

UCLA

UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Pan Jingshu's Flower Painting and Female Authorship: Collecting, Family Inheritance, and Antiquarian Practice

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1pr6v0q0>

ISBN

9798190926163

Author

Zhang, Sally

Publication Date

2026-09-10

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Pan Jingshu's Flower Painting and Female Authorship:
Collecting, Family Inheritance, and Antiquarian Practice

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Master of Arts
in East Asian Studies

by

Sally Xiaomeng Zhang

2026

© Copyright by

Sally Xiaomeng Zhang

2026

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Pan Jingshu's Flower Painting and Female Authorship:

Collecting, Family Inheritance, and Antiquarian Practice

by

Sally Xiaomeng Zhang

Master of Arts in East Asian Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2026

Professor Hui-Shu Lee, Chair

This thesis examines how Pan Jingshu 潘靜淑 (1892–1939) became visible as a painter, collector, and participant in antiquarian textual culture. She was born into the Suzhou Pan family, a lineage distinguished in the late Qing for its collections of rare books, epigraphic materials, and ancient bronzes. The study centers on three works she created with her husband Wu Hufan 吳湖帆 (1894–1968) in 1936–37, *Tianzhong xiaojing* 天中小景 (Small Scene for the Tianzhong Festival), *Suichao tu* 歲朝圖 (Painting of the New Year's Morning), and *Qihou hu bu yulan tu* 齊侯壺補玉蘭圖 (Painting of the Hu Vessel of the Marquis of Qi Supplemented with Magnolia), in which her flower painting is brought into the genre of *bogu qingong* 博古清供

(antiquities and pure offerings), where blossoms appear among ancient vessels, rubbings, seals, and colophons.

Through close analysis of these paintings and their inscriptions, the thesis argues that Pan's authorship took shape through three interlocking practices. Her citation of the earlier women painters Chen Shu 陳書 (1660–1736) and Jiang Jixi 蔣季錫 (fl. 1661–1735) placed her within a distinguishable genealogy of female accomplishment. Her handling of rare books and heirlooms inherited from her natal family bound that lineage to the antiquarian past. And her self-narrative and archival endeavor on a revised epigraphic catalogue record the processes by which she selected, edited, marked, and preserved these materials for transmission.

By situating women's artistic creation beside the male-coded traditions of collecting, epigraphy, and connoisseurship, this thesis shows that Pan's authorship was neither conferred by marriage nor recovered against it, but constructed through image-making, kinship transmission, and textual preservation, and fixed in the material forms that carried it forward.

The thesis of Sally Xiaomeng Zhang is approved.

Li Min

Huijun Mai

Hui-Shu Lee, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract of the Thesis	ii
List of Figures	vi
Introduction.....	1
Material Inheritance and the Antiquarian Practice	5
<i>Objects Carried into Marriage</i>	5
<i>Meiying shuwu as Antiquarian Setting</i>	7
<i>Bogu qinggong 博古清供 (antiquities and pure offerings) as a Gendered Visual Field</i>	8
The Collaborative Works of 1936–37.....	12
<i>Tianzhong xiaojing 天中小景 (Small Scene for the Tianzhong Festival): Citation after Chen Shu</i>	12
<i>Suichao tu 歲朝圖 (Painting of the New Year's Morning): Repetition and Female Genealogy</i>	19
<i>Qihou hu bu yulan tu 齊侯壺補玉蘭圖 (Painting of the Hu Vessel of the Marquis of Qi Supplemented with Magnolia): The Composite Antiquarian Image</i>	28
Antiquarian Labor in Books and Albums	33
<i>Zixu 自敘 (Self-Narrative): Self-Positioning</i>	34
<i>Meihua xishen pu 梅花喜神譜 (Guide to Capturing the Spirit of Plum Blossoms): Inheritance and Inscription</i>	37
<i>Jinyu qixiang ce 金玉其相冊 (Album of Forms Like Gold and Jade): Recording Two Family Lineages</i>	39
<i>Kezhai jigu lu 憲齋集古錄 (Kezhai Records of Collected Antiquities): Transcription and Print</i>	41
Conclusion	43
Figures.....	52
Bibliography	72

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1a Pan Jingshu 潘靜淑 (1892–1939) and Wu Hufan 吳湖帆 (1894–1968), <i>Tianzhong xiaojing</i> 天中小景 (Small Scene for the Tianzhong Festival), 1936. Ink and color on paper. Private Collection.....	52
Fig. 1b Detail: Wu Hufan's colophon inscription.....	53
Fig. 1c Detail: Pan Jingshu's signature and two seals: Wu Pan Jingshu 吳潘靜淑 and Jingshu shuhua 靜淑書畫	53
Fig. 1d Detail: seal reading <i>Wu Hufan Pan Jingshu hezuo yin</i> 吳湖帆潘靜淑合作印.....	53
Fig. 1e Detail: seal reading <i>Meiying shuwu</i> 梅影書屋	53
Fig. 2a Pan Jingshu and Wu Hufan, <i>Suichao tu</i> 歲朝圖 (Painting of the New Year's Morning), 1936. Ink and color on paper. Private Collection.	54
Fig. 2b Detail: Wu Hufan's colophon inscription.....	55
Fig. 2c Detail: Pan Jingshu's signature.....	55
Fig. 2d Detail: seal reading <i>Wu Hufan Pan Jingshu hezuo yin</i> 吳湖帆潘靜淑合作印.....	55
Fig. 2e Detail: seal reading <i>Meiying shuwu</i> 梅影書屋	55
Fig. 3a Pan Jingshu and Wu Hufan, <i>Qihou hu bu yulan tu</i> 齊侯壺補玉蘭圖 (Painting of the Hu Vessel of the Marquis of Qi Supplemented with Magnolia), 1937. Ink, color, and rubbing on paper. Private Collection.....	56
Fig. 3b Detail: Wu Hufan's colophon inscription.....	57
Fig. 3c Detail: Pan Jingshu and Wu Hufan's colophon inscription and seal reading <i>Wu Hufan Pan Jingshu hezuo yin</i> 吳湖帆潘靜淑合作印	57
Fig. 3d Detail: seal reading <i>Jingshu huaqi</i> 靜淑畫記	57
Fig. 4 Unknown, <i>Danping qiuhui tu</i> 膽瓶秋卉圖 (Autumn Flowers in a Gall-Bladder Vase), Song dynasty. Ink and color on silk, 26.5 x 27.5 cm. The Palace Museum, Beijing	58
Fig. 5 Shen Zhou 沈周 (1427–1509), <i>Pinghe tu</i> 瓶荷圖 (Lotus in a Vase), Ming dynasty. Ink and color on paper, 60 x 143 cm.....	59
Fig. 6 Chen Gua 陳栝 (active sixteenth century), <i>Ping'an ruilian tu</i> 平安瑞蓮圖 (Auspicious Lotus of Peace and Safety), Ming dynasty. Ink and color on paper, 90.4 x 46.4 cm. Nanjing Museum, Nanjing.....	60
Fig. 7a Chen Shu 陳書 (1660–1736), <i>Meihua shuangque tu</i> 梅花雙雀圖 (Plum Blossoms and Two Magpies), Qing dynasty. Ink on paper, 106.6 x 42.3 cm. Shanghai Museum, Shanghai.....	61
Fig. 7b Detail: Pan Jingshu's colophon inscription and seal reading <i>Pan Jingshu zhencang yin</i> 潘靜淑珍藏印.....	61
Fig. 7c Detail: seal reading <i>Pan Jingshu pingsheng xin'ai zhi wu</i> 潘靜淑平生心愛之物	61
Fig. 8a Page from <i>Meiying shuwu shuhua ji</i> 梅景書屋書畫記 (Records of Painting and Calligraphy from the Plum Scenery Studio), vol. 10, section on <i>nüshi</i> 女史 (women painters)..	62

Fig. 8b Following page from <i>Meiying shuwu shuhua ji</i> , vol. 10, continuing the section on <i>nüshi</i>	62
Fig. 9a Zhao Wenchu 趙文俶 (1595–1634), <i>Meihua tu zhou</i> 梅花圖軸 (Plum Blossom Hanging Scroll), Ming dynasty. Ink on silk, Shanghai Museum, Shanghai.....	63
Fig. 9b Detail: Wu Hufan's colophon inscription.....	63
Fig. 10 Wu Yun 吳雲 (1811–1883), <i>Illustration of the Zhou Qihou lei</i> 周齊侯壺 (Zhou-dynasty <i>lei</i> Vessel of the Marquis of Qi), from <i>Lianglei xuan yiqi tushi</i> 兩壺軒彝器圖釋 (Illustrated Catalogue of Bronzes from the Lianglei xuan Collection), <i>juan</i> 4, Qing dynasty.....	64
Fig. 11 <i>Huanzi Mengjiang hu</i> 洹子孟姜壺, Eastern Zhou dynasty. Bronze, 22.1cm H x 13.5 cm D. National Museum of China, Beijing	64
Fig. 12 Page of Pan Jingshu 潘靜淑, <i>Zixu er</i> 自敘二 (Self-Narrative Two), in <i>Gu jin banyue kan</i> 古今半月刊 (Past and Present Half-Monthly), no. 45 (1944): 12.....	65
Fig. 13 Song Boren 宋伯仁 (active thirteenth century), Front covers of the <i>Meihua xishen pu</i> 梅花喜神譜 (Guide to Capturing the Spirit of Plum Blossoms). Southern Song dynasty, 1261. Woodblock print on paper, 23.1x 28.6 cm. Shanghai Museum, Shanghai.....	66
Fig. 14a Song Boren, a leaf from <i>Meihua xishen pu</i> . Woodblock print on paper. Shanghai Museum, Shanghai.....	67
Fig. 14b Detail: seal reading <i>Pan Jingshu pingsheng xin'ai zhi wu</i> 潘靜淑平生心愛之物.....	67
Fig. 15 Pan Jingshu and Wu Hufan, <i>Yeye liuchan jinbei</i> 葉葉榴蟬金杯 (Gold Cup with Layered Pomegranate Leaves and Cicadas), 1935. From <i>Jinyu qixiang ce</i> 金玉其相冊 (Album of Forms Like Gold and Jade). Ink on paper. Suzhou Museum, Jiangsu.....	68
Fig. 16 Pan Jingshu and Wu Hufan, <i>Panchi yubei</i> 盤螭玉杯 (Jade Cup with Coiled <i>Chi</i> -Dragon Motif), 1935. From <i>Jinyu qixiang ce</i> . Ink on paper. Suzhou Museum, Jiangsu.	69
Fig. 17 Colophon page from the 1937 revised edition of <i>Kezhai jigu lu</i> 憲齋集古錄 (Kezhai Records of Collected Antiquities) by Wu Dacheng 吳大澂 (1835–1902), with a jointly signed inscription by Wu Hufan and Pan Jingshu.....	70
Fig. 18 Page from the 1937 revised edition of <i>Kezhai jigu lu</i> , with seals reading <i>Jingshu jing shu</i> 靜淑敬書 and <i>Wu Pan Jingshu</i> 吳潘靜淑.....	71

Introduction

Between 1936 and 1937, Pan Jingshu 潘靜淑 (1892–1939) brought her floral painting into three collaborative works made with Wu Hufan 吳湖帆 (1894–1968) in the format of *bogu qinggong* 博古清供, or antiquities and pure offerings: *Tianzhong xiaojing* 天中小景 (Small Scene for the Tianzhong Festival, 1936), *Suichao tu* 歲朝圖 (Painting of the New Year's Morning, 1936), and *Qihou hu bu yulan tu* 齊侯壺補玉蘭圖 (Painting of the Hu Vessel of the Marquis of Qi Supplemented with Magnolia, 1937) (Figs. 1–3). In each painting, Pan supplied the flowers, while Wu added the ancient vessel, rubbing, title, or colophon that placed the image within a learned pictorial language of ancient objects. Their respective roles are marked through signatures, seal impressions, and inscribed comments, which identify Pan's floral contribution and preserve it within the collaborative antiquarian oeuvre.

Pan's artistic practice centered on *huaniao hua* 花鳥畫 (flower-and-bird paintings), a genre associated with flowers, plants, birds, insects, seasonal observation, cultivated gardens, and the domestic studio.¹ In these works, that practice is situated within *bogu qinggong*, a pictorial format combining flowers and other refined offerings with antiquities. Flowers appear among bronze vessels; brushwork is accompanied by seals and colophons; inscriptions identify pictorial models, circumstances of viewing, and the respective contributions of the two artists. Within these works, Pan's authorship is registered through such material and textual markers: her floral compositions invoke earlier women painters, are set in relation to ancient objects, and are

¹ Pan's surviving paintings are known largely through posthumous and later compilatory publications, especially the *Meiying shuwu huaji* 梅影書屋畫集 (*Collection of Paintings from the Plum Scenery Studio*) and the modern compilation *Meiying shuwu huashi* 梅景書屋畫事 (*Painting Matters of the Plum Scenery Studio*), which remains the most extensive published collection of her extant works. See Chen Hansu 陳含素 and Wang Shuzhong 王叔重, *Meiying shuwu huashi* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang ren min mei shu chu ban she, 2017).

identified through signatures, seals, and inscribed comments. She drew on model paintings, inherited holdings, studio objects, and collaborative writings, recombining these materials within images that joined floral refinement to antiquarian knowledge.

The possibility of such a practice was inseparable from Pan's familial and cultural position. Born Pan Shuchun 潘樹春, she came from the Suzhou Pan family, a lineage distinguished by collections of rare books, epigraphic materials, and antiquarian objects associated especially with Pan Zuyin 潘祖蔭 (1830–1890). Her marriage to Wu Hufan brought this natal inheritance into contact with another powerful collecting lineage. Wu, one of Republican Shanghai's leading painters, connoisseurs, and collectors, was the adoptive grandson and principal heir of Wu Dacheng 吳大澂 (1835–1902), the late-Qing official, epigraphic scholar, and bronze collector. Their shared studio and collecting space, *Meiying shuwu* 梅影書屋 (Plum Scenery Studio), took shape through this convergence of family collections, inherited objects, and connoisseurial practices.² For Pan, it became the environment in which floral painting, antiquarian materials, inscription, authentication, and pictorial collaboration could be brought into sustained relation.

Pan has often been understood through the relational frames that made her historically recognizable. One presents the Pan–Wu marriage as a Republican echo of Li Qingzhao 李清照 (1084–ca. 1155) and Zhao Mingcheng 趙明誠 (1081–1129), the paradigmatic couple of literary and antiquarian learning dated back to the Song Dynasty.³ Another emphasizes the convergence

² The studio was originally named *Meiying shuwu* 梅影書屋. In premodern usage, *jing* 景 was sometimes used interchangeably with *ying* 影, so the two forms *Meiying shuwu* 梅影書屋 and *Meijing shuwu* 梅景書屋 both appeared across the couple's seals, colophons, and printed catalogues; the romanization, however, remains *Meiying shuwu*.

³ Dai Xiaojing 戴小京, *Wu Hufan zhuanlue* 吳湖帆傳略 (*A Brief Biography of Wu Hufan*), *Duo yun xian dai guo hua jia cong shu* (Shanghai: Shanghai shu hua chu ban she, 1988), 45; see also Gu Yinhai 顧音海 and She Yanyan

of two collecting lineages, with Pan bringing the books, rubbings, and other cultural resources of her natal family into Meiyang shuwu. These frames identify a unique condition of her world: marriage, lineage, collecting, and cultivated companionship.⁴ Pan's paintings within collaborated input of Wu bring another process into view. They show how Pan shaped those conditions into authorship through practice: by working through women's painterly precedents, mobilizing inherited materials, and allowing her name, hand, and acts of possession to be preserved through seals, colophons, titles, and records.

This thesis argues that Pan Jingshu's visibility as a painter, collector, and participant in the highly-regarded antiquarian textual practice was produced through these interrelated forms of work. Her engagement with earlier eminent women painters, especially Chen Shu 陳書 (1660–1736) and Jiang Jixi 蔣季錫 (fl. 1661–1735), situated her floral painting within an established tradition of female artistic accomplishment. Her access to books, objects, inscriptions, and collecting histories preserved by the Pan family connected that painting to a broader antiquarian inheritance. The inscriptions, seals, object records, and printed texts surrounding her works then gave these connections durable form. Marriage and studio collaboration provided important conditions for Pan's authorship, but did not in themselves define it. Her authorial position was articulated through the ways she selected, adapted, inscribed, and transmitted the materials available to her.

余彥焱, *Wu Hufan de yi shu shi jie* 吳湖帆的藝術世界 (*The Artistic World of Wu Hufan*), (Shanghai: Wen hui chu ban she, 2004), 122.

⁴ Clarissa Von Spee, *Wu Hufan: A Twentieth Century Art Connoisseur in Shanghai*, with Lothar Ledderose and Julia F. Andrews (Berlin: Reimer, 2008), 39; see also Ling Lizhong 凌利中, "Jin xian dai shuhua jian ding xue ke de dian ji zhe: Wu Hufan yu ershi shiji shang ban ye de shuhua jian cang huodong 近現代書畫鑑定學科的奠基者：吳湖帆與二十世紀上半葉的書畫鑑藏活動 (Founder of Modern Research on Connoisseurship of Painting and Calligraphy: Wu Hufan and the Connoisseurship Activities of Painting and Calligraphy in the First Half of the 20th Century)," in *Wu Hufan shuhua jian cang te ji* 吳湖帆書畫鑒藏特集 (Collection and Connoisseurship of Painting and Calligraphy of Wu Hufan), ed. Shanghai Museum (Shanghai: Shanghai shu hua chu ban she, 2016), 16.

This study draws together several bodies of scholarship that have usually been discussed separately. Studies of women's artistic and literary production in late imperial China have shown how female authorship often took shape through kinship, marriage, domestic learning, virtue, textual practice, and mediated collaboration.⁵ Research on collecting, *jinshi* 金石 (antiquarian epigraphy), and *bogu qingong* painting has clarified how antiquarian authority was formed across objects, texts, and images. Bronzes, rubbings, inscriptions, provenance, catalogues, studio names, and acts of preservation gave ancient objects their scholarly and social force; in *bogu qingong* painting, that force could be reorganized on a single pictorial surface, where vessels, flowers, seals, colophons, and rubbings joined object knowledge to visual display.⁶ Pan's collaborative paintings stand at the point where these histories meet. They allow women's flower painting to be read within the textual, material, and social protocols of antiquarian display, a field whose authority had long been articulated through male literati networks.

⁵ On women's artistic production and visibility within late imperial Chinese painting, see Marsha Weidner, "Women in the History of Chinese Painting," in *Views from Jade Terrace: Chinese women artists 1300-1912* (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1988); Ellen Johnston Laing, "Women Painters in Traditional China," in *Flowering in the Shadows: Women in the History of Chinese and Japanese Painting*, ed. Marsha Weidner (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990); and Lara C. W. Blanchard, "Virtue and Women's Authorship in Chinese Art History: A Study of Yutai Huashi (History of Painting from Jade Terrace)," *Journal of Chinese Literature and Culture* 10, no. 1 (2023). For related studies of women's literary authorship and agency, see Ellen Widmer and Kang-i Sun Chang, *Writing Women in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997); and Grace S. Fong, *Herself an Author: Gender, Agency, and Writing in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008).

⁶ See Bai Qianshen 白謙慎, "Antiquarianism in a Time of Crisis: On the Collecting Practices of Late Qing Government Officials, 1861–1911," in *World Antiquarianism: Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Alain Schnapp et al., Issues & Debates (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013); Bai, "From Composite Rubbing to Pictures of Antiques and Flowers (Bogu Huahui): The Case of Wu Yun," *Orientalism* (Hong Kong) 38, no. 3 (2007): 52–60; Michael Hatch, *Networks of Touch: A Tactile History of Chinese Art, 1790–1840*, Perspectives on Sensory History (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2024); Kong Lingwei 孔令偉, "Haipai bogu tu chutan 海派博古圖初探 (A Preliminary Study of Shanghai-School Bogu Paintings)," in *Haipai huihua yanjiu wenji* 海派繪畫研究文集 (*Collected Essays on Shanghai-School Painting Studies*), (Shanghai shu hua chu ban she, 2001); and Kong, *Yue gu: Zhongguo yi shu shi zhong de gu qi wu ji qi tu xiang biao da* 悅古: 中國藝術史中的古器物及其圖像表達 (*Taking Pleasure in Antiquity: Ancient Objects and Their Pictorial Representation in Chinese Art History*), Zhongguo mei shu yan jiu cong shu (Shanghai: Shanghai shu hua chu ban she, 2020).

The first section establishes the historical and visual ground for this reading. It situates Pan and Wu within the family collections and inherited practices that formed Meiying shuwu, and it introduces *bogu qingong* as a pictorial format in which flowers, ancient vessels, rubbings, seals, and inscriptions made antiquarian authority visible. The second section turns to the three collaborative paintings, reading each first through its inscriptional and pictorial evidence and then outward to the textual records, family transmissions, and collecting practices that gave these images their force. The final section follows Pan beyond the painted surface, examining how she wrote about her own position, marked inherited books and objects, recorded family transmission, and participated in the preservation of antiquarian texts. Across these practices, Pan's flowers appear as part of a larger endeavor of naming, remarking, preserving, and giving inherited materials new pictorial and textual form and context.

Material Inheritance and the Antiquarian Practice

Objects Carried into Marriage

Through the rare books, rubbings, and objects that accompanied her marriage, Pan Jingshu carried the Pan family's antiquarian inheritance into the studio she shared with Wu Hufan. By the late Qing, that inheritance had been shaped above all by Pan Zuyin, whose collections of books, bronzes, and inscribed stones gave the family a durable place within *jinshi* culture. Pan Zuyin organized these holdings through named collecting spaces: Pangxi zhai 滂喜齋 (Pangxi Studio) and Gongshun tang 功順堂 (Gongshun Hall) housed books, while Pangu lou 攀古樓 (Pangu Tower) held bronzes and stones. These names did more than designate storage.

They articulated a classificatory world in which antiquity was divided among media, each requiring its own practices of handling, reading, preservation, and transmission.⁷

At the center of this antiquarian world stood the Pan family's great bronzes: *Da Yu ding* 大盂鼎 (Great Yu Tripod), *Da Ke ding* 大克鼎 (Great Ke Tripod), and *Shi Song ding* 史頌鼎 (Shi Song Tripod).⁸ They mattered not simply as prestigious possessions, but as inscribed bodies of evidence. Their long cast inscriptions joined archaic writing to ritual form, allowing each vessel to function simultaneously as object, text, and record of early political and ceremonial order. To possess such bronzes was to guard material fragments of high antiquity; to read them was to participate in a recognized practice of *jinshi* learning.⁹

Pan Jingshu entered marriage through this culture of material inheritance. After Pan Zuyin died without male heirs, part of his collection passed to his younger brother Pan Zunian 潘祖年 (1870–1925), Pan Jingshu's father. When Pan married Wu Hufan in 1915, her dowry included objects from Pan Zuyin's former collection. Among the most valued were three rare rubbing albums of inscriptions in the calligraphy of Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 (557–641): *Huadu si ta ming* 化度寺塔銘 (Inscription on the Pagoda at Huadu Monastery), *Jiuchenggong Liquan ming* 九成宮醴泉銘 (Inscription on the Sweet Wine Spring at Jiucheng Palace), and *Huangfu Dan bei* 皇甫誕碑 (Stele for Huangfu Dan).¹⁰ After a fourth album by Ouyang Xun later entered the couple's collection, Pan and Wu came to understand the group as the *Si Ou* 四歐 (Four Ous). They incorporated *Ou* 歐 into their children's names and housed the albums in *Si Outang* 四歐堂

⁷ Von Spee, *Wu Hufan*, 39; see also Zheng Zhong 鄭重, *Hai shang shou cang shi jia* 海上收藏世家 (*Collectors in Shanghai*), (Shanghai: Shi ji chu ban ji tuan Shanghai shu dian chu ban she, 2003), 8.

⁸ Zheng, *Hai shang shou cang shi jia*, 1–8.

⁹ Bai, "Antiquarianism in a Time of Crisis," 386–402.

¹⁰ Zheng, *Hai shang shou cang shi jia*, 161–62.

(Hall of the Four Ous).¹¹ The rubbings from Pan's dowry thus helped shape the household's own language of family and studio identity. On Pan's thirtieth birthday, Pan Zunian presented her with a rare Southern Song imprint of *Meihua xishen pu* 梅花喜神譜 (Guide to Capturing the Spirit of Plum Blossoms), the illustrated plum manual compiled by Song Boren 宋伯仁 (active thirteenth century).¹² Wu later named their shared studio Meiyong shuwu after this book.¹³ The Ouyang rubbings and *Meihua xishen pu* accompanied Pan into marriage as materials of calligraphic, bibliophilic, and connoisseurial authority. Her inheritance did more than enlarge the collection she shared with Wu. It helped shape the family names, studio names, and working environment of the Pan–Wu household, giving Pan a material claim within the world of *jinshi* collecting.

Meiyong shuwu as Antiquarian Setting

After Pan Jingshu's inherited materials entered the Pan–Wu household, Meiyong shuwu became the space in which her natal inheritance met the Wu family's procedures of antiquarian study.¹⁴ On the Wu side, Meiyong shuwu inherited the working practices of Kezhai 窠齋, Wu Dacheng's studio of antiquarian scholarship. There, ancient objects moved between collection, writing, reproduction, and publication. His studio name, Kezhai, derived from an archaic graph on one of his vessels, so that a single name joined possession, paleography, and studio identity.

¹¹ Von Spee, *Wu Hufan*, 39; see also Zheng, *Hai shang shou cang shi jia*, 160–65. Wu Hufan and Pan Jingshu named their four children Meng'ou 孟歐, Shu'ou 述歐, Si'ou 思歐, and Hui'ou 慧歐.

¹² Chen Hansu and Wang Shuzhong, *Wu Hufan nian pu* 吳湖帆年譜 (*Chronological Biography of Wu Hufan*), (Shanghai: Dongfang chubanshe, 2017), 27. See also Hua Lei 華蕾, “Meihua xishen pu banben kao” 《梅花喜神譜》版本考 (A Study of the Editions of Meihua xishen pu) (master's thesis, Fudan University, 2010), 67–68; and Chen Hansu 陳含素 and Wang Shuzhong 王叔重, *Meiyong shuwu huashi* 梅景書畫事 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang ren min mei shu chu ban she, 2017).

¹³ Von Spee, *Wu Hufan*, 39.

¹⁴ Zheng, *Hai shang shou cang shi jia*, 158–165.

His *Shuowen guzhou bu* 說文古籀補 (Supplement to the Ancient and Zhou Scripts of the *Shuowen*), *Guyu tukao* 古玉圖考 (Illustrated Study of Ancient Jades), and *Kezhai jigu lu* 憲齋集古錄 (Kezhai Records of Collected Antiquities) show the range of this practice: he drew ancient objects, transcribed their inscriptions, classified their forms, compared them with received sources, and published them as records of antiquarian knowledge. Wu Hufan inherited from Wu Dacheng a world in which ancient objects were continually converted into records. Bronzes, jades, rubbings, inscriptions, and catalogues passed through the Wu lineage, while Wu Dacheng's own antiquarian work belonged to the late Qing culture of whole-form rubbing, or *quanxing ta* 全形拓.¹⁵ In *Meiying shuwu*, this inheritance mattered less as a direct technical transfer than as a set of habits for naming, recording, publishing, and pictorially reactivating ancient things.

Meiying shuwu brought these procedures into contact with Pan's inherited materials. The studio provided the setting in which rare books, rubbings, ancient vessels, floral models, seals, and inscriptions could be handled together and given a new pictorial form. For Pan, this environment mattered because it placed her floral practice beside the very materials and procedures through which antiquarian authority was recorded: rubbings, titles, colophons, seals, and catalogues. *Bogu qinggong* would turn this studio arrangement of vessels, rubbings, inscriptions, seals, and flowers into pictorial form.

Bogu qinggong 博古清供 (antiquities and pure offerings) as a Gendered Visual Field

¹⁵ Bai Qianshen 白謙慎, "Composite Rubbings in Nineteenth-Century China: The Case of Wu Dacheng (1835–1902) and His Friends," in *Reinventing the Past: Archaism and Antiquarianism in Chinese Art and Visual Culture* (Chicago: Center for the Art of East Asia, University of Chicago, 2010), 291–319.

Within this studio world, *bogu qinggong* offered a format in which ancient vessels, flowers, rubbings, titles, seals, and colophons could be brought together on a single pictorial surface. Its two terms joined related yet distinct histories. *Bogu* 博古, or ancient erudition, referred to learned engagement with antiquity, especially ancient vessels, inscriptions, and material remains. Song antiquarian catalogues such as Lü Dalin's 呂大臨 (1044–1091) *Kaogu tu* 考古圖 (Illustrated Investigations of Antiquity) and the imperial *Xuanhe bogu tu* 宣和博古圖 (Illustrated Catalogue of Antique Objects from the Xuanhe Hall) established a model in which bronzes appeared through form, measurement, inscription, and explanation.¹⁶ These catalogues made vessels available for comparison and interpretation. This strand of *bogu* imagery belonged to the catalogue and epigraphic world of *jinshi* learning, where ancient vessels, stone inscriptions, and inscribed remains served as material witnesses to the past.¹⁷

Qinggong 清供, or pure offerings, belonged to refined arrangements of flowers, fruits, vessels, and studio objects prepared for seasonal display and cultivated viewing. An early textual precedent appears in Zhang Yanyuan's 張彥遠 (ca. 815–907) *Lidai minghua ji* 歷代名畫記 (Famous Paintings through the Ages), which attributes a *Furong zhan ding tu* 芙蓉蘸鼎圖 (Hibiscus Dipping into a Ding Vessel) to Emperor Yuan of Liang 梁元帝 (508–555); since no corresponding work survives, the attribution functions as a historiographic anchor rather than a

¹⁶ Kong, *Haipai bogu tu chutan*, 59.

¹⁷ Shana J. Brown, *Pastimes: From Art and Antiquarianism to Modern Chinese Historiography* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011); Chia-Ling Yang, *Appropriating Antiquity for Modern Chinese Painting* (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2023).

pictorial record.¹⁸ Later depictions of flowers arranged in vessels, such as the anonymous Song *Danping qiuhui tu* 膽瓶秋卉圖 (Autumn Flowers in a Gall-Bladder Vase), Shen Zhou's 沈周 (1427–1509) *Pinghe tu* 瓶荷圖 (Lotus in a Vase), and Chen Gua's 陳栝 (active sixteenth century) *Ping'an ruilian tu* 平安瑞蓮圖 (Auspicious Lotus of Peace and Safety), placed blossoms in vessels that suggested antiquity, refinement, and auspicious display (Figs. 4–6). In these works, the vessel gained seasonal vitality, while the flower acquired cultural depth through association with an antique form.¹⁹

The more densely composite form of *bogu qingong* developed when these two trajectories converged. By the nineteenth century, especially in Jiangnan antiquarian circles, ancient vessels, flowers, fruits, rubbings, seals, titles, and colophons could be brought together on a single surface. This convergence depended on the maturation of whole-form rubbing during the Jiaqing 嘉慶 (1796–1820) and Daoguang 道光 (1821–1850) reigns. Associated with figures such as Ma Qifeng 馬起鳳 (active early nineteenth century) and Liuzhou 六舟 (1791–1858), whole-form rubbing translated a three-dimensional object into a paper image through contact, selection, and reconstruction.²⁰ It could render the vessel's body, handles, foot, decorative bands, and inscription as an apparently coherent image, while retaining the authority of a surface touched by paper and ink.²¹

¹⁸ Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠, *Li dai ming hua ji* 歷代名畫記 (*Famous Paintings through the Ages*), *juan* 7. Cong shu ji cheng chu bian (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1985).

¹⁹ Kong, *Yue gu*, chapter 4.

²⁰ Bai, "From Composite Rubbing to Pictures of Antiques and Flowers," 52–53; see also Chia-Ling Yang, "Power, Identity and Antiquarian Approaches in Modern Chinese Art," *Journal of Art Historiography* (Glasgow) 10, no. 10 (2014): 1–33.

²¹ Hatch, *Networks of Touch*, 117–20.

By the late Qing and Republican periods, this composite format suited Shanghai's connoisseurial world especially well. It embedded antiquarian knowledge within images made for display, exchange, collection, and circulation, while allowing auspicious, social, and scholarly meanings to gather on the same surface.²² The ancient vessel functioned as more than a container. It condensed object knowledge, ownership, scholarly distinction, and the right to speak through antiquity. A flower rising from such a vessel therefore brought color, season, and vitality into a visual field organized by the protocols of antiquarian evidence.

This structure clarifies the gendered stakes of Pan's participation. Antiquarian authority had long been mediated through classical learning, official networks, epigraphic expertise, and male literati exchange. To identify a bronze, read its inscription, or correlate it with catalogues was to perform learned custodianship over the material past.²³ The moral pressure surrounding antiquarian collecting further sharpened this structure. Because bronzes, jades, seals, and other inscribed objects could invite the charge of *wanwu sangzhi* 玩物喪志 (the dissipation of moral purpose through indulgence in things), collectors often framed their value through scholarship: the recovery of ancient writing, the reconstruction of ritual systems, and the preservation of cultural patrimony.²⁴

Pan Jingshu's flowers entered this visual structure where a recognized language of female flower painting met an apparatus conventionally associated with male antiquarian expertise. *Bogu qingong* placed her floral practice beside vessels, rubbings, titles, seals, and colophons, the very forms through which ancient objects acquired evidentiary and connoisseurial authority.

²² Kong, *Haipai bogu tu chutan*; and Yang, *Appropriating Antiquity for Modern Chinese Painting*.

²³ Brown, *Pastimes*, 3–4.

²⁴ Bai, "Antiquarianism in a Time of Crisis."

The following analyses ask how this encounter gave Pan's floral authorship durable form within the antiquarian image.

The Collaborative Works of 1936–37

Between the *bingzi* 丙子 [1936] and the *dingchou* 丁丑 [1937] years, Pan Jingshu carried her flower painting into three collaborative antiquarian images made within Meiyong shuwu. She painted from earlier floral models, signed and sealed her work, and placed her flowers within compositions structured by the vessels, inscriptions, rubbings, titles, and colophons supplied by Wu Hufan. Read in sequence, these works trace how Pan's floral practice moved from citation after an earlier woman painter, to repeated genealogical positioning, and finally to the placement of her magnolia within a fully articulated antiquarian image.

Tianzhong xiaojing 天中小景 (*Small Scene for the Tianzhong Festival*): Citation after Chen Shu

Tianzhong xiaojing, painted in 1936, first makes visible the collaborative structure through which Pan Jingshu's floral authorship entered the antiquarian image (see Fig. 1a). The composition presents a compact cluster of flowers rising from an archaistic bronze vessel. The vessel anchors the lower portion of the image with frontal weight and antiquarian gravity, while the floral spray extends upward with a controlled rhythm and delicate chromatic restraint. From the outset, the painting joins two pictorial registers: Pan's flower painting and Wu Hufan's archaic vessel form. Their meeting gives the image its structure.

Wu Hufan's colophon, inscribed at the upper right, makes this structure explicit: "In the summer of *bingzi* 丙子 [1936], Jingshu diligently devoted herself to flower painting; there was scarcely a celebrated model she did not copy. This [work] is after a Nanlou model. I added a

Shang *lei* vessel to complete it.” (丙子之夏靜淑奮寫花卉名作幾無不臨摹此□乃臨南樓本也余為補商壘足成之) (Fig. 1b).²⁵ The wording performs more than attribution. It first identifies Pan’s work as part of a sustained practice of copying celebrated flower paintings. The phrase “there was scarcely a celebrated model she did not copy” (幾無不臨摹) presents her floral practice as disciplined study rather than casual accomplishment. It then specifies that this work is “after a Nanlou model” (臨南樓本), thereby locating Pan’s painting in relation to a named historical source: Nanlou refers to Chen Shu, the recognized Qing dynasty woman painter also known as *Nanlou laoren* 南樓老人 (The Old Person of the Southern Pavilion). After these two acts of framing, Wu describes his own contribution as “added a Shang *lei* vessel to complete it” (為補商壘足成之). The sequence matters. Pan’s floral image is established first, while Wu’s vessel is marked by the verb *bu* 補 (“to add” or “to supplement”) as a subsequent intervention that completes the composition. That completion is also structurally decisive: by adding the bronze vessel, Wu relocates Pan’s floral study into the antiquarian format of *bogu qingong*. The inscription thus records not only who painted which part, but also how the work was produced as a composite object: floral citation first, antiquarian completion second.

The placement of Pan’s signature and seals reinforces this division. At the upper left, Pan signs the work “Jingshu” 靜淑, with the seals *Wu Pan Jingshu* 吳潘靜淑 and *Jingshu shuhua* 靜淑書畫 (Jingshu’s calligraphy and painting) impressed below. Their position distinguishes Pan’s authorial presence from Wu’s colophon on the right and visually marks the floral component as her contribution (Fig. 1c). Her presence is therefore not hidden within Wu’s colophon alone. It is marked through her own seal system, where personal name, married identity, and artistic practice

²⁵ Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.

converge. The seal *Jingshu shuhua*, especially, identifies her with the practice of painting and calligraphy, placing her within the category of artistic production.

The work's conjugal identity is registered through a separate set of seals. The seal *Wu Hufan Pan Jingshu hezuoyin* 吳湖帆潘靜淑合作印 (Collaborative seal of Wu Hufan and Pan Jingshu) explicitly marks the painting as a joint production (Fig. 1d). The studio seal *Meiying shuwu* further folds the collaboration into the couple's named studio identity (Fig. 1e).²⁶ Together, the seals register the painting as a collaborative production while maintaining the distinction between Pan's floral authorship and Wu's antiquarian addition.

The visual organization of the painting gives this inscriptional structure a pictorial form. A large archaistic bronze vessel occupies the lower register, set frontally to establish weight, symmetry, and antiquarian gravity. Its rounded body, ring handles, low foot, and simplified decorative band evoke the idiom of an ancient bronze without claiming archaeological specificity. From its mouth rises a restrained floral spray of pale blue blossoms, smaller red blooms, and upright leaves, whose vertical movement counterbalances the vessel's mass below. The flowers are rendered through thin color washes, light contouring, and precise descriptive control; cool greens and muted blues are animated by touches of red, producing a refined chromatic balance. The vessel invokes antiquity; the flowers introduce seasonal vitality. Together they produce a small scene in which floral refinement and ancient erudition occupy the same surface.

Once Pan's contribution has been distinguished within the collaborative surface, the inscription turns the viewer toward the historical source that gave her floral painting its

²⁶ The seal reads *Moujing shuwu* 某景書屋, employing *mou* 某 as an archaic graphic form associated with *mei* 梅 and *jing* 景 as a variant form of *ying* 影. The studio's name is therefore properly read *Meiying shuwu* 梅影書屋.

genealogical force. Chen Shu's career offered Pan a particularly charged precedent because her artistic reputation had been stabilized through forms of legitimacy available to elite women: family recognition, moral praise, learned cultivation, and later imperial collection.

Chen Shu's reputation exemplified the logic of "conventional success." Her reputation joined artistic skill to the moral categories through which elite women's cultural activity could be praised: filial daughter, exemplary wife, capable mother, and cultivated gentlewoman. Her paintings also supported this reputation as orthodox, historically grounded practice. Across her oeuvre, Chen engaged recognized old-master models and early-Qing orthodox modes, while her flower painting drew especially on Ming Suzhou and Wu School precedents. Her decorous subjects, disciplined handling, and reliance on sanctioned models made her art legible as a learned, morally respectable, and transmissible precedent for later women painters.²⁷

The durability of Chen Shu's reputation depended on two connected forms of validation. The first was familial: her eldest son Qian Chenqun 錢陳群 (1686–1774), a prominent official at the Qianlong court, composed a lengthy account of her life that framed her artistic achievement through the language of Confucian virtue. The second was institutional: Qian presented a number of her paintings to the Qianlong emperor 乾隆帝 (r. 1735–1796), bringing her work into the imperial collection and its apparatus of cataloguing, inscription, and connoisseurial judgment. Through this process, Chen Shu's painting became inseparable from the mechanisms that preserved and authorized it: filial commemoration, family advocacy, and imperial recognition together made her talent legible as the accomplishment of a virtuous and learned woman.²⁸

²⁷ Marsha Weidner, "The Conventional Success of Ch'en Shu," in *Flowering in the Shadows*, 130–49.

²⁸ Weidner, "The Conventional Success," 124–29.

For Pan, Chen Shu mattered precisely because her reputation had already passed through these channels of recognition. To paint after Chen was therefore to approach a female predecessor whose work had been made durable through family commemoration, imperial collection, and connoisseurial record. This history gave Pan's citation its particular force. Chen's visibility showed how a woman painter's lasting reputation could be produced through the careful fit between artistic accomplishment and the moral expectations governing elite female conduct. It also showed that such visibility depended on practices of preservation carried out through family, court, and connoisseurial institutions: biography, presentation, inscription, collecting, and cataloguing. Chen Shu's case was therefore structural as well as biographical. Her artistic achievement had been converted into transmissible cultural authority through precisely the mechanisms that made a woman painter visible within literati culture, and Pan's citation of her brought that authorized lineage into the collaborative surface of *Tianzhong xiaojing*.

Pan's invocation of Chen Shu should therefore be read as a deliberate act of genealogical self-positioning within a precisely defined model of female legitimacy. By citing Chen Shu, Pan aligned her floral painting with a predecessor whose reputation had already made women's artistic activity legible as learned, virtuous, and worthy of preservation. The reference was strategic in two interrelated registers. Stylistically, it aligned Pan's brushwork with a recognized orthodox idiom of female flower painting transmitted through Qing painting circles and imperial collections. Institutionally, it placed her authorship within a sanctioned female lineage, one whose authority derived from cultivated restraint, moral respectability, family advocacy, and incorporation into elite cultural memory.

Pan's floral handling in *Tianzhong xiaojing* makes that alignment visible on the pictorial surface itself. The blossoms are rendered with soft color washes and controlled outlines, while

the leaves are articulated with light descriptive precision. The floral spray is poised and refined. This restraint is central to the painting's authorial claim. It translates the Nanlou citation into visual terms: Pan presents her authorship through cultivated control, a historically mediated relation to Chen Shu, and a command of recognizably proper accomplishment. The painting thus brings visual form and inscriptional claim into alignment, making Pan's visibility depend on disciplined execution and on her placement within a lineage already intelligible to elite viewers.

Pan Jingshu's citation of Chen Shu in *Tianzhong xiaojing* was more than a textual reference to a celebrated name. It was grounded in the material practice of collecting, viewing, and inscribing Chen Shu's paintings within the Pan–Wu studio, and more specifically in Pan's own direct engagement with such works. A hanging scroll by Chen Shu, now catalogued as *Meique tu* 梅鵲圖 (*Plum Blossoms and Magpies*) and known within the Pan–Wu collection as *Meihua shuangque tu* 梅花雙雀圖 (*Plum Blossoms and Two Magpies*), preserves this relationship with particular clarity (Fig. 7a).²⁹ The scroll bears Pan's own inscription, dated to the first month of *dingchou* 丁丑 (1937): “Magpies announce glad tidings beneath clear eaves; plum blossoms claim the first days of spring. Good news arrives from the family garden; their cold beauty illuminates the present moment” (鵲報晴簷喜梅花佔首春家園消息好冷豔照時新) (Fig. 7b).

The placement of this poem is crucial. Pan wrote directly on the painting surface, rather than on a mounting border or attached colophon strip, so that her response enters the pictorial field as an integrated act of viewing, inscription, and possession. The verse responds to Chen

²⁹ Wu Hufan 吳湖帆, *Wu Hufan wen gao* 吳湖帆文稿 (*Manuscripts of Wu Hufan*), ed. Liang Ying 梁穎, with Wu Yuanjing 吳元京, *Zhongguo mei shu xue yuan mei shu shi yan jiu suo cong shu* (Hangzhou: Zhongguo mei shu xue yuan chu ban she, 2004), 564.

Shu's plum blossoms through auspicious sound, seasonal renewal, and domestic place: magpies announce joy, plum blossoms mark the beginning of spring, and the "family garden" becomes the site from which favorable news arrives. Its language presents Pan's relation to Chen Shu through affective recognition rather than technical connoisseurial judgment, yet this affective register carries its own authority. By adding her poem to the painted surface, Pan aligns her literary voice with the blossoms of an earlier woman artist. The scroll thus materially layers two women's presences: Chen Shu as painter, and Pan as later viewer, poet, collector, and inscriber.

Pan's seals sharpen this relationship. The impressions *Pan Jingshu zhencang yin* 潘靜淑珍藏印 (Seal of Pan Jingshu's treasured possession) and *Pan Jingshu pingsheng xin'ai zhi wu* 潘靜淑平生心愛之物 (Lifelong cherished object of Pan Jingshu) mark the scroll as an object of sustained personal and cultural value (see Figs. 7b–c). These seals record ownership, but they also transform attachment into a statement of possession. The phrase lifelong cherished (*pingsheng xin'ai* 平生心愛) gives force to this valuation, pressing Pan's emotional relation to the painting into the material record of the collection. The date of the inscription is equally significant: Pan inscribed *Meihua shuangque tu* in the first month of *dingchou* (1937), within the same concentrated period as the three Pan–Wu collaborative paintings examined in this thesis. Her painted citation of Chen Shu in *Tianzhong xiaojing* and her inscription of an actual Chen Shu scroll therefore belong to the same active moment of making, collecting, and study. Chen Shu was not a remote name from women's painting history; she was a predecessor encountered through a material work, incorporated into the studio collection, inscribed by Pan's own hand, and marked with seals of personal attachment.

Read beside *Meihua shuangque tu*, Pan Jingshu's reference to Chen Shu in *Tianzhong xiaojing* becomes a materially grounded act of self-positioning. Chen Shu's authority entered

Pan's painting through more than a recognized historical name: it was sustained by Pan's possession of Chen's scroll, her poem written into its pictorial field, and her seals of treasured attachment. The flowers in *Tianzhong xiaojing* therefore carry a relationship already formed through collection, inscription, and close viewing. Once placed within the *bogu qingong* structure of the painting, this relationship gives Pan's floral authorship a specific historical force. She appears through Chen Shu as a predecessor whose work had already been preserved, valued, and made available within the Pan–Wu studio. *Tianzhong xiaojing* thus establishes the first mechanism of Pan's visibility within the collaborative corpus: her authorship becomes legible through a material citation of a sanctioned female painterly lineage.

Suichao tu 歲朝圖 (*Painting of the New Year's Morning*): *Repetition and Female Genealogy*

Suichao tu, painted in the third month of *bingzi* (1936), carries Pan Jingshu's floral citation into a second collaborative image (see Fig. 2a). After *Tianzhong xiaojing* linked her flower painting to Chen Shu, *Suichao tu* turns to another earlier woman painter, Jiang Jixi. The repetition is important. Pan again paints from a female precedent, signs her work, and places her flowers within a composition completed by Wu Hufan's vessel and colophon. The second work therefore gives the procedure greater durability. What first appeared through Chen Shu now becomes a repeated practice of female painterly positioning.

The surviving published photograph of *Suichao tu* is monochrome, so the present analysis focuses on composition, inscription, and authorial structure. The composition is built around a tall, attenuated bronze vessel, rendered with graduated ink washes that plausibly suggest a surface comparable to the *lei* in *Tianzhong xiaojing*, giving it visual weight and antiquarian presence. Its elongated body provides a stable vertical support for an asymmetrical

arrangement of branches, blossoms, and berries opening outward and upward. The branches are linear, airy, and rhythmically dispersed across the upper field, producing a sense of abundance held within controlled restraint.

The painting's inscription provides the clearest evidence for this repeated collaborative procedure. Wu Hufan's colophon records: "Paintings by the lady Jiang Jixi, the younger sister of Nansha Grand Secretary, are exceedingly rare. A friend recently brought from Beiping a *Suichao tu* and showed it to me. Jingshu made a copy after the borrowed model, with slight modifications. I supplied a danping in supplement, completing this small scene. The third month of bingzi, inscribed by Wu Hufan" (南沙相國之妹蔣季錫女史畫殊少見近從北平友人攜示歲朝圖靜淑假臨一過略為變動余為補寫膽瓶勉成小景時丙子三月吳湖帆題) (Fig. 2b).

The inscription takes the form of a documentary note, and its phrasing carefully defines the conditions of Pan's authorship. It first identifies Jiang Jixi as a rare female painter whose works were difficult to encounter, then records the specific circumstance through which the model became available: a friend had brought a *Suichao tu* from Beiping and shown it to Wu. This detail places Pan's act of copying within the circulation of paintings among collectors, friends, and studio viewers. Her access to the model was both social and material; her authorship emerged through a concrete encounter with an object temporarily made available for study. Through the inscription, this passing act of viewing becomes a durable record of artistic relation. The sequence then defines the collaborative procedure: Pan made a mediated copy of the earlier woman painter's work, introduced slight modifications, and Wu supplied the vessel to complete the scene. The added vessel relocates Pan's floral copy into the structure of *bogu qingong*, converting a borrowed flower image into an antiquarian composition. Read in this way, *Suichao*

tu repeats the authorial structure examined in *Tianzhong xiaojing*: female painterly citation joined to antiquarian completion, now taking shape through a different female predecessor.

The verb that names Pan's contribution is especially important. "A copy after the borrowed model" (假臨) describes an imitative practice shaped by access, mediation, and temporary possession. The phrase acknowledges that Pan worked from a model made available to her, while also leaving room for her intervention within that act of copying. The phrase "with slight modifications" (略為變動) further clarifies the nature of that process. Pan's copy preserved the authority of the borrowed model while introducing measured adjustments, thereby placing her authorship within a practice of careful, mediated imitation that late imperial and Republican literati culture recognized as a legitimate, indeed central, means of entering a stylistic tradition.³⁰ Her visibility emerges through this learned capacity to work through inherited form and make it newly operative within a collaborative antiquarian image.

The seal program further clarifies the painting's divided authorship. Pan's signature "Jingshu" and seal appear at the upper left, while Wu's colophon runs along the right side of the image, spatially distinguishing their respective contributions in a manner that recalls *Tianzhong xiaojing* (Fig. 2c). As in *Tianzhong xiaojing*, *Suichao tu* bears the joint seal *Wu Hufan Pan Jingshu hezuo yin* and the studio seal *Meiying shuwu*, which define the work as a collaborative production situated within the named domestic space of the studio (Figs. 2d–e). The painting thus performs the same collaborative operation analyzed in *Tianzhong xiaojing*: female painterly

³⁰ On the Republican-era literati practice of borrowing paintings for imitation, see Fan Jingzhong 范景中, "Yige wenren huajia de richang shenghuo: Wu Hufan 1933 nian yuan yue de riji 一個文人畫家的日常生活——吳湖帆 1933 年元月的日記 (*The Daily Life of a Literati Painter: Wu Hufan's Diary for January 1933*)," *Xin mei shu*, no. 1 (2008): 4–14.

citation is joined to antiquarian completion, while both contributions are held within the shared identity of the studio and made legible through distinct authorial registers.

The force of this repeated procedure depends on the female predecessor it invokes. Jiang Jixi offered Pan Jingshu a second, related form of artistic legitimacy. While Chen Shu had offered Pan a model of morally sanctioned artistic accomplishment, Jiang Jixi extended that framework in a related direction, toward family learning, elite kinship, and the cultivated household as conditions of female painterly authority. Wu Hufan's colophon locates this status with precision by identifying her as the younger sister of the "Grand Secretary Nansha (*Nansha xiangguo* 南沙相國)," that is, Jiang Tingxi 蔣廷錫 (1669–1732), the renowned flower painter who served as Grand Secretary under the Yongzheng emperor 雍正帝 (r. 1722–1735).

This kinship framing should be understood as more than a biographical marker. It identifies one of the historical channels through which elite women's painting became legible in late imperial China. Jiang Jixi was situated within a family world dense with official status, collecting practice, literary cultivation, and flower painting: she was the daughter of Jiang Yi 蔣伊 (1631–1687), a high-ranking official and collector, and the sister of Jiang Tingxi, whose flower painting enjoyed exceptional prestige in early Qing court and literati circles. Within such a household, women's painting could be understood as an extension of family learning and domestic cultivation. Artistic practice gained authority through proximity to inherited models, household collections, kinship instruction, and the intergenerational transmission of pictorial style. Jiang's flower painting therefore exemplified a mode of female accomplishment made

recognizable through the very structures that organized a substantial portion of women's artistic production in the late imperial period.³¹

Pan's choice of Jiang therefore carries a precise analytical force. Jiang's example joined two issues central to Pan's own position: access to a recognized female artistic lineage and the conversion of family resources into artistic authority. As a painter, Pan needed more than a general old-master model; she needed a predecessor through whom female flower painting had already become historically intelligible. As a collector and participant in a shared studio, she also needed a way to make inherited access, household study, and connoisseurial circulation relevant to her own artistic identity. Jiang's case allowed these two concerns to meet. Her example presented family as a site of artistic formation, where objects, models, instruction, and lineage could become conditions of cultural production. In citing Jiang, Pan therefore aligned her own floral practice with a precedent through which female authorship could be grounded in cultivated inheritance.

Taken together with the citation examined in *Tianzhong xiaojing*, *Suichao tu* reveals a selective and cumulative strategy. Pan chose women painters whose authority had already been stabilized through distinct yet compatible structures of legitimacy: moral propriety on the one hand, family transmission on the other. To position herself as the inheritor of both Chen Shu and Jiang Jixi was to claim a joint authority, one that made her floral authorship legible through more than individual skill. Each act of copying transformed an encountered or collected work into a model for Pan's own practice; each collaboration with Wu placed that model inside the male-coded visual language of *bogu qingong*, where flowers, vessel, inscription, seal, and studio

³¹ Ellen Johnston Laing, "Wives, Daughters, and Lovers: Three Ming Dynasty Women Painters," in *Views from Jade Terrace: Chinese Women Artists, 1300-1912* (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1988); Blanchard, "Virtue and Women's Authorship in Chinese Art History"; and Weidner, "Women in the History of Chinese Painting."

identity worked together. The second citation therefore gives the procedure historical density. Repetition becomes the means through which Pan's painterly position is constructed as a recognizable female genealogy, varied across different precedents and stabilized within the collaborative antiquarian image.

The genealogy Pan built through painted citation also took shape in the collection that surrounded her practice. The women she copied or invoked did not remain distant names from painting history; within *Meiying shuwu*, women's paintings were gathered, classified, appraised, and preserved as a body of material precedents. In volume ten of the *Meiying shuwu shuhua ji* 梅景書屋書畫記 (Records of Painting and Calligraphy from the Plum Scenery Studio), a dedicated section is allocated to paintings by *nüshi* 女史 (women painters), suggesting that this area of collecting had become sufficiently systematic to receive categorical recognition within the couple's formal catalogue of holdings (Figs. 8a–b).³² This classification gives archival form to the female painterly genealogy that Pan's collaborative paintings construct pictorially.

The entries that follow show how this category functioned as an active connoisseurial field. They identify women painters through lineage, marital affiliation, literary reputation, pictorial specialty, rarity, provenance, and stylistic quality, thereby placing individual works within a comparative history of women's painting. The historical breadth of the section is registered through names such as Guan Daosheng 管道昇 (1262–1319), Zhao Wenchu 趙文俶 (1595–1634), Li Yin 李因 (1610–1685), Ma Shouzhen 馬守真 (1548–1604), and Chen Shu, whose works could be examined through established criteria of authenticity, historical rank, brushwork, literary cultivation, and transmission. The catalogue thus gathers several modes of

³² Wu, *Wu Hufan wen gao*, 557–58.

female artistic authority, extending from the Yuan model of conjugal artistic visibility to Ming and Qing traditions of flower painting, poetry, and literati household culture.³³

Several entries also make Pan's own collecting activity visible within the catalogue itself. The entry for a collaborative painting by Cai Han 蔡含 (1647–1686) and Jin Yue 金玥 (active late seventeenth century), for instance, describes the two women as poet-painters whose surviving works had become extremely rare, then states that “in recent years Jingshu searched for and gathered authentic works by women painters of successive periods, numbering only in the dozens” (近歲靜淑搜集歷代女史畫真迹，僅數十品).³⁴ A later entry on Luo Qilan's 駱綺蘭 (b. 1755) orchid scroll gives this collecting practice a more intimate register. After praising the work's elegant brushwork, the catalogue notes that it was acquired in Shanghai in the summer of *bingzi* and that “Jingshu cherished it as a prized jade *bi*” (靜淑愛若拱璧云).³⁵ Read together, these two entries reveal Pan's engagement with women's painting at two levels: as a sustained effort to gather authentic works by women painters across historical periods, and as a practice of close appraisal in which individual objects became sites of attachment, study, and preservation.

The catalogue therefore gives textual form to a female painterly genealogy grounded in material possession, connoisseurial comparison, and repeated acts of valuation. Its entries gather women painters into a field where their works could be named, ranked, authenticated, and studied in relation to one another. This structure is crucial for understanding Pan's collaborative paintings. The female predecessors she invoked on the painted surface belonged to a broader

³³ Wu, *Wu Hufan wen gao*, 558–73.

³⁴ Wu, *Wu Hufan wen gao*, 565.

³⁵ Wu, *Wu Hufan wen gao*, 567.

body of collected objects through which her artistic study could be sustained and historically positioned. Pan's genealogy-building thus operated simultaneously in painting and in collecting: pictorial citation made earlier women painters visible as models, while the catalogue preserved them as material precedents within the Pan–Wu collection.

The significance of the *nüshi* section therefore lies in the way it allows the collaborative paintings and the collection catalogue to illuminate one another. In *Tianzhong xiaojing* and *Suichao tu*, Pan's relation to earlier women painters takes pictorial form through copying, modification, and inscriptional reference; in the *Meiying shuwu shuhua ji*, the same relation appears through acquisition, appraisal, and catalogue description. The studio emerges from this evidence as a shared environment where painting, collecting, connoisseurship, and conjugal collaboration intersected. The evidence supports a measured claim: Pan's artistic study and the accumulation of women's paintings within Meiying shuwu belonged to the same cultural world. The women she invoked as painterly models were also preserved as collectible precedents, making women's painting available to her as a usable history through which her own floral authorship could be positioned, studied, and transmitted.

One object in this collected field makes the link between Pan's painting practice and her possession of women's paintings especially explicit: a plum scroll by Zhao Wenchu, a Ming woman painter celebrated for flower painting. Now catalogued as *Meihua tu zhou* 梅花圖軸 (Plum Blossom Hanging Scroll) and known within the Pan–Wu collection as *Shujing hengxie tu* 疏景橫斜圖 (Sparse Shadows and Slanting Branches), the scroll bears Wu's inscription dated to the Lantern Festival of *dingchou* (Fig. 9a).³⁶ On this Zhao scroll, the inscription reads: “Since

³⁶ Wu, *Wu Hufan wen gao*, 564.

Jingshu began studying painting in recent years, the outstanding works by women painters in her possession have become exceptionally numerous; this is the foremost among them” (靜淑近歲習畫後所貯女史傑構殊多此其冠乎) (Fig. 9b). The sentence gives direct textual evidence for the mechanism that the collaborative paintings have so far revealed through image, inscription, and repetition. It links Pan’s recent study of painting to the growing concentration of works by earlier women artists in her possession. The phrase “in her possession” (所貯) assigns this body of works to Pan, while “outstanding works by women painters” (女史傑構) defines them as a valued category of artistic achievement. These paintings appear as distinguished works gathered under the rubric of women’s painting, rather than as scattered objects within the larger household collection.

The force of the statement lies in this convergence of study, possession, and evaluation. Pan’s painting practice and her women-painters collection emerge as historically linked developments: as she studied painting, works by earlier women painters gathered around her as objects of reference, comparison, copying, and appraisal. Zhao Wenchu’s presence gives this structure greater historical depth. As one of the major figures of Ming women’s flower painting, Zhao placed Pan’s collection in relation to a longer female painterly tradition, while the scroll’s designation as the foremost among Pan’s holdings marked it as a privileged object within that lineage. The Zhao colophon thus clarifies the material basis of Pan’s artistic self-positioning. Her citations of Chen Shu and Jiang Jixi were grounded in a studio environment where women’s painting had become materially available, categorically legible, and ready for reactivation through her own brush.

This evidence changes the meaning of repetition in Pan’s practice. Across *Tianzhong xiaojing* and *Suichao tu*, the recurrence of a woman painter’s model, Pan’s mediated imitation,

Wu's antiquarian supplement, and the shared studio frame formed a repeatable procedure through which her floral authorship acquired historical depth. Chen Shu and Jiang Jixi offered complementary models of female legitimacy, one associated with morally consolidated recognition and the other with family learning and kinship transmission; Zhao Wenchu extended that field into the longer history of Ming women's flower painting. Together, these figures formed a selective lineage through which Pan's authorship could be positioned, studied, and preserved. By the close of *Suichao tu*, the argument has therefore moved beyond pictorial citation alone. Repetition has become a method of genealogy-building, and collecting has become the material condition that made that genealogy durable.

Qihou hu bu yulan tu 齊侯壺補玉蘭圖 (*Painting of the Hu Vessel of the Marquis of Qi Supplemented with Magnolia*): *The Composite Antiquarian Image*

Qihou hu bu yulan tu, painted in the third month of *dingchou* (1937), brings the collaborative procedure traced through the two earlier works into a denser antiquarian field (see Fig. 3a). Whereas *Tianzhong xiaojing* and *Suichao tu* organize Pan's floral painting around Wu's added archaistic vessel, this scroll transforms the flower-and-vessel pairing into three vertically coordinated registers, each presenting a distinct mode of antiquarian evidence. The upper field contains the large title inscription naming the vessel as *Qihou hu* 齊侯壺 (Hu Vessel of the Marquis of Qi), together with Wu's long colophon; the middle register presents the painted bronze with magnolia branches rising from its mouth, accompanied by the brief inscription that records the division of labor; the lower register is filled by a broad rubbing of the bronze inscription. Together, these elements transform the hanging scroll into a composite antiquarian

image organized around the bronze as an object of naming, depiction, commentary, and epigraphic trace.

This organization matters because it brings the formal logic of nineteenth-century composite rubbing into the medium of a painted hanging scroll. In composite rubbings, the ancient vessel was made legible through the coordinated presentation of form, inscription, and trace. Its shape was visually reconstructed, its inscribed text was reproduced, and the resulting surface allowed pictorial presence and epigraphic evidence to substantiate one another.³⁷ *Qihou hu bu yulan tu* extends this evidentiary logic by distributing the vessel across several coordinated modes: as a named object, a painted form, a subject of antiquarian interpretation, and an inscribed surface preserved through rubbing. Its authority therefore depends on the relation among these modes rather than on any single one alone. The scroll moves from antiquarian evocation to antiquarian demonstration, presenting the bronze as something to be seen, read, and verified across a single surface.³⁸

The bronze at the center of the scroll is anchored in a specific antiquarian record. It corresponds in type to the *Zhou Qihou lei* 周齊侯壘 (Zhou-dynasty *lei* Vessel of the Marquis of Qi) illustrated and transcribed in *Lianglei xuan yiqi tushi* 兩壘軒彝器圖釋 (Illustrated Catalogue of Bronzes from the Lianglei xuan Collection), the bronze catalogue compiled by Wu Yun 吳雲 (1811–1883) and printed in 1873 (Fig. 10).³⁹ Wu’s upper inscription further specifies this reference by identifying the vessel as one formerly preserved in Ruan Yuan’s 阮元 (1764–1849)

³⁷ Bai, “Composite Rubbings in Nineteenth-Century China.”

³⁸ Thomas Kelly, *The Inscription of Things: Writing and Materiality in Early Modern China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2023).

³⁹ Wu Yun 吳雲, *Lianglei xuan yi qi tu shi* 兩壘軒彝器圖釋 (*Illustrated Catalogue of Bronzes from the Lianglei xuan Collection*), *juan* 4.

Jigu zhai 積古齋 and later in Wu Yun's Lianglei xuan 兩壺軒 (Studio of Two *lei* Vessels) (Fig. 3b). His note also registers a crucial taxonomic correction: although the vessel had been transmitted under the old name *Qihou lei* 齊侯壺 (Lei Vessel of the Marquis of Qi), its form belongs to the category of *hu* 壺. The two narrow inscriptions to the left carry this connection further: one copies the vessel's measurements, weight, and formal description from *Lianglei xuan yiqi tushi*, while the other transcribes the bronze inscription in nineteen lines according to the same catalogue. Through this layered citation of catalogue image, provenance, measurement, description, and inscribed text, the painted bronze enters the scroll as a catalogued and readable antiquarian object.

The corresponding surviving vessel is now generally identified as *Huanzi Mengjiang hu* 洹子孟姜壺.⁴⁰ Yet the painting does not function as a simple copy of the catalogue image or of the bronze itself. Its proportions, the articulation of the handles, and the placement of decorative bands diverge in small but visible ways from both the *Lianglei xuan* illustration and the extant bronze. These differences preserve identification while adapting the vessel to the compositional demands of a hanging scroll. The scroll thus draws on the authority of the antiquarian record and redirects that authority into a new pictorial environment, where the bronze serves at once as scholarly evidence, visual anchor, and support for the floral addition.

⁴⁰ The *Qihou hu* belongs to a pair of closely related bronze *hu* vessels, first collected separately by Ruan Yuan and Cao Zaikui 曹載奎 (1782–1852), and later reunited in the collection of Wu Yun. Wu Yun recorded the pair separately in *juan* 4 and *juan* 5 of his *Lianglei xuan yiqi tushi*. Modern scholarship and museum cataloguing generally identify the pair as *Huanzi Mengjiang hu* 洹子孟姜壺, now divided between the collection of the Shanghai Museum and the National Museum of China. See Wu, *Lianglei xuan yi qi tu shi*, *juan* 4–5; and Jia Hongdi 賈紅荻, “Lianglei xuan cang qihou liang hu ji tuopian suo tan 兩壺軒藏齊侯兩壺及拓片瑣談 (The Pair of the Bronze Flasks of the Marquis of the Qi State Collected by Wu Yun and Ink Rubbings of the Engraved Inscriptions on Them),” *Gugong xuekan*, no. 2 (2014): 285–90.

Only after the vessel has been named, corrected, measured, transcribed, and visually anchored does the scroll identify Pan's contribution: the magnolia rising from its mouth. The brief painting inscription placed to the right of the vessel specifies how that register is authored. It reads: "In the third month of *dingchou*, Pan Jingshu painted the magnolia; Wu Hufan supplemented the purple magnolia" (丁丑三月潘靜淑作玉蘭吳湖帆補紫玉蘭) (Fig. 3c). The sentence resumes the paired verbs that structure the two earlier collaborations. Pan's action is identified through *zuo* 作 (to make or to paint), while Wu's intervention is designated through *bu* (to add). In this work, however, the same verbal pairing operates on a finer scale. In *Tianzhong xiaojing* and *Suichao tu*, *bu* marked Wu's addition of the vessel, the element that relocated Pan's floral painting into the *bogu qinggong* structure. In *Qihou hu bu yulan tu*, the supplement occurs within the floral register itself: Wu adds purple magnolia to Pan's magnolia. The wording therefore makes Pan the maker of the primary floral field and casts Wu's contribution as a subsequent addition within the pictorial component she had initiated.

With this division of authorship established, the floral register can be read with greater precision. Magnolia branches emerge from the mouth of the bronze, painted in the *mogu* 沒骨 (boneless) manner with translucent color washes and restrained tonal modulation. The blossoms open with measured delicacy against the visual weight of the vessel and the ink-dark rubbing below. Pale pink and lavender tones articulate the buds and partially opened flowers at the left, while fuller white blossoms unfold toward the right, their petals defined through soft gradation rather than emphatic outline. Small green leaves punctuate the branches, and the upward sweep of the stems gives rhythm and movement to the composition. The floral register thus introduces a pictorial language markedly different from the evidentiary density of the surrounding apparatus. Its softness, chromatic delicacy, and seasonal vitality do more than embellish the bronze; they

activate the vessel as a pictorial ground. Rising from the catalogued object, the magnolia transforms the bronze from an antiquarian form to be identified and verified into the support for a visible act of floral painting.

This internal division of the floral register is crucial to the scroll's larger logic. The surrounding apparatus, including the title, Wu's colophon, the catalogued bronze, transcribed measurements, and inscriptional rubbing, belongs to a field of scholarly authority historically associated with male literati expertise. Within that field, the brief painting inscription that records the division of labor prevents the floral element from being absorbed into the scroll as anonymous ornament. Pan's authorship is therefore secured through the coordination of image and inscription: the magnolia repositions the bronze as a pictorial support, while the brief painting inscription identifies that transformation as her work. Through this operation, a bronze already elaborated through catalogue citation, provenance, measurement, and rubbing enters the register of *qingong*, becoming available as an object of studio display and connoisseurial viewing. The scroll thus preserves two modes of authority at once. The bronze remains an object of antiquarian study, while the floral register becomes the site through which Pan's painterly agency is named, localized, and made visible within that study.

Pan's seal brings this structure to a close. The impression *Jingshu huaji* 靜淑畫記 (Jingshu's painting mark) appears beside the painting inscription, joining name, image, and record at the point where the magnolia rises from the bronze (Fig. 3d). The joint seal Wu Hufan *Pan Jingshu hezuo yin* 吳湖帆潘靜淑合作印 then places this marked act of painting within the collaborative surface of Meiyong shuwu (see Fig. 3c). In a scroll dense with Wu's title, colophon, transcription, and rubbing, Pan's seal gives the branch its own documentary force. The Qihou hu remains an object named through provenance, measurement, inscription, and rubbed trace, yet

Pan makes it bear a living floral image. Her magnolia rises from the very form that antiquarian writing classifies and verifies, carrying her hand across the scroll's central field. In this final collaboration, Pan's authorship is fixed through the magnolia itself: a painted addition that turns the recorded bronze into a collaborative *qinggong* image and gives her presence a place inside the learned surface of Meiyong shuwu.

Across the three paintings, Pan Jingshu's flowers move through a cumulative sequence: from citation after an earlier woman painter, through repeated genealogy-building, to the placement of her magnolia within a fully articulated antiquarian image. In *Tianzhong xiaojing*, her floral painting becomes legible through the named precedent of Chen Shu, whose established reputation offered a sanctioned lineage for female artistic practice. In *Suichao tu*, that procedure is repeated and expanded through Jiang Jixi, so that female genealogy appears as a practice sustained by copying, collecting, inscription, and studio circulation. In *Qihou hu bu yulan tu*, Pan's magnolia enters the most densely structured antiquarian field of the group, one organized by bronze form, catalogue reference, inscriptional correction, rubbing, title, colophon, and seal. The sequence therefore carries Pan's authorship from floral citation into a progressively more learned material apparatus. Her visibility emerges through collaboration, yet it remains anchored in the painted flowers she supplied, the female precedents she invoked, and the inscriptions and seals that fixed her presence onto objects made for preservation and transmission. By the end of this group, Pan's floral authorship participates directly in the forms through which antiquarian authority is pictured, marked, and transmitted.

Antiquarian Labor in Books and Albums

By the time Pan Jingshu painted the magnolia in *Qihou hu bu yulan tu*, she had already developed a practice of bringing flowers, citation, and inscription into the antiquarian field of *bogu qingong*. That practice drew force from a wider engagement with inherited materials. Pan handled family objects, marked them with her name and seals, recorded their transmission, and helped convert them into durable antiquarian records. During this same period, she wrote *Zixu er* 自敘二 (Self-Narrative Two; hereafter *Zixu*), marked *Meihua xishen pu* with her inscription and seal, recorded inherited objects in *Jinyu qixiang ce* 金玉其相冊 (Album of Forms Like Gold and Jade), and participated in the 1937 revised edition of *Kezhai jigu lu* 憲齋集古錄 (Kezhai Records of Collected Antiquities). Across these materials, Pan acted as narrator, custodian, inscriber, and transmitter of inherited things. Her floral authorship in the collaborative paintings grew from this broader practice of naming, marking, preserving, and giving material inheritance new textual and pictorial form.

Zixu 自敘 (Self-Narrative): Self-Positioning

The clearest surviving first-person articulation of this position is her essay *Zixu er*, composed in 1936 and published posthumously in 1944 in no. 45 of the Shanghai journal *Gu jin banyue kan* 古今半月刊 (Past and Present Half-Monthly) (Fig. 12).⁴¹ Read here as a text of self-positioning rather than as a simple autobiographical account, *Zixu* gives conceptual language to the same structure that the collaborative paintings stage materially. It shows how Pan understood her relation to painting, calligraphy, connoisseurship, marriage, and inherited cultural authority,

⁴¹ Pan Jingshu 潘靜淑, “*Zixu er* 自敘二 (Self-Narrative Two),” *Gu jin banyue kan* 古今半月刊 (Past and Present Half-Monthly) 45 (1944): 12.

while also clarifying how her presence within the Pan–Wu antiquarian world could be narrated in her own voice.

This writing begins by grounding her cultural identity in her natal family: “My family, from the time of the Shangshu gong, has been conversant with *jinshi*, excelled in calligraphy and painting, and been renowned throughout the realm” (吾家自尚書公通金石，擅書畫，名震海宇). The “Shangshu gong” refers to Pan Zuyin. Pan’s opening sentence therefore presents her relation to metal-and-stone studies, calligraphy, and painting as an inherited cultural position. She introduces Wu only after establishing this natal ground: “And my husband Hufan, too, has gained renown in his time by carrying forward his ancestral scholarly legacy” (而外子湖帆，又以能傳祖研鳴於時). The parallel construction is deliberate. Pan’s lineage and Wu’s lineage are placed side by side: the Pan family’s *jinshi* and collecting tradition alongside the Wu family’s inheritance from Wu Dacheng. This opening part of *Zixu* thus rewrites the two-lineage narrative in Pan’s own voice: before she appears as Wu Hufan’s wife, she first presents herself as an inheritor of Pan-family *jinshi* culture.

The essay then shifts from genealogy to daily practice. Pan recounts Wu’s sustained devotion to studying calligraphy, copying paintings, and building a collection, presenting herself as an intimate witness to that process. She then describes her own relation to painting in terms that are at once modest and revealing:

I had originally known nothing of painting; but because in recent years everything that came to hand was all scrolls and fascicles, I too gradually developed this particular liking. Night after night, as the hours grew late, we would sit facing each other and study [the works] together. Hearing his every utterance, there was nothing that was not the most profound truth and the most consummate principle. 素不知畫，因年來觸手皆卷帙，亦漸癖好。每夜闌更深，輒相對研索，聞其咳吐，無非至情至理。

The rhetorical force of this passage lies in the way Pan frames her connoisseurial formation as arising from sustained material contact and shared study rather than from formal instruction or independent ambition. The phrase “originally known nothing of painting” conforms to a familiar rhetorical posture of female humility, but the passage immediately turns humility into a record of formation. Her knowledge emerges through constant contact with objects and, crucially, through the nightly practice of examining them together with Wu Hufan. The scene invokes the canonical model of Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng, yet Pan’s phrasing anchors that ideal in the concrete routines of material study: handling scrolls, reading fascicles, and joining in shared acts of connoisseurial examination. In this formulation, marriage becomes more than a domestic setting; it provides the structure through which Pan’s artistic and antiquarian knowledge is cultivated, practiced, and made legible.

From this scene of shared study Pan advances to a more philosophical claim:

Only then did I come to understand that calligraphy and painting are the embodiment of culture, and that masterworks are the distilled essence of the worthy. If one can gather and possess them, it is as though one were personally warmed by the presence of the ancients, the most joyful and most fortunate thing in a human life.

方知書畫爲文化之表徵，名迹乃賢者之精英。若能聚而有之，彷彿親炙古人間，生至樂至幸之事。

The scope of this formulation deserves attention. Pan is not merely expressing gratitude for access to beautiful objects. She is articulating a philosophical understanding of painting and calligraphy as “the embodiment of culture,” and of masterworks as “the distilled essence of the worthy.” To gather and possess such works, in her account, is to enter a quasi-personal relation with the ancients, an experience she describes as one of supreme joy and fortune.

Connoisseurship here becomes more than appreciation or ownership. It is a mode of historical proximity, in which the preserved object mediates contact with earlier cultural lives. Pan’s

language therefore places her in the position of a reflective interpreter of collection as cultural custodianship, rather than simply as a custodian of inherited things or an appreciative companion to Wu Hufan.

Pan brings this self-positioning to its most concise expression near the end of *Zixu*: “No one understands painting and calligraphy as well as Hufan; no one understands Hufan as well as I” (知書畫者莫如湖帆，知湖帆者莫如余). The first clause affirms Wu Hufan’s authority in the domain of painting and calligraphy; the second clause claims for Pan a different, yet closely related, form of authority. She presents herself as the one who understands the connoisseur himself, and thus as the person best positioned to interpret the habits of looking, judging, collecting, and valuing through which that authority took shape. This authority arises from conjugal proximity, but *Zixu* has already made clear that proximity alone cannot account for it. Pan’s interpretive position also depends on the natal inheritance, cultivated upbringing, and material familiarity with books and objects that the essay has carefully established.

Pan’s self-positioning is therefore relational, but it is not passive. She does not claim mastery by separating herself from the domestic and marital structures that shaped her cultural life. Instead, she turns those structures into the ground of her legitimacy. In this sense, *Zixu* functions as more than biographical context: it gives Pan’s own conceptual form to the position that the collaborative paintings stage through inscription, collaboration, and antiquarian framing. Her visibility was fashioned through marriage, family inheritance, collection, and shared antiquarian practice, rather than apart from them.

Meihua xishen pu 梅花喜神譜 (*Guide to Capturing the Spirit of Plum Blossoms*): *Inheritance and Inscription*

What *Zixu* articulates in language finds material support in the objects Pan marked, preserved, and brought into the shared world of Meiyong shuwu. The first of these is the Song-printed plum manual *Meihua xishen pu*, first engraved in 1238 and preserved in the 1261 Jinhua shuanggui tang 金華雙桂堂 recut (Fig. 13).⁴² Comprising one hundred titled images of plum blossoms, each paired with a five-character poem, the book was designed as a structured image-text object for viewing, comparison, and pictorial cultivation.⁴³ Its route into the Pan–Wu household ran through Pan’s natal line. The two fascicles had previously belonged to her uncle Pan Zuyin and were given to her by her father on the Lantern Festival of *xinyou* 辛酉 (1921), which fell on her thirtieth birthday.⁴⁴ Pan’s own colophon makes that relation explicit:

My late paternal uncle, Lord Wenqin, had in his collection two fascicles of the Song-printed *Meihua pu*. On the Lantern Festival of the *xinyou* year, as I reached my thirtieth birthday, my father bestowed them upon me, and I treasured them. Respectfully recorded by the lady Jingshu, Pan Shuchun.
先伯父文勤公藏宋刻梅花譜二冊辛酉正月燈節當予三十初度父親舉以錫予寶之 靜淑女史潘樹春敬記

The inscription does more than record provenance. Its opening phrase, “formerly in the collection of my late paternal uncle, Lord Wenqin” (先伯父文勤公藏), places the book within an established line of Pan family custody, while “my father bestowed them upon me” (父親舉以錫予) fixes its transfer as a paternal act of inheritance rather than an impersonal acquisition. By signing the note with the gendered title *nüshi*, Pan positions herself as the named female recipient, inscriber, and custodian of the object. Her closing phrase, “I treasured them” (寶之),

⁴² Hua, “Meihua xishen pu banben kao.”

⁴³ Mengge Cao, “Schematizing Plum Blossoms: Understanding Printed Images in Thirteenth-Century China” (master’s thesis, McGill University, 2016), 9; and Te-Hsin Chen 陳德馨, “Meihua xishen pu: Song Boren de ziwo tuijian shu 《梅花喜神譜》——宋伯仁的自我推薦書 (Mei-Hua Hsi-Shen P’u: A Self-Recommendation Painting Manual of Sung Po-Ren),” *Taida Journal of Art History*, no. 5 (1998): 126–30.

⁴⁴ Chen and Wang, *Wu Hufan nian pu*, 27.

gives affective force to the transfer, turning inheritance into personal valuation. The colophon thus marks not only the book's transmission, but also Pan's role in making that inherited history newly legible.

Pan's claim to the book is further materialized by the seal impressed on the album's surface, *Pan Jingshu pingsheng xin'ai zhi wu* (Figs. 14a–b). The phrase *pingsheng xin'ai* extends the affective language of *bao zhi* from a response at the moment of receipt into an enduring mark of possession. It recasts the Song imprint as more than an object of Pan-family inheritance or a bibliophilic rarity, defining it instead as something claimed through sustained personal attachment. Because the seal was impressed directly onto a rare book made for viewing, handling, preservation, and transmission, Pan's valuation did not remain private. It became a visible and durable component of the album's provenance record.

As noted earlier, Wu Hufan named the couple's studio Meiyang shuwu after this Song imprint. The name continued to accompany the works they made together, appearing in the seals, colophons, and textual records surrounding the three collaborative paintings. Each appearance carried the memory of a book that had entered the household through Pan's natal family and bore her own inscription and seal. Through the repeated presence of Meiyang shuwu, Pan's inheritance remained visible within the records that preserved the couple's collaborative antiquarian images. The book thus gave material form to a claim that *Zixu* would later state in words: Pan's place in the studio began from inheritance, custody, and the ability to make that inheritance visible.

Jinyu qixiang ce 金玉其相冊 (*Album of Forms Like Gold and Jade*): Recording Two Family Lineages

The next object, *Jinyu qixiang ce*, shifts the discussion from a single inherited book to an album that stages the meeting of two-family lineages. Assembled in 1935 for the twentieth anniversary of the Pan and Wu marriage, the album pairs rubbing leaves of objects from each side of the household.⁴⁵ Its structure is commemorative, but its method is antiquarian. Family objects are transformed into rubbings, inscriptions, titles, and seals. Through this process, marital memory becomes a record of material transmission.

On one leaf, Pan Jingshu inscribes rubbings of the *Yeye liuchan jinbei* 葉葉榴蟬金杯 (Gold Cup with Layered Pomegranate Leaves and Cicadas), a pair of pomegranate-shaped gold cups set with rubies and diamond-eyed cicadas and transmitted through four generations of her family. The leaf presents rubbings of the cups from two angles, together with a rubbing of the inscription on the base, translating the object into an antiquarian record in which form, ornament, and textual trace corroborate one another. Pan's inscription traces the cups' transmission with specificity, from her great-grandmother Madame Wang (汪太夫人), through her elder paternal uncle, grandfather, elder paternal uncle, and father, before they entered her dowry in the year of *yimao* 乙卯 (1915) (Fig. 15).⁴⁶ She signs the note "great-granddaughter Pan Jingshu, respectfully recorded" (曾孫女潘靜淑謹識), while the title at the far right identifies the cups as "a treasured heirloom of the Pan family" (潘氏家傳之寶), accompanied by her seal *Wu Pan Jingshu*. Together, the inscription, title, and seal make the cups' Pan-family transmission unmistakably legible. By recording this lineage herself, Pan incorporates the object's natal history into the album's commemorative structure, giving the inherited treasure new cultural meaning within the

⁴⁵ Chen and Wang, *Wu Hufan nianpu*, 188–92.

⁴⁶ Pan Jingshu's inscription reads: "金杯二器鑄成大小二榴形以紅寶石鑲作榴子棲一蟬鑽石為眼天藍寶為身明光璀璨耀射十步為先曾祖母汪太夫人奩中盛品其一襲藏伯祖父後裔此杯為先祖所藏遞傳於伯父及先父至乙卯余歸吳氏為奩品云葉葉榴蟬四字先文恭公所題也 乙亥春曾孫女潘靜淑謹識。"

Pan–Wu marital context. On the facing leaf Wu Hufan inscribes a jade cup associated with Wu Dacheng, performing a parallel act of genealogical commemoration on the Wu side (Fig. 16).

The album's structure presents marriage as the convergence of two material lineages, each endowed with its own authority, memory, and collectible past. Its symmetry is pronounced. Pan's leaf and Wu's leaf are arranged as counterparts; each spouse records, through rubbing and inscription, an inherited object from a distinct family line; and the album's title *Jinyu qixiang ce* names this paired genealogy through a classical phrase that evokes precious material substance while also referring directly to the gold and jade objects represented within the album. In this form, the album transforms objects of familial custody into a connoisseurial declaration addressed to an elite viewing public. What had once belonged to separate family histories is recast as visible evidence of joined cultural inheritance. Within this apparatus, Pan appears not simply as Wu Hufan's wife, but as the named custodian and inscriber of a Pan-family object, and her inscription converts natal transmission into a legible component of the album's commemorative and antiquarian structure. In 1935, this album gave material form to the dual lineage that *Zixu* would articulate verbally one year later.

Kezhai jigu lu 憲齋集古錄 (*Kezhai Records of Collected Antiquities*): Transcription and Print

After marking *Meihua xishen pu* with her inscription and seal and recording the Pan-family gold cups in *Jinyu qixiang ce*, Pan Jingshu carried the same habits of naming, preserving, and transmitting inherited materials into books and catalogues. She joined Wu Hufan in collating and printing *Danren ziyi cao* 澹人自怡草 (Drafts of Self-Contentment by Danren), the poetry collection of Wu Dagen 吳大根 (1833–1899), Wu Dacheng's elder brother and Wu Hufan's biological grandfather; *Kezhai shicun* 憲齋詩存 (Surviving Poems from Kezhai), a collection of

poems by Wu Dacheng; and *Wushi shuhua ji* 吳氏書畫集 (Collection of Wu-Family Calligraphy and Painting), a compilation of calligraphy and painting from the Wu lineage. She also helped organize the records of Meiyong shuwu's holdings and helped write the preface to *Meiyong shuwu shuhua ji*.⁴⁷ Her work therefore ranged from inherited books and family objects to poetic collections, calligraphy-and-painting compilations, and collection catalogues.

Among these projects, the 1937 revised edition of Wu Dacheng's *Kezhai jigū lu* leaves the clearest trace of Pan's hand. The work belonged to the core of Wu Dacheng's *jinshi* scholarship, gathering ancient objects, inscriptions, and material evidence into a record of antiquarian knowledge. In the spring of 1937, Pan and Wu jointly undertook a substantial revision and reissue of this work. The co-signed colophon to the revised compilation makes this collaborative labor explicit. It records: "[the late father] ordered Hufan and Jingshu to divide the task of transcription and prepare the text for printing" (命湖帆靜淑分錄付印). It further records that they dismantled, reexamined, and recopied the manuscript, concluding with the joint signature, "Hufan and Jingshu, respectfully record this" (湖帆、靜淑謹志) (Fig. 17). Pan's seals, *Jingshu jing shu* 靜淑敬書 (Jingshu respectfully inscribed) and *Wu Pan Jingshu*, appear within the body of the compilation (Fig. 18). Her name and seals therefore entered a printed antiquarian record devoted to the preservation of ancient things.

The labor named in this colophon is concrete. Pan divided the manuscript, copied it, checked it, and helped prepare it for publication. She worked with Wu Dacheng's textual legacy at the level of transcription and transmission, where antiquarian authority depended on accurate copying, careful ordering, and the conversion of manuscript materials into printed form. Her

⁴⁷ Zheng, *Hai shang shou cang shi jia*, 164.

seals fixed that labor inside the book itself. In *Kezhai jigu lu*, Pan's participation appears through the same material procedures that structured the objects discussed above: she marked, copied, organized, and preserved inherited materials so that they could continue to circulate.

Pan's work in *Kezhai jigu lu* completed a chain of practices already visible in the materials discussed above. In *Zixu*, she described how scrolls and fascicles came constantly to hand, and how nightly study turned proximity to objects into cultivated knowledge. In *Meihua xishen pu*, she recorded the route by which a Song plum manual passed from Pan Zuyin through her father to herself, then sealed it as an object cherished across her lifetime. In *Jinyu qixiang ce*, she traced the Pan-family gold cups across four generations and gave their movement into her dowry a written, rubbed, and sealed form. In the Wu-family publications and *Meiying shuwu* catalogues, she continued the same work with manuscripts, poems, paintings, inscriptions, and collection records. Across these acts, Pan gave inherited materials names, routes, and textual bodies.

What remains visible is a repeated practice rather than a single role. Pan received objects, wrote their histories, impressed seals, copied texts, helped arrange holdings, and prepared books for circulation. Each act left a durable trace: a colophon on a rare Song imprint, a genealogical record in an anniversary album, a preface to a collection catalogue, seals inside a printed antiquarian compilation. Through this work, she made inherited things readable within *Meiying shuwu* and made her own hand part of their transmission. Her antiquarian labor rested in practical acts of custody: keeping materials together, giving them recordable form, and carrying them forward through books, albums, rubbings, seals, and printed texts.

Conclusion

Pan Jingshu's floral paintings entered Meiyong shuwu through surfaces that recorded her hand with unusual precision. In *Tianzhong xiaojing*, *Suichao tu*, and *Qihou hu bu yulan tu*, her flowers were named, signed, sealed, and placed within images structured by ancient vessels, rubbings, titles, and colophons. These works preserve more than marital collaboration. They show how Pan brought flower painting into a field of antiquarian display and made her authorship visible through the very materials that gave that field authority: precedent, inherited objects, seals, inscriptions, catalogues, and records.

Read together, the three paintings form a cumulative sequence. *Tianzhong xiaojing* establishes Pan's floral authorship through citation after Chen Shu, whose reputation offered a sanctioned precedent for women's painting within a morally and historically recognizable lineage. *Suichao tu* repeats and expands this procedure through Jiang Jixi, making female painterly genealogy a sustained practice rather than a single act of reference. *Qihou hu bu yulan tu* brings Pan's flowers into the densest antiquarian structure of the group. There, her magnolia rises from a bronze identified through title, catalogue reference, provenance, measurement, transcription, rubbing, colophon, and seal. The flower does not merely decorate the vessel. It turns the catalogued bronze into a *qinggong* image and fixes Pan's hand inside a visual field organized by antiquarian evidence.

The force of this sequence depends on the wider material world that surrounds it. Pan's floral painting grew from a studio environment shaped by books, rubbings, bronzes, inherited objects, women's painting, and collaborative records, and the textual labor examined above shows her working on that world directly rather than only within it. Whether she narrated her own position, marked an inherited Song imprint, recorded a dowry object across four generations, or prepared an antiquarian catalogue for reissue, she carried out one recognizable

operation: she turned inheritance into record, fixing her name to objects at the moment they were made legible for transmission. What the collaborative paintings stage through flowers, seals, and colophons, the books and albums confirm through inscription, provenance, and print. Taken together, the two bodies of evidence describe an authorship exercised less in the invention of new forms than in the custody and transmission of existing ones.

Her authorship therefore took shape through a series of concrete acts. Pan worked in Meiyong shuwu as a painter who chose her models, as an inheritor who brought Pan-family materials into the studio, and as an inscriber who fixed her name onto objects and records prepared for preservation. When she painted after Chen Shu, she aligned her brush with a woman painter whose reputation had already been secured through filial commemoration, moral exemplarity, and imperial collection. When *Meihua xishen pu* entered Meiyong shuwu through her inheritance, the studio's name came to rest on an object whose route of transmission passed through the Pan lineage. When she impressed *Jingshu jing shu* onto the revised *Kezhai jigu lu*, she entered the labor of *jinshi* practice at the level of transcription, preparation, and preservation. These acts belonged to the world of marriage, family collection, and studio collaboration, yet Pan turned that world into the ground of her own visibility, placing her hand and name where later viewers, collectors, and cataloguers would be obliged to reckon with them.

This conclusion also marks the point at which the argument turns from production to transmission. The structures that made Pan legible during her lifetime continued to shape her afterlife, though in altered form. After Pan's death in the summer of 1939, her works entered a new field of selection, reproduction, remounting, supplementation, publication, and commemoration. Within months, her sons compiled *Meiyong shuwu huaqi*, the first photolithographic gathering of paintings by Pan and Wu, selecting nine of her floral works from

a surviving body of more than one hundred and sixty.⁴⁸ *Zixu*, written in 1936, appeared only in 1944, when it was published in the journal *Gu jin*. Wu Hufan continued to remount and supplement the *Meihua xishen pu* well into the 1950s, incorporating leaves recovered from Pan's posthumous papers and reshaping the album's internal order.⁴⁹ The corpus through which the present analysis has been possible therefore survives as a mediated archive: produced by Pan's own acts of painting, inscription, collecting, and custodianship, yet transmitted through curatorial decisions made after her death.

Among these acts, the most interpretively consequential was Wu Hufan's public framing of Pan's literary afterlife. In the winter of 1939, Wu inaugurated a large-scale commemorative project centered on a single line from Pan's lyric to the tune *Qianqiu sui* 千秋歲 (*A Thousand Autumns*): "lǜbian chitang cao 綠遍池塘草 (Green spreads across the pond grasses)." He solicited paintings and inscriptions on this phrase from roughly one hundred and twenty figures across the literary, painterly, and antiquarian networks of Republican Shanghai, gathering their contributions in *Lǜbian chitang cao tuyong* 綠遍池塘草圖詠 (Painting and Verse on "Green Spreads Across the Pond Grasses").⁵⁰ The project transformed private bereavement into a public and networked act of remembrance. Pan's authorship was now preserved less through objects she had touched than through the responses of others: their poems, paintings, inscriptions, and social authority collectively reintroduced her into cultural memory. Wu's preface to the album reveals the terms of this memorial framing.⁵¹ He situated Pan's lyric talent within four generations of Pan-family poets, presenting her literary cultivation as the outcome of natal inheritance, domestic

⁴⁸ Dai, *Wu Hufan zhuan lue*, 37.

⁴⁹ Wu, *Wu Hufan wen gao*, 273; and Hua, "Meihua xishen pu banben kao," 67–68.

⁵⁰ Chen and Wang, *Wu Hufan nian pu*, 285–96.

⁵¹ Chen and Wang, *Wu Hufan nian pu*, 298–99.

learning, and conjugal companionship. He then elevated her five-character phrase by placing it beside Li Qingzhao's "*huanghua shou* 黃花瘦 (the yellow flowers grow thin)," thereby aligning Pan with the most canonical female lyric voice in Chinese literary memory. Wang Jian 王謐 (1888–1969), a Suzhou literatus closely connected to the Pan–Wu circle, extended the comparison further in his preface to the related posthumous lyric collection *Lücao ji* 綠草集 (Collected Writings of Green Grass).⁵² He described the Pan–Wu partnership as a rare union of lyric composition, calligraphy and painting, and antiquarian connoisseurship, and identified Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng as its closest historical precedent.

These prefaces should be read as acts of posthumous interpretation rather than transparent records of marital experience. They translated Pan's heterogeneous forms of lifetime activity, across painting, collecting, inscription, and epigraphic labor, into a more familiar literary type: the cultivated wife whose lyric talent, fidelity, and learned companionship made her worthy of remembrance.⁵³ This translation was powerful because it drew on a deeply canonized model of female cultural legitimacy. Yet it also narrowed the terms through which Pan could be remembered. The material and antiquarian operations examined in this thesis receded behind the more legible image of the refined consort and lyric writer. The same conjugal structure that had helped secure Pan's visibility during her lifetime thus continued, after her death, to govern the forms through which her authorship became transmissible.

⁵² Chen and Wang, *Wu Hufan nian pu*, 477.

⁵³ Ronald Egan, *The Burden of Female Talent: The Poet Li Qingzhao and Her History in China*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 90 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2013); and Shana J. Brown, "The Women of Liulichang: Female Collectors and Bibliophiles in the Late Qing," in *Material Women, 1750–1950: Consuming Desires and Collecting Practices*, ed. Maureen Daly Goggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 287–89.

This recognition clarifies what is at stake in the study. Pan's surviving record is unusually dense: named paintings, signed colophons, dated inscriptions, seals, photolithographic reproductions, posthumous publications, and edited compilations. This record should not be treated as a neutral archive awaiting recovery. These materials preserve traces of practices Pan performed in life: painting, inscription, selection, collecting, and custodianship. Yet they have reached the present through the very conjugal and curatorial structures that shaped their survival, including posthumous processes of selection, arrangement, reproduction, supplementation, and interpretation that Pan no longer controlled. Pan's case is significant because the surviving record allows us to see how the same structures that bound her visibility also generated the conditions through which her activity remains partially recoverable. The task of this thesis has been to analyze that point of contact between authorship and transmission. Only there can Pan's visibility be understood with historical precision: as something materially produced in life, and materially mediated in survival.

Situating Pan Jingshu's case within the wider field of Republican-era women's artistic production clarifies the scope of this thesis. Existing scholarship has often reconstructed women's artistic visibility in early twentieth-century China through modern public institutions and media, including art schools, exhibitions, women's art societies, illustrated journals, newspapers, and the urban art market.⁵⁴ Pan belonged to the same historical moment, yet her practice followed another route. Her artistic position took shape within an elite literati-connoisseurial environment, through flower painting, lyric writing, object inscription, collecting, and antiquarian labor carried out in the studio, the family collection, and the conjugal household.

⁵⁴ Julia F. Andrews, "Women Artists in Twentieth-Century China: A Prehistory of the Contemporary," *Positions: Asia Critique* 28, no. 1 (2020): 19–64; and Doris Sung, *Women of Chinese Modern Art: Gender and Reforming Traditions in National and Global Spheres, 1900s–1930s* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024).

These practices place her inside Republican modernity through a less visible formation of it, one in which inherited literati culture, family memory, antiquarian preservation, and new mechanisms of publication and reproduction were continually reassembled under unstable historical conditions. Pan's case thus suggests that the modernity of women's art in this period had multiple trajectories. Alongside the public paths of schools, societies, exhibitions, and print media, traditionalist literati culture remained a viable structure through which female artistic presence could be produced, authorized, and preserved.

For this reason, Pan's significance requires a carefully delimited claim. Visibility here refers not to public celebrity, but to the capacity to become legible within a specific cultural field through the forms of evidence that the field recognizes as authoritative. In Pan's case, those forms included named authorship, seals, colophons, catalogues, inherited objects, remounted albums, photolithographic reproductions, and posthumous compilations. Her poems, inscriptions, signatures, seals, and painted flowers placed her physically and textually within objects that could be viewed, collected, circulated, reproduced, and reinterpreted. Her participation in remounting, transcription, collaborative inscription, and antiquarian textual work further attached her authorship to material formats designed for transmission. The value of this archive therefore lies neither in its typicality nor in its uniqueness, but in the clarity with which it exposes a process: how a woman's authorship could be made recordable within Republican literati culture. Many women whose artistic practices unfolded inside elite households left far thinner traces. Pan's surviving materials allow us to ask how such traces were produced, why some endured, and how the mechanisms of preservation shaped the historical image of female authorship itself.

The stakes of this approach extend beyond Pan herself. For the study of women's art in late imperial and Republican China, her case offers an alternative to narratives organized

primarily around resistance, suppression, or recovery. It asks instead how decorum, citation, inheritance, and collaboration could function as historically specific modes of self-positioning. Such an approach avoids both romanticizing constraint and treating constraint as total erasure. It examines the concrete procedures through which a woman artist worked within available structures and converted them into vehicles of inscription, recognition, and transmission. For the historiography of Chinese antiquarianism, this study also complicates the assumption that *jinshi* culture moved chiefly through male scholarly lineages, official networks, and homosocial connoisseurship. Pan's case shows that antiquarian authority could also pass through natal inheritance, marital exchange, domestic custodianship, and collaborative labor. The material past entered the studio through women as well as men, and the work of preserving, naming, and reanimating that past could be deeply gendered while remaining shared.

Pan Jingshu passed away in the summer of 1939 at the age of forty-seven, a little more than two years after she completed *Qihou hu bu yulan tu* in the spring of 1937. The outbreak of full-scale war in the summer of 1937, only months after that final collaboration, had already brought her painting to a close.⁵⁵ What remained were traces fixed to things designed to outlast their makers: a Song imprint reanchored to her natal lineage, an album of magnolias organized around a documented bronze, colophons added to scrolls by earlier women painters, a seal pressed into the proofs of a revised antiquarian catalogue, and a small corpus of collaborative paintings in which each contribution is named. Read with sufficient care, these traces yield no heroic narrative of emancipation. They offer something more historically exact: the record of a woman who worked through the structures available to her with sustained precision, and whose

⁵⁵ Dai, *Wu Hufan zhuan lue*.

practices of citation, positioning, and material custodianship constituted an authorial claim made through transmission itself.

FIGURES



Fig. 1a Pan Jingshu 潘靜淑 (1892–1939) and Wu Hufan 吳湖帆 (1894–1968), *Tianzhong xiaojing* 天中小景 (Small Scene for the Tianzhong Festival), 1936. Ink and color on paper. Private Collection.

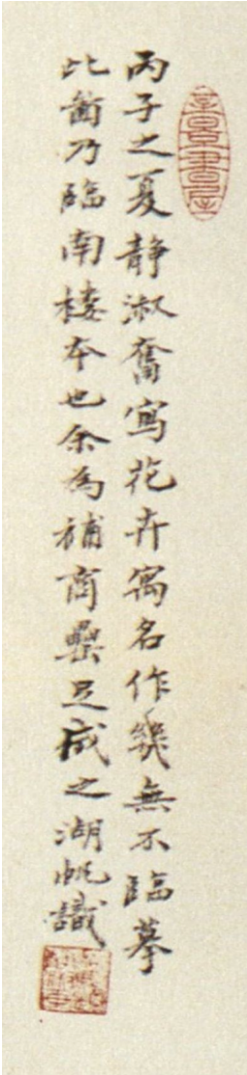


Fig. 1b Detail: Wu Hufan's colophon inscription.



Fig. 1c Detail: Pan Jingshu's signature and two seals: Wu Pan Jingshu 吳潘靜淑 and Jingshu shuhua 靜淑書畫.

Fig. 1d Detail: seal reading *Wu Hufan Pan Jingshu hezuo yin* 吳湖帆潘靜淑合作印.

Fig. 1e Detail: seal reading *Meiying shuwu* 梅影書屋.



Fig. 2a Pan Jingshu and Wu Hufan, *Suichao tu* 歲朝圖 (Painting of the New Year's Morning), 1936. Ink and color on paper. Private Collection.

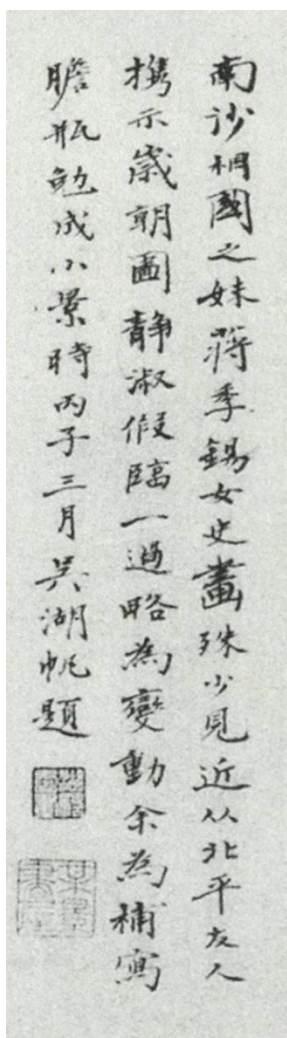


Fig. 2b Detail: Wu Hufan's colophon inscription.

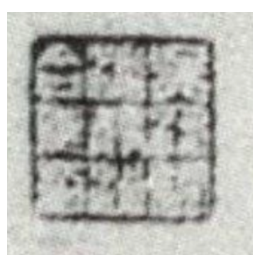


Fig. 2c Detail: Pan Jingshu's signature.

Fig. 2d Detail: seal reading *Wu Hufan Pan Jingshu hezuo yin* 吳湖帆潘靜淑合作印.

Fig. 2e Detail: seal reading *Meiying shuwu* 梅影書屋.



Fig. 3a Pan Jingshu and Wu Hufan, *Qihou hu bu yulan tu* 齊侯壺補玉蘭圖 (Painting of the Hu Vessel of the Marquis of Qi Supplemented with Magnolia), 1937. Ink, color, and rubbing on paper. Private Collection.

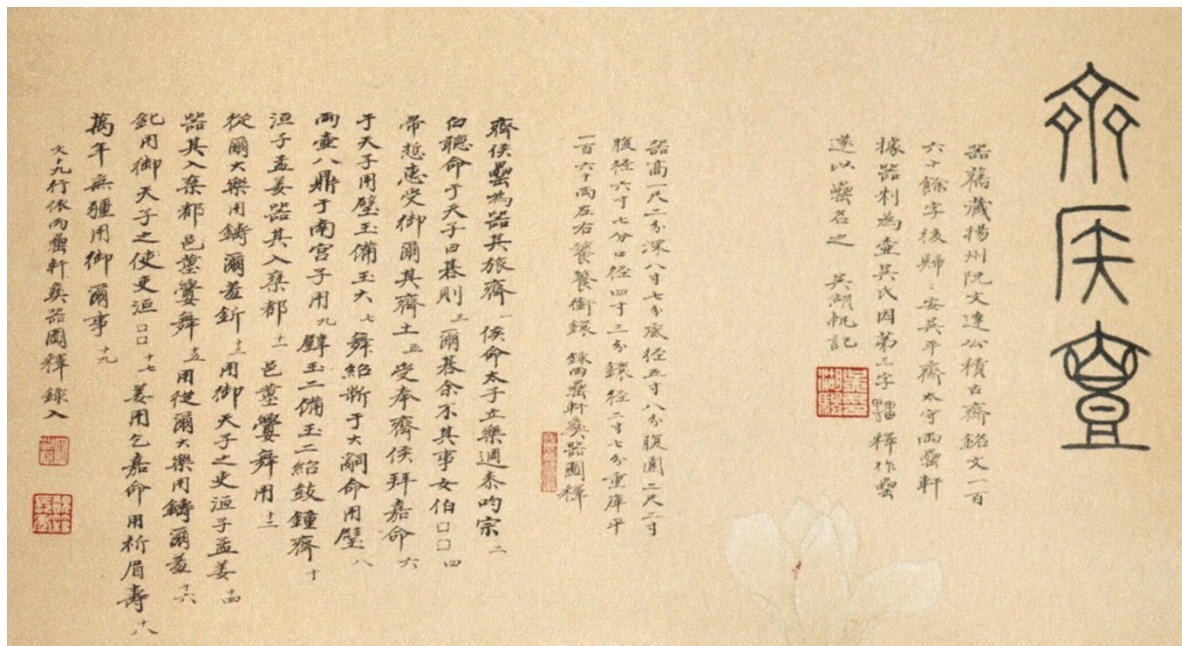


Fig. 3b Detail: Wu Hufan's colophon inscription.

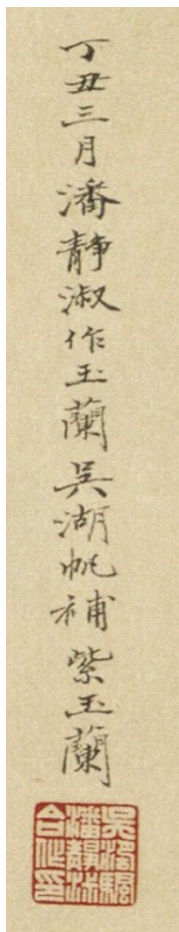


Fig. 3c Detail: Pan Jingshu and Wu Hufan's colophon inscription and seal reading *Wu Hufan Pan Jingshu hezuoyin* 吳湖帆潘靜淑合作印.

Fig. 3d Detail: seal reading *Jingshu huaji* 靜淑畫記.



Fig. 4 Unknown, *Danping qiuhui tu* 膽瓶秋卉圖 (Autumn Flowers in a Gall-Bladder Vase), Song dynasty. Ink and color on silk, 26.5 × 27.5 cm. The Palace Museum, Beijing.



Fig. 5 Shen Zhou 沈周 (1427–1509), *Pinghe tu* 瓶荷圖 (Lotus in a Vase), Ming dynasty. Ink and color on paper, 60 × 143 cm.



Fig. 6 Chen Gua 陳栝 (active sixteenth century), *Ping'an ruilian tu* 平安瑞蓮圖 (Auspicious Lotus of Peace and Safety), Ming dynasty. Ink and color on paper, 90.4 × 46.4 cm. Nanjing Museum, Nanjing.



Fig. 7a Chen Shu 陳書 (1660–1736), *Meihua shuangque tu* 梅花雙雀圖 (Plum Blossoms and Two Magpies), Qing dynasty. Ink on paper, 106.6 × 42.3 cm. Shanghai Museum, Shanghai.

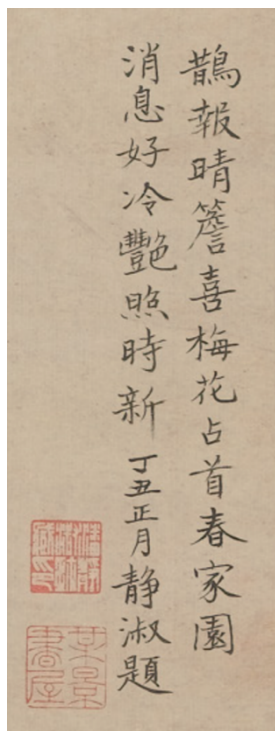


Fig. 7b Detail: Pan Jingshu's colophon inscription and seal reading *Pan Jingshu zhencang yin* 潘靜淑珍藏印.

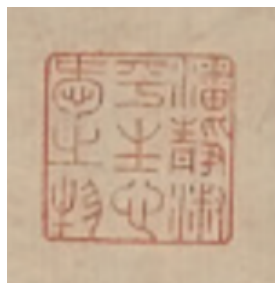


Fig. 7c Detail: seal reading *Pan Jingshu pingsheng xin'ai zhi wu* 潘靜淑平生心愛之物.

梅景書屋書畫記卷十目錄

元管仲姬修竹圖卷
明女史畫扇集冊
明邢慈靜畫墨梅軸
明馬湘蘭薛素素畫蘭合璧卷
明馬湘蘭雙清圖軸
明薛素素魚籃大士圖軸
明趙文俶花蝶草蟲冊
明趙文俶畫梅花軸
明李今生芙蓉鴛鴦圖軸
明吳素公壽蓮塘詩字軸
清蔡女蘿金曉珠合作秋花白鷗圖軸
清馬江香紅杏雙燕圖軸
清吳應貞貓蝶圖軸
清陳南樓梅花雙雀圖軸
清惲清于三秋圖軸
清孫雲鳳梅花軸
清駱佩香蘭花軸
清駱佩香荷花軸
清廖織雲錦葵軸
清許素心梅花冊
清吳飛卿牡丹軸
清蓉湖女史百年和合圖軸
清金紅鵝紅袖倚石圖軸
清英煦齋介文夫婦書畫合璧冊
清英煦齋介文夫婦合璧葵石蹲貓圖軸
清金五雲梅月雙清圖

Fig. 8a Page from *Meiying shuwu shuhua ji* 梅景書屋書畫記 (Records of Painting and Calligraphy from the Plum Scenery Studio), vol. 10, section on *nüshi* 女史 (women painters).

清湯貞愍董夫人梅花雙簪軸
清江友仙臨雲林山水軸

Fig. 8b Following page from *Meiying shuwu shuhua ji*, vol. 10, continuing the section on *nüshi*.



Fig. 9a Zhao Wenchu 趙文俶 (1595–1634), *Meihua tu zhou* 梅花圖軸 (Plum Blossom Hanging Scroll), Ming dynasty. Ink on silk, Shanghai Museum, Shanghai.

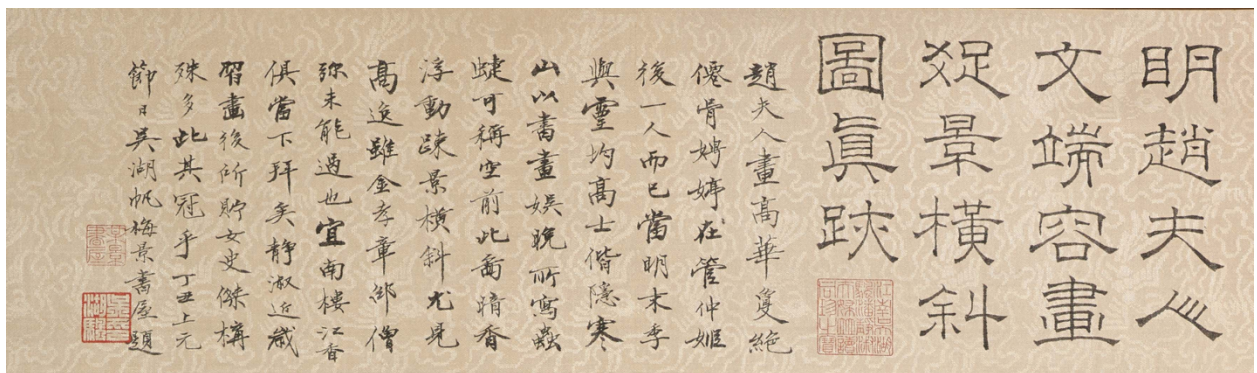


Fig. 9b Detail: Wu Hufan's colophon inscription.



Fig. 10 Wu Yun 吳雲 (1811–1883), *Illustration of the Zhou Qihou lei 周齊侯壘* (Zhou-dynasty lei Vessel of the Marquis of Qi), from *Lianglei xuan yiqi tushi 兩壘軒彝器圖釋* (Illustrated Catalogue of Bronzes from the Lianglei xuan Collection), *juan 4*, Qing dynasty.



Fig. 11 *Huanzi Mengjiang hu 洹子孟姜壺*, Eastern Zhou dynasty. Bronze, 22.1cm H x 13.5 cm D. National Museum of China, Beijing.

自敘二

潘靜淑(遺著)

吾家自尙書公通金石，擅書畫，名震海宇，而外子湖帆，又以能傳祖研鳴於時。余結褵時，湖帆年才二十二，日夕熟視其伏案不倦，習書臨畫，未嘗一日輟，或擷小恙，亦不釋卷，真所謂寢饋於斯者也。其嗜書愛畫，出於至性。自甲子避亂遷滬後，所見名迹日夥，因此嗜書愛畫之心亦日深。顧以先人遺藏，除金石之外，書畫已散，摩挲有限，乃就鬻藝所得，悉以搜羅，法書名畫，每至傾囊，甚或典劍不惜也。故十餘年來，所獲唐宋元明清諸賢名迹，幾三四百本。復因歷歲荒歉，所入漸澀，不得已乃舉之易米，如此則唏噓憶惜者累日始釋，是亦恒情也。余素不知畫，因年來觸手皆卷帙，亦漸癖好。每夜闌更深，輒相對研索，聞其咳吐，無非至情至理。方知書畫爲文化之表徵，名迹乃賢者之精英，若能聚而有之，彷彿親炙古人間，人生至樂至幸之事，豈可雲煙梨夢而忽之耶，爰撰斯記。有旨哉，知書畫者莫如湖帆，知湖帆者莫如余，因爲序言。丙子夏五月靜淑記于梅景書屋之雙修閣。

Fig. 12 Page of Pan Jingshu 潘靜淑, *Zixu er* 自敘二 (Self-Narrative Two), in *Gu jin banyue kan* 古今半月刊 (Past and Present Half-Monthly), no. 45 (1944): 12.

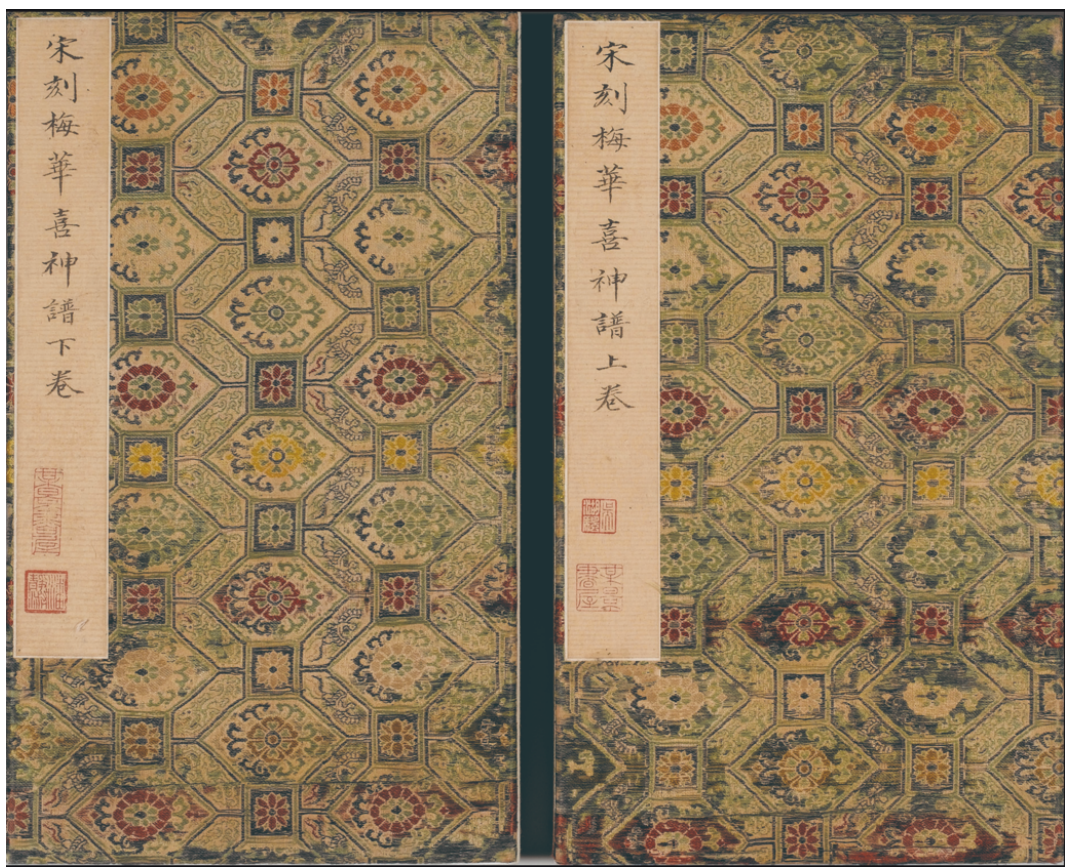


Fig. 13 Song Boren 宋伯仁 (active thirteenth century), Front covers of the *Meihua xishen pu* 梅花喜神譜 (Guide to Capturing the Spirit of Plum Blossoms). Southern Song dynasty, 1261. Woodblock print on paper, 23.1 × 28.6 cm. Shanghai Museum, Shanghai.



Fig. 14a Song Boren, a leaf from *Meihua xishen pu*. Woodblock print on paper. Shanghai Museum, Shanghai.



Fig. 14b Detail: seal reading *Pan Jingshu pingsheng xin'ai zhi wu* 潘靜淑平生心愛之物.

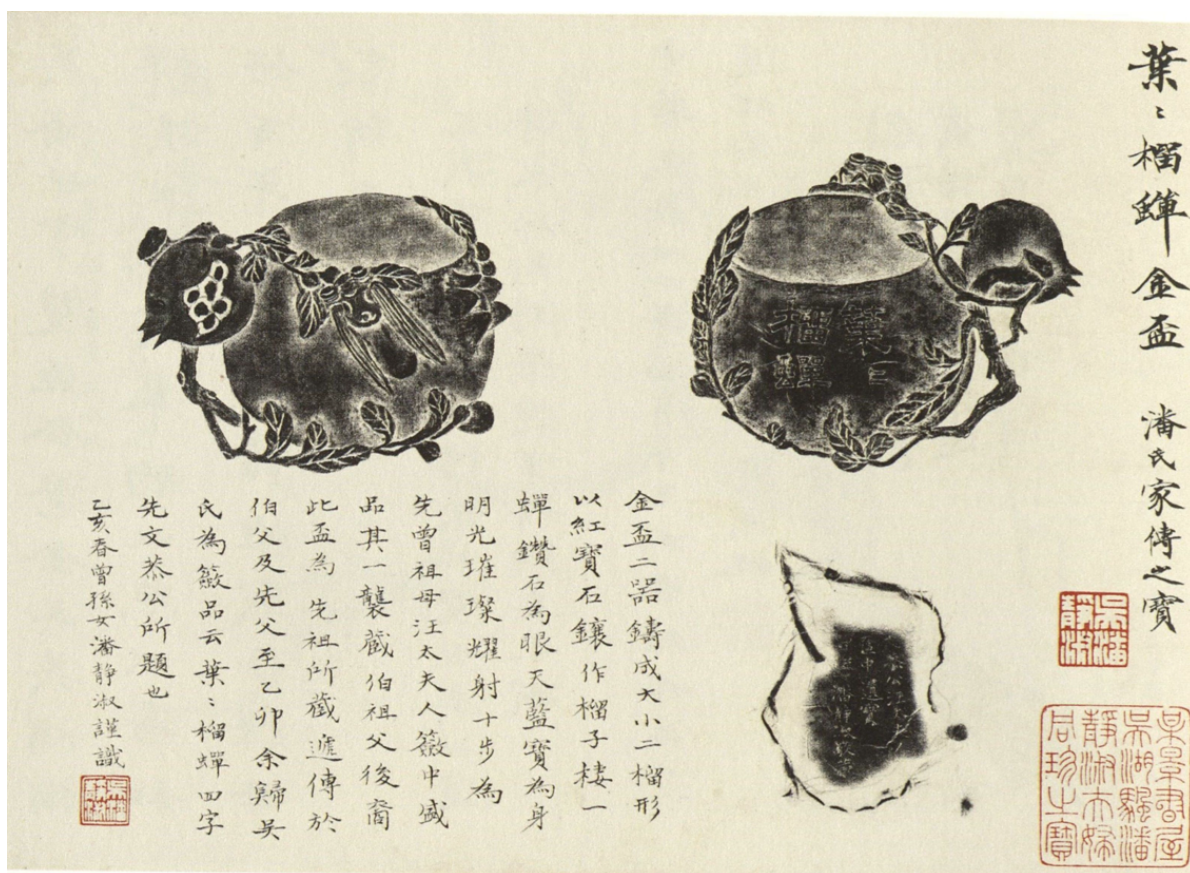


Fig. 15 Pan Jingshu and Wu Hufan, *Yeye liuchan jinbei* 葉葉榴蟬金杯 (Gold Cup with Layered Pomegranate Leaves and Cicadas), 1935. From *Jinyu qixiang ce* 金玉其相冊 (Album of Forms Like Gold and Jade). Ink on paper. Suzhou Museum, Jiangsu.



Fig. 16 Pan Jingshu and Wu Hufan, *Panchi yubei* 盤螭玉杯 (Jade Cup with Coiled *Chi*-Dragon Motif), 1935. From *Jinyu qixiang ce*. Ink on paper. Suzhou Museum, Jiangsu.

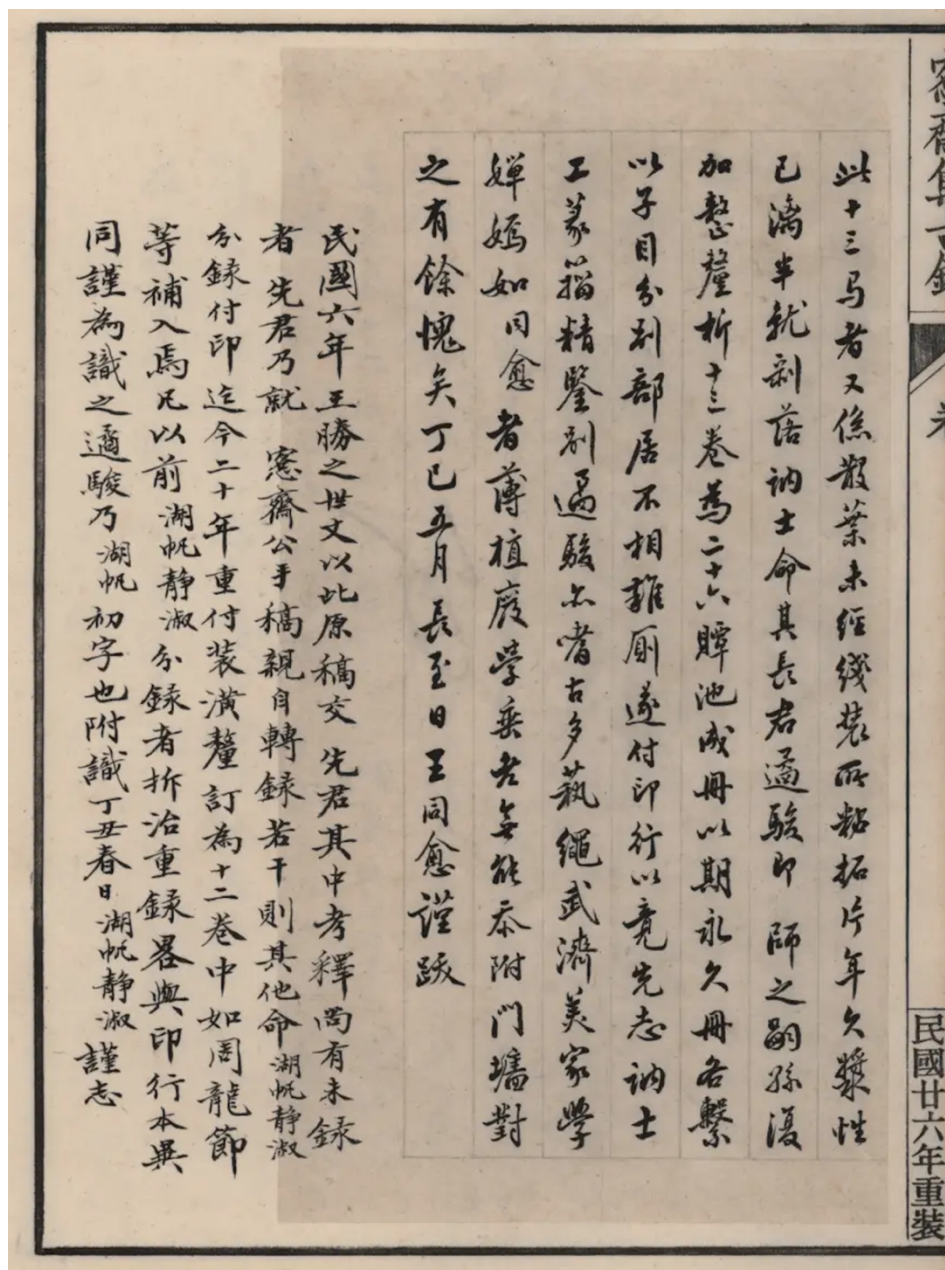


Fig. 17 Colophon page from the 1937 revised edition of *Kezhai jigu lu* 憲齋集古錄 (Kezhai Records of Collected Antiquities) by Wu Dacheng 吳大澂 (1835–1902), with a jointly signed inscription by Wu Hufan and Pan Jingshu.

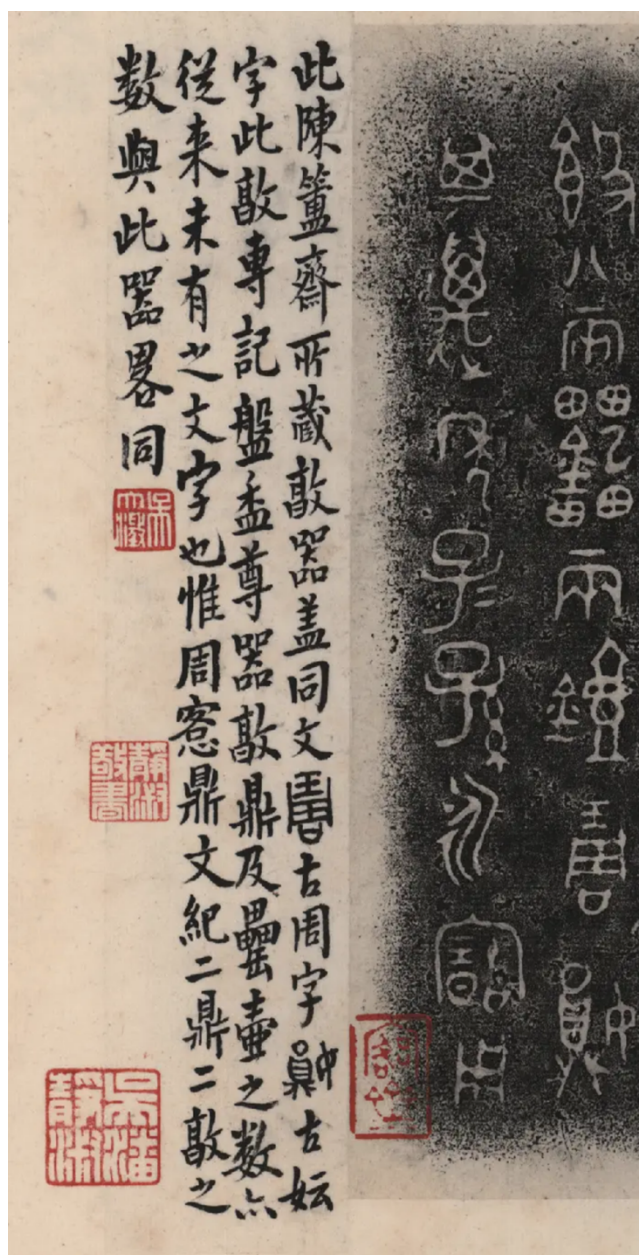


Fig. 18 Page from the 1937 revised edition of *Keshai jigū lu*, with seals reading *Jingshu jing shu* 靜淑敬書 and *Wu Pan Jingshu* 吳潘靜淑.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Andrews, Julia F. "Women Artists in Twentieth-Century China: A Prehistory of the Contemporary." *Positions: Asia Critique* 28, no. 1 (2020): 19–64.
- Bai Qianshen 白謙慎. "Antiquarianism in a Time of Crisis: On the Collecting Practices of Late Qing Government Officials, 1861–1911." In *World Antiquarianism: Comparative Perspectives*, edited by Alain Schnapp, Lothar von Falkenhausen, Peter N. Miller, and Tim Murray, 386–402. Issues & Debates. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013.
- Bai Qianshen 白謙慎. "Composite Rubbings in Nineteenth-Century China: The Case of Wu Dacheng (1835–1902) and His Friends." In *Reinventing the Past: Archaism and Antiquarianism in Chinese Art and Visual Culture*, edited by Wu Hung, 291–319. Chicago: Center for the Art of East Asia, University of Chicago, 2010.
- Bai Qianshen 白謙慎. "From Composite Rubbing to Pictures of Antiques and Flowers (Bogu Huahui): The Case of Wu Yun." *Orientalism* (Hong Kong) 38, no. 3 (2007): 52–60.
- Blanchard, Lara C. W. "Virtue and Women's Authorship in Chinese Art History: A Study of Yutai Huashi (History of Painting from Jade Terrace)." *Journal of Chinese Literature and Culture* 10, no. 1 (2023): 221–43.
- Brown, Shana J. *Pastimes: From Art and Antiquarianism to Modern Chinese Historiography*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011.
- Brown, Shana J. "The Women of Liulichang: Female Collectors and Bibliophiles in the Late Qing." In *Material Women, 1750–1950: Consuming Desires and Collecting Practices*, edited by Maureen Daly Goggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin, 279–94. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009.
- Cao, Mengge. "Schematizing Plum Blossoms: Understanding Printed Images in Thirteenth-Century China." Master's thesis, McGill University, 2016.
- Chen Hansu 陳含素 and Wang Shuzhong 王叔重, eds. *Meiying shuwu huashi* 梅景書屋畫事 (*Painting Matters of the Plum Scenery Studio*). Hangzhou: Zhejiang ren min mei shu chu ban she, 2017.

- Chen Hansu 陳含素 and Wang Shuzhong 王叔重. *Wu Hufan nian pu* 吳湖帆年譜
(*Chronological Biography of Wu Hufan*). Shanghai: Dongfang chubanshe, 2017.
- Chen Te-Hsin 陳德馨. “Meihua xishen pu: Song Boren de ziwo tuijian shu 《梅花喜神譜》
——宋伯仁的自我推薦書 (Mei-Hua Hsi-Shen P’u: A Self-Recommendation Painting
Manual of Sung Po-Ren).” *Taida Journal of Art History*, no. 5 (1998): 123–52.
- Dai Xiaojing 戴小京. *Wu Hufan zhuanlue* 吳湖帆傳略 (*A Brief Biography of Wu Hufan*).
Duo yun xian dai guo hua jia cong shu. Shanghai: Shanghai shu hua chu ban she, 1988.
- Egan, Ronald. *The Burden of Female Talent: The Poet Li Qingzhao and Her History in
China*. Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 90. Cambridge, MA: Harvard
University Asia Center, 2013.
- Fan Jingzhong 范景中. “Yige wenren huajia de richang shenghuo: Wu Hufan 1933 nian
yuan yue de riji 一個文人畫家的日常生活——吳湖帆 1933 年元月的日記 (The
Daily Life of a Literati Painter: Wu Hufan’s Diary for January 1933).” *Xin mei shu*, no.
1 (2008): 4–14.
- Fong, Grace S. *Herself an Author: Gender, Agency, and Writing in Late Imperial China*.
Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2008.
- Gu Yin Hai 顧音海 and She Yanyan 佘彥焱. *Wu Hufan de yi shu shi jie* 吳湖帆的藝術世界
(*The Artistic World of Wu Hufan*). Shanghai: Wen hui chu ban she, 2004.
- Hatch, Michael. *Networks of Touch: A Tactile History of Chinese Art, 1790–1840*.
Perspectives on Sensory History. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University
Press, 2024.
- Hua Lei 華蕾. “Meihua xishen pu banben kao 《梅花喜神譜》版本考 (A Study of the
Editions of Meihua xishen pu).” Master’s thesis, Fudan University, 2010.
- Jia Hongdi 賈紅荻. “Lianglei xuan cang qihou liang hu ji tuopian suo tan 兩壺軒藏齊侯兩
壺及拓片瑣談 (The Pair of the Bronze Flasks of the Marquis of the Qi State Collected
by Wu Yun and Ink Rubbings of the Engraved Inscriptions on Them).” *Gugong xuekan*,
no. 2 (2014): 285–90.

Kelly, Thomas. *The Inscription of Things: Writing and Materiality in Early Modern China*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2023.

Kong Lingwei 孔令偉. "Haipai bogu tu chutan 海派博古圖初探 (A Preliminary Study of Shanghai-School Bogu Paintings)." In *Haipai huihua yanjiu wenji* 海派繪畫研究文集 (*Collected Essays on Shanghai-School Painting Studies*), Shanghai: Shanghai shu hua chu ban she, 2001.

Kong Lingwei 孔令偉. *Yue gu: Zhongguo yi shu shi zhong de gu qi wu ji qi tu xiang biao da* 悅古: 中國藝術史中的古器物及其圖像表達 (*Taking Pleasure in Antiquity: Ancient Objects and Their Pictorial Representation in Chinese Art History*). Zhongguo mei shu yan jiu cong shu. Shanghai: Shanghai shu hua chu ban she, 2020.

Laing, Ellen Johnston. "Wives, Daughters, and Lovers: Three Ming Dynasty Women Painters." In *Views from Jade Terrace: Chinese Women Artists, 1300-1912*, 31–39. Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1988.

Laing, Ellen Johnston. "Women Painters in Traditional China." In *Flowering in the Shadows: Women in the History of Chinese and Japanese Painting*, edited by Marsha Weidner, 81–101. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990.

Ling Lizhong 凌利中. "Jin xian dai shuhua jian ding xue ke de dian ji zhe: Wu Hufan yu ershi shiji shang ban ye de shuhua jian cang huodong 近現代書畫鑑定學科的奠基者：吳湖帆與二十世紀上半葉的書畫鑑藏活動 (Founder of Modern Research on Connoisseurship of Painting and Calligraphy: Wu Hufan and the Connoisseurship Activities of Painting and Calligraphy in the First Half of the 20th Century)." In *Wu Hufan shuhua jian cang te ji* 吳湖帆書畫鑒藏特集 (*Collection and Connoisseurship of Painting and Calligraphy of Wu Hufan*), 1–49. Edited by Shanghai Museum. Shanghai: Shanghai shu hua chu ban she, 2016.

Pan Jingshu 潘靜淑. "Zixu er 自敘二 (Self-Narrative Two)." *Gu jin banyue kan* 古今半月刊 (*Past and Present Half-Monthly*) (Shanghai) 45 (1944): 12.

Sung, Doris. *Women of Chinese Modern Art: Gender and Reforming Traditions in National and Global Spheres, 1900s–1930s*. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024.

- Von Spee, Clarissa. *Wu Hufan: A Twentieth Century Art Connoisseur in Shanghai*. With Lothar Ledderose and Julia F. Andrews. Berlin: Reimer, 2008.
- Weidner, Marsha. "The Conventional Success of Ch'en Shu." In *Flowering in the Shadows: Women in the History of Chinese and Japanese Painting*, edited by Marsha Weidner, 123–56. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990.
- Weidner, Marsha. "Women in the History of Chinese Painting." In *Views from Jade Terrace: Chinese women artists 1300-1912*. Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1988.
- Widmer, Ellen, and Kang-i Sun Chang. *Writing Women in Late Imperial China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- Wu Hufan 吳湖帆. *Wu Hufan wen gao* 吳湖帆文稿 (*Manuscripts of Wu Hufan*). Edited by Liang Ying 梁穎. With Wu Yuanjing 吳元京. *Zhongguo mei shu xue yuan mei shu shi yan jiu suo cong shu*. Hangzhou: Zhongguo mei shu xue yuan chu ban she, 2004.
- Wu Yun 吳雲. *Lianglei xuan yi qi tu shi* 兩壘軒彝器圖釋 (*Illustrated Catalogue of Bronzes from the Lianglei xuan Collection*). 12 juan. 1873.
- Yang, Chia-Ling. *Appropriating Antiquity for Modern Chinese Painting*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2023.
- Yang, Chia-Ling. "Power, Identity and Antiquarian Approaches in Modern Chinese Art." *Journal of Art Historiography* (Glasgow) 10, no. 10 (2014): 1–33.
- Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠. *Li dai ming hua ji* 歷代名畫記 (*Famous Paintings through the Ages*). Cong shu ji cheng chu bian. Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1985.
- Zheng Zhong 鄭重. *Hai shang shou cang shi jia* 海上收藏世家 (*Collectors in Shanghai*). Shanghai: Shi ji chu ban ji tuan Shanghai shu dian chu ban she, 2003.