Wu. In contrast, in Pu Lin's version, 25.6% of Pu Lin's version concerns this theme. Unlike Pu and Yu, Yang provides explanations as to why Pi Wu directs his knavish behaviour towards the rich and arrogant. He does not like rich people who are not merciful to the poor or the treacherous. Such people remind him of his father's friends who take away his

---

<sup>254</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 47.

### The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

considerable fortune by deploying trickery at a gambling party and show no mercy. In addition, he looks down on the urban townspeople who are avaricious and arrogant. He is ready to perform tricks on these people to gain 200 *wen*, with the objective of seeking revenge and making fun of them. Thus, in Yang's story, Pi Wu is presented as an upright man who only plays knavish tricks on the villains.

Yang also narrates the inner thoughts of Pi Wu. As discussed above, Yang creates new episodes to demonstrate Pi Wu's knavish behaviour. For example, Unit 41 was added by Yang, which is absent from Pu's and Yu's versions. In Unit 41, "Half *jin* of Longjin tea," Pi Wu disguises himself as Liu Shouzi to gain a half *jin* of Longjin tea by cheating at the Hong Yitai tea store. When he has successfully obtained the tea through trickery and ready to head home, he thinks of Liu Shouzi and is worried about him. Pi Wu says to himself, "Liu Shouzi is so poor. Can he afford the Longjin tea? What can he do if the boss of the store charges him a fee later? I do not want him to be brought to the court by the boss." Eventually, Pi Wu goes back to the store and tells the truth to the owner.<sup>255</sup> In this incident, Pi Wu cannot be regarded as an upright man, because he has used trickery on the tea store owner and Liu Shouzi. However, he is a man of conscience. Considering that Liu Shouzi is poor, Pi Wu decides to admit his trickery to the owner even though he has obtained the tea because he does not want to get poor Liu Shouzi into trouble. In Yang's story, the incident in Unit 41 suggests that Pi Wu is a knavish rogue, but he will not direct his knavishness towards the poor.

Yang and Yu are devoted to portray Pi Wu as a swordsman in daily life but this is not the case in Pu's version. In Yang's and Yu's versions, Pi Wu helps the poor to solve their problems by performing trickery. Taking Units 38, 42 and 50 in Yang's

---

<sup>255</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 335.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

version for example, in Unit 38, “Asking for money by faking death,” Pi Wu pretends to be dying, lying on the ice-cold ground outside the bank on a winter night, aiming to obtain money by performing a trick on the boss. Jin Erpang, the boss of the bank, who used to be a friend of Pi Wu’s father and is one of those who take away Pi’s fortune through tricky gambling. As a form of revenge, Pi Wu performs tricks on him to gain three string (*diao* 吊) of coins to help a poor woman. In Unit 42, “Helping an elderly lady,” Pi Wu spreads a fake rumour of a fire outbreak one winter night and collects money from the bystanders through trickery. He collects money to help the homeless old lady. In Unit 50, Pi Wu disguises himself as the fifth uncle of a young lady whom he has never met before. He goes to the lady’s home and asks her father-in-law to arrange a wedding ceremony for the young lady and his son. In addition, Pi Wu asks the old man to treat the young lady as a female bodhisattva. As shown in Table 4.4, the event in Unit 38 is shared in the three versions, but the events in Units 42 and 50 are absent from Pu’s version. Although Yu narrates the two events, he does not provide any comment on the incidents, and he does not provide Pi Wu’s speech or inner thoughts in the same way as Yang. Thus, the role of Pi Wu as swordsman becomes more concrete in Yang’s version.

Yang provides an in-depth description of Pi Wu as a man merciful to the poor. In Unit 64, Pi Wu donates all of his limited money to the poor, even though he is not rich. In Unit 39, “First-class laba congee,” a poor boy breaks a bowl while waiting for *laba* congee at the gate of the Buddhist temple. His mother blames him and he cries sadly. Pi Wu says to himself upon witnessing the scene, “When I am rich, I will distribute *laba* congee to the poor every day. I will give them the top-quality thick *laba*

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

congee, not the diluted type.”<sup>256</sup> Pi Wu becomes a generous philanthropist after he finds the large fortune. In Unit 90, Pi Wu says he will give every poor man ten taels of silver. In this way, they will be able to run a small business and lead a better life.<sup>257</sup> In the events from these three units, Pi Wu shows mercy to the poor. As shown in Table 4.4, events in Units 39, 64 and 90 are shared in Yu’s version but absent from Pu’s. Thus, Pi Wu is identified as a man merciful to the poor in Yang’s and Yu’s. However, in Units 39 and 90, Yang arranges for Pi Wu to directly speak about his goodwill to the poor through Pi Wu’s monologue and conversations with the poor, as shown above. On the other hand, this is not the case in Yu’s version. As a result, Pi Wu appears more merciful in Yang’s version compared to that of Yu’s.

In Yang’s story, Pi Wu hates violent behaviour and robbery. For example, in Unit 74, Pi Wu persuades some robbers to give up their evil practice for good. The robbers broke into Pi Wu’s luxury house. When Pi Wu discovers them, he tries to persuade them. As shown in Table 4.4, this event is absent from Pu’s version but present in Yu’s. However, unlike Yang, Yu does not focus on describing the conversations between Pi Wu and the robbers. In Yang’s version, the manner Pi Wu speaks to the robbers suggests that he is indeed an upright man.

As shown above, Pi Wu is portrayed positively in the story. Although he lives by performing trickery on people who are not upright, he never hurt others through force. Moreover, he is always merciful to the poor and helps them by tricking the rich and arrogant. He even persuades the robbers to turn over a new leaf.

The portrayal by Yang Mingkun of the various types of relationships Pi Wu has with the characters have received positive responses as well. As shown in Table

---

<sup>256</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 318.

<sup>257</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 728.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

4.3, 47.5% of Yang's narration centres on the daily life experiences of Yangzhou locals whereas only 33.3% of Yu's narration and 9.6% of Pu's centre on this theme. As will be elaborated below, there are three main types of relationships as presented through the characters' daily life experiences. They are not identified in Pu's version as Pu does not focus on narrating the daily life experiences of the Yangzhou people. The first two types are identified in Yu's version but the last is absent.

Firstly, many married couples are involved in the story of Pi Wu, such as Pi Wu and Sun Xiaogu, and Ni Si and Si nainai. They care about each other and go through the ups and downs of life together. When Xiaogu has the desire to drink Longjin tea, Pi Wu goes all out to get it for her. In another case, Xiaogu wants to buy something special for the Spring festival and Pi Wu goes out to get for her too. When Pi Wu buys a dilapidated house, Xiaogu does not kick up a fuss but without hesitation immediately moves in with him even though she knows there is a risk of being killed by the monster living in the house.

Secondly, the relationship between Pi Wu and his friends fits the proverb "a friend in need is a friend indeed." When Pi Wu is a poor rogue, he "bought" a room from Ni Si by cheating. Later, Ni Si discovers Pi Wu's trickery but forgives him and lets him move in. This is because Ni Si does not want to delay Pi Wu's wedding. Pi Wu is grateful, and he never forgets those who helped him previously, such as Ni Si, Mama Zhang and Xiao Liuzi. Mama Zhang saves Xiaogu from her stepmother by marrying her to Pi Wu. Also, she supports Xiaogu's life in many other ways. Xiao Liuzi is a friend of Mama Zhang, and he saves her life by offering her his only return-of-the-soul pill (*huanhun dan* 還魂丹). When Pi Wu becomes a wealthy pawnbroker, he treats Ni Si, Mama Zhang and Xiao Liuzi as his family members and asks them to move to live with his family in his grand mansion.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Thirdly, the employers in Yang's story are friendly and have good relationships with their employees. The young boss of the Hongyitai tea house treats his employees respectfully and in return, they show no hesitation in protecting his interests during crisis. For example, the grandfather of the young boss is arrogant. When he goes to the tea store, all the employees are patient with him. The boss of the Dafa rice store is kind to his temporary employees. When he is absent from the store, they continue to work hard and are praised by the customers. The workers respond and say, "The boss is kind. He provides breakfast for us, such as congee, steamed rice cakes and other types of dim sum. Yesterday, he provided soy sauce pork at lunch. We are happy with him. Although we are not full-time employees, we should do our best to help him."<sup>258</sup>

As shown above, the three types of relationships that exist in our daily lives today are presented in the story narrated by Yang Mingkun: husband and wife, friends, employer and employee. Through the daily life experiences of Pi Wu, Ni Si, Mama Zhang, Xiao Liuzi and other characters related to Pi Wu, have a positive attitude in life, which serves to motivate the contemporary audience.

Although Yang Mingkun continues the tradition of portraying Pi Wu as a rogue who displays knavish conduct, it appeals greatly to contemporary audiences due to the positive messages and the sense of integrity reflected in the character.

## 4.4 Conclusion

As a storyteller responsible for the transmission of the repertoire, Yang Mingkun preserves the storyline (*shu lu zi*) of the Pu School initially created by Pu Lin. The three themes associated with Pi Wu and the court case storyline in Pu's story have

---

<sup>258</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 357.

## **The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

been examined as the main plot shared with the other two transcribed texts of Yu Youchun and Yang Mingkun.

As a contemporary storyteller, Yang recreates Pu's story and develops into a biography of Pi Wu. Yang does not change the shared main plot inherited from his master but also does not ignore the requirements of the contemporary audiences. Thus, he recreates the story by enriching the funny episodes and creating new ones. Also, he omits details that are of no direct relevance to the story of Pi Wu. He elaborates on the funny incidents, gives explanations of dialect words and makes new comments on the figures and incidents in the story. All these elements contribute to the popularity of his storytelling among the audiences today.

## FIVE

### Phonetic and Syntactic Features of Yang Mingkun's Performance Language

The language used by Yang Mingkun in reciting the story of Pi Wu is the Yangzhou dialect spoken in a traditional style.<sup>259</sup> In this chapter, I will examine the conventionalized speaking register in Yang's performance of the story of Pi Wu.

The Yangzhou dialect is used in Yangzhou storytelling. However, different Yangzhou *pinghua* storytellers have different speaking styles. Some of them apply the Yangzhou dialect throughout their performance, others prefer to adopt a few Northern phonetic realisations or pronounce words their own way. Yang Mingkun performs with the Yangzhou dialect that he learnt in the Pu School. This chapter aims to examine whether Yang has adopted Yangzhou dialect in his performances and analyse his performance diction from a historical-linguistic point of view. I will first outline the linguistic features of his performance language through phonetic and syntactic analysis. Secondly, using the commonly accepted phonological system of the Yangzhou dialect and the syntactic features of the Yangzhou dialect, I will illustrate that Yang's performance language manifests itself as typical of the Yangzhou dialect in the traditional style, albeit with slight pronunciation adjustments. In the last section, based on Yang's performance diction, I will look at the relationship between migration history and the development of the Yangzhou dialect to point out that his performance diction greatly contributes to the study of Yangzhou dialect. The data for phonetic and

---

<sup>259</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.



syntactic analysis in this chapter are collected from the text *Rogue Pi Wu* transcribed from Yang Mingkun's repertoire, the video recording of Yang's performance of *Rogue Pi Wu*, and Yang's live performances that I observed at Pi Wu Story House in April and July 2016.<sup>260</sup>

## **5.1 Phonetic Features of Yang's Performance Language**

In this section, I will examine whether the phonetic features of Yang's performance language match the Yangzhou dialect commonly used by the locals today. For Standard or Standard Chinese, the Beijing accent is regarded as the standard pronunciation and the Northern dialect as its basic dialect, while the standard grammatical rules are drawn from contemporary vernacular works.<sup>261</sup> As the accent and phonetic realisation of the Beijing dialect is the phonetic foundation of Standard Chinese, I set the phonological system in Beijing dialect as the anchor to assess the phonological features of Yang's performance language. During the process, I will conduct a comparative analysis of the Yangzhou dialect and Yang's performance language. I ascribe Yang's phonetic features to the following eight rules:

1. Retroflex initials *zh-* [tʂ-], *ch-* [tʂ'-], *sh-* [ʂ-], and *r-* [ʐ-] are absent.
2. Dental-alveolar initials *l-* [l-] and *n-* [n-] are distributed according to the phonetic type of the following vowel.
3. Nasal ending *-ng* [-ŋ] in the compound finals *-eng* is realised as [-n]; *-n* [-n] in the *-in* is realised as [-ŋ].

---

<sup>260</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi; Pi Wu lazi* (oral performance by Yang Mingkun), (Jiangsu Phoenix Electronic Audio and Video Publishing House, 2015).

<sup>261</sup> Zhang, *Xinbian xiandai Hanyu*, 7.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

4. Compound finals are realised as single finals; retroflex roll *er* [-ər] is realised as [a] without a retroflex trace.
5. MC entering tone is commonly realised.
6. Literary and colloquial reading and *podu* reading exist.
7. There is set abbreviated realisation of pluri-syllable words.
8. Realisation is clear and sonorous.

The retroflex initials *zh-*, *ch-*, *sh-* and dental-alveolar initials *z-*, *c-*, *s-* are six phonemes in the Beijing dialect, and they all perform the function of differentiating syllables. However, in Yang's pronunciation, only *z-*, *c-* and *s-* are identified while *zh-*, *ch-*, *sh-* are absent (Table 5.1)

Example	知	紙	場	吃	師	是	燥	子	次	嘴	絲	四
<i>pinyin</i> syllable	<i>zhi</i>	<i>zhi</i>	<i>chang</i>	<i>chi</i>	<i>shi</i>	<i>shi</i>	<i>zao</i>	<i>zi</i>	<i>ci</i>	<i>zui</i>	<i>si</i>	<i>si</i>
Beijing dialect	tʂ-	tʂ-	tʂ'-	tʂ'-	ʃ-	ʃ-	ts-	ts-	ts'-	ts'-	s-	s-
Yang's realisation	ts-	ts-	ts'-	tɕ'-	s-	s-	ts-	ts-	ts'-	ts'-	s-	s-

Table 5.1 Phonetic realisation of *zh-*, *ch-*, *sh-* and *z-*, *c-*, *s-*

Yang Mingkun realises the retroflex initials *zh-* [tʂ-], *ch-* [tʂ'-], *sh-* [ʃ-] of the Beijing dialect as the dental-alveolar initials *z-* [ts-], *c-* [ts'-], *s-* [s-] or alveolar-palatal initial *q-* [tɕ'-]. As a result, many homonyms exist in Yang's diction, but not in the Beijing dialect. For example, 紫 *zǐ* and 紙 *zhǐ* are identically realised as [ts<sub>1</sub><sup>42</sup>] by Yang.

The distribution of the dental-alveolar initials *l-* [l-] and *n-* [n-] in Yang's pronunciation differs from that of Beijing dialect. Børdahl pays close attention to the initials *l-* and *n-* when observing Wang Shaotang's speaking styles but does not illustrate the distribution of *n-* and *l-* in detail. She argues that there is a "distinction between initials /l-/ , /n-/ and /r-/ in opposition to no such distinction, here called blurred

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

/l-/.”<sup>262</sup> Audiences who are not familiar with the Yangzhou dialect but are familiar with Standard Chinese are usually confused with phonetic realisation [l-] when watching Yang’s performance. Also, they wrongly argue that in Yangzhou *pinghua*, *r-* [ʐ-], *l-* [l-] and *n-* [n-] are allophonic variations of the phoneme [l-], as they cannot distinguish between syllables via the initials *l-*, *n-*, and *r-*. The view held by Margaret Mian Yan is that “Nanjing dialect merges Standard Chinese consonant initials *n-* with *l-* and realised both as [l-]” is not accurate.<sup>263</sup> Instead, the distribution of the two initials in the Nanjing dialect is similar to that in Yangzhou dialect.

The distribution of the initials *l-* [l-] and *n-* [n-] in Yang’s realisation is as follows: First, when observing Yang’s pronunciation, I found that the phoneme [l-] is followed by the *hongyin* 洪音 vowel (finals which contain “open” rhymes or “closed” rhymes); [n-] by the *xiyin* 細音 vowel (finals which contain “rounded” rhymes or “aligned-teeth” rhymes).<sup>264</sup> Table 5.2 is an illustration of the phonetic realisation of *n-* and *l-*.

Example	牛	那	魯	驢
<i>pinyin</i> syllable	<i>niū</i>	<i>nà</i>	<i>lǔ</i>	<i>lǚ</i>
Beijing dialect	<i>n-</i>	<i>n-</i>	<i>l-</i>	<i>l-</i>
Yang’s realisation	<i>n-</i>	<i>l-</i>	<i>l-</i>	<i>n-</i>

Table 5.2 Phonetic realisation of *n-* and *l-*

As shown in Table 5.2, the phoneme [n-] in Yang’s pronunciation is followed by *hongyin* finals which contain the “aligned-teeth” rhyme *-i* or “rounded” rhyme *-ü*. [l-], followed by *xiyin* finals including open rhyme *-a* or closed rhyme *-u*. The syllable *lǚ* 綠 is an exception to this rule. It is realised as [ly] in the Beijing dialect and [lɔʔ] by

<sup>262</sup> Børdahl, “The Voice of Wang Shaotang in Chinese Storytelling”, 17.

<sup>263</sup> Yan, *Introduction to Chinese Dialectology*, 72.

<sup>264</sup> According to the shapes of mouth and lips when pronouncing, Chinese finals are divided to *sihu* 四呼 (four types): *kaikou hu* 開口呼 (“open” rhymes), i.e. a [a]; *hekou hu* 合口呼 (“closed” rhymes), i.e. u [u]; *cuokou hu* 撮口呼 (“rounded” rhymes), i.e. ü [y]; and *qichi hu* 齊齒呼 (“aligned-teeth” rhymes), i.e. i [i].

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yang; the initial *l-* was retained. It is because Yang changed the “rounded” rhyme [y] to the “open” rhyme [ɔʔ].

Secondly, in some cases, Yang realises initials *r-* [ʐ-] and *n-* [n-] in the Beijing dialect as [l-]. The realisation of the retroflex initial *r-* [ʐ-] undergoes an interesting change in Yang’s pronunciation. Take *rǎn* 染 and *rěn* 忍 for example: the former *r-* [ʐ-] in the Beijing dialect is absent in Yang’s realisation [iě] of *rǎn*, whereas the latter changes into [l-] in [lən] of *rěn* (Table 5.3).

Example	然	冉	讓	人
<i>pinyin</i> syllable	<i>ran</i>	<i>ran</i>	<i>rang</i>	<i>ren</i>
Beijing dialect	ʐ-	ʐ-	ʐ-	ʐ-
Yang’s realisation	∅ (zero initial)	∅	l-	l-

Table 5.3 Phonetic realisation of *r-*

In Yang’s realisation, the nasal ending *-ng* [-ŋ] in the compound final *-eng* is realised as [-n] or [-ŋ] conditionally. As shown in Table 5.4, *-eng* in *leng*, *feng*, and *weng* in Yang’s performance diction is realised as [-əŋ], [-oŋ] and [-oŋ], respectively, and *-n* and *-ng* in *-in* and *-ing* as [-ŋ] identically. Interestingly, all the three commonly used syllables *lěng*, *rén*, and *réng* are pronounced as [lən] in similar tone pitches by Yang.

Example	音	英	冷	風	翁
<i>pinyin</i> syllable	<i>yin</i>	<i>ying</i>	<i>leng</i>	<i>feng</i>	<i>weng</i>
Beijing dialect	-in	-iŋ	-əŋ	-əŋ	-əŋ
Yang’s realisation	-iŋ	-iŋ	-əŋ	-oŋ	-oŋ

Table 5.4 Phonetic realisation of *-ng* and *-n*

Yang treats compound finals as a single in his diction. First, Yang treats the diphthong in compound finals as a monophthong instead. For example, *gao* 高 is realised as [kau] in the Beijing dialect, but as [kɔ] in Yang’s diction. Secondly, Yang changes the di-phone final into a mono-phone. The commonly used di-phone finals *-an* [əŋ] are shortened to mono-phone [ǣ] in Yang’s pronunciation. For instance, *san* 三 [sən] in the Beijing dialect is pronounced as [sǣ] by Yang. Thirdly, the retroflex di-

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

phone final *-er* [-ər] is [a] in Yang's diction. Wang Shaotang deals with *-er* in a different way; he pronounces it clearly as the di-phone [ar].<sup>265</sup>

The MC entering tone has a short glottal ending sound attached to a syllable's phonetic realisation, recorded as [ʔ]. It is regarded as a phonetic feature of the dialect and categorised with the fifth tone pitch. It commonly exists in Yang's pronunciation. For instance, Yang reads *he* 鶴, *pa* 杷, *zhuo* 卓, *xue* 學, and *le* 樂 as [xaʔ], [p'aʔ], [tsuaʔ], [eiaʔ], and [laʔ], respectively. The MC entering tone is conditionally read by Wang Shaotang according to his personal speaking styles.<sup>266</sup> Additionally, Wang's and Yang's entering tone realisation reflects the phonological development of the Yangzhou dialect in the last fifty years. For example, the syllable *rou* 肉 is pronounced as [loʔ.] by Wang in the traditional pronunciation, but as [lyuʔ] by Yang without the MC entering tone.<sup>267</sup>

The literary (L) and colloquial (C) pronunciation and *podu* (P) pronunciation commonly exist in Yang's diction. For example, Yang reads *xia* 下 as [eia] or [xa], the former is the literary pronunciation and the latter is colloquial. In Yang's diction, *sa* 撒 is [sæʔ] or [sa] in Yang's diction with the former as the original (O) pronunciation and the latter, *podu*. As a result, some syllables with two types of phonetic realisations exist in Yang's diction but only one exists in the Beijing dialect (Table 5.5)

---

<sup>265</sup> Børdahl, "The Voice of Wang Shaotang in Chinese Storytelling", 17-8.

<sup>266</sup> Børdahl, "The Voice of Wang Shaotang in Chinese Storytelling", 18.

<sup>267</sup> Wang shihua, "Yangzhou yuyin de yixie bianhua" 揚州語音的一些變化 ("Some Variations in Phonetic Realisation in the Yangzhou Dialect"), *Yangzhou shiyuan xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 4 (1981): 82.

The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Example <i>Pinyin</i> syllable	LC reading		P reading			
	家 jia	去 qu	疊 die	摸 mo	兩 liang	爹 die
Beijing dialect	teia	te'y	tie	mo	lianj	tie
Yang's phonetic realisation I	ka (C)	k'ɪ (C)	tieʔ* (O)	maʔ* (O)	nianj* (O)	tia* (O)
Yang's phonetic realisation II	teia (L)	te'y (L)	tiã (P)	mo (P)	niã (P)	tii (P)

Table 5.5 Syllables with two phonetic realisations in Yang's diction

Language contact between the Northern and Southern dialects occurred in ancient China, as several waves of southward migration took place from the Western Jin dynasty onwards; As the phonetic evidence of language contact, LC pronunciation exists in many individual dialects. LC reading is a notable feature of the Northern Wu dialect.<sup>268</sup> L pronunciation indicates a syllable read in the Northern dialect and C pronunciation, in the Southern. As shown in Table 5.5, both *jia* 家 and *qu* 去 have LC pronunciation. The L reading [teia] and [te'y] follows the Northern phonological system and they resemble the phonetic realisation [teia] and [te'y] in Beijing dialect respectively. Their respective C reading [ka] and [k'ɪ] follows the Southern pattern and shows the difference in initial and final from the L reading.

The P pronunciation aims to distinguish different but related meanings of one syllable or two morphemes sharing a phonetic realisation, which is achieved by changing the tone, final, or initial. Basically, the O reading retains the manner of the Middle Chinese phonetic realisation, and P reading resembles the reading in Beijing dialect. As shown in Table 5.5 above, the O realisation of *die* 疊, *mo* 摸, *liang* 兩, *die* 爹 complies with Middle Chinese diction.<sup>269</sup> To add a relative meaning to them, the P

<sup>268</sup> Coblin, "Migration history and dialect development in the lower Yangtze watershed", 534-6.

<sup>269</sup> Wang, "Yangzhou kouyu zhong de podu", 108-9.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

reading is produced. For instance, *die* 爹 means “father” in the O reading; it refers to “grandfather” in the P realisation, which sounds like the pronunciation in Beijing dialect. The word *die* 疊 is a measure word (MW) when realised as a P reading [tiæ̃], and becomes a verb in the O reading [tieʔ]. LC reading is identified in Wang’s pronunciation.<sup>270</sup>

The set abbreviated realisation of pluri-syllable words exists in Yang’s speech. For example, the word *mashang* 馬上 [ma ʃaŋ] in the Beijing dialect is read as [maŋ] by Yang. The four-syllable phrase *zhe ge yang zi* 這個樣子 is realised as [kaŋ tsɛ] by Yang and it is realised as [tʃe ke iaŋ tsɿ] in the Beijing dialect. Regarding the realisation of pluri-syllable phrases, the set abbreviation by Yang is not identified in the diction of Wang Shaotang. The commonly used set abbreviated realisations of disyllable words or phrases are given in Table 5.6.

Example	的呀	子啊	的哎	告訴
<i>pinyin</i> syllable	de ya	zi a	de ai	gao su
Beijing Dialect	tə ia	tsɿ a	tə ai	kau su
Yang’s pronunciation	tia	tʃa	tɛ	koŋ

Table 5.6 Set of abbreviated realisations of disyllable by Yang

These set abbreviations shown in Table 5.6 are only a few of those found in Yang’s diction. Yang adopts them in his performance in a high frequency as [tia], [tʃa], and [tɛ] represent the sentence as an ending syllable.

The above eight rules of Yang’s phonetic realisation are attained through my personal observation of his pronunciation in performance. I will now compare the phonetic features of Yang’s performance language with that of the Yangzhou dialect. Before this comparative analysis is conducted, it is necessary to briefly introduce the

---

<sup>270</sup> Børdahl, “*Wenbai yidu*: Literary and Colloquial Forms in Yangzhou Storytelling”; “The Voice of Wang Shaotang in Chinese Storytelling”, 18-9.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

phonological features of the Yangzhou dialect. First, the Yangzhou dialect is a subgroup of the Hongchao dialect group. The Hongchao group is one of the four subgroups of Jiang-Huai Mandarin. Jiang-Huai Mandarin belongs to Northern Mandarin. Undoubtedly, the phonological system in the Yangzhou dialect is close to that of Northern Mandarin. However, it also displays features of the Southern dialects. Secondly, the Yangzhou dialect spoken at present is different from that spoken fifty years ago or earlier and the main difference lies in the domain of phonetics.

The phonological system of the Yangzhou dialect consists of seventeen consonant initials with the zero initial, 47 finals,<sup>271</sup> and 5 tones, including the MC entering tone (Table 5.7).<sup>272</sup>

<b>Initials:</b> p p̣ m f t ṭ l ts ṭ s ṭ ɕ k ḳ x Ø
<b>Finals:</b> ɿ i u y a ia ua ɛ iɛ uɛ iɪ uɪ ɔ iɔ o ɪ uɪ yu iyu ǣ iǣ uǣ iē yē uō ɤn uən iŋ yŋ aŋ iaŋ uaŋ oŋ ioŋ aʔ iaʔ uaʔ ɤʔ iǣʔ uǣʔ əʔ uəʔ ieʔ yeʔ ɔʔ iɔʔ uoʔ
<b>Tones' pitch:</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> tone 21; 2 <sup>nd</sup> tone 34; 3 <sup>rd</sup> tone 42; 4 <sup>th</sup> tone 55; entering tone ʔ4

Table 5.7 Phonological system of the Yangzhou dialect

Yang's speaking rules 1-3 show that his phonetic features conform to the phonological system of Yangzhou dialect. In Yangzhou dialect, the retroflex initials *zh-* [tʂ-], *ch-* [tʂ'-], *sh-* [ʂ-] and *r-* [ʐ-] are absent as are the nasal endings *-eng* [-əŋ] and *-in* [-in]. The retroflex initial *r-* [ʐ-], nasal initial *n-* [n-] and lateral initial *l-* [l-] of the Beijing dialect are re-distributed in the Yangzhou dialect according to the following rules: The

<sup>271</sup> As final [m] can act as a syllable in the Yangzhou dialect, i.e. [m ma] 姆媽, it is controversial to include [m] in the initial group of the Yangzhou dialect. Here, I count it as an initial according to the grouping in the Li Rong 李榮, Wang Shihua and Huang Jilin, (eds.), *Yangzhou fangyan cidian* 揚州方言詞典 (*Dictionary of the Yangzhou Dialect*), (Nanjing: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe, 1996)

<sup>272</sup> Bao Mingwei 鮑明偉, *Jiangsu sheng zhi fangyan zhi* 江蘇省志方言志 (*Gazetteer the Dialects within Jiangsu Province*), (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 1998) Since the 1950s, scholars have conducted research on the Yangzhou dialect concerning its phonological system, among which the *Jiangsu sheng zhi fangyan zhi* is an authority. The phonological system of the Yangzhou dialect presented in *Jiangsu sheng zhi fangyan zhi* is reckoned as the standard and frequently cited by scholars to support their argument. In the present study, I rely on it as well.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

realisations [z̥-] are absent but [l-] exists and phoneme [l-] embraces two allophonic variations of [l-] and [n-]. [l-] must be followed by a *hongyin* vowel and [n-] by *xinyin*. Initial *r-* [z̥-] is realised as [l-], or zero initial.<sup>273</sup> At present, due to the influence of phonetic realisations in Standard Mandarin, the distribution of [z̥-], [n-] and [l-] in the Yangzhou dialect is close to that of Standard Chinese.<sup>274</sup> Most of the modern Yangzhou dialect speakers are not over 40 years and they have learnt Standard Mandarin as their day-to-day language (Table 5.8).

Example	拿	膩	熱	暖	冉
Pinyin syllable	<i>na</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>re</i>	<i>nuan</i>	<i>ran</i>
Standard Mandarin	na	ni	ʐə	nuan	ʐan
Yangzhou dialect	la	li	ieʔ	luō	iě
Modern Yangzhou dialect	na	ni	le	nuō	ran

Table 5.8 Initial realisation [n-] and [l-]

In Table 5.8, the distribution of [n-] and [l-] in the modern Yangzhou dialect resembles that in Standard Mandarin. However, it is different from that of Yangzhou dialect. Tables 5.1-5.3 and 5.8 indicate that the distribution of the initials [z̥-], [n-], and [l-] in Yang's diction is identical to that in the Yangzhou dialect, but not in the present.

Yang's phonetic rules 4-5 conform to the phonological system of the Yangzhou dialect. In his study of Yangzhou dialect, Wang Shihua argued that the compound diphthong or triphthong finals in Beijing dialect existed in Yangzhou dialect as monophthongs.<sup>275</sup> For example, [ei] of the Beijing dialect is realised as [i] in the Yangzhou dialect. Also, [i] has an allophonic variation [ii]. Yang Mingkun realised the diphthong in compound finals as monophthong as well.

<sup>273</sup> Wang Shihua, "Yangzhouhua de sheng yun diao" 揚州話的聲韻調 (*The Initials, Finals, and Tones of the Yangzhou Dialect*), *Fangyan* 2 (1992): 115; Li et al. (eds.), *Yangzhou fangyan cidian*, 7.

<sup>274</sup> Lu Qin 陸琴, "Jin wushinian lai Yangzhou fangyan yuyin de bianhua yanjiu" 近五十年來揚州方言的語音的變化研究 ("Study on the Phonetic-Variations of Yangzhou Dialect over the Past Fifty Years"), (MA thesis, Nanjing Normal University, 2003), 14.

<sup>275</sup> Wang, "Yangzhouhua de sheng yun diao", 119; Wang, "Yangzhou yuyin de yixie bianhua", 84.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Thirty compound finals exist in the phonological system of the Beijing dialect, of which 17 are diphthongs or triphthong finals (Table 5.9).

<b>Finals:</b> ɪ i u y ʅ ə a ia ua ie ye Y o uo ai iai uai ei uei au iau ou iou an iɛn uan yan ən in uən yn aŋ iaŋ uaŋ əŋ iŋ uəŋ iuŋ uŋ m
---

Table 5.9 Finals in the Beijing dialect

By contrast, there are only nine diphthongs and triphthongs finals in the Yangzhou dialect (Table 5.7). All the diphthongs and triphthongs in the Beijing dialect exist in Yangzhou dialect as monophthongs and diphthongs. In addition, the syllable *er* [ɛr] of the Beijing dialect is read as [a] with no trace of retroflex ending. Yang Mingkun reads *er* as [a] without retroflex ending.

Yang's phonetic rule 6 conforms to the phonetic features of the Yangzhou dialect, with a slight variation. In Yangzhou dialect, around 526 syllables are realised with the MC entering tone or the fifth tone.<sup>276</sup> In the present Yangzhou dialect, five of the syllables have lost their entering tone completely and ten of them are bleaching, namely *yi* 易, *yi* 翼, *hua* 劃, *rou* 肉, *yu* 玉, *cuo* 錯, *zuo* 昨, *ju* 劇, *shuai* 率, and *shuai* 蟀.<sup>277</sup> With the exception of the older generation, Yangzhou locals today do not realise the fifteen syllables with the entering tone. The other 511 syllables retain their entering tone realisation in the present dialect.<sup>278</sup> Wang Shaotang realises all the ten syllables with an entering tone in his performance but Yang Mingkun does not. For example, 肉 and 玉 are pronounced as [lɔʔ˨˨˨] and [iɔʔ˨˨˨] in the Yangzhou dialect, but Yang pronounces them as [lyu˨˨˨] and [y˨˨˨], without the entering tone. Yang explained the

---

<sup>276</sup> Lu, "Jin wushinian lai Yangzhou fangyan yuyin de bianhua yanjiu", 24.

<sup>277</sup> Lu, "Jin wushinian lai Yangzhou fangyan yuyin de bianhua yanjiu", 24. Five syllables are *la* 拉, *zha* 柵, *she* 射, *yi* 憶 and *jiao* 餃.

<sup>278</sup> Lu, "Jin wushinian lai Yangzhou fangyan yuyin de bianhua yanjiu", 24.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

difference, “I have changed a few traditional realisations into the contemporary, in case my audiences do not recognize them.”<sup>279</sup>

The last two phonetic rules 7-8 of Yang’s performance language also comply with the phonetic features of Yangzhou dialect. The LC pronunciation and P reading commonly exist in Yangzhou dialect.<sup>280</sup> The fifty-five syllables that have LC reading exist in Yangzhou dialect but three of them are lost in the C reading in contemporary Yangzhou dialect, namely *hong* 虹, *kua* 跨, and *xie* 懈.<sup>281</sup> As discussed above, LC pronunciation is found in both Wang Shaotang’s and Yang Mingkun’s performance, even though Wang (1889-1968) and Yang (1949-) belong to two different generations. So far, there is only one study devoted to the P reading in Yangzhou dialect which argues that the syllables are realised as P reading.<sup>282</sup> I find that Yang Mingkun realises nearly all these instances of P reading in his performance.

In the *Yangzhou fangyan cidian*, the set abbreviated realisation of the pluri-syllable words in the Yangzhou dialect is explained in detail. This phenomenon is recognized as one of the linguistic features of Yangzhou dialect.<sup>283</sup> Many pronunciations are shortened in Yangzhou dialect. Native speakers cannot explain this scenario owing to the shortened realisations of the pluri-syllable as idiomatic usage. As indicated in Table 5.6, the set abbreviated realisation of the pluri-syllable words exists in Yang’s pronunciation.

Based on the comparison above, my argument is that Yang’s phonetic features conform to that of Yangzhou dialect with a slight variation.

---

<sup>279</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>280</sup> Lu, “Jin wushinian lai Yangzhou fangyan yuyin de bianhua yanjiu”, 45-6; “Yangzhou kouyu zhong de podu”.

<sup>281</sup> Lu, “Jin wushinian lai Yangzhou fangyan yuyin de bianhua yanjiu”, 44-5.

<sup>282</sup> Wang, “Yangzhou kouyu zhong de podu”.

<sup>283</sup> Li et al. (eds.), *Yangzhou fangyan cidian*, 17-8.

## 5.2 Syntactic Features of Yang's Performance Language

I will now examine whether the syntactic features of Yang's performance share common features with those of Yangzhou dialect, starting with the frequently used syllables *-zi* 子 and *-tou* 頭. They are mostly defined as “morphological productivity” Mandarin derivational suffixes by linguists in their studies focusing on contemporary Chinese morphology. *-zi* is a nominal and weakly diminutive suffix and *-tou* is a dummy nominal.<sup>284</sup> In Yang's diction, they also act as a semantic marker when attached to a phrase.

In Yang's diction, the suffix *-zi* attaches to the noun (N) and verb (V); *-zi* attaches to the noun *che* 車 and verb *gai* 蓋 to produce new nouns *chezi* 車子 and *gaizi* 蓋子. Also, *-zi*, acts as a semantic marker, attaching to the nominal phrase (NP), verbal phrase (VP), adjective phrase (AP), nun-measure phrase (NMP), and interrogative pronoun phrase (IPP). When the lexical meaning of *-zi* is not bleached, *-zi* gives the whole phrase the meaning of “diminutive” or “trifle.” When the lexical meaning of *-zi* is bleached, *-zi* acts as a dummy marker. Some examples are shown in Table 5.10 (√ denotes “existence” and “---,” “absence”). The adjective phrase *pang dianr* 胖點兒 means “a little chubby”; 胖點兒子 *pang dianr zi* means “only a little chubby,” as *-zi* reduces the degree of “a little”. The interrogative phrase *duo wan* 多晚 means “how late”, whereas *duo wan zi* 多晚子 means “what time exactly” as *-zi* has merged with *duo wan* to form a new phrase and it has lost its lexical meaning.

---

<sup>284</sup> Giorgio Arcodia; Bianca Basciano, “On the Productivity of the Chinese Suffixes -兒-*r*, -化-*huà*, and -頭-*tou*”, *Taiwan Journal of Linguistics* 10.2 (2012): 89-118, at 89-92.

The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Example	車子 <i>che zi</i>	胖點兒子 <i>pang dianr zi</i>	蓋子 <i>gai zi</i>	送點兒子 <i>song dianr zi</i>	兩圈子 <i>liang quan zi</i>	多晚子 <i>duo wa nzi</i>	絲絲子 <i>si si zi</i>
The head	N	---	V	---	---	---	---
The base phrase	---	AP	---	VP	NMP	IPP	NP
Suffix <i>-zi</i>	√	---	√	---	---	---	---
Semantic marker <i>-zi</i>	---	√	---	√	√	√	√

Table 5.10 *-zi* in Yang’s diction

The distribution of the suffix *-tou* is more complicated than that of *-zi* in Yang’s diction. Resembling the so-called “dummy affix” that exists in Standard Chinese, the suffix or quasi-suffix *-tou* is attached to the verb (V), adjective (A), and noun (N).<sup>285</sup> In this condition, the suffix *-tou* has no lexical meaning whereas the quasi-suffix *-tou* indicates the sense of “smallness, colloquialism, casualness” as it has not finished the lexicalisation process with the head word.<sup>286</sup> In Table 5.11, the suffix *-tou* in *kutou* 苦頭 and *xiangtou* 想頭\* is a dummy with no actual meaning and it has merged with the adjective *ku* or “bitter” and verb *xiang* or “think” and developed into new nouns, such as *kutou* (suffering) and *xiangtou* (idea).<sup>287</sup> In *luobo tou* 蘿蔔頭 (tiny radish or useless radish), the quasi-suffix *-tou* has not finished the lexicalisation process to combine with the noun *luobo* or radish into a new word, indicating the sense of “trifle” or “insignificant.” The semantical marker *-tou* attaches to the verb (V) and nominal quantifier phrase (NQP) to give the base phrase an additional meaning, since it is in

<sup>285</sup> Arcodia; Basciano, “On the Productivity of the Chinese Suffixes -兒-*r*, -化-*huà*, and -頭-*tou*”, 102-5.

<sup>286</sup> Giorgio Arcodia, “A Construction Morphology Account of Derivation in Mandarin Chinese”, *Morphology* 21.1 (2011): 89-130, at 97. Suffix are semantically empty, always bound and undergo some sort of phonological reduction, whereas the quasi-suffix bears some sort of “categorical meaning.”

<sup>287</sup> *Xiangtou* has two formation patterns as follows. 1) A noun word consists of the verbal morpheme *xiang* 想 and suffix *-tou* 頭; it refers to “idea”. See Arcodia; Basciano, “On the Productivity of the Chinese Suffixes -兒-*r*, -化-*huà* and -頭-*tou*”, 95. 2) A phrase consisting of the verb *xiang* 想 and semantic marker *-tou* 頭, suggests a meaning of “to be worthy of thinking over”. In Table 5.11, 想頭\* is the former and 想頭 is the latter.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

the grammaticalization process and it has not bleached in the semantic aspect.<sup>288</sup> Table 5.11 (“√” denotes “existence” and “---” denotes “absence”) shows that *-tou* in *xiangtou* indicates the action *xiang* or “think” is worthy of doing and it indicates that *sanquan* 三圈 (three circles) is a small quantity in *sanquan tou* 三圈頭.

Example	苦頭 <i>ku tou</i>	掃帚頭 <i>Saozou tou</i>	蘿蔔頭 <i>luobo tou</i>	想頭 <i>xiang tou</i>	想頭* <i>xiang tou</i>	三圈頭 <i>San quan tou</i>	一斤頭 <i>yi jin tou</i>
The head	A	N	N	---	V	---	---
The base phrase	---	---	---	V	---	NQP	NQP
Suffix <i>-tou</i>	√	---	---	---	√	---	---
Quasi-Suffix <i>-tou</i>	---	√	√	---	---	---	---
Semantical marker 1 <i>-tou</i> (only, just)	---	---	---	---	---	√	√
Semantical marker 2 <i>-tou</i> (be worthy of)	---	---	---	√	---	---	---

Table 5.11 *-tou* in Yang’s diction

Five typical syntactic features of Yang’s performance diction are summed up as follows:

1. Usage of structure “MW - *ba* 把- (MW)-(N).”
2. Verb *chi* 吃 (eat) collocates with a wide range of things, covering food, drink, cigarette and so forth.
3. Co-existence of three patterns of neutral questions: “ADV-VP,” “ADV-VP, neg.-VP,” and “V-neg-VP.”
4. Frequently used aspectual markers *zhu* 住 and *dao* 到.
5. The existence of tri-syllabic reduplicative words and high frequency of reduplicated disyllabic words.

<sup>288</sup> Zhang Qiyun 張其昀, “Yangzhou fangyan biao wei biao ji ‘tou’” 揚州方言表徵標記“頭” (“‘Tou’ as a Semantic Marker Suggesting ‘Tiny/ Smallness’ in Yangzhou Dialect”), *Zhongguo yuwen* 5 (2009): 448; Yin Yanfei 尹燕飛, “Zai yi Yangzhou fangyan shuliang duanyu hou de zhuci ‘tou’” 再議揚州方言數量短語後的綴詞“頭” (“Re-discuss the Suffix *-tou* Attached to Numeral Phrases in Yangzhou Dialect”), *Wenxue jiaoyu* 8 (2011):140-41.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

In Yang’s diction, the structure “MW - *ba* - (MW) - (N)” refers to a small quantity of things as indicated by the noun but it does not exist in Standard Chinese. The second MW is optional or unconditional, whereas N is optional where it can be interpreted from the context (Examples 5.1-5.3):

	MW		MW	N	Structural Meaning
(1)	兩	把	兩	酒	some wine
(2)	個	把	個	人	a few persons
(3)	把	把	把	草	a little grass

In Yang’s diction, *liang ba liang yinzi* 兩把兩銀子 is Pi Wu’s pet phrase in daily life, which means a few taels of silver. *Liang ba liang* also collocates with oil, liquor, gold, wine when used by Yang. Examples are given in 5.1-5.3.

The verb *chi* or eat collocates with more nouns than it does in Standard Chinese.

For collocations of *chi*, refer to Table 5.12 (“√” denotes “the same”).

Example	<i>cha</i> 茶 (tea)	<i>jiu</i> 酒 (wine)	<i>fan</i> 飯 (meals; rice)	<i>yan</i> 煙 (cigarette)	<i>kui</i> 虧 (losses)
Yang’s Usage	<i>chi zaocha</i> 吃茶 (drink tea)	<i>chi xijiu</i> 吃酒 (drink liquor)	<i>chifan</i> 吃飯 (have meals)	<i>chiyan</i> 吃煙 (smoking)	<i>chikui</i> 吃虧 (suffer losses)
Standard Chinese	<i>hecha</i> 喝茶 (drink tea)	<i>hejiu</i> 喝酒 (drink liquor)	√	<i>chouyan</i> 抽煙 (smoking)	√

Table 5.12 Collocations of verb *chi*

Yang collocates the verb *chi* with objects/things ranging from real food to the miscellaneous, such as tea, rice, wine, cigarette, meals, and losses, as shown in Table 5.12. This collocation, however, does not meet the rules of Standard Chinese. Also, as shown in Table 5.12, “tea” and “liquor” match the verb *he* or “drink” and “cigarette” matches *chou* or “smoke” in Standard Chinese or in Northern dialects.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Three patterns of neutral question structure co-exist in Yang's diction (Examples 5.4-5.6), and among them, only V-neg.-VP is identified in Standard Chinese.

(4) ADV-VP: *ke xizao (a)?* 可洗澡(啊)? Would you like to take a shower?

(5) ADV-VP, neg-VP: *ke diedesi, diebusi?* 可跌得死, 跌不死? Will the falling cause death or not?

(6) V-neg-VP: *qu bu qu?* 去不去? Go or not?

Instead of the post-verbal aspectual marker *zhe* 著 of Standard Chinese, *zhu* (phonetic realisation is [tsu]) and *dao* (phonetic realisation is [tə]) indicate a continuous situation (Examples 5.7-5.9).

(7) *zouzhu changzhu* 走(V) 住唱(V) 住 singing while walking

(8) *qiangshang guazhu hua* 牆上掛(V)住畫 on the wall hung a picture

(9) *shou Shang tuodao zaotang* 手上托(V)到灶糖 hand holding malt sugar for the Kitchen God

In the three examples listed above, *zhu* and *dao* are post-verbal aspectual, indicating the status of activities *zou* (walking), *gua* (hung), and *tuo* (holding). The *zhu* suggests that these activities last for a while and placing *zhu* ahead of *gua* indicates that the picture is already hung on the wall. *Zhu* and *dao* in Yang's diction indicate the aspect of the verb and resemble the aspect marker *zhe* 著 in Standard Chinese.

Disyllabic and tri-syllabic reduplication words are easily identified in Yang's diction, which do not exist in Standard Chinese (Table 5.13). Some of them are verbal phrases, such as *piaopiao* 飄飄 (float in air) and *wanwanwan* 玩玩玩 (have fun) while



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

the others are combined with auxiliary *de* 的 or suffix *zi* 子, such as *piaopiaode* 飄飄的 (floating in air) and *pianpianzi* 片片子 (little pieces). There are some that are attached by a complement, such as *nongnong ganjing* 弄弄乾淨 (clean up). In terms of the syntactic attribute, the reduplication listed above can be ascribed to a nominal phrase or verbal phrase. Examples selected in Yang’s diction are nominal phrases such as *tiantiantian* 天天天 (everyday) and verbal phrase *longlong* 隴隴 (live on a small income).

Example	飄飄的 be floating <i>piaopiaode</i>	飄飄 to float <i>piaopiao</i>	玩玩玩 to have fun <i>wanwanwan</i>	片片子 little pieces <i>pianpianzi</i>	弄弄乾淨 to clean up <i>nongnong ganjing</i>
Noun phrase	---	---	---	with <i>zi</i>	---
Verbal phrase	with <i>de</i>	independent	independent	---	attached by complement

Table 5.13 Disyllabic and trisyllabic reduplication words in Yang’s diction

In Yang’s diction, address forms are listed in Table 5.14. *Da laodie* [ti] 大老爹 and *diedie* [tia tia] 爹爹 refer to “father” whereas *xiao laodie* 小老爹 refers to “son.” In the story of Pi Wu, children always address Pi Wu as “Wu *diedie*” 五爹爹, meaning “elder uncle Wu”.

	Addresser is not family	Addresser is family
father	大老爹 <i>da laodie</i> ( <i>die</i> [ti] is P pronunciation)	爹爹 <i>die</i> [tia] is O pronunciation
son	小老爹 <i>xiao laodie</i> ( <i>die</i> [ti] is P pronunciation)	小老爹 <i>xiao laodie</i> ( <i>die</i> [ti] is <i>podu</i> pronunciation)
wife	四奶奶 <i>si nainai</i>	奶奶 <i>nainai</i>
elder uncle	爹爹 <i>die</i> [tia] is O pronunciation	爹爹 <i>die</i> [tia] is O pronunciation

Table 5.14 Address forms in Yang’s performance diction

Scholars have conducted a series of research on the syntactic features of Yangzhou dialect. In the following part, I will compare the existing scholarship with my findings on the syntactic features of Yang Mingkun’s diction. First in the

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yangzhou dialect, *-zi* and *-tou* are attached to the verb, verbal phrase, noun, nominal phrase, question pronoun, and the adjective phrase when acting as a suffix (including quasi-suffixes) or semantical marker.<sup>289</sup> As a suffix, *-zi* and *-tou* usually indicate a sense of “familiarity, smallness, and casualness”. As shown in Tables 5.10 and 5.11, *-zi* and *-tou* both undertake the morphological and syntactic functions as a suffix in the word and semantical marker in the phrase respectively.

Secondly, according to the research on aspectual marker *zhe* conducted from historical and dialectal perspectives, the aspectual markers *zhu* and *dao* in the Yangzhou dialect can be regarded as dialectal cognates of the aspectual marker *zhe* in Standard Chinese; *zhu* (住 or 著) and *dao* have two functions: they indicate a continuation of status or suggest the progressive aspect.<sup>290</sup> *Zhu* and *dao* are frequently used in Yang’s diction. Using the examples 5.7-5.9 selected from Yang’s diction, I have explained that the two aspectual markers exemplified the two functions precisely.

Thirdly, one of the most interesting phenomena in Yangzhou dialect is the co-existence of neutral question patterns. Zhu Dexi argued that the neutral question forms “ADV-VP” and “VP-neg.-VP” do not co-exist in one dialect.<sup>291</sup> Zhang Min has

---

<sup>289</sup> Chen Chen 陳晨, “Yangzhou fangyan zhong de ‘zi’ zhui” 揚州方言中的“子”綴 (“Suffix *-zi* in the Yangzhou Dialect”), *Yangzhou shiyuan xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 4 (1981): 86-90; “Yangzhou fangyan biao wei biaoji ‘tou’”, 448.

<sup>290</sup> Sun Chaofen, “Aspectual categories that overlap: A historical and dialectal perspective of the Chinese *zhe*”, *Journal of East Asian Linguistics* 7 (1998) 2: 153-74; Wang Jian 王健, “Cong suwan fangyanti zhuci ‘zhu’ de biao xian kan fangyan jiechu de houguo he jizhi” 從蘇皖方言體助詞“住”的表現看方言接觸的後果和機制 (“Results and Mechanisms of Dialect Contact as Seen from the Usage of Aspectual Marker-*zhu* in Jiangsu and Anhui Dialects”), *Zhongguo yuwen* 1 (2008): 48-57, at 49; Wang shihua, “Yangzhouhua de dongtai zhuci” 揚州話的動態助詞 (“Aspect Particles in Yangzhou Dialect”), *Yangzhou shiyuan xuebao* 1 (1989): 61-4.

Wang, “Cong suwan fangyanti zhuci ‘zhu’ de biao xian kan fangyan jiechu de houguo he jizhi”, 48-57. The marker *zhu* does not have a standard written form, as both 住 and 著 are adopted by contemporary scholars.

<sup>291</sup> Yu Xiaorong 遇笑容, *Rulinwaishi cihui yanjiu* 《儒林外史》詞彙研究 (*Study on the Lexicon of The Scholars*), (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2001), 11.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

conducted a comprehensive study of neutral question forms in the South-eastern Mandarin dialects, including the dialects spoken in Jiangsu and Anhui Provinces. He argued that the applications of “ADV-VP” and “V-neg.-VP” in the Yangzhou dialect have the same frequency.<sup>292</sup> Also, he remarked that “[O]ther variants hitherto undetected may exist in South-eastern Mandarin dialects.” His argument is verified by my findings (Examples 5.6-5.9). Three neutral question forms co-exist in Yang Mingkun’s performance diction and the new one is “ADV-VP, neg.-VP.”

Fourthly, a typical linguistic feature of the Yangzhou dialect is the application of the structures of reduplication words as shown in Table 5.15.<sup>293</sup>

Example	圈圈子	個個個	一把把/幾把把	戴戴好	笑笑的
pinyin syllable	quanquan zi	gegege	yi baba/ ji baba	daidai hao	xiaoxiao de
structure	NN子	MMM	一/幾 MM	VVC	VV的

Table 5.15 Reduplication words in the Yangzhou dialect

The tri-syllabic reduplication *gegege* consists of three measure words 個, meaning “everyone.” Verbal tri-syllabic reduplication *wanwanwan* contains three verbs *wan*, meaning “have fun” (Table 5.13). All the structures listed above are identified in Yang’s diction.

Lastly, the appellation system applied in the Yangzhou dialect is interesting, but complicated.<sup>294</sup> Take *die*, *ye* and *ba* 爸 for example, the word *die* (father/grandfather) was derived from *ye* (father/grandfather) which was subsequently

<sup>292</sup> Zhang Min, “Syntactic Change in Southeastern Mandarin: How Does Geographical Distribution Reveal a History of Diffusion?”, in Ding Bangxin, Yu Aiqin, *In memory of Professor Li Fang-Kuei: Essays on Linguistic Change and the Chinese Dialects*, (USA: University of Washington, the Republic of China 89), 197-242, at 214.

<sup>293</sup> Zhu Jingsong 朱景松, “Yangzhou hua dan yinjie dongci de shengdong chongdie” 揚州話單音動詞的生動重疊 (“Reduplication of the Monosyllabic Verb in the Yangzhou Dialect”), *Zhongguo yuwen* 3 (1993); Lu Qin, “Yangzhou fangyan chongdieshi yanjiu” 揚州方言重疊式研究 (“Study on the Structures of Reduplicative Words and Phrases in the Yangzhou Dialect”), *Nanjing shifan daxue wen xueyuan xuebao* 4 (2011): 174-78, at 78.

<sup>294</sup> Wang Qianlei 王倩蕾, “Yangzhou fangyan qingshu chengwei” 揚州方言親屬稱謂 (“Forms of Address for Relatives in Yangzhou Dialect”), *Yuyan xue yanjiu* 35 (2013):166-68.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

replaced. Thus, *ye* has shifted its meaning to address “father’s younger brother.” Later, *ba* (father) replaces *die* to refer to “father” through the popularisation of Standard Chinese.<sup>295</sup> As a result, in Yangzhou dialect, *ye* refers to “younger uncle”, *die* refers to “father” in O reading [tia tia] and “grandfather” in P reading. Part of the appellation system in Yangzhou dialect is illustrated in Table 5.16.

	Yangzhou dialect	Present Yangzhou dialect
father	爹爹 [tia tia] 老子 <i>laozi</i>	爸爸 <i>baba</i> 老子 <i>laozi</i>
wife	馬馬 <i>mama</i> 奶奶 <i>nainai</i>	老婆 <i>laopo</i>
the younger brother of the father	爺 <i>ye</i>	叔叔 <i>shushu</i>
the elder brother of the father	大大 <i>dada</i>	大大 <i>dada</i>
grandmother	奶奶 <i>nainai</i>	奶奶 <i>nainai</i>

Table 5.16 Address forms in the Yangzhou dialect

As shown above, two types of address forms co-exist in Yangzhou dialect. Yang Mingkun does not apply the address forms in the contemporary Yangzhou dialect when telling a story (Table 5.14).

Based on the discussion above, I find that the typical syntactic features of the Yangzhou dialect are identical to Yang’s performance language.

All the phonetic and syntactic features of Yangzhou dialect as discussed above have been studied by linguists. Based on the comparative analysis of phonetic and syntactic features of Yang Mingkun’s performance language and Yangzhou dialect, I found out that Yang Mingkun’s performance language is typical of Yangzhou dialect.

---

<sup>295</sup> Ray Iwata, “The Jiang-Huai Area as a Core of Lexical Innovation and Diffusion: A Case of the Kinship Term ‘ye 爺’”, in *In memory of Professor Li Fang-Kuei: Essays on Linguistic Change and the Chinese Dialects*, (USA: University of Washington, the Republic of China 89): 179-96, at 193-94; Wang, “Yangzhou fangyan qingshu chengwei”, 166.

## 5.3 Historical-linguistic Value of Yang's Performance

### Language

Among the numerous contemporary works and research on the language of Yangzhou *pinghua* performance, none of the scholars has pointed out the linguistic value of *pinghua* performance language by examining the relationship between migration and development of the Yangzhou dialect.

As “[L]anguage can be thought of as a part of culture” I shall explore the linguistic evidence available in the performance language of Yang Mingkun.<sup>296</sup> As discussed in Chapter 1, Yangzhou is situated on the north bank of the Yangtze River in Jiangsu Province, which has experienced several waves of large-scale southward migration since the Western Jin dynasty. Considering that “historical linguistic evidence is a major factor in the reconstruction of prehistoric cultures, the migrations of people bearing cultures and the diffusion of cultural element,”<sup>297</sup> I shall take into consideration the waves of historical migration in my discussion. “[C]o-existing forms found in a single dialect are expected to be ascribed to different strata [however] the synchronic manifestations of linguistic strata, which are recognizable concerning frequency of usage, are not reflective of diachronic stratification.”<sup>298</sup> This point applies to contemporary linguistic research concerning the Yangzhou dialect as most scholars have focused on the synchronic manifestations of linguistic strata and neglected the diachronic. Thus, in this section, I will base my analysis of the value of

---

<sup>296</sup> David L. Shaul and Louanna Furbee-Losee, *Language and Culture*, (United States of America: Waveland Press, Inc. 1998),1.

<sup>297</sup> Farzad Sharifian, (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Culture*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), 209.

<sup>298</sup> Sharifian, (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Culture*, 198-99.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yang's performance diction on two key points: diachronic evidence and historical migration.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the Yangzhou dialect is described as “neither the Southern dialect nor the Northern; either the Southern dialect or the Northern”. Before the distinctive Yangzhou dialect came into being, the dialect spoken within the area of present-day Yangzhou belongs to a branch of the Eastern dialect group popularised from the mid to the late Han (206 BC-AD 220) period. In this period, the dialects in the Central Plain or Zhongyuan 中原 were called Central dialects. The area in which people spoke Eastern dialects encompasses modern Shandong and northern Jiangsu, extending southwards to the lower reaches of the Yangtze River.<sup>299</sup> In the Han dynasty, the dialect spoken within the area of modern Yangzhou belonged to the Eastern dialect group. Experiencing southward migration since the Western Jin, the distinctive Yangzhou dialect, “born of the interaction between Northern and Wu dialects” emerged as a newcomer and language contact between the Northern and Southern dialects has accompanied its growth.<sup>300</sup>

The neutral question form “ADV-VP” found in Yang's diction, which already existed in the Northern dialects of the Southern and Northern dynasties, indicates that Yangzhou dialect was influenced by the Northern dialects before the Sui period. The first wave of southward migration took place at the end of the Western Jin dynasty (266-316) and lasted nearly 150 years, following the “Disorders of the Yongjia 永嘉 Period” in 311. In the Eastern Jin 東晉 (317-420) and the four successive short-lived Southern Dynasties 南朝 (420-589), the Northern dialects reached the north bank of

---

<sup>299</sup> Coblin, “Migration history and dialect development in the lower Yangtze watershed”, 529.

<sup>300</sup> Zhang, “Syntactic Change in Southeastern Mandarin”, 228-29.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

the Yangtze River.<sup>301</sup> During this time, the Eastern dialects employed in the modern Yangzhou area were undoubtedly influenced by Northern dialects. Jerry Norman summarised the discussion with Chinese historical linguists concerning the linguistic importance of the Jin 晉 (266-420) demographic movements as follows:<sup>302</sup>

[T]he aristocracy and bureaucrats migrated *en masse* to the region south of the Yangtze. [...] The fleeing Jin Gentry brought with them their prestigious Northern dialect, which then became the basis of a new Southern literary standard.

The earliest evidence showing the existence of the specific Yangzhou dialect was in Sui or early Tang dynasty.<sup>303</sup> So far, no research has been done to question whether the Yangzhou dialect already existed in the Jin or the ensuing Southern Dynasties. This inquiry is important because the neutral question form “ADV-VP” (Example 5.4) prevailing in the Northern dialects or Koine during the Northern Dynasties 北朝 (381-581) is retained in the Yangzhou dialect;<sup>304</sup> this linguistic phenomenon verifies that the Yangzhou dialect was influenced by the Northern dialects earlier than the late Sui period.

Colloquial reading, the original reading of *podu*, and the neutral question form “VP-neg-VP” found in Yang’s diction, reflect the remarkable influence of language contact between Northern and Southern dialects on Yangzhou dialect since the Late Sui to the Song periods. The second wave of southward migration began with the An

---

<sup>301</sup> Zhou Zhenghe 周正鶴, *Fangyan yu zhongguo wenhua* 方言與中國文化 (*Dialects and Chinese Culture*), (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2006), 39.

<sup>302</sup> Coblin, “Migration history and dialect development in the lower Yangtze watershed”, 530.

<sup>303</sup> Zhang, “Syntactic Change in Southeastern Mandarin”, 229.

<sup>304</sup> Zhang, “Syntactic Change in Southeastern Mandarin”, 229.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Lushan 安祿山 Rebellion (755-763) in the Tang era, and it lasted for 200 years. Among the three streams related to this wave of southward immigration, the mainstream crossed the Yangtze River and flowed into what is now southern Jiangsu, northern Zhejiang, and southern Anhui.<sup>305</sup> Coblin argued that, “Immigrant settlement patterns in the lower Yangzi area are of considerable interest,” and the Jiang-Huai band had the heaviest point of concentration. The immigrants in this band may have affected the dialect of this region in various ways.<sup>306</sup>

In the Sui and early Tang periods, the Yangzhou dialect was a newcomer. Coblin conducted a phonetic analysis of the syllables’ reading, including colloquial reading or *bai* forms, Proto-Central Jiang-Huai reading, Late Tang reading, and Early *guanhua* 官話 (mandarin) reading. In his findings, Coblin remarked that, “We may guess that these *bai* forms are in fact substrate survivals of the underlying diction varieties found in the belt before the mid-Song inundation.”<sup>307</sup> The colloquial realisations are identical or exactly similar to the reading in the late Tang period. In other words, the colloquial reading might have existed in the Yangzhou dialect in Tang times, following the phonological system introduced in the Mid-Chinese rhyme dictionary from the Wei-Jin 魏晉 period (220-420) to the Song dynasty. While the Yangzhou dialect was deeply influenced by the Northern dialects since the mid-Song period, the colloquial reading co-existed with the literary reading. For examples found in Yang’s pronunciation, refer to Table 5.17.

---

<sup>305</sup> Ge Jianxiong 葛劍雄, Cao Shuji 曹樹基, Wu Songdi 吳淞弟, *Jianming Zhongguo yiminshi* 簡明中國移民史 (*A Brief History of Chinese Migration*), (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1993), 256-58.

<sup>306</sup> Coblin, “Migration history and dialect development in the lower Yangtze watershed”, 532; Ge Jianxiong, Cao Shuji, *Wu Songdi, Zhongguo yimin shi* 中國移民史 (*History of Chinese Migration*), (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1997), 348.

<sup>307</sup> Coblin, “Migration history and dialect development in the lower Yangtze watershed”, 534.



The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Example	丫	敲	間	覺	解
	<i>ya</i>	<i>qiao</i>	<i>jian</i>	<i>jiao</i>	<i>jie</i>
Middle Chinese pronunciation colloquial reading ( <i>bai</i> )	a	k'ɔ	kǎ̃	kɔ	kɛ
literary reading ( <i>wen</i> )	ia	tɛiɔ	tɛiǎ̃	ɛiɔ	tɛiɛ

Table 5.17 Fragments of Mid-Chinese pronunciation (I)

As presented in Table 5.17 above, the colloquial readings contain fragments of mid-Chinese pronunciation.<sup>308</sup> MC pronunciation is also preserved through O reading, this is illustrated in Table 5.18.

Example	蠻	拱	鼓	漫	枯
	<i>man</i>	<i>gong</i>	<i>gu</i>	<i>man</i>	<i>ku</i>
Middle Chinese pronunciation O reading	ᵐǎ̃	'koŋ	'ku	muo'	k'u
<i>podu</i> reading	ᵐǎ̃	ᵏoŋ/koŋ	ᵏu	mǎ̃	ᵏ'u

Table 5.18 Fragments of Mid-Chinese pronunciation (II)

According to Wang Shihua, the original reading of *podu* follows the middle Chinese dictionary.<sup>309</sup> In the Tang period, under the influence of the Northern dialects, apart from the Mid-Chinese reading, one of the three co-existent neutral question forms of the Yangzhou dialect “VP-neg-VP” (Example 5.6) had also developed. The earliest historical reference to the neutral question form was the Tang poems composed by Northerners.<sup>310</sup>

The phonetic features of Yang’s diction exhibit the linguistic phenomena of Southern dialects while the Yangzhou dialect has been a member of Northern group since the Song period. With the intrusion of invaders who later established the Jin dynasty, the third wave of southward migration occurred in the early twelfth century, particularly in the wake of the Jingkang 靖康 Incident (1126-1127) of the Song dynasty. Several waves of irregular southward migration of this period lasted up to

<sup>308</sup> Coblin, “Migration history and dialect development in the lower Yangtze watershed”, 534-6.

<sup>309</sup> Wang, “Yangzhou kouyu zhong de podu”, 108-11.

<sup>310</sup> Zhang, “Syntactic Change in Southeastern Mandarin”, 230.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

sixty-five years.<sup>311</sup> The region covered by the Northern dialects was thus firmly established along the north bank of the Yangtze at that time.<sup>312</sup> In other words, the Yangzhou dialect belonged to the Northern dialect group in the Song period.

When Hangzhou was established as the capital of Southern Song dynasty, the Huai River became the boundary between the Jin 金 (1115-1234) and Southern Song territories. The Jiang-Huai area subsequently became the most critical part of Song's defence, including the present Nanjing and Yangzhou. Active efforts were made to repopulate the Jiang-Huai area to strengthen the defence since it suffered destructive raids during the Jin 金 dynasty earlier. In this circumstance, immigrants from the south settled in this belt and their dialects influenced the local Northern dialect. Under the language contact of this period, the foundation of the Jiang-Huai dialect group was laid. Jiang-Huai dialects belong to the Northern dialect group but they possess the linguistic phenomena of the Southern group. The Yangzhou dialect is a representative of the Jiang-Huai dialect group. It shows features of the Southern dialects. The linguistic findings in Yang's diction allude to this point: monophthongisation, absence of retroflex initials, distribution of nasal endings [-n] and [-ŋ], MC entering tone, LC reading and the usage of verb *chi*. These phenomena are typical features of the Wu dialect, a member of the Southern dialect group.<sup>313</sup>

---

<sup>311</sup> Wu Songdi, *Beifang yimin yu nansong shehui bianqian* 北方移民與南宋社會變遷 (*Northern Immigrants and Social Changes in the Southern Song Dynasty*), (Taipei: Wenjing chubanshe, 1993), 33-5.

<sup>312</sup> Zhou, *Fangyan yu zhongguo wenhua*, 41.

<sup>313</sup> Wang, "Yangzhouhua de sheng yun diao", 119; Yan, *Introduction to Chinese dialectology*, 81-2; 93; 100; Xu Jufang 許菊芳, "Wufangyan zhong 'chi' zi de tongsu cizu" 吳方言中“吃”字的同素詞族 (“The Word Family of the Morpheme ‘chi’ in the Wu Dialect”), *Xihua shifan daxue xuebao (zheshi ban)*, 1 (2004): 104-7; Ji Hongying 稽紅英, "Wu fangyan tezheng gaishuo" 吳方言特徵概說 (“An Outline of the Linguistic Features of the Wu Dialect”), *Xiandai yuwen (yuyan yanjiu)* 3 (2009):107.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yangzhou dialect shares the benefits of the “core area” by transmitting its linguistic innovation to the Southern dialects, which is reflected in the use of kinship stems such as *die*, *ye*, and the aspectual marker *zhu* (住 or 著) in Yang’s diction. The reasons behind the demographic movements in history are ascribed to two types: people are compelled by natural disasters, warfare, and the imperial court to move; people initiatively move to other areas for a better life.<sup>314</sup> Basically, the demographic movements led by the former reason did not happen after the Ming dynasty.<sup>315</sup> Since as early as the mid Song period, demographic movements were mainly led by the latter. During this period, the preponderance of an area in the domain of culture, economics, and politics became an important factor that led to demographic movement. In the Ming and Qing dynasties, a lot of people were attracted to the Jiang-Huai area for its cultural and political prestige at this time. Thus, it performed the role of a “core area,” bearing some linguistic innovations which were eventually transmitted to the south. The city of Yangzhou, a large commercial centre from the Ming to the Qing dynasty in the Jiang-Huai area, shared the benefits of the core area.<sup>316</sup> The usage of kinship stems *die*, *ye*, and the aspectual marker *zhu* identified in Yang’s diction has proven this important development.

When referring to “father’s elder brother,” the kinship stem *die* is older than *ye* in the Northern dialects, and the latter is a phonetic variant derived from the former. For example, Wu *diedie* refers to “elder uncle Wu,” and *daye* refers to “eldest uncle.” However, in the Yangzhou dialect, *ye* refers to “father’s younger brother.” This shift originated in the Jiang-Huai area and extended as far as China’s southwestern province

---

<sup>314</sup> Zhou, *Jianming Zhongguo yiminshi*, 9; *Fangyan yu zhongguo wenhua*, 41.

<sup>315</sup> Zhou, *Fangyan yu zhongguo wenhua*, 44.

<sup>316</sup> Iwata, “The Jiang-Huai Area as a Core of Lexical Innovation and Diffusion: A Case of the Kinship Term “*ye* 爺”, 180.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

of Yunnan 雲南, and it was not identified in the area north of Jiang-Huai.<sup>317</sup> Also, owing to Qing Yangzhou's political, cultural and economic prestige, the usage of the aspectual marker *zhu* in the Yangzhou dialect influenced the *zhu* in the neighbouring Taizhou and Jixi 績溪 dialects.<sup>318</sup>

The linguistic analysis of Yang Mingkun's performance language shows that his diction is characteristic of Yangzhou dialect. His performance language is of great historical-linguistic value. The Yangzhou dialect emerged in the Sui era and later developed into a distinctive dialect. The long period of language contact between the Northern and Southern dialects facilitated the formation and development of the Yangzhou dialect. The results of language contact at different periods of time in history are observable in various strata of the Yangzhou dialect layer by layer.

## 5.4 Conclusion

The speaking register for Yang Mingkun in the performance of *Pi Wu* is typical of the Yangzhou dialect in terms of its phonetic and syntactic features. The distinctive Yangzhou dialect came into being during the Sui and early Tang dynasties and is the result of the language contact of the northern and southern dialects. Hence, it presents some of the phonetic and syntactic features both from the northern and southern dialects. Yang's pronunciation and vocabulary in the performance of *Rogue Pi Wu* is of great value to linguistic studies on the historical development of Yangzhou dialect. However, they have been largely neglected by contemporary linguists.

---

<sup>317</sup> Iwata, "The Jiang-Huai Area as a Core of Lexical Innovation and Diffusion: A Case of the Kinship Term "ye 爺", 181; 188; 194.

<sup>318</sup> Wang, "Cong suwan fangyanti zhuci 'zhu' de biaoqian kan fangyan jiechu de houguo he jizhi", 55.

## SIX

### Lexical Features of Yang Mingkun's Performance

#### Language

“I rarely use stock phrases or setting phrases (*taoyu* 套语) and verses. We storytellers need to keep pace with the times.” This is the remark by Yang Mingkun on his efforts to narrate the story of Pi Wu vividly.<sup>319</sup> This chapter will examine how Yang deals with his performance diction when considering his narrative strategy and whether he has achieved his goal. Also, I will examine how the Yangzhou dialect is effectively incorporated in Yang's performance.

The *taoyu* and verses employed by Pu Lin in his oral performance have been transcribed to create the atmosphere of a storytelling event. In contrast to Pu's version, the transcribed texts of Yu and Yang are simple as there are more stock phrases and verses applied in Pu's version than the latter two versions combined. Moreover, the differences in the use of colloquial words between the three versions are considerable. How do the three versions demonstrate a specific linguistic style of expression? In this chapter, I will first explore the differences in the application of stock phrases, verses and colloquial words between the three texts. I will then examine how the Yangzhou dialect represents the local tradition and customs, which are familiar to Yang and his audiences as well. Next, I will examine Yangzhou dialect—an important means of communication between Yang and his audiences in performance, and the shared

---

<sup>319</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016. In this chapter, the English translation for the terms of stock phrases such as *shiyue*, *huashuo*, *quieting xiahui fenjie*, *zhenshi*, and *zaiyan* is cited from Børdahl in *Wu Song Fights the Tiger—the Interaction of Oral and Written Traditions in the Chinese Novel, Drama and Storytelling*, 113-30; 172; 333.

cultural background by Yang serves as a special channel between Yang and his audiences, which is elusive to outsiders.

## **6.1 Diction**

Chinese dialects do not always have their corresponding written forms in Standard Chinese, and the Yangzhou dialect is no exception. Fortunately, in the twenty-first century, with the development of microcomputer composition techniques taking over from conventional typesetting, it is now much easier to transcribe oral speech in dialects into written form. The text of Yang's repertoire was transcribed and published in 2015 and his performance speech was recorded in the Yangzhou dialect.

Owing to undeveloped publishing techniques, many dialect words in Pu's and Yu's repertoires may have been replaced by literary words in the process of transcription. In this circumstance, the wording styles in the two texts that were transcribed and published in the Qing dynasty and in 1985 deviated from Pu's and Yu's to some extent. In the present time, each phonetic realisation in the local topolects can find a corresponding written Chinese character by following two methods. Firstly, one can borrow the characters applied in Standard Mandarin. For example, in the text of Yang, many homophones are borrowed from Standard Mandarin, such as *nong* 嚙. 嚙 is realised as [noŋ] in Standard Mandarin, meaning "garrulous"; it is realised as [loŋ], meaning "passable," by Yang according to the [n-] and [l-] distribution rule in the Yangzhou dialect (see Chapter 5.1). Secondly, new Chinese characters are coined to express phonetic realisations in other dialects. For example, *gang* 𠵹 is a newly created Chinese character applied in Yang's transcribed text to mean "garrulous."

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

However, undeveloped publishing techniques cannot explain the usage of all literary words in the transcribed texts. As Børdahl pointed out, literary words and *taoyu* or “stock phrases or setting phrases” and other rhetorical devices were used to create the so-called “storyteller manner” of narration by the Ming and Qing authors when writing fiction.<sup>320</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 1, Pu Lin’s repertoire was first transcribed and published under the title *Pure-Wind Dyke* during the Qing dynasty. Although quantities of literary words and stock phrases were identified in this text, Pu might not have used all of them or perhaps used some of them. However, contemporary editors inserted all of them or some of them into the text, aiming to stimulate or highlight the atmosphere of a storytelling event when transcribing Pu’s repertoire into text. On the other hand, Pu might have applied all literary words and setting phrases in his recitation, because the storyteller decides the wording in any performance. Yang stated in an interview in 2016, “My master’s repertoire is in literary style and mine is in colloquial style.”<sup>321</sup> Yang’s master Yu Youchun preferred to use literary words in his performance. Yang also said, “If my audience members are highly educated, I will choose more literary words in the performance.” As Chapter 6 of this thesis focuses only on the lexical features of Yang Mingkun’s performance speech, I limit my study to the performance language of Yang Mingkun. I will not examine whether or not Pu Lin applied literary words or setting phrases in his performance.

The three transcribed texts show how Pu Lin, Yu Youchun and Yang Mingkun dealt with stock phrases, verses and colloquial words in their performances. Only a few *taoyu* are identified in Yang’s transcribed text. In one interview, he said, “I do not

---

<sup>320</sup> Børdahl, “A Case Study of the *Yangzhou Pinghua* Tradition”, 19.

<sup>321</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

recite a poem at the beginning of my recitation. I like to tell my story directly.”<sup>322</sup> When performing, Yang sometimes hits his desk with a wooden block to catch the attention of his audience. Conventionally, a Yangzhou *pinghua* storyteller reads a poem before telling the story in order to attract the audience’s attention. The poem is introduced by the set phrase *shiyue* 詩曰, meaning “the poem says.” In the transcribed text of Yang, introductory verses with the setting phrase *shiyue* are absent. In contrast to Yang, Pu Lin starts with introductory verses. His introductory poem is a heptasyllabic poem of four lines.

In the transcribed text of Yang’s repertoire, only the folk wisdom marker *sushuo* 俗說 (as the folk saying goes) is identified. *Sushuo* is one of the many stock phrases in a storytelling narrative. In contrast to Yang’s simple style, narrative transition phrases, such as *huashuo* 話說 (the story goes), *zaiyan* 再言 (meanwhile, let’s tell) or *zaishuo* 再說 (meanwhile, let’s tell), and *sushuo*, frequently appear in the transcribed text of Pu Lin’s repertoire. In addition, at the end of each narrative episode, Pu ends with the stock phrase *qieting xiahui fenjie* 且聽下回分解 (please listen to the explanation in the next round). In the transcribed text of Yu, pre-verse phrases *zhenshi* 真是 (truly), *youshuoshi* 又說是 (it is also said as), and *haishuoshi* 還說是 (it is also said as) are identified. For example, Yu uses three pre-verse phrases successively to narrate three verses. His narrative is as follows:<sup>323</sup>

真是 (truly):

[...]

---

<sup>322</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>323</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 106.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

又說是 (it is also said as):

[...]

還說是 (it is also said as):

[...]

Many of the stock phrases mentioned above are absent from Yang's performance narrative. As he explains, "I think we storytellers should keep up with the times."<sup>324</sup> Indeed, traditional storytelling narrative formulas such as the stock phrases do not match the language acquisition of the modern audience, because they are adopted from classical Chinese works, which may not be relevant.

From the aspect of phonetic realisation of Yangzhou dialect over the past fifty years, Yang does not cite as many verses as Yu. In fact, Yang retains some verses initially created by Pu by converting them to prose. Pu's verses and Yang's prose are shown in Table 6.1:<sup>325</sup>

Pu's verses	Yang's prose
<p>落地無聲是蓮蓬， 四足能行是個兔。</p> <p><i>Luodi wusheng shi lianpeng, sizu nengxing shi ge tu.</i></p> <p>What silently falls to the ground is fog, What walks with four feet is a rabbit.</p>	<p>落地一場霧。天上下的霧，落到地上可是靜悄悄的？沒得聲音哎，落地無聲。 四條腿跑的是只兔，兔子不是四條腿跑的動物？ 兔子，霧，順音。</p> <p><i>Luodi yichang wu, tianshang xia de wu, luo dao dishang keshi jing qiaoqiao de? Meide shengyin ai, luodi wu sheng.</i></p> <p><i>Si tiao tui pao de shi zhi tu, tuzi bushi si tiao tui pao de dongwu? Tuzi, wu, shunyin.</i></p> <p>What falls to the ground is fog. Falling from the sky, the fog touches the ground silently, doesn't it? Silently! When touching the ground, it is silent. What runs with four legs is a rabbit. A rabbit is an animal that runs with four legs, isn't it? <i>Tu</i> (rabbit) and <i>wu</i> (fog) rhyme.</p>

Table 6.1 Pu's verses and Yang's prose

<sup>324</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>325</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 47; Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 158.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Pu's verses might have enjoyed popularity in Qing Yangzhou, but this is not the case in the present time, as not all contemporary audiences enjoy the time-specific verses or understand the meaning. Taking the audience into consideration, Yang expands the verses into prose by including new explanations for them. Otherwise, the audience will be confused when listening to the verses.

Moreover, the verses created by Pu Lin were in the old Yangzhou dialect, which was popular in Yangzhou city during the Qing dynasty. His verses also do not rhyme in the modern Yangzhou dialect. For example, four lines from the game speech *sazhang* 撒帳 by Pu are as follows:<sup>326</sup>

撒帳撒帳**北**, 名花自是開金**穀**. 賓人休得枉垂涎, 刺蝟想吃天鵝  
肉.

*Sazhangsazhang* (interjection) in the north, the brilliant flowers bloomed  
from gold buds. Visitors shall not desire and drool over it, as does a  
hedgehog yearn to have swan meat.

For the verses to follow the rules of antithetical parallelism, the syllables *bei* 北, *gu* 穀 and *rou* 肉 (shown above in bold type) share the same rhyme [ɔʔ.] with the entering tone. Yang realises *bei* and *gu* as [pɔʔ.] and [kɔʔ.] respectively, but he realises *rou* as [lyuʔ] without the entering tone. In Chapter 5, I clarified that *rou* has lost its entering tone in the present Yangzhou dialect; it was pronounced [lɔʔ.] in the Qing period but it is now pronounced [lyuʔ]. As a result, Pu Lin is able to read the verses in rhyme but Yang cannot. Yang does not incorporate this verse into his performance, owing to the differences between the old and contemporary Yangzhou dialects.

---

<sup>326</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 8.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

On reading the text transcribed from Yang Mingkun's repertoire, I find that his narrative is mostly colloquial. The transcribed text records all the dialect words spoken by Yang in his performance, including slang words, folk sayings, interjections and onomatopoeia. Furthermore, over 1,300 dialect words are documented in the latest interpretation by the editor. Every time when reading Yang's text, it feels like listening to him recite the story in real-life. Unlike Yang, Pu and Yu applied fewer dialect words. Moreover, in the transcribed text of Pu, the dialect words have no explanation; in the text of Yu, 118 words are supplemented with an explanation. The number of dialect words documented and explained in the three texts are listed in Table 6.2:

	Pu's <i>Pure-Wind Dyke</i> Reprinted in 1996	Yu's <i>Rogue Pi Wu</i> 1985	Yang's <i>Rogue Pi Wu</i> 2015
Number	0	118	1,300

Table 6.2 Number of dialect words explained in the three texts

Of the Yangzhou dialect words observed in Yu's and Yang's versions, as many as 1,418 words were not identified in Pu's. The text of *Pure-Wind Dyke* reprinted in 1996 indicates that it is written in a literary style as compared to a contemporary fictional work. Many words in this version, for example, *buke* 不可 (must not), *zu* 足 (foot), and *mu* 目 (eye), are not included in the lexicon of contemporary Yangzhou dialect. These three words are commonly seen in the lexicon of classical Chinese and they are expressed as *buxing* 不行, *jiao* 腳, and *yanjing* 眼睛 in Yangzhou dialect, respectively. Although a few Yangzhou dialect words appear from time to time, they do not interrupt the flow of the text. In contrast to Pu's literary style, Yu's diction is much more colloquial. Many words in the transcribed text of *Rogue Pi Wu* published in 1985, are stylistically neutral in the sense that they are neither literary nor colloquial. See Table 6.3 (L: literary words, C: colloquial words, L/C: neither literary nor colloquial words).

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Pu	Yu	Yang
L <i>fuyou</i> 復又 (again)	L/C <i>you</i> 又 (again)	C 接住/到 (again)
L <i>ciri</i> 次日 (the next day)	L/C <i>dier tian</i> 第二天 (the next day)	L/C <i>dier tian</i> 第二天 (the next day)
L <i>xun</i> 尋 (look for)	L/C <i>zhao</i> 找 (look for)	L/C <i>zhao</i> 找 (look for)
L <i>jingmian</i> 淨面 (wash face)	L/C <i>xilian</i> 洗臉 (wash face)	L/C <i>xilian</i> 洗臉 (wash face)
—	—	C <i>nong</i> 嘍 (to muddle through life)
—	—	C <i>guaiguailongdidong</i> 乖乖隆地咚 (a form of interjection)
—	—	C <i>Yalibuyaxia</i> 雅裏不雅瑕 (something or somebody beautiful but not necessarily graceful)
L <i>yanfu</i> 艷服 (beautiful clothes)	—	C <i>zuodiaole</i> 作掉了 (be wasted)
—	—	C <i>xiaopapa</i> 小爬爬 (small-sized bench)
—	—	C <i>pai</i> 派 (should)
—	—	C <i>lazi</i> 辣子 (rogue)
C <i>laizi</i> 癩子 (rogue)	C <i>lazi</i> 辣子 (rogue)	C <i>kuazi</i> 垮子 (derogatory term for northerners)
—	—	C <i>manzi</i> 蠻子 (derogatory term for southerners)
—	—	—
—	—	—

Table 6.3 Words in the three texts

As seen in Table 6.3, to express “the next day,” Pu uses the literary word *ciri*; Yu and Yang use *di er tian*, which is commonly seen in the colloquial lexicons in both Yangzhou dialect and literary works. In addition, Yang adopts many Yangzhou dialect words that are absent from the text of Yu. For example, *jiezhu* 接住, *nong* 嘍, *Yalibuyaxia* 雅裡不雅瑕, and *guaiguailongdidong* 乖乖隆地咚 found in Yang’s transcribed text are commonly seen in the lexicon of Yangzhou dialect, but they are absent from Yu’s text.

The storyteller decides the words in any performance. Yu Youchun adopts more colloquial words than Pu. However, his repertoire still sounds literary compared to Yang’s. As seen in Tables 6.2-3, Yu uses many literary words. He also “creates” literary words. For example, the introduction of Pi Wu in Yu’s and Yang’s narratives is presented in Table 6.4.<sup>327</sup>

<sup>327</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu laizi*, 7; Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 24.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yu	Yang
<p>頭戴通天小帽，身穿百空短袍， 吊腳褲子半截腰，斷底鞋片及套。 日間街坊訛詐，夜來身棲破廟， 人人見他拔腿跑，皮五辣是尊號。</p> <p><i>Toudai tongtian xiaomao, shenchuan baikong duan'ao, diaojiao kuzi banjieyao, duandi xieqian jitao, rijian jiefang ezha, yelai shenxi pomiao, renren jianta batuipao, piwula shi zunhao.</i></p> <p>Wearing a hat without a top, dressed in a short robe with a hundred holes in it, skinny legs with short trousers revealing half the waist, the shoes have no soles as if they were only covers. Bullying the neighbours at daytime, sleeping in a broken temple at night, people ran away immediately upon seeing him, Rogue Pi Wu is his honorific title.</p>	<p>頭戴開花破帽，身穿百衲窮衣， 短腿疊褲齊胛膝，鞋襪鑽洞無底。 日間街頭訛詐，夜來土地廟身起， 人稱賭舅舅，訛王大帝。</p> <p><i>Doudai kaihua pomao, shenchuan baina qiongyi, duantui dieku qi ge xi, xiewa zan dong wudi, rijian jietou ezha, yelai tudimiao shenqi, rencheng dujiujiu, ewang dadi.</i></p> <p>Wearing the worn-out hat, dressed in poor man's clothes with a hundred patches, short legs with trousers neatly covering only the knees, the socks are filled with holes and the shoes have no soles. Bullying the neighbours at daytime, sleeping at the Earth God temple at night, he is given the name "Gamble Uncle," nicknamed king of rogues.</p>

Table 6.4 Introduction to Pi Wu

When introducing the protagonist Pi Wu, both Yu and Yang apply a short “poem.” At first glance, the first four lines of both poems appear similar. However, in terms of wording and rhyme, Yu’s version is closer to a poetic form. Yu omits the suffix *-zi* in *lazi*. In Chapter 5, I explained that the suffix *-zi* is a common occurrence in Yangzhou dialect. Yu omits this by transforming the dialect word *lazi* to *la*, aiming to simulate a literary word. Unlike Yu, Yang uses present-day dialect words in his poem, such as *du jiujiu* 賭舅舅 (Gamble Uncle) and *ewang dadi* 訛王大帝 (king of rogues). In addition, in Yu’s version, the last syllable of each sentence, except for the fifth, shares the same rhyme [ɔ]. By contrast, in Yang’s version, only the last syllables of the even-numbered lines share the same rhyme [i].

Based on the examination above, Yang changes his language expression in many ways to adapt to the requirements of the audience and development in the Yangzhou dialect. As a result, the three transcribed texts based on the three storytellers’ repertoires have considerable differences, ranging from stock phrases and verses to colloquial words. The text transcribed from Pu Lin’s repertoire is literary, as stock

## **The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

phrases, verses and literary words are used frequently. In contrast to Pu's text, Yang's text uses few stock phrases and verses but numerous colloquial words. Compared with Yang's colloquial style, Yu's version close to a literary style as he prefers to use more words that are "literary/colloquial words." On the other hand, Yang's text is reflective of the language used in contemporary Yangzhou.

### **6.2 *Nong, Yalibuyaxia, Guaiguailongdidong and Huolodo***

According to Foley, performers and audiences in communities with living oral traditions tend to share a special knowledge about the traditions that may be elusive to outsiders. Moreover, the words of performance metonymically suggest to competent listeners a greater reservoir of cultural knowledge that will help to create meanings from the performance. His basic notion is that "traditional structures convey traditional meanings."<sup>328</sup> The communication between Yang Mingkun and his audiences in the performance of Pi Wu is a good example of the scenario mentioned by Foley. The Yangzhou dialect in traditional style is the speaking register by Yang Mingkun in the live performance of Pi Wu, either in the square or round styles (see Chapters 5 and 7.1); it is the vital communication method between Yang and his audiences. Most of his audiences are locals (see Chapter 3.3) and thus they are familiar with the Yangzhou dialect. Yangzhou dialect words reflect the local tradition and customs, which allows for easy recall and understanding given the cultural background shared by Yang and his audiences. The Yangzhou dialect and cultural background evoked by Yangzhou dialect construct a special channel for their communication. People not familiar with

---

<sup>328</sup> Foley, *Immanent Art: From Structure to Meaning in Traditional Oral Epic*, (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1991), 36-7.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yangzhou dialect cannot accurately grasp what Yang said. I will use the example of four dialect words below to illustrate further.

*Nong*, *Yalibuyaxia*, *guaiguailongdidong* and *huolodo* 豁碌篤 (onomatopoeia for the sound of closing a door or drawer) are the four words frequently applied by Yang when he narrates the story of Pi Wu. These terms are also used in the daily conversations of ordinary Yangzhou people today. In this section, I will explore how Yang Mingkun adopts Yangzhou dialect when reciting the story of Pi Wu.

The local language best reflects the everyday lives of the people who speak it. The Yangzhou dialect can accurately describe the daily lives of Yangzhou people. In Yang's version of the story, there are more than 400 figures who are portrayed as Yangzhou locals. In a way, the Yangzhou dialect is the best tool for him to tell the story from the audience's point of view. In Yangzhou dialect, *nong* 噠 refers to a situation in which someone uses something he does not like or adapts to the situation that does not meet his requirements.<sup>329</sup> When Pi Wu lives in poverty as a rogue, his life attitude is *nong*. Due to his unfortunate fate, he was rejected by his social circle when he was a teenager. Thus, he has no opportunity to change his life. He wanders the streets every day, making a living through his knavish conduct and indulges in gambling. He is not satisfied with his life and is unhappy with many things around him.

*Nong* is usually associated with *manman* 慢慢 (slowly), *chaoqian* 朝前 (moving forward) and *yitiantian* 一天天 (day by day). *Manman nong* 慢慢噠 means to "put up with something," delivering a sense of "being helpless." For example, one day, Pi Wu and Mama Zhang greet each other in the street. Pi Wu says, "You must

---

<sup>329</sup> Li et al. (eds.), *Yangzhou fangyan cidian*, 342. In the *Yangzhou fangyan cidian*, *nong* is written as "多農" by the editor.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

have made a big fortune! I have not seen you for a few days. You've got a big fortune.” Mama Zhang responds and says, “How could I have got a big fortune? I make a living by selling flowers. How poor I am! I muddle through my life slowly 慢慢嚟!”<sup>330</sup> Mama Zhang is a peddler selling fresh flowers in Yangzhou in the Qing dynasty and her small business brings her only a small profit. *Manman nong* indicates that her life is not easy, and she has no choice but to carry on as she is. There is another example: when Pi Wu argues with Sun Xiaogu because he does not believe her. In response, the disappointed Xiaogu says to herself, “Since I got married to you, I have not lived a good life. I do not complain about it! I squeeze my nose, control my negative emotion, and I muddle through my life slowly following you 跟著你慢慢嚟.”<sup>331</sup> In this sentence, *manman nong* suggests that Xiaogu has no choice but to live with Pi Wu because she is his wife.

When *nong* is associated with *shenghuo* 生活 (live, life), the phrase *nong shenghuo* 嚟生活 or *shenghuo nongxialai* 生活嚟下來 refers to a person who makes no effort to seek progress in his life. In reality, the poor have no option to get out of their status quo because they do not have the opportunity or money to change their lives. As a result, they usually make no effort in their lives. *Nong shenghuo* appropriately describes their situation. For example, when Pi Wu sees his neighbour Ni Si, he says to himself, “Ni Si sells a load of vegetables each day, the profit he gets from the small business is enough for a day's expenses for his family of three. They just live through the day 一天的生活就嚟下來了.”<sup>332</sup> It seems that Ni Si does nothing more than sell vegetables every day to improve his life. However, to Ni Si, selling

---

<sup>330</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 26.

<sup>331</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 274.

<sup>332</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 278.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

vegetables is the only thing he can do to make a living. The phrase 生活就嚟下來了 effectively reflects the situation of Ni Si.

The word *tian* 天 (day) is associated with life. *Yitiantian nong rizi* 一天天嚟日子 means “struggling to live from day to day,” suggesting a hard life. *Chaoqian* means “in a forward direction.” *Chaoqian nong(nong)* 朝前嚟(嚟) suggests that life is laborious and hence there is a need to look forward. In the story, a lady wants to purchase medicine for her dying husband and says to Pi Wu, “If he is cured, my husband and I can look forward in life 如果治好他，我們夫妻還能朝前嚟嚟。”<sup>333</sup> She means she still has hope in her life when she lives with her husband, even though they live in poverty. In other words, it may also mean when she lives alone, her life feels as if it stops moving. Pi Wu understands her situation by the word *chaoqian nongnong* and decides to play tricks on Jin Erpang to obtain money for the lady.

*Yalibuyaxia* is a word commonly found in the lexicon of Yangzhou dialect, derived from another Yangzhou dialect word *ya*. When transcribed into written form, *ya* borrows the character *ya* 雅 from Standard Chinese. In Standard Chinese, *ya* 雅 is an adjective meaning “elegance.” However, the application of *ya* in Yangzhou dialect has no relationship with “elegance.” In Yangzhou dialect, *ya* becomes a verb, meaning “enjoy,” or an adjective meaning “comfortable.” Acting as an adjective, the commonly spoken term associated with *ya* is *yaxia* 雅瑕. In the story, Ni Si has never ridden on a sedan chair before. When describing his first experience of sitting on it, he says, “This is quite cozy 這個蠻雅瑕的.” When the sedan chair arrives at the destination,

---

<sup>333</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 308.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

he does not want to get off as he enjoys the feeling of sitting on it. As Pi Wu says, “He is enjoying the feeling of sitting on the sedan chair 他正雅住呢。”<sup>334</sup>

*Xiaoya* 小雅 refers to activities that involve enjoying the beauty of ordinary daily life. This includes experiences such as eating delicious food and relaxing. These daily life experiences are not as refined as appreciating calligraphy, paintings or literary and musical works. However, Yangzhou people think of the experiences of enjoying delicious food and relaxing as the happiest moments in their lives. Thus, they attach *xiao* 小 (small; little) to the verb *ya*. *Xiaoya* suggests that Yangzhou people appreciate the beauty in their daily lives. For example, a man invites Pi Wu to go out to enjoy morning tea and he says, “Old Wu, go have fun with me! [...] There are many steamed rice cakes there, let’s go there to enjoy 到那塊小雅下子 and have a cup of tea.”<sup>335</sup> In this sentence, *xiaoya* infers the joy of having steamed rice cakes.

When *yaxia* is applied in the structure “xxx li 裡 *bu* 不 xxx,” the interesting word *yalibuyaxia* emerges, which refers to something or someone beautiful but not necessarily graceful.<sup>336</sup> Sun Qiangshi is beautiful but her standing posture and speaking tone make her no different from the plain Jane. Yang Mingkun uses this term to describe her lack of manners. In normal circumstances, *yalibuyaxia* is abbreviated as *bu yaxia*. Pi Wu takes a bath at the Baiyutang Public Bath House the day before his wedding. He plans to steal a suit coat from a rich man who takes a bath there. When he sees a coat belonging to an old man, he says to himself, “The style of the coat is out

---

<sup>334</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 604-5.

<sup>335</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 50.

<sup>336</sup> Ming Guang 明光, “Yangzhouren zhihui shenghuo yu chuansen yuyan de shilu” 揚州人智慧生活與傳神語言的實錄 (“Factual Records of the Intelligent Life and Vivid Speech of Yangzhou People”), in Song et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji*, 184.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

of date. It is not suitable for me! Wearing it on the wedding ceremony is not graceful 把我結婚穿起來不雅瑕。”<sup>337</sup> In this sentence, *buyaxia* means “not graceful.” Interestingly, the second meaning of *yaxia* emerges partly from sharing the lexical meaning of *Yalibuyaxia*, which is used to refer to all improper speech and conduct.<sup>338</sup>

Interjections act as comic relief in Yang’s narrative and in the daily conversation of Yangzhou people. *Guaiguailongdidong* is one example of this. It is a five-syllable interjection, delivering a sense of astonishment. The tones of the five syllables are shown as ˉ (the first tone), ˉ (the first tone), ˊ (the second tone), neutral tone, and ˉ (the first tone). By referring to *sisheng* 四聲 (four traditional Chinese syllable types), all five syllables are pronounced with *pingsheng* 平聲 (level tone). Generally, each interjection in Yangzhou dialect contains *zesheng* 仄聲 (oblique tone), because *zesheng* syllables efficiently deliver a sense of astonishment, happiness and anger. *Guaiguailongdidong* is abbreviated as *guaiguai* 乖乖. Repetition of *guaiguai* sounds comical. For example, when Pi Wu is surprised to see his niece, he says, “*guaiguai**guaiguai**guaiguai**guaiguai*, *guaiguai*, it’s you!”<sup>339</sup> Five *guaiguai* used in succession have no lexical meaning but they successfully suggest Pi Wu’s astonishment at seeing his niece. The interjection *pochigui* 潑嗤鬼 is also a comical term, likened to *guaiguailongdidong*, but with a negative connotation. Mama Zhang uses this term in her daily conversation with Pi Wu, as the latter often says improper things to her.

Onomatopoeia also serves as comic relief in Yang’s narrative as well as in the daily speech of Yangzhou. In their conversation, Yangzhou people are fond of

---

<sup>337</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 103.

<sup>338</sup> Li et al. (eds.), *Yangzhou fangyan cidian*, 84. In the *Yangzhou fangyan cidian*, *yaxia* is written as “丫霞” or “雅霞”.

<sup>339</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 743.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

adopting onomatopoeia to create a sense of ease. For example, “*Huolodo*, she closes the door. *Huolodo*, Mama Zhang opens the closet. *Hulongdong* 呼隆咚 (sound of closing the door of the house or cabinet), she covers the small cabinet.”<sup>340</sup> The two onomatopoeia *huolodo* and *hulongdong* enhance the liveliness of an otherwise simple action. Another example is the use of the onomatopoeia *zhiga* 吱嘎 to mimic the sound of a moving sedan chair. “*Zhiga zhiga zhiga zhiga, guaiguai*, he is out of the city. *Zhiga zhiga zhiga zhiga*, he arrives at a street out of the city. *Zhiga zhiga zhiga zhiga*, he is in the countryside.”<sup>341</sup> In this sentence, not only does *zhiga zhiga zhiga zhiga* describes the sound of a moving sedan chair but it also adds comic effect.

The daily lives of the Yangzhou people are reflected in the Yangzhou dialect; interjections and onomatopoeia act as comic relief in daily speech. Thus, the Yangzhou dialect plays a vital role in Yang Mingkun’s recitation. He successfully portrays around 400 figures in the story of Pi Wu by depicting their daily lives and conversations, as well as delivering comic effect to his audience through the Yangzhou dialect. This is because he is aware that only the Yangzhou dialect can best describe the story of Yangzhou people.

### 6.3 Comedic Elements

In this section, I will focus on the comedic elements in Yang Mingkun’s performance speech. Other characteristics, including Yang’s facial expressions and mouth acrobatics concerning comedic elements, will be discussed in Chapter 7.

---

<sup>340</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 37.

<sup>341</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 714.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

As observed by Richard Bauman, John Miles Foley and Mark Bender, the storyline in a given tradition is shaped by devices that stimulate the imagination through shared knowledge and experiences of the performer and audiences.<sup>342</sup> Under normal circumstances, the native southern dialect speaker understands around 70% of the daily conversation in any style of the northern dialect, such as the Beijing and Nanjing dialects. As the Yangzhou dialect is a branch of sub-group of Northern dialects group in modern China, it is not so difficult for locals from the Yangtze River delta such as Shanghai, Suzhou, Hangzhou and Wuxi to understand what Yang Mingkun is performing. However, they may not be able to get the effect *qu* (interesting) from Yang's narration. The main reason is that Yang Mingkun shares with local audiences the dialect and life experiences in Yangzhou—the key to decoding Yang's comedic elements. Those outside the traditional speaking register will not be able to fully catch the punch line in Yang's narration.

*Xue* 噱 or *xuetou* 噱頭 refers to comical speech or activities.<sup>343</sup> Telling (*shuo* 說), quipping (*xue*), plucking musical instruments (*tan* 彈) and singing (*chang* 唱) are the four skills in Suzhou chantefable performance. As the saying on Suzhou *pingtan* goes, “Quips are treasures in storytelling”, which suggests the importance of humour and witty remarks in Suzhou singing and storytelling. This saying also applies to Yang Mingkun's performance. In Suzhou chantefable, humour is identified by the three categories: humour in the flesh (*rouli xue* 肉裡噱), inserting flowers from outside

---

<sup>342</sup> Bender, *Plum and Bamboo*, 73; Richard Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance*, (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland, 1977), 15-24; Foley, *Immanent Art*, 6-8.

<sup>343</sup> Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan yuyuan yanjiusuo cidian bianjishi 中國社會科學院語言研究所詞典編輯室 (Dictionary Editorial Office, Institute of Language, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), (eds.), *Xiandai hanyu cidian* 現代漢語詞典 (*Modern Chinese Dictionary*), (Beijing: shangwu yinshuaguan, 1998), 1430.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

(*waicha hua* 外插花), small sales (*xiaomai* 小賣). *Rouli xue* refers to the comedic element that arises from the interactions between characters in the plot. *Waicha hua* is the comedic element that results from the inserted explanatory notes, similes, metaphors and analogies which are not directly related to the plot. *Xiaomai* denotes brief witticism or a humorous act, which may be described as an “occasional show-off.”<sup>344</sup> However, it is difficult to determine the nature of the comedic elements encoded in Yang’s narration by referring to the three categories to Suzhou chantefable. Whether the audience is familiar with Yang’s speaking register will decide the comedic elements in Yang’s narration. As discussed before, the channel where Yang and his audiences communicated in performance is constructed by Yang’s performance language—Yangzhou dialect and the cultural background evoked by Yangzhou dialect. Without this special communicative channel, most of the comedic elements will not work on the audience.

Rapport between the performer and audience contributes significantly to a successful performance by Yang Mingkun. Yang’s narration of the story of Pi Wu is filled with comedic elements because he wants his audiences to feel at ease and happy when watching his performance.<sup>345</sup> He does not try to please the audience with crude jokes or vulgar language. Yang Mingkun knows that his audiences consist mostly of Yangzhou people and that “Yangzhou *pinghua* will lose its vitality when it leaves its birth place.”<sup>346</sup> Yang builds his comical narrative on the shared mentality that centres upon the Yangzhou dialect, daily life experiences, and even what the people have

---

<sup>344</sup> Wenwei Du, “*Xuetou*: Comedic elements as Social Commentary in Suzhou *Pinghua* Storytelling”, *CHINOPERL Papers* 1 (1995): 33-44.

<sup>345</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

<sup>346</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

learnt throughout their lives. Yang told me about a failure he has experienced in his performance career. This happened in Beijing in 1985 when he was nominated as one of the ten most outstanding artists in China. For this particular performance, nearly all the audience members were native speakers of Northern dialects and they did not laugh at his comical presentation because they did not understand the Yangzhou dialect, having not lived in Yangzhou and they did not share the same cultural background as Yangzhou people. For these reasons, they were not able to understand the punch lines Yang delivered.

Yang Mingkun prefers to narrate the story from the stance of the characters in the story, not from that of an omniscient narrator. His real-life expressions of the characters' speech and thoughts satisfy the audience's curiosity. For example, Units 31-32, "Sticky rice cakes are fragrant and delicious" and "Cheating Boss Wang" contain an impressive depiction of the shape and taste of the sticky rice cake served in the shop. Yang does not directly describe how delicious and beautiful the rice cakes are from the narrator's point of view; instead, he portrays the rice cakes through a conversation between Pi Wu and Wang, the owner of a rice cake shop. A few lines from their conversation are given below (W: Wang, P: Pi Wu):<sup>347</sup>

W: Have a taste! Tell us about their taste.

P: The rice cake made in your shop must taste good.

W: Taste it! Do not comment on them before tasting.

P: OK! It is sweet! Sweet bean paste! It is my favourite! Oh, it is hot! Good! Very sweet! This one, stuffed with vegetables, *guaiguai*, also has lots of shrimp and shrimp eggs. Yummy! The vegetables are green. Good! Excellent (*guagua jiao* 呱呱叫)! *Guaiguai*! It is

---

<sup>347</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 255.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

with sweet sesame paste and sweet-scented osmanthus! Tastes good!  
This one with cubed pork fat. *Guaiguai!* Not bad! This one with nuts!  
Good! *Guaiguai!* Another one is with stuffing as big as a pork ball.  
*Guaiguai!* The excellent aroma is filling my mouth now!

In the above dialogue, the different types of rice cake are presented to the audience directly through Pi Wu's narration of the tasting experience. Pi Wu can only specify the stuffing, temperature and shape of the rice cake as he is a rogue and cannot describe his encounter with sophisticated words. Considering Pi's life experience and educational background, Yang organises the speech of Pi Wu with just a few nouns and adjectives and two funny interjections that are commonly used by ordinary Yangzhou people. For the brief comment on the rice cakes by Pi, the interjection *guaiguai/guaguajiao* is used five times to instil comic effect.

Unlike Yang's narrative style, Pu directly describes the smell and taste of the rice cakes in literary words by applying the rhetoric device of exaggeration, acting as an omniscient narrator. The lines describing the rice cake in the text of Pu Lin are given below:<sup>348</sup>

The smell of sticky rice cake directs one to the twelfth floor from the ground. Rice cakes not only satisfy people's taste but are also good for their health, they stimulate people's appetites too.

The image of the sticky rice cake narrated by Pu is not as explicit as that of Yang. Pu's narrative delivers little information about the sticky rice cakes to the audience nor does it create comic effect.

---

<sup>348</sup> Wang et al. (eds.), *Qingfengzha*, 49.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yang's depiction of his characters may appear simple, but it is refined by the application of dialect words. He shapes the characters through their appearance, conduct and speech, and his characterisation is vernacular and comical. For example, Sun Qiangshi is an evil and vicious woman. The elderly Yang Pan is a hooligan living in the Yang Family Village and he always receives small favours from others by sweet talking or promising to help ordinary people solve their problems by talking to county officials. The depiction of these two figures by Yang Mingkun is as follows:<sup>349</sup>

孫強氏就朝門口一站。她站在那裡，**雅裡不雅**的。什麼樣子？打扮得花枝招展的，頭上簪環首飾戴著，手巾捏兒往胳肢窩裡一夾，手朝腰眼上一叉，蘭花指頭一豎，小指甲往牙縫裡一鬥，**趣格格**的。

模样还不错，个头**高高的**，穿了件大褂子，一手拎住大褂子一角，一手大拇指**翘翘的**，嘴上胡子**硬茬茬的**，嘴唇**油光光的**，好像才吃过喝过，脸上非常得意的笑，**笑嘻嘻的**。

Sun Qiangshi stands at the door. She looks beautiful standing there. What does she look like? She is flamboyantly dressed, wearing hairpins on her head and jewellery. She holds a handkerchief under her armpit and puts her arm on her hip. She does a hand gesture with her thumb and middle finger joined, using her small nails to pick her teeth, throwing a coquettish look.

He looks pretty good. He is tall, dressed in a large coat, holding one corner of the coat in his hand. He raises his thumb, his beard is stiff, his oily lips glisten as if he just came back from a feast. Smiling with great satisfaction, he grins from ear to ear.

---

<sup>349</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 11; 27.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

When describing Sun Qiangshi, Yang applies the dialect words *yalibuyaxia* and *qugege* 趣咯咯 (coquettish), as shown in bold above. Generally, the two words are applied with caution because they indicate a sardonic attitude towards women. Sun Qiangshi is a woman who has killed her husband and buried his body in the kitchen. She does this in order to marry her stepson. She is always flamboyantly dressed even when devising evil plans. In addition, her standing posture at the door is linked to a woman always seeking adventures and an indication that she is also not a person of good virtue. These two dialectal words generate comic effect, as they not only indicate that Sun is beautiful but also emphasise her odd dressing style and standing posture. When listening to the short passage about Sun, the audience members who understand the Yangzhou dialect will grasp Yang's intention as well as picturing Sun's appearance and gestures vividly in their minds.

Similarly, Yang Mingkun shapes Yang Pan using dialect words, with a focus on his subtle actions. As shown in bold above, he successively applies three tri-syllabic words: *ying chacha* 硬茬茬 (stiff), *you guangguang* 油光光 (glistening with oil) and *xiao xixi* 笑嘻嘻 (grins from ear to ear) to describe the funny appearance of Yang Pan. The lifted thumb, oily lips that glisten and facial expressions while walking suggest that Yang Pan is an outgoing man. Additionally, the name Yang Pan itself is a joke as it shares phonetic similarity with the dialect word *yangpan* 洋槃 (a mouther).

Dialect words have another significant role in Yang's narrative. For example, he takes advantage of the four expressions of "death" in Yangzhou dialect to construct a facetious conversation between Pi Wu and a young lady who is going to jump into a river. The conversation is given below (P: Pi Wu, Y: Young lady):<sup>350</sup>

---

<sup>350</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 408.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

P: 我來問你啊, 你家大舅舅呢?

Y: 大舅舅, 大舅舅死了.

P: 你家二舅舅呢?

Y: 二舅舅, 二舅舅翹了辮子了.

P: 三舅舅呢?

Y: 三舅舅捺了腿了.

P: 四舅舅呢?

Y: 四舅舅嘎咕吃湯飯了.

P: Let me ask you, how is your eldest uncle?

Y: My eldest uncle, he is dead.

P: How is your second uncle?

Y: My second uncle's pigtail turns upwards (dead).

P: What about your third uncle?

Y: My third uncle stretches his legs (dead).

P: What about your fourth uncle?

Y: My fourth uncle eats his congee (dead).

Phrases such as *qiaole bianzi* 翹了辮子, *na le tui* 捺了腿, and *gagu chi tangfan* 嘎咕吃湯飯 in the Yangzhou dialect mean *si* or “death”/ “to die.” Native speakers will not use these terms, except when they wish to express an explicitly playful attitude to the dead. Usually, they prefer literary words or euphemisms such as *qushi* 去世 (left the world) or *zoule* 走了 (gone) to indicate the death of an acquaintance or family member as a form of respect for the dead. However, the young lady applies them consecutively to refer to the deaths of her four uncles. While the audience is expecting a conventional answer, the unexpected answers with the four expressions of death generate comic effect.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yang Mingkun uses the Yangzhou dialect to create funny conversations, as per Chinese storyteller parlance, “there will be no story if there is no coincidence” (*wuqiao bu cheng shu* 無巧不成書). Including *si*, there are four expressions denoting “death” in the Yangzhou dialect. Coincidentally, the young lady has four uncles and they are all dead; Pi Wu becomes her fifth uncle, matching his name Pi Wu or the fifth Pi perfectly. Yang ingeniously creates this comedic conversation by centring on Pi Wu. Local audience members can easily catch the humour in the conversation as they completely understand the usage of the alternative expressions of death.

As mentioned earlier, the Yangzhou dialect and local traditions are the sources of inspiration for Yang’s fictional creation. This is also the case for his comedic expressions. For example in Yangzhou dialect, *pao* 跑 means “walk” when pronounced with the second tone and “run (away)” with the third. Yang takes advantage of this homograph in creating the narrative of Unit 49, “Running Away with a Pair of Shoes.” As indicated in the headnote, this unit elaborates on how Pi Wu obtains a pair of new shoes through his trickery. The fun part of this narrative is the conversation between Pi Wu and the owner of the shoe store. It reads as follows (W: Wang, P: Pi Wu):<sup>351</sup>

W: Walk [跑 means “to walk” when realised as *páo* in the Yangzhou dialect!] You will feel better when walking in the new shoes. Walk! Walk! Walk faster!

P: Ok! You ask me to run away [跑 means “to run away” when realised as *pǎo* in Yangzhou dialect], why not! *Dido* 滴篤 (onomatopoeia: the sound of steps), *dido*, *dido*.

---

<sup>351</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 404.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

W: Walk faster!

P: Ok! Walk faster! *Dido, dido, dido.*

W: Walk! The faster, the better!

P: Boss Wang, you asked me to run away, didn't you? [Indeed, Wang was meant to ask Pi Wu to walk]

W: Yes!

P: I am going to run away.

W: Just walk as you want!

P: Ok! Run! *Didao dida.*

Pi Wu swings his arms and runs at full speed. [...] This got him a new pair of shoes.

The lines above create comic effect for the audience. The audience realises that Pi Wu is playing a trick on Boss Wang as he pretends to understand *pao* realised in the third tone, meaning “run (away).” Pi Wu knows all along that Wang means “walk” when saying *pao* in the second tone, but he says to himself, “You (Boss Wang) asked me to run away, didn't you? ... You asked me to run away, why not!” Pi Wu takes advantage of the minor phonetic difference in the tones of *pao* that give different lexical meanings. In addition, he successfully gains a pair of shoes by cheating Wang using the phonetic difference. Audience members who do not understand the Yangzhou dialect will not grasp Yang's punch line in this excerpt.

Yang's comedic presentation also draws on the daily life experiences of Yangzhou people. Their traditions of worship and taboo are turned into Yang's comical presentation. The popular tradition of sacrifice to the Kitchen God in Yangzhou city is one of the sources of his narratives, as shown below (W: elderly Wang, P: Pi Wu).<sup>352</sup>

---

<sup>352</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 421.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

W: It is not possible to hold the wedding ceremony on the twenty-fourth day of the twelfth lunar month.

P: Why?

W: Traditionally, we need to sacrifice to the Kitchen God on that day.

P: To sacrifice to the Kitchen God, you can choose another day such as the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth of the month.

W: How can you say that? We cannot sacrifice on those two days.

P: (Pi smiles.) I know our tradition very well! The soldiers sacrifice on twenty-third, we the ordinary people on twenty-fourth, turtle and soft turtle [bad guys] sacrifice on twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth, respectively. You are not a turtle! So you need to hold a wedding ceremony for your son and also sacrifice to the Kitchen God on the same day, twenty-fourth of the twelfth lunar month. As the proverb goes, *Datuishang cuoyuanzi — yishou yijiao* 大腿上搓圆子——手一脚 (literally “Making a ball on the thigh, one arm one leg” referring to an embarrassing situation in which one has to handle several issues at the same time).

Audience members who are not familiar with the sacrifice tradition in Yangzhou will not understand the punch line when listening to the lines above. To resolve this problem, Yang Mingkun interprets the tradition of the sacrifice to the Kitchen God from Pi Wu’s view by enriching Pi’s conversation with Old Wang. The tradition of offering sacrifices to the Kitchen God in Yangzhou generates the type of humour found in this conversation. Pi Wu advised Wang to sacrifice to the Kitchen God on the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth of the twelfth lunar month instead with the intention of mocking Wang as a turtle. *Gui* 龜 (turtle) or *wangba* 王八 (soft turtle) in Yangzhou dialect mean “bad guy.” Old Wang is a man without good sense and he always finds excuses to delay his son’s wedding ceremony. For this reason, Pi Wu intentionally chooses the upcoming twenty-fourth day of the twelfth lunar month for Wang to hold the ceremony for his son. If Wang avoids the promise to arrange his son’s marriage on

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

the twenty-fifth day using the excuse of offering sacrifice to the Kitchen God, he must offer the sacrifice on the twenty-fifth day and be mocked as a turtle.

The worship activities of Yangzhou people provides creative material for Yang in his comical presentation. In historic Yangzhou, people worshipped various gods, such as Wealth God, Kitchen God, Moon God, the Jade Emperor, the City God and other auspicious gods. However in the story, people worship silver, mirrors and even a toilet lid. Wang Er's wife has an ugly appearance but she wants to look beautiful at any cost. Hence, she kowtows to the magical "Reunited Mirror" eighty-one times. The description of her worship to the Mirror reads as follows:<sup>353</sup>

She follows his [Pi Wu's] suggestion to light the joss sticks and candles, putting the Reunited Mirror on the desk together with the Bodhisattva. While kneeling, she says, "Please seat yourself here, magical Reunited Mirror." Subsequently, she kowtows eighty-one times before the mirror and prays loudly.

Another example is a boss worshipping the silver that he earned from his first deal and the description is as follows:<sup>354</sup>

He draws silver out from the drawer and puts it in front of the Bodhisattva, conducting several subsequent kowtows to the silver and Bodhisattva at the same time.

---

<sup>353</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 378.

<sup>354</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 78.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Interestingly, Pi Wu worships a toilet lid that has blessed him in gambling. He attributes his great fortune to the toilet lid and worships it as a bodhisattva. How Pi Wu treats the toilet lid is described below:<sup>355</sup>

Pi Wu goes back home holding a toilet cover. He puts it on the centre of a desk, lights the joss sticks and candles and prepares to kowtow to it. When conducting kowtow, he prays: “Great General toilet cover, please bless me in my table gambling.” From then on, the toilet cover becomes his god.

The most ironic worship recorded in *Rogue Pi Wu* is the sacrifice made by the Shandong thieves before their theft. The description of their worship is as follows:<sup>356</sup>

The Shandong thieves bring an incense burner and candlesticks onto the desk, drawing out three sticks of incense, three pieces of yellow paper and a big bowl of water.

What are they doing? Are they praying for a fortune?

After lighting the incense, the thieves pray, “By my faith, we come here for the first time so we do not know who is rich. Please indicate the right direction to the rich.”

Subsequently, they light the paper and throw it into the sky and let the burning paper float in the wind. Ashes float in the south-westward direction. The Shandong thieves say excitedly, “God exists around us!”

---

<sup>355</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 563.

<sup>356</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 580.



## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

As shown in the four passages above, the worship activities performed by Wang Er's wife, the shop owner, Pi Wu and the Shandong thieves do not make sense from the perspective of contemporary audiences as they very well know that people cannot become beautiful just by worshipping a mirror or become rich by worshipping the silver and toilet lid. Hence, the excerpts above provoke laughter because the audience cannot believe that the mirror and the toilet lid would be worshipped by someone living in the Qing era. The most comical part is that the Shandong thieves do not hide the fact that they plan to steal but actually sacrificed and tell the truth to the god. They hope that the god will lead them to a rich family so that they can steal a huge fortune. Yang's narrative of the Shandong thieves' thinking provokes laughter among the audience.

Pi Wu is portrayed as a funny rogue because he is concerned about the taboo shared among thieves. He knows that thieves will run away as soon as they hear the syllable *zhuo* 捉 (catch) because they are afraid of being caught by court officials. He considers the syllable *zhuo* to be taboo to thieves in daily conversation. Thus, Pi Wu reminds Ni Si not to use this syllable when speaking at his wedding ceremony as most of his wedding guests are thieves. This is described as follows:<sup>357</sup>

Ni Si asks Pi Wu, “Why should we call *zhuozi* (desk) *taizi* 檯子 (desk) tomorrow?”

Pi Wu says, “Tomorrow you must not say *zhuozi*, you must say *taizi*.”

As most of the guests who will come to my wedding ceremony tomorrow are thieves and rogues, they will be afraid of hearing the syllable *zhuo* [a sound associated with the meaning, “catch”]. They

---

<sup>357</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 132.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

will run away quickly when you say *zhuozi*. Remember to say *taizi*, understand?”

As described in the passage above, Pi Wu appears very considerate to his guests when he gives Ni Si the friendly reminder. The audience catches the humour when they hear that Pi Wu demonstrates consideration for the thieves as he is also afraid of hearing the syllable *zhuo*. After all, he is a rogue who cheats on others.

In addition, Yang adds his own life experiences in Yangzhou to the story of Pi Wu. Liquor brands such as Shuanggou 雙溝, Nü’erhong 女兒紅 and Yanghe 洋河, familiar to locals in contemporary Yangzhou, appear in the conversations of Pi Wu.<sup>358</sup> When Pi Wu speaks about a traditional Chinese medicine shop, he refers to Dadesheng 大德生, a contemporary Chinese medicine chain store.<sup>359</sup> In many other examples, Yang embellishes his comical comments on the story by drawing analogies or comparing them with current events. For example, Sun Xiaogu feels shy when talking to Mama Zhang about her marriage. To help the audience appreciate this, Yang compares Sun’s feelings of shyness about marriage issues with the feelings of a modern girl talking about her love experiences in public. His narrative is as follows:<sup>360</sup>

In ancient China, parents arranged their daughters’ marriages. When talking about marriage issues, girls felt shy and blush. They tried to avoid this topic.

Girls of our time are different. For example, one day I met some girls. They were eighteen or nineteen years old at the most. One of them spoke to me, “Mr Yang, you do not care about me.” I said, “Why did you say that?” “I am around eighteen years old.” “Yes, you are.” “You have got

---

<sup>358</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 145.

<sup>359</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 329.

<sup>360</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 165-66.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

many friends, haven't you? Introduce a good boy to me, and we may fall in love." They were proud when talking about their love experiences. The more experiences they had, the more honoured they felt. "Mr Yang, I have fallen in love six times so far."

Girls living in ancient China are shy when talking about their marriages so Sun Xiaogu does not answer Mama Zhang's question about her wedding.

When the audience listens to Yang's narration of modern girls talking about their love experiences, they strongly feel the difference between girls living in Qing Yangzhou and those in the present day. At the same time, they are able to comprehend Yang's exaggeration as they know that a girl aged around eighteen years in contemporary Yangzhou will not usually conduct herself in the way Yang describes. Yang makes use of exaggeration to produce a striking contrast on the social background of girls living in Qing Yangzhou and those in contemporary Yangzhou.

In addition, Yang draws on his early childhood experiences when narrating about Pi Wu walking alone at night. Some of the lines are as follows:<sup>361</sup>

Indeed, Pi Wu is fearless and courageous. He sings while walking alone at night. When walking alone at night, we feel braver singing a song or saying something to ourselves. Pi Wu is not an exception! He plans to sing a folk song. Take me as an example: when I was a child, I used to sing a song when walking on a lane without any lighting. What did I sing? I sang the song "We Rely on the Sailors When Sailing at Sea" (*Dahai hangxing kao duoshou* 大海航行靠舵手). "Dido (onomatopoeia of the sound of steps) *dido dido dido*." I went through the dark lane by singing a song. Pi Wu is smart, and he is a master of opera such as Beijing opera, Su opera (*suju* 蘇

---

<sup>361</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 307.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

劇), Kun opera, Yangzhou opera and Huangmei opera (*huangmei xi* 黃梅戲).

When listening to the presentation above, the audience is amused to discover that the fearless Pi Wu is afraid of the dark. Yang speaks about his own experiences of walking alone at night at a young age to explain why Pi Wu plans to sing a song while walking in the dark. However, given the title of the story and the knavish conduct of Pi Wu, the audience's impression is that Pi Wu must be a fearless person. In this presentation, the image of the fearless Pi Wu does not develop in the way the audience expects, and his weakness is revealed. The plot twist in the narrative generates humour.

As well as the plot twist, the list of the opera genres that Pi Wu knows also generates comic effect. Yang says that he sings the song *Dahai hangxing kao duoshou* when walking at night, aiming to show Pi's favourites. According to Yang's narrative, Pi Wu is familiar with various genres of opera such as Beijing opera, Su opera, Kun opera and Huangmei opera, which are still popular today. It is not important to know whether Pi Wu is a master of such genres. Yang lists them merely to create a connection between Pi Wu and the contemporary audience. The audience can resonate better with Pi Wu knowing that they share the same interest.

Yang also draws on riddles, folk sayings, witty words, interjections and onomatopoeia in Yangzhou dialect to create a sense of facetiousness. For example, at the very beginning of Unit 1, a rogue asks an old fortune-teller to tell his fortune. The fortune-teller does not like the rogue and is reluctant to tell him anything. To make fun of the rogue, the smart fortune-teller recites a poem, making hints that the rogue is a beast in public. His poem is as follows:<sup>362</sup>

---

<sup>362</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 3.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

眉如直八，一世发达。二目不同，一世不穷。

鼻如玄田，一世有铜钲。嘴如牛一，一世有得吃。

Your eyebrows look like the character *ba* 八 (eight), you will be wealthy in life. Your eyes are distinct, you will never live in poverty in this life. Your nose looks like the character *tian* 田 (farming field) and suggests that you do not lack money in your life. Your mouth looks like the characters of *niu* 牛 (cow) and *yi* 一 (one), and it implies that you will not lack food in your life.

The characters *ba* 八, *tian* 田, *niu* 牛 and *yi* 一 are structural components of the two characters that form the word “beast” (*chusheng* 畜生). The riddle relates to the word *chusheng*. Contemporary audience members are not familiar with riddle games and may not be able to solve the riddle. To resolve this issue, Yang includes Pi Wu’s father-in-law Sun Dali, a well-educated county official, in this narration.

In traditional Chinese culture, a riddle is a type of game that consists of two parts: question (*mi mian* 謎面) and answer (*mi di* 謎底). Pi Wu sets a series of riddles relating to the names of dishes, aiming to cheat the boss. Some of the riddles created by Pi Wu are as follows (P: Pi Wu; B: Boss):<sup>363</sup>

P: I will tell riddles and as for you, please guess the dishes’ names.

B: No problem. Riddles, please! I will work out all of them.

P: Let us start with the names of eight dishes. “A beggar gives birth to a baby” (*jiaohuazi shenghaizi* 叫花子，生孩子), What is the dish?

B: Peanut (*huashengrenzi* 花生仁子), is that right?

---

<sup>363</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 144.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

P: A pole cannot touch the bottom of the sea. What is the dish?

B: Sea slug (*haishen* 海參), is that right?

In this episode, Pi Wu sets fifteen articles of riddle. Each riddle is funny as it relates to the name of a dish. It is unexpected that Rogue Pi Wu has an ability to create fifteen articles of comical riddle relating to fifteen names of dishes during the conversation with a young owner. This shows that Pi Wu is a master of trickery but also generates comic effect to the audience.

Folk sayings are as witty as riddles but easier to understand than the latter; hence, Yang includes quite a few of them in the narrative. Take the conversation between Sun Qiangshi and Mama Zhang as example (S: Sun Qiangshi; Z: Mama Zhang):<sup>364</sup>

S: 你要放在心上呢. You need to keep this in mind (place in your heart)!

Z: 掛在肝上呢. It is now hung on my liver!

*Fangzai xinshang* 放在心上 is a common phrase in Yangzhou dialect: it means to “have something in mind.” However, the phrase *guazai ganshang* 掛在肝上 does not exist and is produced by following the structure of *fangzai xinshang*. Yang creates the phrase and includes in the conversation to generate humour. On a few occasions, Yang directly resorts to exaggeration to create a comical narrative. Generally, “partiality” is translated into *pianxin* 偏心 (literally “deflective heart”) in the Chinese language. Yang uses the literal meaning of *pianxin* in his narrative. It reads: “Many people are selfish and show partiality all the way. Their hearts move elsewhere while beating.

---

<sup>364</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 18.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Beat and beat, their hearts move to the armpit.”<sup>365</sup> The heart does not actually change position while beating. However, in Yang’s narration, the heart of a selfish person will jump to his armpit. Yang’s exaggerating narrative not only amuses the audiences but also strikes a chord in the audience’s heart as he uses a sneering tone to demonstrate his negative attitude towards selfish people.

The onomatopoeia *guadi guadi* 呱滴呱滴 is used to liven up a long conversation.<sup>366</sup> The interjection *pochigui* 潑哧鬼 is Mama Zhang’s pet phrase—she applies it when she wants to express denial. When Pi Wu is listening to Mama Zhang and explains why she has chosen him as Sun Xiaogu’s husband, only five interjections, *an* 唉, *en* 嗯, *a* 啊, *ao* 嗷 and *ai* 哎, are used in the long conversation. As Yang narrates the story, “Pi Wu said, ‘An,’ ‘en,’ ‘an, an, an,’ ‘en,’ ‘The bad guy!’ ‘En, en, en,’ ‘a?’ ‘ao.’ ‘ai.’”<sup>367</sup> What Mama Zhang wants to say to Pi Wu has already been mentioned to the audience. From the stance of the storyteller, Yang Mingkun understands that it is not necessary to repeat this to the audience.<sup>368</sup> He applies five interjections and arranges them in Pi’s response to Mama Zhang’s explanation.<sup>369</sup> The five interjections spoken by Pi Wu in different tones generate comic effect because the intonations of the five syllables realised by Yang Mingkun cover the life experience of Sun Xiaogu told by Mama Zhang.

Yang Mingkun frequently applies folk sayings to the story of Pi Wu as almost all the characters are depicted as Yangzhou locals. Folk sayings are the wisdom of the ordinary people and most are funny. For example, *gongji hai sangzi—buti* 公鷄害臊

---

<sup>365</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 23.

<sup>366</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 165; 167.

<sup>367</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 47.

<sup>368</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 31 July 2016.

<sup>369</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 31 July 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

子—不提。<sup>370</sup> *Gongji hai sangzi* means the rooster has a sore throat so it cannot crow, which is expressed as “cannot crow” (*buti* 不啼) in Yangzhou dialect. *Buti* sounds identical to another word *buti* 不提 meaning “do not mention.” Thus, when Yang Mingkun needs to use the word 不提, he uses the folk saying *gongji hai sangzi* instead. The audience will find such references comical.

Folk sayings produced by Yangzhou locals express their simple yet humorous attitude to life. Some examples include *zhusun wei tizi* 竹筍煨蹄子 (beat a person with a bamboo stick); *maomaoyu dahuoer sasa* 毛毛雨大家夥兒灑灑 (share the profits with others).<sup>371</sup> Stewed pig trotters with bamboo shoots (*zhusun wei tizi* 竹筍煨蹄子) is a popular Yangzhou dish. It is used to imply that a person has endured a severe beating with a bamboo stick. Inspired by the features of the natural weather phenomenon drizzle (*maomaoyu* 毛毛雨), *maomaoyu dahuoer sasa* suggests that people with good sense should share their profits with others. Yangzhou locals are intimately familiar with these sayings and Yang readily applies them in his performance. These folk sayings also create humour, making Yang’s performance distinct and impressive.

As discussed above, Yang Mingkun narrates the story of Pi Wu in a facetious tone. The clever use of Yangzhou dialect, sharing life experiences and understanding the mental make-up of Yangzhou people form the comedic elements of his presentation.

---

<sup>370</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 160.

<sup>371</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 40; 181.



## 6.4 Conclusion

As a performer, Yang Mingkun bases his language expression on the cultural background of the contemporary audience as well as on the lexical features of Yangzhou dialect. Firstly, considering the phonetics and lexis development of Yangzhou dialect over the last four centuries, he transfers the verses initially created by Pu into prose without changing the original meaning and omits many of the stock phrases previously applied in Yangzhou *pinghua*. In addition, he does not use the literary words that existed in the repertoire inherited from his master Yu Youchun and instead adopts colloquial words.

Considering the fact that majority of the audience of the Yangzhou storytelling are locals of Yangzhou, he bases his comical narratives on the Yangzhou dialect, the mental make-up of the Yangzhou people and their daily life experiences. From my findings in his research, the use of Yangzhou dialect words is the most vital communication in his comical expression.

## SEVEN

### The Features of Acting by Yang Mingkun

Yang Mingkun is proud of his performance techniques. He said, “My master said I was better than him in imitating Pi Wu as I act like Pi in terms of voice narration, facial expression and gestures.”<sup>372</sup> In this chapter, I will examine Yang’s features of acting and explore how Yang enliven the descriptions in his stories through aural and vocal means of communication.

Yangzhou storytelling performance involves five basic acting skills, that is finding expressions through *kou* (mouth), *shou* (hand), *shēn* (body), *bu* (step) and *shén* (facial expression). *Kou* refers to elements of the performer’s speech, including speaking styles and mouth acrobatics known as *kouji* 口技 in Chinese. *Shou*, *shēn* and *bu* refer to activities carried out by the performer using the hands, body and steps respectively; *shén* refers to the performer’s facial expressions. These are the five fundamental aspects of Yangzhou *pinghua* performance. However, they are not of equal significance in individual performances. Among them, *kou* and *shén* are of particular importance in Yang’s style. This chapter aims to explore the acting features of Yang Mingkun in terms of *kou*, *shou*, *shēn*, *bu* and *shén*. Firstly, based on the data from the observation of his performance and his interviews, I will explore which type of speaking styles Yang uses in his performance of *Rogue Pi Wu*. Secondly, I will focus on Yang’s paralinguistic and non-verbal features in performance, such as his facial expressions and body gestures, particularly the aspects of mouth acrobatics, *shou*, *shēn*, *bu* and *shén*. Thirdly, I will discuss how as a storyteller responsible for the

---

<sup>372</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 August 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

transmission of the traditional repertoire, Yang has preserved the oral tradition of the Pu School by applying the Yangzhou dialect and mouth acrobatics in his performance; and how as a performer, Yang has made adjustments to his pronunciation and extends the application of mouth acrobatics.

### 7.1 Speaking Styles

Yangzhou *pinghua* storytellers apply different types of speaking style according to different plotlines and personal preferences. Among the various speaking styles, *yuankou* (round mouth) and *fangkou* (square mouth) are the two most frequently applied styles.<sup>373</sup> The square mouth style refers to the storyteller speaking slowly in a literary form with forceful pronunciation and a rhythmic flow of sound. By contrast, the round mouth refers to the performer speaking rapidly and smoothly, as in daily conversation. In terms of phonetic realisation, storytellers do not share the same criteria of the two speaking styles.<sup>374</sup>

Yang Mingkun uses Yangzhou Mandarin (Yangzhou *guanhua* 揚州官話) in the square mouth and Yangzhou dialect in the round mouth when reciting the story of *Rouge Pi Wu*. Børdahl outlined the five criteria of speaking styles of the five eminent storytellers: Wang Xiaotang 王筱堂 (1918-2000), Li Xintang 李信堂 (1934-), Fei Li, Chen Yintang 陳蔭堂 (1951-) and Dai Buzhang 戴步章 (1925-2003).<sup>375</sup>

1. Monophthong finals are realised as a diphthong.
2. Phonetic realisation [er] or [ar] of the final *-er* is retained.

---

<sup>373</sup> Børdahl, *The Oral Tradition of Yangzhou Storytelling*, 40.

<sup>374</sup> Børdahl, “Yangzhou pinghua zhong de koutou xushu yu ‘shuokou’” 揚州評話中的口頭敘述與“說口” (“The Oral Narrative and Speaking Styles in the Yangzhou Storytelling”), *Chinese Studies Hanxue yanjiu* 31 (1998): 122-3.

<sup>375</sup> Børdahl, “Yangzhou pinghua zhong de koutou xushu yu ‘shuokou’”, 122.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

3. Initials [l-], [n-] or [r-] are distinguished or not.
4. MC entering tone is absent.
5. Colloquial pronunciation exists.

When observing Yang's performance, I adjusted the third rule by considering the phonetic features of the Yangzhou dialect. In Chapter 5, I discussed how in the Yangzhou dialect, consonant initials l-, n- and r- are distinctive and have their own distribution according to the pronunciation features of the vowels. For example, [l-] must be followed by a *hongyin* vowel and [n-] by a *xiyin*. The distribution of the three initials in Yangzhou dialect does not overlap as it does in the Northern dialects or Standard Mandarin, resulting in the common misconception that the three initials are equivalent to each other in the Yangzhou dialect and identically realised as “blurred [l-].” Based on this, the third rule ignores the phonetic traditions of the Yangzhou dialect. It does not work well when applied to Yang's speaking. In Yang's speech, l-, n- and r- are distinguished clearly by following the tradition of Yangzhou dialect. According to rule three, it would be wrong to argue that Yang should adapt his pronunciation to the Northern dialects in the square mouth. Based on the study of Yangzhou dialect and the close observation of Yang's performance, I attached a restricted condition “according to phonetic rules of the Beijing dialect” to the third rule. The new rule is as follows:

\*3. Initials [l-], [n-] or [r-] are distinguished or not according to phonetic rules of the Beijing dialect.

I observed Yang's live performance and interviewed him at the Yangzhou Pi Wu Story House in April, July and August of 2016. Yang told me that he applied the square mouth and the round mouth styles when telling the story of Pi Wu. He speaks Yangzhou Mandarin in the square mouth and Yangzhou dialect in the round mouth

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

style. According to Yang, the pronunciation difference between Yangzhou Mandarin and Yangzhou dialect, especially the *wendu* or “literary pronunciation,” is that the former realises *wendu* only. In her study, Børdahl found that all five storytellers also realised *wendu* in the square mouth.

When replying to my question on which type of speaking styles he applies when performing *Rogue Pi Wu*, Yang said:<sup>376</sup>

I apply the square mouth and the round in performance but most of the time, I apply the round mouth. I use the square mouth only when highlighting something important to the plotline, such as my comment on a character’s conduct or an event, introduction to a figure, and crisis (*guanzi* 關子) at the end of each round.

On a further note, I asked him about the pronunciation differences between the square mouth and the round mouth styles. Yang explained the exact difference between the two speaking styles in his performance as follows:<sup>377</sup>

When speaking in the square mouth, I deliberately speak slower and pronounce more clearly in Yangzhou Mandarin. For example, when reading a poem, I apply the square mouth. When introducing a new figure to the story, I apply it as well.

Apart from the occasional square mouth application, I adopt the round mouth in Yangzhou dialect; my round mouth [Yangzhou dialect] sounds identical to the Yangzhou dialect. However, I have to project my voice without a microphone to ensure

---

<sup>376</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 August 2016.

<sup>377</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 August 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

everyone in the story house hears me clearly. For the sake of convenience, my phonetic realisation in the round mouth, to some extent, differs from what you hear on the streets.

As shown above, Yang adopts Yangzhou Mandarin in the square mouth and Yangzhou dialect in the round. In Chinese dialect terminology, there is no such term as “Yangzhou Mandarin.” What exactly is Yangzhou Mandarin? Yang answered this question as follows:<sup>378</sup>

Yangzhou Mandarin, as I mentioned before, is the Yangzhou dialect with some phonetic adaptations of Standard Mandarin. For example, *jia qu* 家去 (return home) is realised as [teia tɛ'y] in the square mouth; it is [ka k'ɪ] in the round.

Yang explained the phonetic difference between the square mouth and the round in his performance using the phrase *jia qu*. He applies the realisation [teia tɛ'y] in the square mouth and [ka k'ɪ] in the round. In Chapter 5, when discussing the colloquial and literary readings, I mentioned that the phonetic realisation of *jia* and *qu* exists in Yang's diction as well as in the Yangzhou dialect. In Table 5.5, [teia tɛ'y] and [ka k'ɪ] are the literary and colloquial readings of the word *jia qu* respectively. In other words, Yang realises the literary reading in the square mouth and colloquial in the round.

Yang realises *er* as [a] without the retroflex ending [r] in his performance. As discussed in Chapter 5, *er* is realised as [er] in the Beijing dialect as well as in Standard Mandarin, but as [a] in the Yangzhou dialect. Unlike Yang, the five storytellers realised *er* as [ar] or [er] with a retroflex ending in their performance speaking. To

---

<sup>378</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 August 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

understand whether Yang realises the final or syllable *-er/er* with a retroflex ending [r] as [ar] or not, his response was: “*Er* is always realised as [a] in the Yangzhou dialect as well as in my performance. I have never realised *er* as [er] or [ar] in the Yangzhou dialect.”<sup>379</sup>

Earlier in Chapter 5, I discussed the MC entering tone in Yang’s speaking and in the Yangzhou dialect. When telling a story, Yang realises the MC entering tone in both the square mouth and the round. For example, he reads *he, pa, zhuo, xue* and *le* as [xaʔ], [p‘aʔ], [tsuaʔ], [ɕiaʔ] and [laʔ] respectively. By contrast, only Wang Xiaotang and Chen Yintang of the five storytellers realise the MC entering tone in the public talk (*guanbai* 官白)<sup>380</sup> in the square mouth.

One of the phonetic features of Yang’s speaking style is the monophthongisation of a diphthong. However, in the square mouth, Yang and the five storytellers commonly diphthongise the monophthong in the Yangzhou dialect. For example, Yang extends the realisation of [e] and [æ] as [ei] and [ai], both of which sound like the Beijing dialect.

Based on the observations above and Børdahl’s findings, I list and compare the phonetic features of Yang Mingkun with those of the five storytellers in Table 7.1 (S: square mouth; R: round mouth; P: present; A: Absent; P/A: sometimes present; DYZ: daily Yangzhou dialect; BJ: Beijing dialect).<sup>381</sup> As I have limited my current research to two speaking styles in Yangzhou *pinghua*, the “talk” or *bai* is not examined here.

---

<sup>379</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 1 August 2016.

<sup>380</sup> Among the various terminologies for “talk” (*bai* 白) in Yangzhou storytelling, “public talk” refers to the dialogue or monologue of the protagonist in the story.

<sup>381</sup> Børdahl, “Yangzhou pinghua zhong de koutou xushu yu ‘shuokou’”, 122.

**The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

	Diphthongisation		[ar]/[er]		l-, n-, r- distinguishing		MC entering tone		Colloquial reading	
	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R
Yang	<b>P/A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>P</b>
Wang	P/A	A	P	P	P	P	P/A	P	A	A
Li	P/A	A	P	P/A	P/A	A	P	P	A	P/A
Fei	P/A	A	P	P	A	A	A	A	A	P
Chen	P/A	P/A	P	P/A	P/A	P/A	A	P	A	P/A
Dai	P/A	A	P	P/A	P/A	A	P	P	A	P
DYZ	<b>A</b>		<b>A</b>		<b>A</b>		<b>P</b>		<b>P</b>	
BJ	<b>P</b>		<b>P</b>		<b>P</b>		<b>A</b>		<b>A</b>	

Table 7.1 Phonetic features in square mouth and round

As shown in the table above, in terms of phonetic realisation, the so-called Yangzhou Mandarin applied by Yang in the square mouth is the daily Yangzhou dialect with diphthongised monophthong finals but without the colloquial pronunciation. Indeed, Yangzhou Mandarin sounds identical to the Yangzhou dialect, as diphthongised monophthong finals and colloquial readings can be neglected with the mutual understanding of the natives. Comparing the six storytellers' phonetic features with the phonetic rules of the Yangzhou dialect and the Beijing dialect (as shown in Table 7.1), I find that, in both the square mouth and the round, Yang's performance diction sounds closer to the daily Yangzhou dialect than that of the other five storytellers. The five storytellers, to some extent, adapt their realisations to the Beijing dialect.

Based on the examination above, I find that Yang's two speaking styles, that is the square mouth and the round, can be distinguished from each other by the colloquial reading and the diphthongised monophthong finals. His phonetic realisation in the two mouth styles is different from that of the five eminent storytellers. His performance language in both speaking styles can be read as the Yangzhou dialect.



## 7.2 Mouth Acrobatics, Look, Hand, Body and Step

Storytellers must master an array of eye, hand, and body movements, gestures, expressions, and paralinguistic sounds to portray the characters effectively and enliven the descriptions in their stories.<sup>382</sup> Yang Mingkun's live performance of *Rogue Pi Wu* provides an example in point. Although the “mouth” and the other four acting skills—“look,” “hand,” “body” and “step” work together in Yangzhou *pinghua*, they do not have equal status in an individual performance. When performing *Rogue Pi Wu*, Yang Mingkun applies the look and hand and mouth terminologies more often than the other two.

In general, Yang does not move his body excessively. He simply sits on the chair behind the small square desk for almost the entire performance. Sometimes, he touches the teapot or the teacup, which is known among professional storytellers as favourable turn (*zhuanji* 轉機). Why should we call a teapot and a teacup *zhuanji*? Yang answered:<sup>383</sup>

The teapot or teacup is not part of the *pinghua* storytelling performance. The talking stopper, handkerchief and folding fan are necessary for performing but the teapot or teacup is not. Professionally, the teapot or teacup are called *zhuanji*. When performing, we touch them only when we stop talking for various reasons. For example, when I forget my words, I touch them. The audience would not know this as they think the performer is going to talk about a crisis or adjust his speaking tempo.

---

<sup>382</sup> Bender, *Plum and Bamboo*, 60.

<sup>383</sup> Interview with Yang Mingkun, 18 April 2016.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

When performing, Yang does not frequently apply *shēn* and *bu* terminologies. As the story of *Pi Wu* centres on the daily lives of ordinary Yangzhou people, the individuals in the story do not engage in extreme behaviours. In contrast to Yang Mingkun's application, members of the Wang School of *Water Margin* usually apply *shou*, *shén* and *bu*. As nearly all the key figures in the story of *Water Margin* are masters of martial arts, it is a major challenge for the storyteller to imitate them.

The live performance of *Rogue Pi Wu* by Yang Mingkun meets the aesthetic effect *wei* as Yang realises the tradition of the Pu School in a unique style—the Yang School of *Pi Wu* (see Chapter 1.3). Yang sits on a chair when reciting even when he impersonates a character in the story. Occasionally, he stands up to mimic a character who is featured using a unique standing pose, or to show gestures clearly to the audience. He sits facing his audience when reciting and moves his body to the right or left by forty-five degrees at the most when impersonating a female character. His gestures are slightly more exaggerated than in daily life. The most common of these is when he raises one arm with the palm of his hand lying horizontal, which looks like the gesture applied when introducing someone or something. However, when mimicking a running man, a fighting man or a mass scene, he dramatically swings his arms or raises them up high. The folding fan and the handkerchief are props used effectively by Yang to impersonate characters. He opens up the fan and uses it as an umbrella or holds it in his hand and uses it as a baton; he wipes tears with the handkerchief when mimicking a crying woman or covers his hair with the handkerchief when mimicking an old woman.

Yang Mingkun is a master of using “mouth acrobatics” in performing. His voice plays a vital role in his impersonations. Traditionally, the Chinese term “mouth acrobatics” in oral performing arts refers to the ability to perform mimicry. Pu Lin, the

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

founder of the Pu School, is a master of mouth acrobatics. Unfortunately, we are no longer able to enjoy his fabulous performance. Today, Yang Mingkun is also regarded as a master of mimicry and humour. Yang is skilled at imitating various types of voices, the sounds of musical instruments, rain, women talking, a baby crying and so forth. When impersonating the characters in the story, his role changes and his voice also changes; he adjusts his voice to vividly portray the imagery associated with the portrayal of his characters. For example, when talking as a Shanxi boss, Yang speaks in the Shanxi dialect; as an illiterate, Yang uses a colloquial pronunciation that is indistinct; as a trader, Yang speaks smartly and quickly using clear pronunciation; when portraying a female, Yang uses a graceful feminine voice and when portraying a male, he speaks in a loud and rough voice.

In the square mouth, Yang applies mouth acrobatics to create humour. He creates a biography for Pi Wu, which reads:<sup>384</sup>

上無片瓦，下無寸鐵，  
日無飢餐之米，夜無鼠耗之糧，  
喝酒賭錢，脾氣極壞，  
開口就罵，舉手就打，  
六親不靠，窮及無賴。

There is not even a tile above his head, there is not even a *cun* 寸<sup>385</sup> of metal below.

There is no rice for meals in the day, there is no grain for mice to steal at night.

With a very bad temper, he drinks wine and gambling,

---

<sup>384</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 11.

<sup>385</sup> *Cun*, is a Chinese unit of length. One *cun*, equal to one-tenth of *chi*, is approximately one third decimetre.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Opening the mouth to scold and raising the arms to fight.

No relatives to rely on, he lives like a knave in poverty.

When reciting the passage above using the square mouth, Yang speaks slowly with forceful pronunciation. Although, strictly speaking, this passage is not structured in fixed rhyme and form, it still reads with a certain tempo. If Yang reads the biography only when Pi Wu is introduced to the story for the first time, this will not create much of an effect. However, Yang reads it every time Pi Wu comes into the story. In one round, Yang repeats it several times. Through this constant repetition, the performance becomes comical and we are reminded of the protagonist Pi Wu.

When impersonating Pi Wu, Yang makes facial expressions to create a visual image about this character in the story. He closes one eye, lifts one corner of his mouth, nods his head slightly and speaks in a knavish tone. Usually when impersonating Pi Wu, he sits on the chair and does not move his body or his hands. However, when introducing Pi Wu to the story at the beginning of his recitation, Yang impersonates Pi Wu more vividly. The description of Pi Wu's appearance by Yang is as follows:<sup>386</sup>

One of his eyes is closed and the other open. [...] He does not wash his face every day in the morning as he is a beggar now. His eyelids are stuck together as there is too much eye discharge. [...] One day, he put a little saliva on his eyelids, and managed to open one eye. What about the other eye? Let it go! Thus, as a habit, he opens one eye with the other closed, even after washing his face thoroughly.

---

<sup>386</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 23.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

When reciting the passage above, Yang Mingkun impersonates Pi Wu by mimicking his actions and pose. He closes his eyes, lifts one corner of his mouth and tilts his head. He puts a little saliva onto two fingers, places them on one of his eyelids and acts as if he is opening his eye painfully using the two fingers. After opening his eye, he stands up with one shoulder bent forward and nods his head slightly. When they see Yang's facial expression and standing pose, most audiences burst into laughter and exclaim, "He is Pi Wu!" Yang is very proud of his facial expressions, as he remarked in an interview: "My master said I was better than him when performing Pi Wu." This is the highest compliment for Yang.

In the round mouth, he is a master of sound and scene imitation using homophones, synonyms and onomatopoeia. How does he apply imitation in performance? In the story *Rogue Pi Wu*, Pi Wu is very poor and has no proper place to stay for the night and cannot afford to wear decent clothes. His waist belt is a rope knotted by several short pieces of cloth and string. Yang Mingkun introduces this distinct accessory as follows:<sup>387</sup>

不曉得打了多少個結，周周正正，結連結，結挨結，結靠結，  
結巴結，端午節靠到中秋節，他身上全是結。

*Bu xiaode da le duoshao ge jie, zhouzhouzhengzheng, jie lian jie, jie  
ai jie, jie kao jie, jie ba jie, Duanwu jie kao dao Zhongqiu jie, ta  
shenshang quanshi jie.*

We cannot count how many knots are on his belt. It is true that a  
knot connects to another, one knot leans against the other, and one

---

<sup>387</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 24.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

knot is wrapped on the other. The Mid-Autumn Festival follows the Dragon Boat Festival. His clothes are covered with knots.

When reciting this passage, Yang Mingkun stands up and ties the knots at his waist with empty hands. When listening to this passage, the audience was impressed by Yang's speaking speed and his innovative use of the homophonous words *jie* 結 (knot) and *jie* 節 (festival) as well as five verbal near-synonyms. In the passage, *jie* 結 is repeated ten times and *jie* 節 twice. There are also five verbal near-synonyms, including *lian* 連, *ai* 挨, *kao* 靠, *ba* 巴 and *kao dao* 靠到, meaning “close to” or “closely next to.” In other words, 31% of the syllables in the passage sound like *jie*; 71% of the verbs in the passage mean “next to.” Yang recites this passage in the round mouth. He speaks so rapidly that the twelve repeated syllables *jie* follow one after the other; five verbal synonyms are strung together like the knots tied together. In this way, the artistic synaesthesia plays an important role in the audience's reception as what they hear is transformed into what they see. When I hear the syllables and the near-synonyms repeated in this rapid style, the image of a knotted belt almost appear before my eyes. Although the second-to-last sentence, “The Dragon Boat Festival is next to the Mid-Autumn Festival,” has no semantic relation to the whole passage, the last sentence, “His clothes are covered with knots,” reveals that the festivals add two more homophonous *jie* and one synonym *kaodao* to the passage. Although this may make little sense, Yang's intention is to portray that the life lived by Pi Wu is hollow and nugatory. The audience bursts into laughter when listening to this passage.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Yang Mingkun also creates various sounds when mimicking a scene. For example, he dramatizes a chaotic fire scene as follows:<sup>388</sup>

當當當當當..... 著火了，當當當當當當，這裡著火了，當當  
當當當當，快！當當當當當當當.....四面八方，喀喇喀喇  
喀喇喀喇喀喇.....喀喇喀喇喀喇，個個都到了。

*Dang, dang, dang dang dang... there is fire, dang dang dang dang dang  
dang, this place has caught fire, dang dang dang dang dang dang, hurry up!  
Dang dang dang dang dang dang dang dang ... in all directions, kala kala  
kala kala kala... kala kala kala kala kala, everyone has arrived.*

The chaotic scene consists of the two onomatopoeia, *dang* 當 (sound of a gong) and *kala* 喀喇 (sound of hurrying steps), and five short verbal phrases as shown above. In ancient China, a gong ringing is associated with a fire alarm. In the fire scene, the sound of gongs fills the air. In this circumstance, people can do nothing but hurry to a safe place and the panicked footsteps make the sound of “*kala kala*.” Yang Mingkun’s dramatization of the fire scene centres on two key factors: the sound of the gong and the sound of hurrying footsteps. When reciting the passage above, he first stands up and mimics a person beating a gong. Although his hands are empty, his left hand looks as though he is carrying a large gong and his right hand is holding a gong stick. When performing these actions, he mimics the sound of the gong by loudly saying *dang dang dang ...* Then, he sits down on the chair and mimics a chaotic scene filled with the sound of panicked steps. He stretches and slowly swings his arms horizontally, saying loudly *kala kala kala ...* indicating a hurrying crowd. With the repetition of the two

---

<sup>388</sup> Yin et al. (eds.), *Pi Wu lazi*, 343.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

onomatopoeia in the round mouth, Yang Mingkun constructs a fire scene involving men and women moving in a precipitated manner.



Fig. 7.1 Yang Mingkun performs the story of Pi Wu. 18 April 2016. Pi Wu Story House, Dongguan Street, Yangzhou.

Yang Mingkun impersonates all the 400 figures in the story by imitating their speeches and facial expressions when reciting the story of Pi Wu. As Bender said, “[...] where performers go more deeply into character than they traditionally did—is a phenomenon that seems to have been influenced by television and Western drama.”<sup>389</sup> Take Yang’s performance as an example. Unit 38, “Asking for money by faking death,” features five characters: Pi Wu, a hopeless woman, a dying man, the treacherous owner of a traditional bank and the acrimonious accountant working in the bank. Most of the time, they are involved in one dialogue. When reciting the dialogue between the five characters, Yang impersonates all of them vividly. When impersonating the woman, Yang uses his handkerchief to wipe his canthus, sits on the chair as a woman by turning his body towards the right at an angle of forty-five degrees, compresses his lips and talks in a sobbing tone. He raises and moves his right arm with his fingers held in the orchid pose. He also mimics the voice of a sobbing woman. When impersonating the

---

<sup>389</sup> Bender, *Plum and Bamboo*, 50.



## **The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

dying man, Yang half closes his eyes, drops his mouth sadly and talks intermittently. When impersonating the owner, Yang lifts the right corner of his mouth, opens his eyes wide and talks loudly with a stammer. When impersonating the accountant, Yang does not change his facial expression but opens and stretches all ten fingers and talks in a high-pitched tone. Immediately after talking as the woman by picking up his handkerchief, Yang lifts the right corner of his mouth and talks as the owner. When he has finishing talking as Pi Wu by lifting the left corner of his mouth and closing his left eye, Yang talks as the accountant by stretching all ten fingers. Yang shifts between the five characters frequently and naturally.

Based on the observation and examination above, I find that Yang Mingkun tends to impersonate all the figures and mimic noisy scenes appearing in the story of *Rogue Pi Wu* through performing mouth acrobatics. He uses the Yangzhou dialect in both the square mouth and the round mouth. He rarely moves his body and steps in reciting the story of Pi Wu.

### **7.3 Conclusion**

Yangzhou dialect and other communication means works together allowing Yang's live performance to be presented in a distinctive way. As a professional storyteller responsible for transmitting this traditional repertoire, Yang has preserved the tradition of the Pu School created by Pu Lin. Firstly, Yang applies the Yangzhou dialect when telling the story of *Rogue Pi Wu* in both the round mouth and the square mouth. As discussed in Chapter 5, Yang speaks the Yangzhou dialect in a traditional style. Pu Lin created the story of Pi Wu based on his own life experiences in Yangzhou. Protagonist Pi Wu and nearly all the characters in the story are ordinary Yangzhou

### **The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

locals. As all the characters lived in Qing Yangzhou and spoke the Yangzhou dialect, the Yangzhou dialect is suitable for narrating the story of Pi Wu (See Chapter 6.2).

Secondly, Yang performs mouth acrobatics frequently in his performance. Pu Lin was renowned for his imitation and mouth acrobatics. Yang is also well known as the founder of the “Yang School of Pi Wu,” enjoying an excellent reputation as a master of mouth acrobatics. Mouth acrobatics and facial expression play an important role in his performance.

As a performer, Yang extends the quantity and range of the imitations in his performance to cater to the needs of his audience. Firstly, Yang prefers to impersonate all the characters in the story, which is a big challenge considering that the number of characters in his story is nearly twice that in the story told by his master. Audiences are attracted by his vivid impersonations. In addition, Yang Mingkun broadens the range of imitations. The rhetorical device of synaesthesia is essential in his imitations. He is also skilled at imitating inanimate items or mimicking chaotic scenes by applying onomatopoeia and homophones in the Yangzhou dialect. Audiences are impressed by Yang’s refreshing creations.

## EIGHT

### A Conclusion

Yang Mingkun is the ninth-generation inheritor of the Pu School of Pi Wu—a traditional register of Yangzhou storytelling performance. At the same time, he is a present-day storyteller who has a personal narrative strategy and clear goals in performing the inherited repertoire. He strikes a balance in handling the tradition of the Pu School and his fresh understanding of the tradition by performing three main roles: a tradition bearer, an adapter to the inherited story and a performer of the inherited repertoire.

Shouldering the responsibility to inherit and transmit the repertoire, Yang Mingkun, as a member of the Pu School, carefully follows the traditions of the Yangzhou *pinghua* and the Pu School initially created by Pu Lin in the Qing dynasty. The live performance of *Rogue Pi Wu* by Yang Mingkun provides a good case study to understand the tradition of the Pu School and that of Yangzhou storytelling in general. Through the traditional oral transmission model *kouchuan xinshou* in Yangzhou storytelling, the repertoire of *Rogue Pi Wu* created by Pu Lin and revised by Gong Wuting has been passed down to the ninth-generation storyteller Yang Mingkun. Yang teaches his apprentices the repertoire of Pi Wu in the same way. He performs in the Pi Wu Story House decorated in the Qing style, dressed in a traditional gown, and sitting behind a small desk. On the desk, there is a folding fan and a talking-stopper. He tells the story of Pi Wu in the Yangzhou dialect and applies mouth acrobatics from time to time to deliver a comical presentation. His narration does not change the *shu lu zi* or storyline created by Pu Lin. In his story, Pi Wu frequents

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

pawnbrokers to obtain gambling funds. He is a rogue indulging in gambling, as is also seen in Pu Lin's version.

Meanwhile, as a present-day storyteller, Yang inserts his life experience and personal understanding of the tradition of the Pu School in receiving the inherited repertoire from his master. Yang recreates the inherited, adapting it to his own understanding and considering the requirements and cultural background of his audiences. Yang has extended the range of mouth acrobatics and adjusted a few phonetic realisations in his performance to cater for the needs and wishes of the audiences of the time. He has also extended the existing comical episodes and created new ones that centre on the tricks played by Pi Wu. He has deleted set phrases, verses, literary words and narratives in a colloquial style to adapt to the development in the Yangzhou dialect and requirements of the audience.

As a result of Yang's preservation and recreation in receiving the tradition of the Pu School, his live performance of *Rogue Pi Wu* sounds *li* or credibility, *xi* or intricate description, *qi* or novelty and *qu* or interesting, and thus is presented in a special *wei* or flavour—the Yang School of Pi Wu. As the Chinese saying goes, “Life is like a drama and; a drama is like life.” This idea finds full expression in Yangzhou *pinghua*. The storyteller is the key point in the conversion between “real life” and “drama.” Life is full of drama. Pu Lin lived in poverty as a rogue and then in wealth as a reputable storyteller in Qing Yangzhou. He felt that his life experiences were dramatic enough to be staged as a performance. Thus, his *pinghua* story *Pure-Wind Dyke* was born. The story is novelty as the life experiences of Pi Wu and Sun Xiaogu were full of ups and downs but they were eventually blessed by mysterious power. The story can be read as Pu's biography, as most episodes came directly from his experiences and the contemporary social life of Qing Yangzhou. Consequently, the

### **The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

dramatic story is as realistic as it can get. Over the past three hundred years, numerous storytellers narrating the story of Pi Wu have enriched the story by adding their own thoughts and views on life and their comments on contemporary events and daily life experiences. Historically, two main presentations of the protagonist Pi Wu have emerged: a martial Pi Wu and a gentle Pi Wu. In the present generation, the story readapted by Yang Mingkun has further enhanced the biography of Pi Wu involving what Yang sees and hears in contemporary Yangzhou, together with his new comments and explanations of past incidents in the story. Yang focuses on the intricate description on several major characters and their complicated relationships, and heavily draws on the daily life experiences of Yangzhou folk. His explanation and intricate description increase the credibility of the story. From time to time, Yang delivers comedic effects by displaying his skills in mouth acrobatics and comedic facial expressions. In every round of Yang's narrative, the audience has a chance to enjoy Pi Wu's tricks and comical conduct. Thus, his live performance is entitled the "Yang School of Pi Wu" by contemporary audiences.

However, only the audience who are familiar with Yangzhou dialect and the life of Yangzhou folk can decode the comedic elements portrayed by Yang in his performance. The Yangzhou dialect and the culture background of Yangzhou people construct the special channel where Yang and his audiences communicate in performance. He tells his story in the Yangzhou dialect in a traditional style and uses dialect words to impersonate characters in the story. Yang also creates new episodes using the Yangzhou dialect, drawing on the daily life experiences of Yangzhou folks. Yangzhou dialect acts as a vital method of communication in his comical presentation and acting. Unfortunately, the outsiders of the communicative channel can hardly catch the punch lines from Yang's narration.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Although Yang Mingkun's innovative ability plays an important role in unfolding the inherited storyline, he borrows an episode from the written literature in the Qing times—*A Dream of the Red Chamber*. Indicated by the two versions of texts based on Pu and Yu's repertoires, Yang does not go far away in unfolding the *shu lu zi* or storyline of the Pu School into a comical biography of Pi Wu. However, as Pi Wu's life experience resembles that of the protagonist Jia Baoyu in the novel *A Dream of the Red Chamber*, Yang lets Pi have the same ending in life as Jia has in the novel.

As a member of the Pu School, Yang Mingkun successfully balances his preservation and recreation in dealing with the tradition of the Pu School. His repertoire typically embodies the five secrets (*li, xi, qi, qu, wei*) to the storytelling performance. Yangzhou dialect features his performance as being the speaking register and vital communication method between Yang and his audiences in performance. The ending of the story of Pi Wu narrated by Yang provides an example to the interaction between the oral and written literature.

## Bibliography

Arcodia, Giorgio, “A Construction Morphology Account of Derivation in Standard Chinese”, *Morphology* 21.1 (2011): 89-130.

Arcodia, Giorgio and Basciano, Bianca, “On the Productivity of the Chinese Suffixes -兒-r, -化-huà, and -頭-tou”, *Taiwan Journal of Linguistics* 10.2 (2012): 89-118.

Bao Mingwei 鮑明燁, *Jiangsu sheng zhi fangyan zhi* 江蘇省志方言志, (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 1998)

Bauman, Richard, *Verbal Art as Performance*, (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland, 1977)

Bender, Mark, “The Storyteller’s Art and ‘Song Sigong’”, *Journal of the Chinese Language Teacher’s Association* 23 (1988): 55-67.

\_\_\_\_\_. “A description of Jiangjing (telling scriptures) services in Jingjiang, China”, *Asian Folklore Studies*, vol.60, 1 (2001): 101-133.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Plum and Bamboo: China’s Suzhou Chantefable Tradition*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003)

Berezkin, Rostislav, “The Development of the Mulian Story in Baojuan Texts (14th-19th century) in Connection with the Evolution of the Genre”, (Ph.D. diss., the University of Pennsylvania, 2010)

Børdahl, Vibeke, “The Phonemes and the Phonological Structure of the Yangzhou Dialect”, *Acta Orientalia* 38 (1977): 251-320.

\_\_\_\_\_. “‘Square Mouth’ and ‘Round Mouth’ in Yangzhou Storytelling”, *Acta Orientalia* 52 (1991): 135-147.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Grammatical Gleanings from a Yangzhou Storyteller’s Tale”, *Cahiers de linguistique asie orientale* 2 (1991): 169-217.

**The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

\_\_\_\_ . “*Wenbai yidu: Literary and Colloquial Forms in Yangzhou Storytelling*”, *CHINOPERL Papers* 16 (1992-1993): 29-63.

\_\_\_\_ . “Yangzhou pinghua zhong de ‘fangkou’ he ‘yuankou’” 揚州評話中的“方口”和“圓口”, *Fangyan* 2 (1994): 119-124.

\_\_\_\_ . “Narrative Voices in Yangzhou Storytelling”, *CHINOPERL Papers* 18 (1995):1-31.

\_\_\_\_ . *The Oral Tradition of Yangzhou Storytelling*, (London: Curzon Press, 1996)

\_\_\_\_ . “Professional Storytelling in Modern China: A Case Study of the Yangzhou pinghua Tradition”, *Asian Folklore Studies* 56 (1997): 7-32.

\_\_\_\_ . “Yangzhou pinghua zhong de koutou xushu yu ‘shuokou’” 揚州評話中的口頭敘述與“說口”, *Hanxue yanjiu* 31 (1998): 267-287.

\_\_\_\_ . *The Eternal Storyteller-Oral Literature in Modern China*, (Curzon Press, 1999)

\_\_\_\_ . “In Memory of Wang Xiaotang (1918-2000)”, *Asian Folklore Studies* 59 (2000): 174.

\_\_\_\_ . “The Storyteller’s Manner in Chinese Storytelling”, *Asian Folklore Studies* 62 (2003): 65-112.

\_\_\_\_ . “The Voice of Wang Shaotang in Chinese Storytelling”, *CHINOPERL Papers* 25 (2004): 1-33.

\_\_\_\_ . “The Man-Hunting Tiger: From ‘Wu Song Fights the Tiger’ in Chinese Traditions”, *Asian Folklore Studies* 66 (2007): 141-163.

\_\_\_\_ . *Wu Song Fights the Tiger—the Interaction of Oral and Written Traditions in the Chinese Novel, Drama and Storytelling*, (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2013)

Børdahl, Vibeke, Ge Liangyan, (eds., and trs., with editorial assistance by Wang Yalong), *Western Han: A Yangzhou Storyteller’s Script*, (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2017)



**The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

Børdahl, Vibeke, Margaret B. Wan (eds.), *The Interplay of the Oral and the Written in Chinese Popular Literature*, (Singapore: Mainland Press, 2010)

Cao Xiaoyun 曹小雲, “*Qingfengzha* zhong de Yangzhou fangyan shili” 《清風閣》中的方言詞釋例, *Fuyang shifan xueyuan xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 3 (2003): 31-34

Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹 (ca.1715-ca.1763), *Honglou meng* 紅樓夢, (Beijing: dazhong wenyi chubanshe, 1998)

Cao Yongseng 曹永森, *Yangzhou fengsu* 揚州風俗, (Jiangsu: Suzhou daxue chubanshe, 2001)

Chen Chen 陳晨, “Yangzhou fangyan zhong de ‘zi’ zhui” 揚州方言中的“子”綴, *Yangzhou shiyuan xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 4 (1981): 86-90.

Chen Ruheng 陳汝衡, *Songdai shuoshu shi* 宋代說書史, (Shanghai: Wenyu chubanshe, 1979)

\_\_\_\_. *Shuoshu shihua* 說書史話, (Beijing: Zuojia chubanshe, 1958)

Chen Shihai 陈世海, “Yangzhou pinghua *Pi Wu lazi* de gongxing jingyan yu gexingjiazhi” 揚州評話《皮五辣子》的共性經驗與個性價值, in Song Hongfa 宋洪發 et al (eds.) *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji* 皮五辣子論文集, (Nanjing: Jiangsu fenghuang wenyi chubanshe, 2015), 15-30.

Chen Wulou 陳午樓, “Cong changpian xiaoshuo fazhan dao changpian pinghua” 從長篇小說發展到長篇評話, *Yangzhou shiyuan xuebao* 1 (1985): 107-114.

Coblin, W. South, “Migration history and dialect development in the lower Yangtze watershed”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (2002): 529-543.

**D**olby, William. (trans. with commentaries and annotations), *Three Hundred T'ang Dynasty Poems*, (Edinburgh: Carreg Publishers, 2006)

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Dong Guoyan 董國炎, “Lun shijing xiaoshuo de shenhua fazhan--cong *Qingfengzha* dao *Pi Wu lazi*” 論市井小說的深化發展—從《清風閣》到《皮五辣子》, *Ming Qing xiaoshuo yanjiu* 3 (2006): 91-102.

\_\_\_\_. “Lun Yangzhou pinghua de minsu shenmei” 論揚州評話的民俗審美, *Yan Zhao xueshu*, spring (2008): 98-105.

\_\_\_\_. “Lun *Qingfengzha* de yanbian he yiyi” 論《清風閣》的演變和意義, *Heilongjiang shehui kexue* 106 (2008): 105-109.

\_\_\_\_. “Shijing xiaoshuo de zhongyao daibiao” 市井小說的重要代表, in 宋洪發 et al (eds.) *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji* 皮五辣子論文集, (Nanjing: Jiangsu fenghuang wenyi chubanshe, 2015), 190-208.

Du Wenwei, “*Xuetou*: Comedic elements as Social Commentary in Suzhou *Pinghua* Storytelling”, *CHINOPERL Papers* 1 (1995): 33-44.

Fairlee, Cathryn, “Nine Generations of *Pi Wu lazi* in Yangzhou *Pinghua*”, *CHINOPERL Papers* 29 (2011): 105-132.

Fan Zushu 范祖述 (ca.1840-ca.1912), *Hangsu Yifeng* 杭俗遺風, (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1989)

Fei Li, “The Traditional Style of Story houses in Yangzhou”, in Olivo vá, Lucie and Børdahl, Vibeke (eds.), *Lifestyle and Entertainment in Yangzhou*, (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2009): 271-285.

Finnane, Antonia, *Speaking of Yangzhou: A Chinese City, 1550-1850*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Centre, 2004)

Foley, John Miles, *Traditional Oral Epic: the Odyssey, Beowulf and the Serbo-Croatian Return Song*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990)

**The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

\_\_\_\_. *The Singer of Tales in Performance*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995)

\_\_\_\_. *Immanent Art: From Structure to Meaning in Traditional Oral Epic*, (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1991)

**G**e Chunyuan 戈春源, *Dubo shi* 賭博史, (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1995)

Ge Jianxiong 葛劍雄, Cao Shuji 曹樹基, Wu Songdi 吳淞弟, *Jianming Zhongguo yiminshi* 簡明中國移民史, (Fuzhou: Fujian renming chubanshe, 1993)

Guan Wenxian 管文仙, “Fojiao yu Zhongguo gudai xiaoshuo zhong de yinguo baoying muti” 佛教與中國古代小說中的因果報應母題, (MA thesis, Shanghai University, 2009)

Guo Lin 郭麐, “Chuyuan xiaoxia lu” 樗園銷夏錄, in the *Xuxiu Sikuquanshu* 續修四庫全書, vol. 1179 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002)

**H**ong Mai 洪邁 (1123-1202), *Yijian zhi* 夷堅志, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981):4

Hu Ming 胡明, Pan Baoming 潘寶明 (eds.), *Yangzhou Wenhua gaiguan* 揚州文化概觀, (Nanjing: Nanjing chubanshe, 1993)

Huang Jilin 黃繼林, “Cong ‘pi bao shui’ shuoqi—Yangzhou de cha wenhua ji qita” 從“皮包水”說起—揚州的茶文化及其他, *Dang’an yu jianshe*, 12 (1999): 51-52.

\_\_\_\_. *Yangzhou mingxiang* 揚州名巷, (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2005)

**I**wata, Ray, “The Jiang-Huai Area as a Core of Lexical Innovation and Diffusion: A Case of the Kinship Term “ye 爺”, in *In memory of Professor Li Fang-Kuei: Essays on Linguistic Change and the Chinese Dialects*, (USA: University of Washington, the Republic of China 89): 179-196.

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

**Ji Hongying** 稽红英, “Wu fangyan tezheng gaishuo” 吴方言特征概说, *Xiandai yuwen (yuyan yanjiu)* 3 (2009): 106-108.

Ji Peijun 季培均, “Shijian yishu shengming” 時間藝術生命, in Song Hongfa 宋洪發 et al (eds.) *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji* 皮五辣子論文集, (Nanjing: Jiangsu fenghuang wenyi chubanshe, 2015), 7-14.

Jia Zhenjin 賈振金, “Bamai Yangzhou pinghua shengtai jianshe” 把脈揚州文化生態建設, in Song Hongfa 宋洪發 et al (eds.) *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji* 皮五辣子論文集, (Nanjing: Jiangsu fenghuang wenyi chubanshe, 2015), 129-148.

Ju Min 居敏, “Yangzhou gudai chaguan yu xiandai chaguan zhi bijiao” 揚州古代茶館與現代茶館之比較, (MA thesis, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, 2011)

**Ke Ling** 柯玲, “Su wenxue de diyu gexing yu dushi xiaofei qingjie—Qingdai Yangzhou de gean guanzhao” 俗文學的地域個性與都市消費情結—清代揚州的個案關照, (Ph.D. diss., East China Normal University, 2005)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Minsu shiye zhong de Qingdai Yangzhou su wenxue* 民俗視野中的清代揚州俗文學, (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 2006)

**Lei Mengshui** 雷夢水, et al. (eds.) *Zhonghua zhuzhi ci* 中華竹枝詞, (Beijing: Beijing guji chubanshe, 1997)

Li Dou 李鬥 (1749-1817), *Yangzhou huafang lu* 揚州畫舫錄, (1797; reprint Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997)

Li Liangnian 李良年, (1653-1694), *Qiu jing shanfang ji* 秋錦山房集, in *Sikuquanshu cunmu congshu* 四庫全書存目叢書, vol. 251 (Jinan: qilu shushe, 1997)

**The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

Li Rong 李榮, Wang Shihua 王世華 and Huang Jilin 黃繼林, (eds.), *Yangzhou fangyan cidian* 揚州方言詞典, (Nanjing: Jiangsu Jiaoyu chubanshe, 1996)

Li Xuemei 李雪梅 et al. *Zhongguo guci wenxue fazhan shi* 中國鼓詞文學發展史, (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2012), 32-33.

Lin Sumen 林蘇門 (c.1748-1809), *Hanjiang sanbai yin* 邗江三百吟, (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe 2005)

Liu Liu 劉琉, “Cong pinghua *Pi Wu lazi* kan Yangzhou chuantong wenhua” 從評話《皮五辣子》看揚州傳統文化, (MA thesis, Shanghai Normal University, 2007)

Liu Chongyi 劉重一, “Jianlun *Qingfengzha*” 簡論《清風閣》, *Zhangzhou shiyuan xuebao* 1 (2007): 15-19.

Lu Deyang 陸德陽, *Liumang shi* 流氓史, (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1995)

Lu Qin 陸琴, “Jin wushinian lai Yangzhou fangyan yuyin de bianhua yanjiu” 近五十年來揚州方言的語音的變化研究, (MA thesis, Nanjing Normal University, 2003)

\_\_\_\_. “Yangzhou fangyan chongdieshi yanjiu” 揚州方言重疊式研究, *Nanjing shifan daxue wen xueyuan xuebao* 4 (2011): 174-178.

Luo Guanzhong 羅貫中 (1330-1400), Feng Menglong 馮夢龍 (1574-1646), *Pingyao zhuan* 平妖傳, (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981)

**M**ackerras, Colin, “Yangzhou Local Theatre in the Second Half of the Qing”, in Olivo vá, Lucie and Børdahl, Vibeke (eds.), *Lifestyle and Entertainment in Yangzhou* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2009)

McLaren, Anne E., *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables* (Leiden [Netherlands]; Boston: Brill, 1998)

## **The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

Meng Yuanlao 孟元老 (ca.960-ca.1127), *Dongjing meng hua lu* 東京夢華錄, (Beijing: Zhongguo shangye chubanshe, 1982)

Ming Guang 明光, “Yangzhouren zhihui shenghuo yu chuansen yuyan de shilu” 揚州人智慧生活與傳神語言的實錄, in Song Hongfa 宋洪發 et al (eds.) *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji* 皮五辣子論文集, (Nanjing: Jiangsu fenghuang wenyi chubanshe, 2015), 177-189.

Nai Deweng 耐德翁 (fl.1125), *Ducheng jisheng* 都城紀勝, (Beijing: Zhongguo shangye chubanshe, 1982)

Olivo vá, Lucie and Børdahl, Vibeke (eds.) *Lifestyle and Entertainment in Yangzhou* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2009)

Pan Baoming 潘寶明 (eds.), *Yangzhou Wenhua gaiguan* 揚州文化概觀, (Nanjing: Jiangsu Gujie chubanshe, 2003)

Qu Yanbing 曲彥斌, *Diandang shi* 典當史, (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1993)

Rubin, David, *Memory in Oral Traditions: The Cognitive Psychology of Eric, Ballads, and Counting-Out Rhymes*, (Oxford: Oxford University, 1995)

Shang Wei, *Rulin waishi and Cultural Transformation in Late Imperial China*, (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2003)

Sharifian, Farzad (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Culture*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2015)

Shaul, David Leedom and Furbee-Losee, Louanna, *Language and Culture*, (United States of America: Waveland Press, Inc. 1998)

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

Song Hongfa 宋洪發 et al (eds.) *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji* 皮五辣子論文集, (Nanjing: Jiangsu fenghuang wenyi chubanshe, 2015)

Sun Chaofen, “Aspectual categories that overlap: A historical and dialectal perspective of the Chinese zhe”, *Journal of East Asian Linguistics* 7 (1998): 153-174.

Sun Chuanyu 孫傳余 (eds.), *Yangzhou mingyuan* 揚州名園, (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2005)

Sun Longfu 孫龍父, “Yangzhou pinghua de lishi fazhan” 揚州評話的歷史發展, in Song et al (eds.) *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji* 皮五辣子論文集, (Nanjing: Jiangsu fenghuang wenyi chubanshe, 2015), 317-342.

**T**aotan jiuzhu 桃潭舊主 (ca.1840-ca.1911), *Yangzhou zhuzhici chugao* 揚州竹枝詞初稿, (Nanjing: Jiangsu wenyi chubanshe, 1993)

Taiping Tianguo shi yanjiushi at Nanjing University 南京大學太平天國史研究室, “Qiang chuan shi mo” 槍船始末, in *Jiang Zhe Yu Wan Taiping tianguo shiliao xuanbian* 江浙豫皖太平天國史料選編, (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1983)

Tian Yiheng 田藝衡 (1524 -?), *Liu qing ri zha* 留青日紕, (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji chubanshe, 1992)

**W**an, Margaret Baptist, “Local Fiction of the Yangzhou Region: *Qingfengzha*”, in Olivo vá, Lucie and Børdahl, Vibeke (eds.) *Lifestyle and Entertainment in Yangzhou* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2009), 177-204.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Regional Fiction *Clear Wind Sluice (Qingfengzha 1819)*”, in Altenburger, Roland; Wan, Margaret B.; Børdahl, Vibeke (eds.), *Yangzhou, A Place in Literature, The Local in Chinese Cultural History*, (University of Hawaii Press, 2015), 189-202.

**The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

Wang Cheng 王澄, et al. (eds.), (transcribed from Yu Youchun's repertoire), *Pi Wu lazi* 皮五辣子, (Nanjing: Jiangsu wenyi chubanshe, 1985)

Wang Hong 王鴻, *Yangzhou sanji* 揚州散記, (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 2002)

Wang Jian 王健, “Cong suwan fangyanti zhuci ‘zhu’ de biao xian kan fangyan jiechu de houguo he jizhi” 從蘇皖方言體助詞“住”的表現看方言接觸的後果和機制, *Zhongguo yuwen* 1 (2008): 48-57; 96.

Wang Qianlei 王倩蕾, “Yangzhou fangyan qingshu chengwei” 揚州方言親屬稱謂, *Yuyan xue yanjiu* 35 (2013): 166-168.

Wang Shihua 王世華, “Yangzhou yuyin de yixie bianhua” 揚州語音的一些變化, *Yangzhou shiyuan xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 4 (1981): 82-85.

\_\_\_\_. “Yangzhou kouyu zhong de podu” 揚州口語中的破讀, *Yangzhou shiyuan xuebao shehui kexue ban* 1 (1986): 108-111.

\_\_\_\_. “Yangzhouhua de dongtai zhuci” 揚州話的動態助詞, *Yangzhou shiyuan xuebao* 1 (1989): 61-64.

\_\_\_\_. “Yangzhouhua de sheng yun diao” 揚州話的聲韻調, *Fangyan* 2 (1992): 115-119.

Wang Yingzhi 王穎芝, et al. (eds.), (transcribed from Pu Lin's repertoire), *Qingfengzha* 清風閣 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1996)

Wei Juxian 衛聚賢, *Shanxi piaohao shi* 山西票號史, in the *Shanxi gongshangye shi shiduo* 山西工商業史拾掇, (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1987): 199-210.

Wu Haibo 吳海波, “Qingdai Liang-huai yanye zhongyaoxing zhi dingliang fenxi” 清代兩淮鹽業重要性之定量分析, *Sichuan ligong xueyuan xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 2 (2013): 42-47.



**The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

- Wu Jiankun, 吳建坤, Zhao Lichang 趙立昌, et al. (eds.), *Yangzhou Mingzhai* 揚州名宅 (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2005)
- Wu Songdi 吳淞弟, *Beifang yimin yu nansong shehui bianqian* 北方移民與南宋社會變遷, (Taipei: Wenjing chubanshe, The Republic of China in 82)
- Wu Xiaoru 吳小如, “Shitan gong’an xiaoshuo de jige wenti” 試談公案小說的幾個問題, *Qiusi xuekan* 3 (1995): 78-79.
- Wu Zimu 吳自牧 (ca.1127- ca.1207), *Meng liang lu* 夢梁錄, (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1956)
- Xihu Laoren 西湖老人 (ca.1127-ca.1279), *Xihu laoren fansheng lu* 西湖老人繁勝錄, (Beijing: Zhongguo shangye chubanshe, 1982)
- Xu Jufang 許菊芳, “Wufangyan zhong ‘chi’ zi de tongsu cizu” 吳方言中“吃”字的同素詞族, *Xihua shifan daxue xuebao (zheshi ban)* 1 (2004): 104-107.
- Xu Ke 徐珂 (1869-1928), *Qing baileichao* 清稗類鈔, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984)
- Yan, Margaret Mian, *Introduction to Chinese Dialectology* (Muenchen: LINCOM EUROPA, 2006)
- Yang Xiong 楊雄 (53 BC- AD18), *Fangyan* 方言, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2018)
- Yang Zhaoyu 楊肇遇, *Zhongguo diandang ye* 中國典當業, (Shanghai: Shanghai shangwu yinshuguan, 1929)
- Yin Yanfei 尹燕飛, “Zaiyi Yangzhou fangyan shuliang duanyu hou de zhuci ‘tou’” 再議揚州方言數量短語后的綴詞“頭”, *Wenxue jiaoyu* 8 (2011): 140-141.
- Yin Boda 殷伯達, et al. (eds.), (transcribed from Yang Mingkun’s repertoire), *Pi Wu lazi* 皮五辣子, (Nanjing: Jiangsu fenghuang wenyi chubanshe, 2015)

**The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu***

Zeng Ling 曾玲, “Baihua gong’an xiaoshuo zhong panguan xingxiang de fazhan he yanbian” 白話公案小說中判官的發展和演變, *Wenzhou daxue xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 1 (2008): 94-99.

\_\_\_\_. “Lun Ming Qing gong’an xiaoshuo xingsheng de yuanyin” 論明清公案小說興盛的原因, *Zhongbei daxue xuebao* 3 (2007): 7-8.

Zhang Bin 張斌, *Xinbian xiandai Hanyu* 新編現代漢語, (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2002)

Zhang Li 張利, “‘Shuihu’ pinghua (pingshu) yu shuohua chuanguotong yanjiu” 《水滸》評話（評書）與說話傳統研究, (Ph.D. diss., Yangzhou University, 2012)

Zhang Dai 張岱 (1597-1685), *Tao’an meng yi* 陶庵夢憶, (Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1982)

Zhang Min, “Syntactic Change in Southeastern Mandarin: How Does Geographical Distribution Reveal a History of Diffusion?”, in Ding Bangxin, Yu Aiqin, *In memory of Professor Li Fang-Kuei: Essays on Linguistic Change and the Chinese Dialects* (USA: University of Washington, the Republic of China 89): 197-242.

Zhang Youxin 張又新 (fl. 813), Xu Xianzhong 徐獻忠 (1469-1545), Zhou Lujing 周履靖 (1549-1640), Tian Yiheng 田藝蘅 (1524 -?), *Jian chashui ji* 煎茶水記, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991)

Zhang Zhengmin 張正明, *Shanxi gongshangye shi shiduo* 山西工商業史拾掇, (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1987)

Zhang Zujian 張祖健, “Ting Yang Mingkun shuo lazi shu, pin YangZhou pinghua liubian jingmiao” 聽楊明坤說辣子書, 品揚州評話流變精妙, in Song Hongfa 宋洪

## The Yangzhou Storytelling of *Rogue Pi Wu*

發 et al (eds.) *Pi Wu lazi lunwen ji* 皮五辣子論文集, (Nanjing: Jiangsu fenghuang wenyi chubanshe, 2015), 40-70.

Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan yuyuan yanjiusuo cidian bianjishi 中國社會科學院語言研究所詞典編輯室, (eds.), *Xiandai hanyu cidian* 現代漢語詞典, (Beijing: shangwu yinshuaguan, 1998)

Zhou Liang 周良, *Suzhou pingtan jiu wen chao* 蘇州評彈舊聞抄, (Nanjing: Jiangsu renming chubanshe, 1983)

Zhou Mi 周密 (1232-1298), *Wulin jiushi* 武林舊事 (Beijing: Zhongguo shangye chubanshe, 1982)

Zhou Yunzhong 周運中, “Nan Song shiqi de huaiyang yimin” 南宋時期的淮揚移民, *Xungen* 1 (2007): 130-133.

Zhou Zhenghe 周正鶴, *Fangyan yu zhongguo wenhua* 方言與中國文化, (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2006)

Zhu Huang 朱黃 (ca.1875-ca.1908), *Gong Wuting zhuan* 龔午亭傳, in Dong Yushu 董玉書 (1869-1952) (eds.), *Wucheng huaijiulu bulu* 蕪城懷舊錄·補錄, (Nanjing: Jiangsu Guji chubanshe, 2002)

Zhu Jingsong 朱景松, “Yangzhou hua dan yinjie dongci de shengdong chongdie” 揚州話單音動詞的生動重疊, *Zhongguoyuwen* 3 (1993): 196-223.

Zhu Zhenghai 朱正海 and Wang Yu 王瑜, *Yanshang yu Yangzhou* 鹽商與揚州, (Nanjing: Jiangsu Guji chubanshe, 2001)