

The Life and Religious Culture of the Freshwater Boat People of North China,
1700–Present

By
Ching-chih Lin

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Committee in charge:
Professor David G. Johnson, Chair
Professor Wen-hsin Yeh
Professor Xin Liu

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Abstract

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My dissertation examines how environmental change affected cultural transformation. It investigates the manner in which the mobile, isolated boat people adapted to a boat-dwelling lifestyle and created innovative religious practices and beliefs in order to maintain their relationships with spirits and ancestors, as well as dispersed lineage members, given that they had no fixed base on land to build temples, ancestral shrines or tombs. The subjects of the study are the boat-dwelling people who frequently moved back and forth within the Grand Canal basin between southwest Shandong and north Jiangsu in late imperial and modern China. These boat dwellers were displaced from their land-based estates and became environmental refugees during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The isolation of the boat people protected their unique religious activities from the anti-religious campaigns of the twentieth century. Their ritual tradition *Duangu* Ceremony was granted the status of National Intangible Cultural Heritage by the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China in 2011. I argue that despite the distinctive lifestyle and religious culture of the floating community, some significant elements of religious belief and practice of boat people remained unchanged, transcending differences in occupation, social status, and environment for centuries. With the assistance of ritualists within the floating community, these boat people endeavored to continue their genealogies and maintain ancestor worship, practices that were equally important to farmers. These shared components can help us rethink core elements of Chinese popular culture, previously based on farmers' experiences, and discern which features are the most significant in Chinese

popular religion and how and why they play such vital roles. More importantly, core cultural elements have been resilient and resistant to environmental change.

To compensate for the scarcity of historical sources, I conducted fieldwork in a fishing community in the Weishan Lakes of Shandong, to document their lifestyle and the complete process of religious ceremonies during 2008-2010. This project not only contributes to our knowledge of Chinese popular religion, previously limited to the farming population, but it also opens up our understanding of voiceless boat people and environmental refugees as subalterns of the past. The lessons learned can be taken forward into possible crises of rising sea levels associated with global warming, which may create more environmental refugees. Learning about ways boat-dwelling changed lifestyle and culture in the past may help us prepare better for the future.

To

Feng Chian-min 馮建民 (1924-2012), in memoriam

And

Chiu-yu, Yong-ran, and Mu-ran

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INTRODUCTION

漁 清·王謙志
武棠亭下水漪漣，對對漁人弄小船。
不是賢豪新棄印，兩涯耕種苦無田。
In the rippling water under Wutang Pavilion,
Pairs of fishermen are rowing small boats.
They are not recently-retired grandees;
They have no land to till on either bank.
Fishing, by Wang Qianzhi (c. 1662–1722)

There once were hundreds of thousands of boat people living on China's rivers and lakes, comparable to, or perhaps more than those who lived on boats in harbors along the coast.¹ These freshwater boat people made a living by fishing or harvesting aquatic plants and they lived on their boats permanently. Unlike their saltwater brethren, the freshwater boat people have received little scholarly attention, especially those in North China. When the Macartney embassy from Britain to the Qing Empire traveled through the lakes in southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu via the Grand Canal in 1793, they witnessed a considerable number of boat-dwelling fishing families, whose population they estimated “to be fully as populous as the land.”² The boat people never intermarried with land people. They also possessed no land-based houses or property. The only goods they owned and inherited were their boats and fishing gear. The boats were their permanent homes, as well as their means of earning a living.³ Boat dwelling reshaped and restrained their ways and rhythms of living. The fishing population was more mobile and isolated than farmers who lived in villages. They had distinct ways of life, and therefore developed idiosyncratic religious⁴ beliefs and practices in adapting to

¹ For instance, the freshwater fishermen of Jiangsu province during the Republican period amounted to 210,000 out of a total 240,000 of the provincial fishing population. By 1952, the population of freshwater fishermen had increased to 307,300; meanwhile, there were only 69,300 saltwater fishermen. See JSSCZ, 318. At the national level, there were 1,681,400 saltwater fishermen and 1,130,886 freshwater ones in 1950. In 1952, the number of freshwater fishermen reached 2,336,366, and the saltwater counterpart was 1,948,525. See Zhonghua ren min gong he guo nong ye bo shui chan si (中華人民共和國農業部水產司 [Department of Aquatic Products Industry, Ministry of Agriculture]) ed., *Zhongguo yu ye tong ji si shi nian* (中國漁業統計四十年 [Forty years of statistics of Chinese fishery]) (Beijing: Hai yang chu ban she, 1991), 4.

² John Barrow, *Travels in China* (London: A Strahan, 1804), 557–558. This observation is obviously a mistake, but it proves that a large floating population already existed in lakes and rivers in North China by the end of the eighteenth century. The travel journals of the Macartney embassy also provide us with some detailed and important information about these boat people's aquatic life and fishing methods.

³ I avoid using the term “houseboat” because it carries rather different implications in English. On the other hand, it is worth making a cross-cultural study of boat people to compare how boat dwelling affects people's life and culture, and their religious culture in particular. Boat dwellers exist in many places in the world, from developing countries like Vietnam, Thailand, India, and Turkey to advanced industrialized countries, such as Italy, Holland, France, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States. See Mark Gabor, *Houseboats: Living on the Water around the World* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1979). I will return to this point in the concluding remarks.

⁴ When I use the terms “religious” and “religion” in this dissertation, I do not assume that there is an ecclesiastical organization like Christianity that has coherent, unified doctrines, rituals, and clergy. I fully

life on the water, and these beliefs and practices are the main subject of this dissertation.

Learning more about these people is valuable not only for its own sake, but because it will deepen our understanding of Chinese popular culture and religion,⁵ which is based chiefly on the experiences of land-based farmers. Land-based farmers made up the majority of the Chinese population and have been the main subject of most studies of Chinese popular culture. The boat people can provide us with a different vantage point from which to look at Chinese popular culture. By exploring the history of the floating community of boat people, this dissertation endeavors to make familiar the unfamiliar life and religious practices and beliefs of the freshwater boat people: What characteristics were fundamentally different between boat people and landsmen? How did boat dwelling reshape boat people's everyday lives, annual calendar, and rites of passage? In addition, without fixed houses and farmland, boat people possessed less of a sense of attachment to the earth, which is quite distinct from ordinary farmers' veneration of various earth gods. How, then, did boat people renew their worldview and their relationship with nature and the supernatural? How did they maintain the relationship with the spirits of the waters if they were unable to frequent temples? Moreover, without land for ancestral shrines or tombs, these boat people surprisingly managed to preserve genealogies and forms of ancestor worship that were not observed in the Dan boat peoples in South China before they resettled aboard.⁶ This phenomenon then raises more important questions: How did boat people maintain their relationships with ancestors and with other lineage members? Did they have idiosyncratic rituals of ancestor worship adapted to aquatic life? Who was in charge of mediating relations with deities, ancestors, or demons, if there were such things? Were there religious beliefs and practices that the boat people shared with land-based farmers, that were unaffected by the differences in lifestyle and livelihood? By examining the differences and similarities of water-borne fisherfolk and land-based

agree with the discussions of using the terms "religion" and "belief" in Chinese contexts conducted by Adam Yuet Chau, David Johnson, and Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer. See Adam Yuet Chau, *Miraculous Response: Doing Popular Religion in Contemporary China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 59–61; David Johnson, *Spectacle and Sacrifice: The Ritual Foundations of Village Life in North China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), 9–10; Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 6–13.

⁵ By using the term "popular religion" in a Chinese context, I do not mean there is only one form of it, as Maurice Freedman suggested. See Maurice Freedman, "On the Sociological Study of Chinese Religion," in Arthur Wolf, ed., *Religion and Ritual in Chinese Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 19–41. Instead, I agree with John Lagerwey's discussion of the use of "popular religion" as a category distinct from other established religions, such as Daoism and Buddhism. See John Lagerwey, "Question of Vocabulary, or How Shall We Talk About Chinese Religion?," in Lai Chi Tim (黎志添), ed., *Dao jiao yu min jian zong jiao yan jiu lun ji* (道教與民間宗教研究論集[Collection of papers on Daoism and popular religion]) (Hong Kong: Xue feng wen hua, 1999), 166–181. I think Chinese popular religion is like the art of making a patchwork quilt. It can have diverse faces piecing together elements, but the fundamental structure and the ways of patchwork are essentially identical, because most Chinese, mainly the Han Chinese, share the same annual calendar, ways and rhythms of life, worldview, and cosmology, all of which structure the foundations of Chinese popular religion.

⁶ The Dan peoples began to create their genealogies and construct ancestral shrines after resettling on land in order to legitimate their presence and competition against landsmen. Barbara Ward, "Varieties of the Conscious Model: The Fishermen of South China," in Michael Banton, ed., *The Relevance of Models for Social Anthropology* (London: Tavistock, 1965), 127–28. Maurice Freedman, *Chinese Lineage and Society: Fukien and Kwangtung* (London: Athlone Press, 1966), 93–94. Michael Szonyi, *Practicing Kinship: Lineage and Descent in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 194.

farmers, this dissertation will not only expand our understanding of the freshwater boat people in North China, but will also point out some cultural and religious elements the two groups shared that might help us rethink our ideas about the core essence of so-called “Chineseness.”

At least since the eighteenth century, the *Duangu* Ceremony (literally, “*Duangu* songs” *Duangu qiang* 端鼓腔)⁷ has been the main ritual tradition of the Shandong/Jiangsu boat people, which is a unique religious activity of boat people that combines ritual and opera.⁸ The *Duangu* Ceremony was held every five or ten years for a lineage ceremony called the Continuation of Genealogy (*Xujiapu* 續家譜) and every three or five years for the boat people’s religious assemblies called the *Daiwang*⁹ Assembly (*Daiwang hui* 大王會) or *Tangshen* Assembly (*Tangshen hui* 唐神會). The *Duangu* ritual tradition not only used a water-associated pantheon, but also demonstrated how boat people had created innovative ways to maintain their relationships with deities, ancestors, and ghosts.

Thanks to the mobility and isolation of the boat people, their ritual traditions have been preserved relatively intact. The *Duangu* Ceremony was recognized as a National Intangible Cultural Heritage by the Ministry of Culture in 2011.¹⁰ In fact, the

⁷ There are a variety of Chinese terms for the *Duangu* Ceremony. It is usually called *Duangu xi* 端鼓戲 or *Duangu qiang* 端鼓腔 in Shandong and Anhui, whereas people in Jiangsu often call it *Hongze yugu* 洪澤漁鼓 (fishing drum). Due to Shandong dialectal variation, it is also called *Duangong qiang/xi*, transcribed as 端公腔/戲 (opera of *Duangong* ritual master) or 端供腔/戲 (opera of sacrifice offering). These labels have perhaps been created by people outside the floating community, such as local officials or folklorists. The boat people do not have a standard term for the ceremony. In addition to the previously mentioned terms, some boat people call it *jing shen* 敬神 (venerating deities) or *jing laozu* 敬老祖 (venerating ancestors). In this study, I will use the term *Duangu* Ceremony even if it differs from the term used by informants.

⁸ The issue of tense in this dissertation is complicated. About 90% boat people now resettle on land, so most of them no longer maintain the boat-dwelling lifestyle. In principle, I will use the past tense to describe the lifestyle, social organization, annual festivals, and rites of passage of the boat people. Regarding their religious activities, most religious practices and beliefs remain unchanged, except the cult of the Earth God, funeral and burial rituals, and *fengshui* that boat people have started to imitate landmen’s customs since the mid-1980s. The central rituals of this dissertation are held in the original ways, although the location is changed from boats to the shore. Since the majority of the subjects of this dissertation is no longer “boat people,” I will basically use the past tense to describe their religious activities on the water. When I explain the religious practices and beliefs that are ongoing today, I will use the present tense. In Chapter Three, I rely on my fieldwork investigation to report the details of the ongoing *Duangu* Ceremony, I will use the present tense to describe the complete process.

⁹ The Chinese term “大王” *da wang* is often translated as “Great King” when used as a deity title or as “expert” in general sense, but the water spirits I will describe throughout this dissertation are quite different. I prefer to keep the original pronunciation *dai wang*, because *dai* is a local dialect for *da* 大 and thus reminds us of the regional character of the deity. In addition, *dawang* 大王 (Great King) can be added to other deities to emphasize their efficacy, which can confuse readers. Throughout the Grand Canal and its tributaries, water spirits called *Daiwangs* had been prevalent from the mid Ming Dynasty through the late Qing, before the canal system went down due to the course change of the Yellow River. In order to differentiate the special water spirits of the Grand Canal region from general usage of *da wang*, I will use *Daiwang* in this dissertation. For discussion of the rise of *Daiwang*, see Randall A. Dodgen, “Hydraulic Religion: ‘Great King’ Cults in the Ming and Qing,” *Modern Asian Studies* 33, no.4 (1999): 815–33.

¹⁰ Although the process of applying for the intangible cultural heritage from local governments to the Ministry of Culture problematically involves politics, economy, and tourism, I truly consider that the *Duangu* Ceremony deserves the title. For discussion on the intangible cultural heritage in China, see

well-preserved *Duangu* Ceremony was not an independent ritual tradition. Instead, it was related to a broader ritual tradition connected with the Wei Jiulang (魏九郎) legend, which can be found in southern Shandong, northeast Anhui, northern Jiangsu, and elsewhere in northeastern China today.¹¹ Despite its importance in these areas,¹² the Wei Jiulang ritual tradition has been largely ignored by scholars. This dissertation can help broaden and deepen current understanding of the Wei Jiulang ritual tradition, which is comparable to other regionally significant traditional ritual operas, or operatic rituals, such as *Mulian Rescues his Mother* (*Mulian jiu mu* 目連救母), *Performing Zhong Kui* (*Tiao Zhong Kui* 跳鍾馗) or *Killing the Yellow Demon* (*Sha huang gui* 殺黃鬼). By centering on the *Duangu* Ceremony, this work can contribute further to the study of Chinese rituals by providing new information about the important, but overlooked, Wei

Vincent Goossaert and David Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China*, 259 and 320. This issue deserves further research in the future.

¹¹ Ji Genyin (紀根垠), Chen Daoting (陳道庭), Guo Xuedong (郭學東), and Che Xilun (車錫倫) were pioneer scholars who put these small ritual traditions in a larger context. See Ji Genyin, “Tan Shandong *guniang qiang* (談山東姑娘腔[On Shandong *guniang qiang*],” *Xi qu yan jiu* (戲曲研究[Studies of opera]) 42 (Beijing: Wen hua yi shu chu ban she, 1992): 27–39; Chen and Guo, “Duangu qiang (端鼓腔),” *QLMJYS*, 616–21; Che Xilun, “Jiangsu bei bu de ‘xianghuo shen hui’ ‘shen shu’ and ‘xianghuo xi’ (ti gang) (江蘇北部的「香火神會」「神書」和「香火戲」(提綱)[A proposal on the xianghuo ceremony, divine book, and xianghuo opera in north Jiangsu],” *Xi qu yan jiu* (戲曲研究[Studies of Opera]) 01 (2003): 31–37; Che Xilun, “Shandong, Jiangsu nuo wen hua qu he Pu Songling ji shu de ‘Wu xi’ ‘Wu feng’ (山東、江蘇儺文化區和蒲松齡記述的「巫戲」「巫風」[Nuo culture area in Shandong and Jiangsu provinces and Wu xi and Wu feng recorded by Pu Songling],” *Henan jiao yu xue yuan xue bao* (河南教育學院學報) 1 (2007): 22–28.

¹² Zhu Qiu Hua (朱秋華), Tanaka Issei (田仲一成), Ren Guangwei (任光偉), Shi Hanru (施漢如), Zhang Ziqiang (張自強), Yang Wenchun (楊問春), Cao Lin (曹琳), Huang Wenhui (黃文虎), and Jiang Yan (姜燕) have contributed to the study of Wei Jiulang in different local operas, but they only focused on single places and did not contextualize these local operas in a broader ritual tradition. See Zhu Qiu Hua (朱秋華), “Haizhou *Tongzi xi* kao lue (海州童子戲考略[A brief investigation of the *Tongze* opera in Haizhou],” *Yi shu bai jia* (藝術百家) 02 (1991): 103–106; Tanaka Issei (田仲一成), “Koushou Nantsu ken no Doushigi (江蘇省南通縣的童子戲[Tongzi opera of Nantong County, Jiangsu],” *Chūgoku fukei engeki kenkyū* (中國巫系演劇研究[Shamanistic theatre in China]) (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1993), 851–944; Ren Guangwei (任光偉), *Liaoning min xiang de kao cha yu yan jiu* (遼寧民香的考察與研究[Study of the *Minxiang* in Liaoning]) (Taipei: Shih Ho-Cheng Folk Culture Foundation, 1994); Shi Hanru (施漢如), Zhang Ziqiang (張自強), and Yang Wenchun (楊問春), “Nantong nuo ji yu nuo shen (南通儺祭與儺神 [Nantong nuo sacrifice and nuo deities],” *Min-su ch’ü-i* (民俗曲藝) 88 (1994): 141–168; Cao Lin (曹琳), *Jiangsu Sheng Tongzhou Shi Henggang Xiang Beidian Cun Hu Shi Shang Tong Zi Yi Shi* (江蘇省通州市橫港鄉北店村胡氏上童子儀式[The Tongzi Ritual of the Hu Family in Beidian Village, Henggang Township, Tongzhou Municipality, Jiangsu]) (Taipei: Shih Ho-Cheng Folk Culture Foundation, 1995); Cao Lin, *Jiangsu Sheng Nantong Shi Zhadong Xiang Gongyuan Cun Han Ren De Mian Zai Sheng Hui* (江蘇省南通市閘東鄉公園村漢人的免災勝會[The Great Festival to Avert Disaster of Gongyuan Village, Zhadong Township, Nantong Municipality, Jiangsu]) (Taipei: Shih Ho-Cheng Folk Culture Foundation, 1996); Huang Wenhui (黃文虎), *Jiangsu Liuhe Xian Maan Xiang Wuxing Cun Songzhuang Ji Maji Zhen Jianshan Cun Gongying Han Ren De Jia Pu Xiang Huo Shen Hui* (江蘇六合縣馬鞍鄉五星村宋莊及馬集鎮尖山村龔營漢人的家譜香火神會[The Genealogical Register Incense and Fire Festival of Songzhuang in Wuxing Village, Ma’an Township and of Jianshan Village in Maji Town, Liuhe County, Jiangsu]) (Taipei: Shih Ho-Cheng Folk Culture Foundation, 1996); Jiang Yan (姜燕), *Xianghuo xi kao* (香火戲考[Investigation of the *Xianghuo* opera]) (Yangzhou: Guangling shu she, 2007).

Jiulang ritual tradition.

Renowned environmental historians John McNeill, Mark Elvin, and Liu Ts'ui-jung (劉翠溶) all consider the study of the aquatic environment as one of the most necessary research fields for understanding Chinese environmental history. Scientists have warned that global warming will trigger sea-level rises, causing more and more catastrophic floods, and that many people will consequently be displaced, just as the boat people's ancestors were during the past two centuries. As a result, the world's cultural and historical heritage will be threatened with disappearance.¹³ Learning more about ways boat-dwelling changed lifestyle and culture may help us prepare better for the future. This dissertation contributes to the study of how living ecology interplays with culture through its investigation of freshwater boat people.¹⁴

Boundary/Territory

This research focuses on a specific group of boat people moving between the lakes along the Grand Canal in Shandong and Jiangsu provinces: from Lake Dongping (東平湖), Weishan Lakes¹⁵ (微山湖), Lake Hongze (洪澤湖), through Lake Gaoyou (高郵湖). This section of the Grand Canal is intersected by the Yellow River in the north and the Yangtze River in the south today, spanning 595 kilometers, which basically demarcates the territory of the fishing communities.¹⁶ Although the subgroups I observed now stay in the Weishan Lakes in Shandong, their mobile character in the past requires us to trace them to northern Jiangsu, which I will explain later. Some boat people even migrated to Lake Nushan (女山湖) and Lake Qili (七里湖) in eastern Anhui via Lake Hongze in the late Qing and Republic periods. A few boat people later spread out to the valley of the Yangtze River during the People's Republic, such as Lake Hong (洪湖) and Dongting Lakes (洞庭湖) in Hubei and Boyang Lakes (鄱陽湖) in Jiangxi.

¹³ Kirstin Dow and Thomas E. Downing, *The Atlas of Climate Change: Mapping the World's Greatest Challenge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 59–73.

¹⁴ John McNeill, "China's environmental history in world perspective," in Mark Elvin and Liu Ts'ui-jung eds., *Sediments of Time: Environment and Society in Chinese History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 44; Mark Elvin, "The Environmental History of China: An Agenda of Ideas," *Asian Studies Review* 14:2 (1990): 50; Liu Ts'ui-jung (劉翠溶), "Zhongguo huan jing shi yan jiu chu yi (中國環境史研究芻議[A preliminary discussion of the study of Chinese environmental history]), in Wang Lihua (王利華) ed., *Zhongguo li shi shang de huan jing yu she hui* (中國歷史上的環境與社會[The environment and society in Chinese history]) (Beijing: Sanlian, 2007), 10.

¹⁵ In Chinese, *Weishan hu* (微山湖) has both broad and narrow meanings. In this dissertation, **Weishan Lakes**, in the broad sense, refers to *Nansi hu* (南四湖), or Southern Four Lakes, which is a complex of four interconnecting lakes: Lake Nanyang (南陽湖), Lake Dushan (獨山湖), Lake Zhaoyang (昭陽湖), and Lake Weishan (微山湖). The smaller **Lake Weishan** is located in the southmost part of Weishan Lakes. Therefore, I use **Weishan Lakes** as a singular noun in this dissertation.

¹⁶ Zou Baoshan (鄒寶山), He Fanneng (何凡能), and He Weigang (何為剛) eds., *Jing hang yun he zhi li yu kai fa* (京杭運河治理與開發[Management and development of the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal]) (Beijing: Shui li dian li chu ban she, 1990), 46.



Map 0.1 The Lakes Adjoining the Grand Canal (Adapted from maps.baidu.com)

The region dealt with in this dissertation is geographically close to the center of government in Beijing, but in the past it largely escaped political supervision. On the one hand, local governments were unable to effectively control people who did not live permanently in their jurisdictions; on the other hand, the government was unable to patrol all the waters along the Grand Canal.¹⁷ Thanks to their mobility, the boat people could avoid government control, including taxes, conscription, and corvée labor. John Barrow, a member of the Macartney embassy, recorded in 1793 that no fishing tax and license fee was charged in the lakes around southwestern Shandong.¹⁸ These people were the outsiders in the heartland in terms of governmentality. Although they were close to the Grand Canal, the most important channel to the political center during the late imperial period, they seemed invisible to the officials. Hundreds of official memorials during the Ming-Qing period mentioned the Weishan Lakes, but they were concerned not with the boat people, but with matters associated with hydraulics and transportation on the Grand

¹⁷ The Qing government had certain military forces on the Grand Canal to protect transportation vessels, but they could not extend law enforcement to the waters adjacent to the Grand Canal. According to a gazetteer of Pei County (沛縣), Liu Dameng (劉大孟) and his son Liu Yuying (劉毓英) organized an aquatic militia to patrol the Weishan Lakes and cracked down some lake bandits in 1861. The private aquatic militia got sponsorship from local officials, but did not last long. See Yü Shuyun (于書雲), *Minguo Pei xian zhi* (民國沛縣志[Gazetteer of Pei County during the Republican period]) (Nanning: Fenghuang chu ban she, 2008[1920]), 420. During the Republican period, some lakeshore gentry of the Weishan Lakes petitioned the Executive Yuan to reorganize an aquatic militia in 1931, given that lake bandits often robbed and abducted boat passengers and lakeshore residents. This petition shows that the Republican government could not control the Weishan Lakes. See Zhang Tongshan (張銅山) et al., “Feng jiao Zhang Tongshan deng cheng wei Wei[shan] hu duo fei ni she shui lian tuan ju xie jiao yi shi (奉交張銅山等呈為微湖多匪擬設水練團局協剿一事[Submitting Zhang Tongshan’s petition about establishing an aquatic militia on account of plentiful lake bandits in the Weishan Lakes]),” *The Second Historical Archives of China, Record Group 2, File Number 2105, January 20, 1931.*

¹⁸ John Barrow, *Travels in China*, 557.

Canal or the bad harvests of farmers along the canal and their possible tax exemption.¹⁹ This demonstrates that the imperial courts were far more concerned about the farmers than the boat people. An official of the Department of Construction of Shandong province investigated the fishery and agriculture around the Weishan Lakes in June 1937 and commented on the ungovernable boat people: “The Weishan Lakes are spacious and productive, but the boat people in the lake have never been governed for dynasties, as if they were barbarians. Their population has never been calculated, and the governments cannot govern them.”²⁰ This local official’s observation clearly reflects how the boat people were ignored for centuries. An ethnography done by the German folklorist Josef Thiel in 1948 also confirms that these boat people paid no taxes and had no citizenship.²¹ The freshwater boat people of Shandong and Jiangsu were not included in a series of imperial edicts that emancipated outcasts during the reigns of Yongzheng Emperor (雍正 r. 1722–1735) and Qianlong Emperor (乾隆 r. 1735–1796).²² These edicts covered boat people in Zhejiang and South China, but neglected the boat people living on the waters along the Grand Canal in southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu. Moreover, in 1841, the Governor General of Jiangnan and Jiangxi replied to the Daoguang Emperor’s (道光) inquiry about the Dan peoples through the empire that “Jiangsu province has never had such a name for fisherfolk as ‘Dan household’.” The reply even requested that the saltwater fisherfolk be exempted from organizing self-defense *baojia* (保甲) militias because they routinely sail out for fishing early and return late without asking for trouble; they would be useless if forced to join the militia.²³ The reply of the Governor General shows that the local government never recognized the existence of the freshwater boat people and was too weak to govern the saltwater fisherfolk. The relatively weak government control made the boat people’s mentality less bureaucratic, and their

¹⁹ The copious databases of the Ming-Qing archives, such as the Grand Secretariat stored at the Academia Sinica (<http://archive.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/mctkm2c/mctkm2?1^515921831^10^^@515921831>) and the Qing Palace and Grand Council Archives of the National Palace Museum in Taiwan (<http://npmhost.npm.gov.tw/ttscgi/ttswebnpm?@0:0:1:npmmeta::/ts/npmmeta/metamain.htm#@0.8993391982797566>) preserve hundreds of official memorials about the Weishan Lakes, most of which pertain to the hydraulics of or transportation on the Grand Canal. Those who presented the memorials had visited the lake in person, and must have seen boat people drifting on the lake, but evidently were not interested in them. When the Macartney embassy passed through the Grand Canal in 1793, they saw hundreds of thousands of boat people the entire way, especially in the lakes. I will introduce their travel journals later.

²⁰ Sun Mingjing (孫明經), *1937 nian, zhan yun bian shang de lie ying* (1937年：戰雲邊上的獵影[The year 1937: photographs at the edge of war]) (Jinan: Shandong hua bao chu ban she, 2003), 41. The author quoted an official of the Department of Construction of Shandong province who had just finished a visit to the Weishan Lakes in June of 1937.

²¹ Josef Thiel, "Die Wirtschaftliche Ausnutzung Des Nan-Yang Sees (南陽湖) in Süd-Shantung[The Economic Exploitation of the Lake Nanyang (南陽湖) in South Shandong]," *Folklore Studies* 7 (1948): 117.

²² These imperial edicts abrogated the outcast statuses of the musician households in Shanxi and Shaanxi, the hereditary servants in Anhui, the beggar households and the “fisherfolk of the nine surnames” in Zhejiang, and the boat people known as the *Dan* (蠶) or *Tanka* (蛋家) in South China. See Jing Junjian (經君健), *Qing dai she hui de jian min deng ji* (清代社會的賤民等級[Outcasts of the Qing society]) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang ren min chu ban she, 1993); Anders Hansson, *Chinese Outcasts: Discrimination and Emancipation in the Late Imperial China* (Leiden: Brill, 1996).

²³ *Qing shi lu Xuanzong cheng huang di shi lu* (清實錄·宣宗成皇帝實錄[The veritable records of the Qing Dynasty: Daoguang Emperor]) (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1987), vol. 38, *juan 364*, 560.

illiteracy and isolation made them less influenced by official Confucian ideology and values.

The Influence of the Environment

The territory along the Grand Canal in southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu had a long history of floods caused by both the Yellow River and the Huai River. These floods forced some residents to give up houses and property on land and seek alternative sources of livelihood, either by living on boats or by wandering around as beggars. The boat people, the subject of this dissertation, were descendants of people who were displaced by floods and decided to begin living on the water instead of becoming vagrants begging in villages all over China. Studies and Records on vagrants abound, but records about boat people are scarce. Though voiceless in written records, the boat people were not as vulnerable as homeless beggars. Living on boats enabled them to avoid the ruin that the frequent droughts and floods in this area brought upon the farmers. Moreover, the fish and aquatic plants in the lakes could provide food and income.

Even though they had fashioned a new way of life, the trauma of their abandonment of the land remain in their collective consciousness and is vividly reflected in their religious Observances, as will be shown in the following chapters. Resettlement on boats deprived them of the opportunity to receive an education and to move up socially. No prohibition against boat people taking the civil service examinations existed, but their mobile and isolated lifestyle restricted access to schools or educated men. As the Chinese proverb says, “Water can either float or overturn a boat.” Boat people were able to evade natural or human disasters and made a living from fishing, but boat dwelling was disadvantageous for improving assets or social status. Though catching fish and harvesting aquatic plants provided food and income, the naturally unstable fluctuation of aquatic products in lakes and the lack of property boundaries restrained the opportunity to accumulate the wealth needed to change their status or occupation. Though some fishing families did become wealthier and acquired better boats or fishing gear, it was difficult for them to resettle on land, because of landmen’s discrimination and their own inherited principles—never to intermarry with landmen and never to buy land and construct houses.²⁴ As a result, the social mobility of these boat people was extremely static. Once they became boat people, it was difficult to change their livelihood, lifestyle, and social status. Social mobility could only exist within the entire boat people community.²⁵

Shared Religious Beliefs and Practices

The boat people’s idiosyncratic ways and rhythms of living not only created their distinctive mentality, but also reshaped their religious practices and beliefs. They had their own ritualists and developed a unique pantheon of deities. This phenomenon is further evidence of the “ritual autarky” that David Johnson has suggested was characteristic of Chinese local religion.²⁶ With regard to religious practices, the boat

²⁴ Sun Mingjing, *1937 nian, zhen yun bian shang de lie ying*, 41. The author quoted an official of the Department of Construction of Shandong province, who had just finished a visit to the Weishan Lakes in June of 1937.

²⁵ Liu Yuhua (劉毓華), “Weishan hu yu min dou zheng shi lue (微山湖漁民鬥爭史略[Brief history of Weishan Lakes fisherfolk’s struggle]),” *WSWSZL* 3(1992): 146. Details will be discussed in Chapter One.

²⁶ David Johnson, *Spectacle and Sacrifice: The Ritual Foundations of Village Life in North China*, 11;

people of the Shandong and Jiangsu lakes have shared a unique ritual tradition for centuries: the *Duangu* (端鼓 the term in Shandong) or *Yugu* (漁鼓 the term in Jiangsu) Ceremony. Several troupes that perform these rituals still exist among these lakes, and they travel around the lakes to serve at about thirty religious ceremonies every year.

Map 0.2 Distribution of the *Duangu* Ceremony



The men in charge of the *Duangu* Ceremony, called *Duangong* (端公), who were also fishermen, officiated over various ritual activities: harvest rituals, lineage rituals, and the ceremonies of a type of volunteer ritual association called *Tangshen* Assembly (*Tangshen hui* 唐神會). The harvest ritual, called Venerating *Daiwang* (*Jing Daiwang* 敬大王), consisted of prayers for good catches before and after the fishing seasons. The lineage ritual, called the Continuation of Genealogy (*xu jia pu* 續家譜) or Venerating Ancestors (*Jing Laozu* 敬老祖), was held by individual lineages every five or ten years. The *Tangshen* Assembly was like a “floating temple” or “floating temple festival,” which I will describe in more detail in Chapter Two. In addition, spirit-mediums were consulted by boat people for healing illness, finding lost persons and belongings, and other daily problems. These spirit-mediums could also practice the ritual for Venerating *Daiwang*. They were the initiators and figureheads of the *Tangshen* Assembly, though the main administrative affairs and the ritual operas were handled by other organizers and *Duangong* respectively. Female spirit-mediums did exist at one time, according to informants and the religious paintings of the boat people, but currently only male mediums serve the floating community.

The boat people also had their own unique pantheon: the spirits of “Heaven and The Waters”, not the usual deities of “Heaven and Earth” of the land-based farmers.

Unlike most saltwater fishing populations, who worshiped the Heavenly Empress (*tian hou* 天后) or Dragon Kings (*long wang* 龍王), the freshwater boat people worshiped *Daiwang* (大王) and *Jiangjun*²⁷ (將軍), gods of lakes and rivers. These *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns* were believed to have contributed to the construction and maintenance of the canal and its locks or bridges before they died, most of them from drowning. The boat people always claim there are thirty-six *Daiwangs* and seventy-two *Jiangjuns*, though the roster of *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns*, whether in the liturgical texts or the scroll paintings of deities, frequently have different numbers. Most *Daiwangs* were hydraulic officials, and *Jiangjuns* were hydraulic workers. *Jiangjuns* follow the lead of *Daiwangs*. *Jinlong si daiwang* (金龍四大王) is believed to be the leader of all *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns*. His name was Xie Xu (謝緒), a loyalist in the Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279) who drowned himself after discovering that the Dowager Empress Xie had been abducted by the Mongols when they conquered the Song. He swore vengeance on the Mongols. When Zhu Yuanzhang (朱元璋), the founder of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), engaged in a battle with the Mongols at the intersection of the Grand Canal and Yellow River, Xie Xu as a spirit was said to have demonstrated his efficacy and fulfilled his oath by assisting Zhu in defeating the Mongols. Thereafter, the first Ming Emperor enfeoffed Xie Xu as *Jinlong si Daiwang*. Since *Jinlong si Daiwang* is the central deity of the boat people under discussion, it is reasonable to infer that their pantheon of deities and ritual tradition did not take its current form earlier than the Ming Dynasty, although the *Duangu* ritualists always claim the establishment of their ritual tradition was in the Tang Dynasty (618–907).²⁸

Besides *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns*, the boat people also worshiped a variety of water gods and goddesses, most of whom have never been documented. Unlike the majority of farmers, who believed that the most important water gods, the Dragon Kings, oversee rivers and oceans and manage rainfall, the freshwater boat people of southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu hated the Dragon Kings, which is reflected in their central ritual opera and customs.²⁹ These dissimilar beliefs and attitudes toward water spirits differentiate the boat people from the land-based farmers.

Besides water deities, the Stove God (*zao jun* 灶君) played a prominent role in the pantheon of the boat people, taking the role the Earth God played in village religious life. The Stove God, whose picture was pasted up on the wall above the stove in the stern of boats, was the closest deity to the boat-dwellers, because all other divinities and ancestors were strictly and carefully stored in a sacred shrine box except during Chinese New Year and the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. As with farmers, the Stove God ascended to the Heavenly Court to report the deeds of each family to the Jade Emperor at the end of the year. However, among the boat people the Stove God, not the Earth God, reported the birth and death of family members to higher spiritual authorities. Since the boat people did not live on land, the Earth God had no special significance for them. Instead, they sacrificed to river and lake gods, wishing not only for an abundant catch, but also for aquatic safety. Boat people believed that each body of water had a

²⁷ *Jiangjun* is often translated as “general,” but like *Daiwang*, *Jiangjun* along the Grand Canal specifically refers to a group of water spirits. Hereafter, I will use *Jiangjun* instead of translating it as “general.”

²⁸ This will be introduced in detail in Chapter Three.

²⁹ Details will be introduced in the following chapters.

patron deity in charge of everything above and underneath it. Thus, they offered sacrifice to a wide variety of water gods and goddesses associated with the rivers and lakes adjoining the Grand Canal in Shandong and Jiangsu provinces, the area they had frequented seasonally to make a living or to escape from floods or droughts.

Seasonal Migratory Boat-dwelling Fishing Communities

This research centers on the boat people frequenting the Weishan Lakes in southwestern Shandong, adjacent to northern Jiangsu. The Shandong boat people occasionally migrated to waters in northern Jiangsu to fish or to harvest aquatic plants, or to flee from natural or human calamities.³⁰ In addition, some local records indicate that northern Jiangsu boat people migrated to the Weishan Lakes in southwestern Shandong. These boat people were similar to seasonal migratory birds crossing over natural barriers and artificial borders. It is difficult to claim one single place as their habitat, but their migration routes can be traced. The fishing communities with which I am concerned moved back and forth seasonally between the lakes of the Grand Canal until the end of the 1970s, when the Chinese Communist government tried to resettle them on land.³¹ In the past, their movements correlated closely with fishing seasons. Early spring was the most productive fishing season because the fish were still in an inactive state. During the summer, some boat people left for lakes in Jiangsu to harvest aquatic plants, such as reeds, cattails, foxnuts, wild rice, water caltrops, and lotus seedpods.

These fishing communities in Shandong and Jiangsu shared certain inland waters and practiced unique ritual traditions. The ritual traditions of *Duangu* are closely related to the boat people's way of life and can only be observed in the aforementioned lakes. In the past, almost every fishing community in those lakes had its own ritualists to perform the *Duangu* Ceremony. With the declining number of ritualists, only a few troupes can now perform the *Duangu* Ceremony for the boat people. These exclusively shared ritual traditions and the similar ways of life characterize the commonality of the freshwater fishing communities in southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu.

The fishing boat people must not be confused with the boatmen of the Grand Canal vessels. The canal boatmen transported tax grain from central and southern China to the political center in Beijing in certain months³² regularly every year during the Ming-Qing periods. When the empty canal boats returned, the boatmen were allowed to carry a certain amount of goods for trade on the way back to their destinations, which supplemented their low income. Most canal boatmen had houses on land as their permanent dwellings, which critically differentiated them from the boat-dwellers, as did

³⁰ In fact, part of the Weishan Lakes once belonged to Jiangsu province before the People's Republic established the Weishan County in 1953 to unify all affairs associated with the Weishan Lakes. Hence, some Jiangsu local records also document the activities of Weishan boat people.

³¹ The resettlement project was not successful at all. Only less than a third of boat-dwellers were assigned houses, and many relocated boat people returned to their houseboats berthed close to the assigned houses. Even today, there were at least 10% boat people still living on boats. See Weishan xian shi zhi ban gong shi (微山縣史志辦公室), ed., *Weishan hu zhi* (微山湖志[Gazetteer of Weishan Lakes]) (Jinan: Huang he chu ban she, 2010), 73–83.

³² The Grand Canal systems had strictly regulated fixed deadlines for grain boats departing from different places since the mid Ming period, in order to prevent delays or corruptions or to avoid lower water levels or the frozen flow of the Grand Canal. See Jing Fang (競放) and Du Jiaju (杜家駒), eds., *Zhongguo yun he* (中國運河[Chinese Grand Canal]) (Nanjing: Jinling shu she, 1997), 42–43.

their origins, religious practices, and ways of living. The fishing boat people's rhythms of living followed the fishing seasons or the harvest cycle of aquatic plants, while the canal boatmen traveled back and forth with grain and goods under strict regulation. The boatmen were officially hired and supervised, and they established some associations to support each other outside their native places, including religious sects and charities. The organizations and religious activities of the canal boatmen have been well studied,³³ but little is known about the fishing boat people's way of life, social organization, and cultural practices.

Categories of Fishing Groups

The Shandong-Jiangsu boat people thought of themselves as divided into three types: the Big-Netters (*dawang bang* 大網幫), the Shotgunners (*qiang bang* 槍幫), and the Dipnetters (*lan bang* 罾幫). Each group used a specific type of fishing gear. The Big-Netters were the richest, fishing with bigger boats and nets. The Dipnetters, the poorest, used small boats and small nets. The Shotgunners hunted wild ducks in winter and spring and set up weirs to catch fish in the off-season. Each group had its own occupational or ecological niche, but tensions among them certainly had existed.³⁴ I will focus specifically on the Dipnetters, the main community I observed during fieldwork, and occasionally address related situations of other types of boat people in this dissertation. Some exceptional Big-Netters were rich enough to resettle on land, but most of them had maintained a boat-dwelling lifestyle, which was based on two principles: never intermarry with landmen and never buy land or construct houses.³⁵ Movement from one group of boat people to another was possible, but it was very difficult to adapt to occupations on land. The lifestyle of exclusive boat-dwelling characterizes the whole community of boat people.

This dissertation only focuses on the boat-dwellers and therefore excludes the part-time fishermen who had houses as their principal dwellings. Boat people and part-time fishermen were essentially different in terms of lifestyles and mobility.³⁶ The part-time fishermen, locally called "lake-people" (*hu min* 湖民), usually lived on the shores of lakes and rivers and occasionally caught fish or harvested aquatic plants during their fallow periods. For boat-dwellers, locally called "fisher-people" (*yu min* 漁民), boats were used equally as sources of income and principal residences, which differentiates them from land-based part-time fishermen. Tensions between boat people and landmen abounded. Landmen often teased or cheated boat people when the latter sold fish; boat people were unable to buy houses or farmland for a long time.³⁷ There

³³ David Kelley, "Sect and Society: The Evolution of the Luo Sect among Qing Dynasty Grain Tribute Fleet Boatmen, 1700–1850" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1986).

³⁴ For instance, the Big-Net Group's big boats and nets would destroy the weirs or ecology of other groups. Details will be introduced in Chapter One.

³⁵ Sun Mingjing (孫明經), *1937 nian, zhen yun bian shang de lie ying*, 41. The author quoted an official of the Department of Construction of Shandong province, who had just finished a visit to the Weishan Lakes in June of 1937.

³⁶ Wu Chih-ho (吳智和), "Ming dai yu hu yu yang zhi shi ye (明代漁戶與養殖事業[The fishing household and aquaculture of the Ming Dynasty])," *Ming dai yan jiu zhuan kan* (明代研究專刊[Journal of Ming Studies]) 2 (1979): 124.

³⁷ Wang Peixun (王培荀), "Weishan hu (微山湖[Weishan Lakes])," *Xiang yuan yi jiu lu* (鄉園憶舊錄

were no legal prohibitions to stop boat people's activities on the land, and they were not mentioned in the imperial edicts about removing outcaste status issued by the Qing Yongzheng Emperor (雍正) in 1723. But all of them, whether rich or not, were discriminated against by people on the land, who often derided them as "lake cats" (*hu maozi* 湖貓子). Like the Dan boat peoples in South China described by Barbara Ward, these water-people tended to accept and internalize the land-people's perceptions of them and their discrimination against them. In this way they shaped their own principles of keeping their distance from landmen, in order to avoid trouble.³⁸

Today, around ninety percent of the boat people in the Weishan Lakes resettle on land. Since the late 1970s, the PRC government started to relocate boat-dwelling people on land by building and assigning houses for them on the newly built dikes. At the two villages I conducted fieldwork, most boat people now live on land, except some old people who are not used to land life or a few poor families who were not assigned settlements by the state and could not afford to buy land houses on their own. Each fishing group was resettled on land as an administrative village in the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, there are still ten percent of boat people living on boats today in the Weishan Lakes.³⁹ Even resettled, many boat people still have houseboats berthed close to their houses. They may live on boats during fishing seasons.

The Scarcity of the Historical Sources on North China's Boat People

Written records about the freshwater boat people in Shandong and Jiangsu are extremely rare. Official documents provide almost no detailed information about their life or culture, since they intentionally avoided governmental control, and little was known by officials about them from the Ming Dynasty through the Republican Period. The earliest official documents are surveys conducted by the penetrative communists⁴⁰ in the early 1950s. These surveys, stored in local archives in Weishan County and the Shandong provincial archives in Jinan, provide extraordinarily valuable information about the social structure, fishing gear and methods, and lifestyles of the boat people before they began to change dramatically with technological innovation and political intervention in the 1960s and 1970s. Along with a report⁴¹ on the fishery of the Weishan Lakes published in 1936, these materials give us an overview of the lifestyle and social structure of the boat people in the first half of the twentieth century.

Educated men were not interested in the life of the boat people and had little contact with them; therefore they did not leave us detailed information about the floating communities. Some literati recorded encounters with boat people on the Grand Canal

[Record of reminiscences of the native place] (Jinan: Qi lu shu she, 1993), 235. Wang wrote this passage in 1845–1846 and said these phenomena had already existed for a long time.

³⁸ Barbara Ward, "A Hong Kong Fishing Village," *Journal of Oriental Studies*, Vol. 1, no. 1 (January, 1954): 195–214.

³⁹ WSHZ, 117.

⁴⁰ Unlike preceding rulers, the grass-roots communists for the first time penetrated into the communities of the boat people to investigate their specific ways of living. These surveys later became the foundation for the communist government to control and resettle the floating population in the 1960s and 1970s.

⁴¹ Sun Shenwu (孫慎五), "Gai jin Weishan hu yu ye ji hua (改進微山湖漁業計劃[Project on improving the fishery of Weishan Lakes])," *Shui chan yue kan* (水產月刊[Monthly journal of fishery]) 3, no. 5&6 (1936): 32–38. Sun was a fishery expert in Jiangsu province. The journal was published by the Shanghai Fish Market of the Ministry of Industry.

between Beijing (北京) and Jiangnan (江南) during the Ming-Qing period.⁴² However, their observations are superficial and brief.⁴³ On the one hand, they looked down on the boat people and showed little interest in their daily life. On the other hand, some literati romanticized the boat people as hermits enjoying a secluded life.⁴⁴ These accounts provide no useful information about the life of the boat people.

Surprisingly, foreigners' travel journals provide some useful information. Members of the Macartney embassy⁴⁵ in 1792–1794, and several subsequent embassies,⁴⁶ documented the fishing methods of the boat people.⁴⁷ Foreign relief workers and hydraulic engineers also left records of them.⁴⁸ Oliver J. Todd, a relief worker and hydraulic engineer during the Republic, even took several photographs of a group of poor boat people in the Weishan Lakes, the main subject of this study, the Dipnetters.⁴⁹ These are virtually the only first-hand accounts of the boat people of Shandong and Jiangsu in the premodern period. The Japanese undertook numerous investigations in North China during the 1930s and 1940s, but only one is about the lake zone in southwestern Shandong.⁵⁰ Japanese military forces did not substantially control

⁴² For instance, Yao Wenran (姚文然 1620–1678) witnessed fishing boats in the Lake Yishan (嶧山湖, today's Lake Zhaoyang) during the mid-Shunzhi reign (1644–1661). See Yao Wenran, “Zhou xing ri ji [舟行日記[Navigation journal],” QSWHB, Vol. 75, 495. Peng Sunyi (彭孫貽 1615–1673) not only encountered fishing boats, but also saw a ritual held overnight in Wenshang county, which seems very similar to the *Duangu* Ceremony. Unfortunately, he only left a poem about the ritual, not the details. See Pen Sunyi, “Guo Liulin wen tiao shen wu ge (過柳林聞跳神巫歌[Hearing spirit-mediums' songs when passing through Liulin village, Wenshang County],” *Ming zhai ji* (茗齋集) (Shanghai: Shang wu yin shu guan, 1934), 30.

⁴³ For example, Wang Peixun (王培荀 1783–1859) mentions boat people of the Weishan Lakes and describes how husbands and wives fished together and how boat people were despised by landsmen in his anecdotes, *Xiang yuan yi jiu lu* (鄉園憶舊錄[Record of reminiscences of the native place]) (Jinan: Qi lu shu she, 1993), 235–37. Unfortunately, the passage is too brief for further discussion.

⁴⁴ Wu Chih-ho gives various examples. See Wu Chih-ho (吳智和), “Ming dai yu hu yu yang zhi shi ye,” 121–22.

⁴⁵ For instance, Aeneas Anderson, *A Narrative of the British Embassy to China, in the Years 1792, 1793, and 1794* (London: J. Debrett, 1795), 73, 89, 196–97, 226–28.; George Leonard Staunton, *An Authentic Account of An Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China* (London: G. Nicol, 1797), 221, 224, 242–44; John Barrow, *Travels in China* (London: A Strahan, 1804), 505–6, 515, 557, 559.

⁴⁶ George Thomas Staunton, *Notes of Proceedings and Occurrences, during the British Embassy to Peking in 1816* (London: Havant Press, 1824), 195, 198, 202, 226.

⁴⁷ These records of “backward fishermen” might have given an impression to European readers that China was no longer a strong country and a progressive civilization, and this might have indirectly influenced the colonial invasion toward China during the nineteenth century. The study of the Chinese freshwater boat people can thus have some significance in global history. This idea was inspired by Kenneth Pomeranz. See Kenneth Pomeranz, “Introduction: World History and Environmental History,” in Edmund Burke and Kenneth Pomeranz eds., *The Environment and World History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), pp. 3–32.

⁴⁸ For example, Oliver Julian Todd, “Incidents with Chinese,” China International Famine Relief Commission 1923–1960, O. J. Todd Papers, Box 28 Folder 7, Hoover Institution, Stanford University; Oliver Julian Todd, “Photographs of Work in Progress,” American National Red Cross and Asian Development Company 1921–1937, O. J. Todd Papers, Box 27 Folder 7, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

⁴⁹ Ibid. The photo will be displayed in Chapter One.

⁵⁰ Tōa Kenkyūjo (東亞研究所), *Santō KoshōGun Chitai No Chiiki ChōSa* (山東湖沼群地帯ノ地域調査[Area report on lake regions of Shandong]) (Tokyo: Tōa Kenkyūjo 東亞研究所, 1940).

the lakes, only urban areas. The so-called “lake zone” actually covered all counties in southwestern Shandong, and the investigators cared about agricultural products, mines, and transportation, rather than aquatic products. Therefore, the investigation does not provide any detailed information about fishing or boat people.

Unexpectedly, a German folklorist, Josef Thiel, left behind an ethnographic report on the economic production of Lake Nanyang (the northern part of the Weishan Lakes) in 1948, which has now become invaluable historical evidence revealing the life and fishing methods of the Weishan boat people.⁵¹ This report provides more detailed information about fishing gear and methods than the aforementioned 1936 report by a Chinese fishery expert. Thiel also noticed how landmen despised the boat people. His report is perhaps the closest to the perspective of boat people.

Unfortunately, most written records about the boat people were written by people outside the floating population. These outsiders’ materials can only give us superficial observations of the boat people’s lives. Most boat people were illiterate and could not leave written accounts. Fortunately, I found an author, Liu Yuhua (劉毓華), who came from a fishing family and received a brief education after becoming a communist cadre in the 1940s, and who wrote down some detailed observations of the boat people’s lives from an insider’s perspective.⁵² Liu Yuhua also describes the boat people’s feelings and experiences of life, which helps us understand their worldview. I also found writings of lakeshore residents, including novels⁵³ and memoirs,⁵⁴ which vividly depict the lives and mentalities of the boat people. These neighbors of the boat people interacted with them, or were part-time fisherman themselves. Though the stories’ plots and names might not be authentic, the descriptions of boat people’s lives and experiences accurately reflect reality and fill some of the gaps in the aforementioned materials.

Besides the sources just mentioned, recent local monographs provide supplementary information about the boat people. Local gazetteers of counties or lakes published in the past three decades provide many details about the boat people, including fishing gear and methods, food and clothing, social organizations, and so forth.⁵⁵ In

⁵¹ Josef Thiel, “Die Wirtschaftliche Ausnutzung Des Nan-Yang Sees (南陽湖) in Süd-Shantung [The Economic Exploitation of the Lake Nanyang (南陽湖) in South Shandong],” *Folklore Studies* 7 (1948): 116-22.

⁵² Liu Yuhua (劉毓華), “Weishan hu yu min ge ming dou zheng shi (微山湖漁民革命鬥爭史 [History of Weishan Lakes fisherfolk’s revolution and struggle],” *Shandong wen shi zi liao xuan ji* (山東文史資料選輯) 32 (1992): 103-10; Liu Yuhua, “Weishan hu yu min dou zheng shi lue,” 143-78.

⁵³ Yin Yunling (殷允嶺), *Da chuan bang* (大船浜 [Big-Boat Group]) (Shijiazhuang: Huashan wen yi chu ban she, 1987); Yin Yunling, *Wei niao* (葦鳥 [Reedbird]) (Jinan: Shandong wen yi chu ban she, 1999).

⁵⁴ Yin Yuchuan (殷豫川), “Xian hua Weishan hu (閒話微山湖 [Reminiscence about the Weishan Lakes],” *Lu e ji* (蓼莪集) (Taipei: Xinan shu ju, 1976), 1-18. Zhang Jiushao (張九韶), *Ai de hu* (愛的湖 [Lakes of love]) (Jinan: Shandong wen yi chu ban she, 1996).

⁵⁵ Shandong shen chu ban zong she Jining fen she (山東省出版總社濟寧分社), ed., *Weishan hu feng qing lu* (微山湖風情錄 [Folk record of the Weishan Lakes]) (Jinan: Shandong you yi shu she, 1987); Shandong sheng Weishan xian di fang shi zhi bian zhuan wei yuan hui (山東省微山縣地方志編纂委員會), ed., *Weishan Xian Zhi* (微山縣志 [Gazetteer of Weishan County]) (Jinan: Shandong ren min chu ban she, 1997); Zheng xie Weishan xian wei yuan hui wen shi wei (政協微山縣委員會文史委), ed., “Jining: yun he wen hua Weishan bu fen gao jian (濟寧·運河文化 (微山部分稿件)) [Jining: Grand Canal culture, the materials on Weishan],” manuscript, 1998; Hongze hu zhi bian zhuan wei yuan hui (洪澤湖志編纂委員會), ed., *Hongze hu zhi* (洪澤湖志 [Gazetteer of Hongze Lakes]) (Beijing: Fang zhi chu ban she, 2003); Shandong

addition, monographs on local culture,⁵⁶ and the Ten Collections and Annals of Chinese Ethnic/Folk Literature and Arts, launched by the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China, also preserve some valuable information about the *Duangu* Ceremony, including its history, ritual practices, and opera scripts and stories.⁵⁷ In fact, these materials from the Ten Collections provided the basic information needed to conduct fieldwork and helped me earn the trust of the boat people.

Records from northern Jiangsu also contain valuable evidence about the Weishan boat people of Shandong. The Shandong and Jiangsu fishing communities shared some *Duangu* ritual traditions and certain fishing gear and methods. Some Weishan boat people were originally from northern Jiangsu and still speak with a Jiangsu accent.⁵⁸ Their Jiangsu dialectal accent⁵⁹ shows the close relationship with the northern Jiangsu

sheng Weishan xian di fang shi zhi bian zhuan wei yuan hui (山東省微山縣地方志編纂委員會), ed., *Weishan Xian Zhi* (微山縣志[Gazetteer of Weishan County]) (Jinan: Shandong ren min chu ban she, 2009); Weishan xian shi zhi ban gong shi (微山縣史志辦公室), ed., *Weishan hu zhi* (微山湖志[Gazetteer of Weishan Lakes]) (Jinan: Huang he chu ban she, 2010).

⁵⁶ Mia Jing (苗晶), Jin Xi (金西), and Xing Xue (星學), eds., "Weishan hu *Duangu qiang* (微山湖端鼓腔)," *Shandong min jian ge qu lun shu* (山東民間歌曲論述[Studies on Shandong folk ballads]) (Jinan: Shandong ren min chu ban she, 1983), 75–79; Chen Yan (陳炎), "Duangu qiang yin yue (端鼓腔音樂 [Music of *Duangu* Ceremony])," in Xin Li (辛力) and Anlu Xing (安祿興), eds., *Shandong di fang qu yi yin yue* 山東地方曲藝音樂[Music of Shandong local music narrations] (Jinan: s.n., 1987), 90–93; WSHFQ, 78–80; Chen Yan (陳炎), "Hu shang *Duangu qiang* (湖上端鼓腔[*Duangu* Ceremony on lakes])," *WSWSZL* 2 (1988): 102–12; Chen Yan (陳炎), "Duangu qiang (端鼓腔)," in Weishan xian min jian wen xue san ji cheng ban gong shi (微山縣民間文學三集成辦公室), ed., *Weishan xian min jian wen xue san ji cheng* (微山縣民間文學三集成[Three collections of folk literature of Weishan County]) (Weishan: Weishan xian min jian wen xue san ji cheng ban gong shi, 1989), 223–25.

⁵⁷ Zhongguo xi qu zhi bian ji wei yuan hui (中國戲曲志編輯委員會) and Zhongguo xi qu zhi Shandong juan bian ji wei yuan hui (中國戲曲志·山東卷編輯委員會), eds., *Zhongguo xi qu zhi. Shandong juan* (中國戲曲志·山東卷[Annal of Chinese local operas: Shandong volume]) (Beijing: Zhongguo ISBN Center, 1994), 129–30, 158, 380–86; Zhongguo xi qu yin yue ji cheng: Shandong juan bian ji wei yuan hui (中國戲曲音樂集成·山東卷編輯委員會), ed., *Zhongguo xi qu yin yue ji cheng: Shandong juan* (中國戲曲音樂集成·山東卷 [Collection of Chinese opera music: Shandong volume]) (Beijing: Zhongguo ISBN Center, 1996), 887–907; Zhongguo qu yi yin yue ji cheng: Shandong juan bian ji wei yuan hui (中國曲藝音樂集成·山東卷編輯委員會), ed., *Zhongguo qu yi yin yue ji cheng: Shandong juan* (中國曲藝音樂集成·山東卷[Musical collection of Chinese music narration: Shandong volume]) (Beijing: Zhongguo ISBN Center, 1998), 1293–1303; Zhongguo min jian ge qu ji cheng: Shandong juan bian ji wei yuan hui (中國民間歌曲集成·山東卷編輯委員會), ed., *Zhongguo min jian ge qu ji cheng: Shandong juan* (中國民間歌曲集成·山東卷[Collection of Chinese folk ballads: Shandong volume]) (Beijing: Zhongguo ISBN Center, 2000), 697–722, ; Zhongguo qu yi zhi quan guo bian ji wei yuan hui (中國曲藝志全國編輯委員會) and Zhongguo qu yi zhi Anhui juan bian ji wei yuan hui (中國曲藝志·安徽卷編輯委員會), eds., *Zhongguo qu yi zhi. Anhui juan* (中國曲藝志·安徽卷[Annal of Chinese music narration: Anhui volume]) (Beijing: Zhongguo ISBN Center, 2001), 62–65, 176–83, 328–29, 367–70, 381–82, 478; Zhongguo qu yi zhi quan guo bian ji wei yuan hui (中國曲藝志全國編輯委員會) and Zhongguo qu yi zhi Shandong juan bian ji wei yuan hui (中國曲藝志·山東卷編輯委員會), eds., *Zhongguo qu yi zhi. Shandong juan* (中國曲藝志·山東卷[Annal of Chinese music narration: Shandong volume]) (Beijing: Zhongguo ISBN Center, 2002), 87–90, 111–12, 114, 144, 162–63, 170, 209, 222, 399–407, 426, 440–41, 446, 523, 524.

⁵⁸ WSHFQ, 79. Liu Yuhua, "Weishan hu yu min dou zheng shi lue," 146.

⁵⁹ Local residents of both southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu speak "Central Plain Mandarin," but have different accents. From the perspective of linguistics, what people of these two places speak are not dialects. However, from the perspective of local people, this is a dialectal difference. Local residents

region. In the three Observances for the Continuation of Genealogy I observed in Weishan County, Shandong, numerous lineage members who are boat people from Jiangsu and still live in the traditional way were present. Some Weishan residents also participate in similar Observances held in Jiangsu. All this shows that the fishing communities in the two provinces are substantially the same group of people. They share a common language, live in similar freshwater environments, maintain parallel boat-dwelling lifestyles, use similar fishing gear and methods, possess similar memories of great floods, and preserve the same religious beliefs and practices related to life on the water. Therefore, the consultation of Jiangsu records on boat people, such as local gazetteers, can also help in understanding the boat people of the Weishan Lakes in Shandong, who are my primary subject.

The Jiangsu government accused the boat people of belonging to a sect, the *Hongsan jiao* (紅三教), or “Red Three Teaching”⁶⁰ in 1958 and thereafter cracked down on all of their religious activities. Therefore, the provincial archives preserve some details of their beliefs and practices. I was fortunate to know a retired policeman, Lu Zhongwei (陸仲偉), who managed the materials on sectarianism in Jiangsu, including *Hongsan jiao*. Lu⁶¹ and his apprentice Shen Shunya (沈順芽)⁶² compiled remarkably detailed information from testimony in the trials of *Hongsan jiao* leaders and followers. Some of the ritual objects, liturgies, deities, and operas of what the authorities called the *Hongsan jiao* are surprisingly similar to the *Duangu* Ceremony in Shandong.⁶³ These trial materials fill gaps that most published books and my own ethnography cannot cover.

Incorporating Ethnography with History

Given the scarcity of written materials, we also need to rely on fieldwork to fill the gaps in the historical record. Fieldwork can supplement historical sources only if we assume there is no radical discontinuity between the present and the past. Fortunately, the floating community has preserved many customs and religious beliefs and practices, thanks to their mobility and isolation that helped them avoid governmental control or reduced the influence of land-based people. The *Duangu* Ceremony was always held secretly on several boats tied together as a platform in the deep zone on lakes far away from the land. Even shore residents who had been settled for generations never saw the *Duangu* Ceremony.⁶⁴ Their ritual practices and beliefs did not vanish immediately after

can obviously discern the accent differences. Some terms are also different. These boat people were considered as outsiders by the residents of southwestern Shandong. Therefore, I use the term “dialectal accent.”

⁶⁰ HSJHB, 1.

⁶¹ Lu Zhongwei (陸仲偉), “*Hongsan jiao* (紅三教),” unpublished manuscript, (Nanjing, 2006).

⁶² Shen Shunya (沈順芽), ed. “*Jiangsu sheng fan dong hui dao men zi liao: Hongsan jiao* (江蘇省反動會道門資料：紅三教 [Materials on reactionary sectarianism in Jiangsu: *Hongsan jiao*],” unpublished manuscript, (Nanjing: Jiangsu sheng gong an ting [江蘇省公安廳 Jiangsu Provincial Public Security Department], 1988).

⁶³ There also are differences between the *Duangu* Ceremony and what was called the *Hongsan jiao*. Some of them are localized differences. But a number come from the problematic label of *Hongsan jiao* which indiscriminately included all kinds of religious activities of fishermen. The content and history of the so-called *Hongsan jiao* deserve future study.

⁶⁴ Chen Yan (陳炎), “*Duangu qiang yin yue* (端鼓腔音樂 [Music of the *Duangu* Ceremony]),” in Xin Li (辛力) and Anlu Xing (安祿興), eds., *Shandong di fang qu yi yin yue* (山東地方曲藝音樂 [Music of the

the communists began penetrating the floating community in the early 1950s. A 1953 official report recorded that at least 40 % of the boat people still worshiped deities and burnt incense and paper money to *Daiwangs*; sick boat people still consulted spirit-mediums to heal their diseases.⁶⁵ Although a large number of ritual objects and scrolls were discarded or destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and other anti-religious campaigns, the mobile floating community was relatively less vulnerable than people who lived on land and better able to preserve its traditions. Thanks to the oral tradition of the *Duangu* ritualists, the ritual liturgies and opera scripts have been passed down without written texts. In the past, even non-ritualist fishermen memorized parts of scripts, because the *Duangu* ritual operas were their only entertainment and they sang songs from them daily.⁶⁶ Although most current published materials state that the *Duangu* Ceremony was not performed during the Cultural Revolution, the *Duangu* ritualists and the boat people themselves clearly remember that, even during the hardest times, simplified ceremonies were clandestinely held on lakes.⁶⁷ Indeed, while some *Duangu* ritualists⁶⁸ suffered political persecution during that time in the name of “feudal superstition,” the *Duangu* ritual tradition still continued, thanks to its oral tradition and the mobility and isolation of the boat-dwelling lifestyle.⁶⁹ Customs and religious activities were reinvigorated soon after the end of the Cultural Revolution because the practices of the ritualists were never actually interrupted. For instance, a Duan (段) family still preserves a set of old scrolls that were made one hundred years ago.⁷⁰ Even today, despite resettlement of 90% boat people on land, their religious beliefs and customs are so sacred to and closely related to the aquatic safety and survival of the boat people and water-associated workers that not many people dare to challenge the traditional religious beliefs and practices. The boat people’s strict preservation of religious tradition has therefore allowed me to use fieldwork as a way to approach the little known world of the freshwater fishing boat dwellers in the past as well as the present.

Shandong local musical narration]) (Jinan: s.n., 1987), 90.

⁶⁵ BDYMC, 159.

⁶⁶ Interview with Shen Jiaru (沈家如), one of the head *Duangu* ritualists, on June 21, 2009 at Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong (山東省微山縣新建村).

⁶⁷ Ibid. QYZSD, 89.

⁶⁸ For example, one of the most influential *Duangu* ritualists in the Weishan Lakes, Yang Guangde (楊廣德), was imprisoned in a “boat hole.” See: Zeng Xianjin (曾現金) and Jia Hongmei (賈紅梅), “Yang Chengxing: cong yi 23 nian de shao zhuang Weishan hu *Duangu* qiang chuan cheng ren (楊成興：從藝 23 年的少壯微山湖端鼓腔傳承人 [Yang Chengxing: a young successor of the *Duangu* Ceremony, who has practiced for 23 years],” *Qi lu wan bao* (齊魯晚報 [Shandong evening newspaper]), July 6, 2007. His grandson Yang Chengxing (楊成興) is now one of the head *Duangu* ritualists in Weishan County and was recently granted the title of “Successor of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage” by the Ministry of Culture in 2011.

⁶⁹ Of course, we cannot assume that everything I witnessed during the fieldwork exactly resembled those rituals that were practiced before the Cultural Revolution and earlier. As David Johnson suggests in his discussion on the reconstructed ritual practices and objects for the *Fan-Drum Roster of the Gods* in Renzhuang Village of southwestern Shanxi, it is unwise to accept or reject the contemporary ritual practices uncritically. But the general structure and the main elements of older rituals can still be revealed in current ritual activities. See Johnson, *Spectacle and Sacrifice*, 38–39.

⁷⁰ This information was imparted by Jin Lei (金磊) on April 19, 2010. Jin is *Duangu* ritualist and scroll painter.

I was the first scholar to observe the entire process of the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy for four continuous days and nights. The authors of previous investigations of the *Duangu* Ceremony relied on interviews or partial observation.⁷¹ As a result, they failed to touch upon the critical parts of the ceremony, which are held clandestinely in the dark of night. The boat people usually refuse requests from outsiders to watch the entire process and prohibit the participants from revealing what has been done secretly. In fact, I was not allowed to observe the entire ceremony in my first period of fieldwork in October of 2008. But eventually I gained the trust of the ritualists and participants and in the spring of 2009 I was invited by the head ritualist, Shen Jiuru (沈家如), who is also the head of his lineage, to observe and record the complete process of the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy held by the Shen lineage in November of 2009. I was invited again the next year to observe the ceremony held by the Hu (胡) lineage. Meanwhile, one leader of the Hu lineage introduced me to the leaders of the *Tangshen* Assembly, held in another village, which unfortunately overlapped with the last two days of the ceremony of the Hu lineage. I could only observe some of the rituals of the *Tangshen* Assembly, not only because of the overlap, but also due to my unfamiliarity with the other troupe of *Duangu* ritualists. I am nevertheless the first scholar who has observed and recorded information about the *Tangshen* Assembly, which has never been described before in any publication.

Fieldwork not only provided me with an opportunity to directly observe undocumented religious practices and beliefs, and study unpublished texts, but also gave me a chance to intimately interact with real people and to ask questions that could not be answered by the written accounts. I also collected manuals of deity scroll painters, various families' scrolls of deities and ancestors, scripts and liturgies of ritual operas performed in the *Duangu* Ceremony, and recently compiled and published genealogies. These first-hand materials make possible a far more complete picture of the life of the northern freshwater boat people than we could create using only the written records mentioned above. The fieldwork also offered me an opportunity to gain an understanding of the mentality of the boat people, an understanding rarely reflected in written records, especially those created by people outside the floating community.

Fieldwork allowed me to get closer to the memories, experiences, worldview, and mentality of the boat people. The memory of having to resettle on boats due to displacement by floods was often recalled when assigning blame for the low standard of living of the boat-dwelling lifestyle. Although the boat people benefitted from their water-borne mobility during certain periods to avoid natural disasters, wars, and political control, such as taxes, corvée services and conscription, they blamed the boat-dwelling lifestyle for causing their poverty, lack of education, and low social status.

⁷¹ Zhang Shishan (張士閃) and Gao Jianjun (高建軍), “Weishan hu yu min duan gu xi yi shu tan jie (微山湖漁民“端鼓戲”藝術探解[Exploration of the *Duangu* opera of Weishan Lakes fishermen]),” *Qi lu yi yuan* (齊魯藝苑), no. 01 (1996): 29–33. Both Zhang and Gao never observed the *Duangu* Ceremony in person. Xin Cui (辛翠), “Weishan hu *Duangu* xi yi shu chu tan (微山湖端鼓戲藝術初探[Preliminary exploration of the *Duangu* opera in the Weishan Lakes])” (MA thesis, Fujian Normal University (福建師範大學), 2008). Xin does not touch upon the critical rituals, but only focuses on the music and performance. Ou Lanxiang (歐蘭香), “Lu xi nan *Duangong* xi yuan liu kao (魯西南端公戲源流考[Investigation of the origin of the *Duangu* opera]),” *Zhongguo yin yue xue* (中國音樂學) 01(2010): 75–79. Ou only reorganized secondary or indirect evidence without adding new information about the *Duangu* Ceremony.

The distinct history and lifestyle of these boat people, as well as their reconstructed memory, created a unique mentality. The boat people's social relations, relationships with the state, and rhythms of living, as well as their sense of space, worldview, and relationship with the spirits of Heaven and the waters, differed from that of the farmers. Their perception of space, living as they did on water, was relatively more fluid, whereas the worldview of the sedentary farmers was more fixed. For instance, landsmen usually believed that each territory was overseen by a specific deity. City Gods were in charge of urban areas, while Earth Gods took care of smaller local affairs in villages. For the boat people, territories were not delimited by fixed natural or artificial landmarks, and City Gods and Earth Gods meant little to them. Their territorial boundaries were delineated by the flow of waters. For instance, *Jinlong si Daiwang*, originally the patron deity in charge of the Grand Canal, expanded his influence to the tributaries of the Grand Canal and even went upstream to the upper valley of the Yellow River through the intersection of the two rivers. In addition, the boat people had an old saying that “the boats having no legs can travel to the end of the world,”⁷² which characterizes their mobility and the mentality of being ready to flee from disasters. This phrase repeatedly appeared in my conversations with boat people. Moreover, they often described their perception of the world they lived in as having “three dimensions facing the water, one facing the Heaven,”⁷³ which differs from the landsmen fundamentally in terms of ecology. These common phrases reflect the mentality of boat people. Only by way of fieldwork can we truly understand the mentality of the boat people and reveal their rarely known pantheon of deities.

Distinction between the Freshwater and Saltwater Fisheries

The cultures of freshwater and saltwater boat people were quite different. Some saltwater boat people have already been thoroughly investigated. For instance, the *Tanka*, or “Dan Peoples” (*danmin* 蛋民) of South China, who were mainly saltwater⁷⁴ South China, have been extensively studied by outstanding scholars, including Chen Hsü-ching⁷⁵ (陳序經), Maurice Freedman,⁷⁶ Barbara Ward,⁷⁷ Helen Siu (蕭鳳霞) and Liu Zhiwei (劉志偉),⁷⁸ Ye Xian'en (葉顯恩),⁷⁹ David Faure,⁸⁰ and Michael Szonyi.⁸¹

⁷² The original Chinese phrase is *chuan di wu tui zou tian ya* 船底無腿走天涯.

⁷³ The idiom in Chinese is *san mian chao shui, yi mian chao tian* 三面朝水、一面朝天. The three dimensions they meant are the front, the rear, and the under.

⁷⁴ Some Dan boat people went upstream to freshwater domains, but their lifestyle basically remained identical to their saltwater cohorts.

⁷⁵ Chen Hsü-ching (陳序經), *Dan min de yan jiu* (蛋民的研究 [Research on Dan peoples]) (Shanghai: Shangwu yin shu guan, 1946).

⁷⁶ Maurice Freedman, *Chinese Lineage and Society: Fukien and Kwangtung* (London: Athlone Press, 1966).

⁷⁷ Barbara Ward, *Through Other Eyes: An Anthropologist's View of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1989).

⁷⁸ Helen F. Siu, (蕭鳳霞) and Liu Zhiwei (劉志偉), “Zong zu, shi chang, dao kou, yu Dan min: Ming yi hou Zhu jiang san jiao zhou de zu qun yu she hui (宗族、市場、盜寇與蛋民——明以后珠江三角洲的族群與社會 [Lineage, market, pirate and Dan: ethnicity and society in the Pearl River Delta since the Ming Dynasty]),” *Zhongguo she hui jing ji shi yan jiu* (中國社會經濟史研究), vol. 2004, no. 3 (2004): 1–13.

⁷⁹ Ye Xian'en (葉顯恩), “Notes on the Territorial Connections of the Dan,” in David Faure and Helen F.

Thus, our current understanding of boat people is based on research on saltwater fishing communities. But there are significant distinctions between freshwater and saltwater boat people. The risks they face are quite different, as are their fishing gear and methods. The freshwater boat people of Shandong and Jiangsu have preserved family genealogies and developed an innovative way of maintaining their lineages, which is remarkably different from that used by their saltwater counterparts, who had no genealogies and lineages before resettling on land.⁸² In addition, the population of freshwater fisherfolk was much larger than the saltwater fishing population before modern technology was applied to boating and fishing around the turn of the twentieth century.⁸³ Therefore, the history of the majority boat people, the freshwater fisherfolk, should not be overlooked. Wu Chih-ho (吳智和) is a pioneer scholar of Chinese fishery history who collects copious historical materials associated with fisheries and who raises various questions that deserve further exploration.⁸⁴ Wu pays a lot of attention to the freshwater fishery, since the saltwater counterpart had not matured during the Ming Dynasty. Obayashi Taryo (大林太良) was perhaps the first scholar to pay attention to the study of freshwater fisherfolk.⁸⁵ Inspired by Obayashi, Suzuki Mitsuo (鈴木滿男) explored the “Nine Surnames” fisherfolk in Zhejiang province.⁸⁶ Yin Lingling (尹玲玲) has published two books on the freshwater fishery in the valley of the Yangtze River and the Dongting Lakes (洞庭湖) and one article centering on Lake Tai (太湖). These provide valuable historical texts and information about the fishery economy and policy in the Ming-Qing period.⁸⁷ Zhu Nian (朱年) and Chen Juncai (陳俊才) have thoroughly studied the fishing

Siu, eds., *Down to Earth: The Territorial Bond in South China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 83–88.

⁸⁰ David Faure, *Emperor and Ancestor: State and Lineage in South China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

⁸¹ Michael Szonyi, *Practicing Kinship: Lineage and Descent in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).

⁸² Barbara Ward, “Varieties of the Conscious Model: The Fishermen of South China,” in Michael Banton, ed., *The Relevance of Models for Social Anthropology* (London: Tavistock, 1965), 127–28. Maurice Freedman, *Chinese Lineage and Society: Fukien and Kwangtung* (London: Athlone Press, 1966), 93–94. He Xi (賀喜), *Yi shen yi zu: Yue xi nan xin yang gou jian de she hui shi* (亦神亦祖：粵西南信仰構建的社會史[Being deities and ancestors simultaneously: social history constructed in southwest Guangdong’s religious beliefs]) (Beijing: San lian shu dian, 2011), 254.

⁸³ For instance, the freshwater fishermen of Jiangsu province during the Republican period amounted to an overwhelming percentage, 87.5%. Of 240,000 fishing population, 210,000 were freshwater fishermen. In 1952, the population of freshwater fishermen increased to 307,300; meanwhile, just under 69,300 saltwater fishermen existed. See JSSCZ, 318.

⁸⁴ Wu Chih-ho (吳智和), “Ming dai yu hu yu yang zhi shi ye (明代漁戶與養殖事業[The fishing household and aquaculture of the Ming Dynasty],” *Ming dai yan jiu zhuan kan* (明代研究專刊[Journal of Ming Studies]) 2 (1979): 109–64.

⁸⁵ See Obayashi Taryo (大林太良), “Chugoku nairiku no mizubito tachi (中国内陸の水人たち [Water-people of inland China],” *Kikan Jinruigaku* (季刊人類學[Quarterly Journal of Anthropology]) no. 13(2) (1982): 148–52.

⁸⁶ Suzuki Mitsuo (鈴木滿男), “漁：浙江省北部、富春江で出会った水上民[Wandering Fishermen on the Fuchun River in northern Zhejiang],” *Minzokugaku kenkyu* (民族学研究[Japanese Journal of Ethnology]) 55, no. 1 (1990): 69–75.

⁸⁷ Yin Lingling (尹玲玲), *Ming Qing chang jiang zhong xia you yu ye jing ji yan jiu* (明清長江中下游漁業經濟研究[Research on fishery economy in the lower Yangtze Valley during the Ming-Qing period])

gear and methods and the fisherfolk's customs and folklore of Lake Tai, which has inspired my own research.⁸⁸ Liang Hongsheng (梁洪生) has deeply investigated the history of fishery regulation and fisherfolk lineages in the Boyang Lakes (鄱陽湖).⁸⁹ All of these milestone studies significantly contribute to our understanding of the freshwater fishery. However, little attention has been paid to the valley of the Huai River or Yellow River, or North China in general. The Weishan Lakes is the largest lake in North China and its fishery and boat people deserve careful study. This dissertation can help broaden our understanding of the history and culture of the freshwater fisherfolk in North China.

Outline of Chapters

The main body of this study is divided into three parts. The first chapter describes the boat people's idiosyncratic ways and rhythms of living. The second chapter outlines the ritual activities and practitioners who led them and then describes the pantheon of deities worshiped by the boat people, which reflects their distinctive aspirations and which is related to their aquatic life. The third chapter illustrates the unique religious practices developed by the boat people in response to life on the water. I argue that the boat people's ways and rhythms of living fundamentally altered their socio-economic status, which then reshaped their mentality and culture to adapt to life on the water. The environmental factors did not simply change the life and culture of the boat people, but intricately transformed them through socio-economic mechanisms. The boat-dwelling lifestyle limited their chances to receive an education or to accumulate wealth; therefore, the social mobility of the boat people became extraordinarily stagnant. In order to adapt to the boat-dwelling lifestyle and maintain a good relationship with the waters, boat people had to create new religious practices and beliefs. By looking deeply into their religious practices and beliefs, we can learn more about how the environment interplayed and interlocked with the cultural, economic, and social elements of their lives. As well as evident differences between the boat people and land-based farmers, this study will

(Jinan: Qi lu shu she, 2004); "Ming Qing shi qi Tai hu liu yu de yu ye sheng chan : yi Suzhou, Songjiang, Changzhou di qu wei li (明清時期太湖流域的漁業生產——以蘇州、松江、常州地區為例[Fishery production of the Lake Tai during the Ming-Qing period])," *Gu jin nong ye* (古今農業)2(2004): 28–35; *Ming Qing liang hu ping yuan de huan jing bian qian yu she hui ying dui* (明清兩湖平原的環境變遷與社會應對[The environmental change and social response of the Dongting Lakes during the Ming-Qing period]) (Shanghai: Shanghai ren min chu ban she, 2008).

⁸⁸ Zhu Nian (朱年) and Chen Juncai (陳俊才), *Tai hu yu su* (太湖漁俗[Fishery customs of the Lake Tai]) (Suzhou: Suzhou da xue chu ban she, 2006).

⁸⁹ Liang Hongsheng (梁洪生), "Lao bu quan de zheng duo: si ye, guan he yu xi guan—dui Boyang hu qu yu min li shi wen shu de jie du (捕撈權的爭奪:“私業”、“官河”與“習慣”——對鄱陽湖區漁民歷史文書的解讀[Fighting for fishing rights: private fisheries, registry rivers, and customs——an interpretation of the historical documents about fishermen in the Poyang Lakes])," *Qinghua da xue xue bao(zhe xue she hui ke xue ban* (清華大學學報[哲學社會科學版][Journal of Tsinghua University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)]) 5(2008): 48–60+159; "Cong si lin wai dao da fang: Boyang hu qu Zhang shi pu xi de jian gou ji qi yu min hua jie ju—jian lun Minguo di fang shi liao de you xiao xing ji duan shi duan fen xi wen ti (從“四林外”到大房:鄱陽湖區張氏譜系的建構及其“漁民化”結局——兼論民國地方史料的有效性及“短時段”分析問題[From “Beyond the Four Woods” to the main branch: construction of the genealogy of the Zhang lineage in the Lakes Boyang and its eventual subjugation to the fishing industry——with a discussion of the validity of Republican local historical data and “micro-periodic” analysis])," *Jin dai shi yan jiu* (近代史研究[Modern Chinese History Studies]) 2(2010): 76–92+3.

explore important similarities in their religious practices and beliefs. I maintain that these common elements of religious practice and beliefs reveal some core elements of Chinese popular religion shared by most Han Chinese. The first chapter will introduce the physical and social settings of the floating community in Shandong. Life on the water was enormously different from life on the land. The dangers faced by boat-dwellers were quite different from the dangers that land-based farmers ordinarily encountered. Moreover, boat people made their living by fishing, and their lifestyle was therefore closely adapted to fishing seasons, which obviously are different from farming seasons. The boat people's daily, monthly, annual, and life cycle rhythms were distinct from those of land-based farmers. Their religious beliefs and practices were also closely associated with boat-dwelling and fishing activities, and they developed socio-cultural institutions that were adapted to aquatic life. For instance, their frequent mobility, another feature of their water-borne lifestyle, made it difficult for kin members to reunite for ancestral worship or tomb-sweeping, as the land-based people usually did. Furthermore, the main target property of family division among boat-dwellers centered on boats and fishing gear, as well as religious objects, rather than land and houses. As a result, a distinct form of family division was created among them. All the settings mentioned above, including the physical environment and socio-cultural context, have conditioned and shaped the religious beliefs and practices of the boat-dwellers. The second chapter will briefly introduce the ritual activities and specialists of the boat people and then decipher the pantheon of the floating community by examining the scrolls of deities and ancestors, ritual operas, ritual objects and texts, and the spatial setting of the *Duangu* ceremony. The floating community developed a distinctive way of maintaining and renewing the relationship with ancestors and divinities. Three types of vital rituals will be briefly outlined: the Harvest Ritual (Venerating *Daiwang*), the Lineage Ritual (Continuation of Genealogy), and the *Tangshen* Assembly. The latter two are different forms of the *Duangu* Ceremony. The ritual specialists in the floating community play pivotal roles not only in ritual activities, but also for cultural communication and interpretation within and beyond the boat people. Two types of ritualists will be introduced in detail: spirit-mediums and *Duangong* ritual masters/opera performers.

As for the pantheon of the floating community, boat people worship the spirits of Heaven and the waters adjacent to the Grand Canal. Each boat-dweller family has a set of scroll paintings of deities and ancestors that they carefully store. Each set has about eleven to thirteen scrolls, depending on the economic status of the family. These scrolls play a pivotal role in the whole Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. Every five or ten years, the *Duangong* ritualists, along with scroll painters, help renew these paintings of deities and ancestors, symbolizing the reconnection with divine protectors. In this chapter, each scroll will not be investigated in detail. Instead, I will focus on the most significant deities of the pantheon, in terms of the functions and symbolic meanings associated with boat people's life and culture. Combining the analysis of scroll paintings with the interpretation of ritual materials and the spatial setting of the ritual, this chapter will reconstruct the hierarchy and structure of the pantheon of the floating community, of which almost nothing has been known up until now. The most characteristic feature of these pantheons is the existence of numerous water spirits. The ancestral scroll, with the help of literate scroll painters, records the patrilineal family tree, which preserves family history and critically differentiates the Shandong/Jiangsu boat people from the Dan boat

peoples of South China. The variations in scroll combinations also demonstrate the freedom of the boat people to manipulate the arrangement of deities to meet the demands of each family. The floating community had their own ritualists and created their own arrays of deities to support their religious practices and beliefs. This phenomenon seems to support David Johnson's observation of villages in North China—the “competent village” with independence, creativity, and self-consciousness.⁹⁰

The second chapter will also introduce another important *Duangu* ritual of the boat people: the *Tangshen* Assembly. Unlike the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy, participation in the *Tangshen* Assembly was not compulsory. Actually, there was more than one *Tangshen* Assembly. For instance, the two adjacent villages⁹¹ in which I conducted fieldwork have five assemblies, and participants in each assembly came from both villages. Individuals could belong to more than one assembly. Each one had an initiator, several organizers, and a number of followers. The activities of the *Tangshen* Assembly did not take place daily or monthly, and anyone could take part. This cannot thus be called sectarian activity. Each assembly held a multi-day Observance every three or five years, structurally similar to the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. The ritualist-performers were identical, and several ritual operas were common. What this section will emphasize are the different parts: how the volunteer assemblies were organized, what functions they performed, what distinct opera stories they performed, and why there were such differences between the Continuation of Genealogy and the *Tangshen* Assembly. My investigation shows that these *Tangshen* Assemblies, along with the Patriarch Hua Assembly (華祖會), which was unique to physicians, might be water-borne versions of temples. I also found that in the neighboring Jiangsu province, the ritual practices of the boat people were astonishingly similar, but there, as mentioned earlier, the government labeled them a religious sect: the *Hongsan jiao* (紅三教) or “Red Three Teaching”. This “sect” prevailed among boat people in the waters of northern Jiangsu where my main subjects, the Weishan boat-dwellers, frequently visited and stayed for seasonal fishing or the harvesting of aquatic plants, or even for shelter from natural disasters or wars in Shandong. Such types of floating religious organizations are little known and have much to teach students about the variation and consistency of Chinese popular religion.

The third chapter will detail the *Duangu* Ceremony by illustrating a significant lineage ritual called the “Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy,” which I have observed in its entirety several times during my fieldwork. This Observance intertwines both ritual activities and opera performances. It was created by the floating community to cope with problems created by living on the water. The contemporary occupations of most lineage members are still associated with aquatic life but more diversified: fisherfolk, boatman, bargee, or ferryman. Hence, they have to move around to make a living. Dispersed boat-dwellers could not easily reunite for ancestor worship every year as landsmen usually did at tombs or ancestral shrines. Therefore, they invented a new way to worship their ancestors: members of each lineage reunited every five or ten years

⁹⁰ Johnson, *Spectacle and Sacrifice*, 337.

⁹¹ As I have mentioned earlier, most boat people now live on land, except some old people who are not used to land life or a few poor families who were not assigned settlements by the state and could not afford to buy land houses on their own. Each fishing group was resettled on land as an administrative village in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

to hold a lineage ritual and took the chance to continue generational names in their genealogy.⁹² That is why the reunion ritual is called the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. Every lineage among the floating community has such a ritual. Ritual activities used to take place on inter-connected boats and are now usually held on the shore of lakes or rivers. When the Observance is held, lineage descendants convene from a wide range of places, distant or close. During the four-day-and-night Observance, five ritual operas are performed to entertain the divinities and the ancestors, as well as lineage members and community bystanders. Each opera story has its ritual significance and closely relates to certain deities that the boat people worship. A detailed description and interpretation of these ritual operas will be provided in this chapter, along with careful investigation of the ritual objects and texts used throughout the Observance.

A certain number of divinities are shared by the boat people and landmen. Ancestor worship is equally vital to boat people and farmers. Given the distinct living environments, these shared deities can teach students of Chinese popular culture which elements of religious belief and practice are critically significant, transcending differences in occupation, social status, and physical environment. Comparison of the ritual behavior of the boat people and farmers will help us understand the core elements of Chinese popular culture, those features that are the most significant in Chinese popular religion and how and why they play such vital roles.

⁹² Traditional lineages used generational names to signify each descendant's position in the family tree. All kinsmen of the same generation used the same character, usually the first, in their given names. The lineage decided the sequence of the generational names and usually announce this in the genealogy books if they had them. The sequence was often a poem or couplet. See Susan Naquin, "Two Descent Groups in North China: The Wangs of Yung-p'ing Prefecture, 1500–1800," in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and James L. Watson, eds., *Kinship Organization in Late Imperial China, 1000–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 221–22.

CHAPTER ONE

The Setting

微湖泛夏即事 清·顧大申
迅颿愁短艇，截河出危檣。
小市菰為米，漁師芰作裳。

Gales make small fishing boats worry;

Clear and deep waters make boats sail with tall masts.

In the little markets wild rice is the grain;

Fishing masters use stems of water caltrops to make clothes.

Drifting to Xiazhen through the Weishan Lakes, Gu Dashen (c. 1652–1662)

The physical and socio-economic setting of the floating community in southwestern Shandong shaped the lifestyle and mode of economic production for the boat people. The emergence of lakes in this region, caused by floods or canal engineering, dramatically changed the landscape, and then transformed the fate of local residents, who lost land and houses, and resettled in homes on boats. The lakes also attracted a number of boat people from northern Jiangsu to take advantage of a new fishing ground where no taxes were imposed. When these native and migrant boat people converged and gradually formed a community, they brought their own customs and ritual traditions, and they developed a common boat-dwelling lifestyle, as well as shared religious practices and beliefs. This chapter will introduce the physical and socio-economic setting of the boat people and the emergence of a remarkable boat-dwelling lifestyle.

The Landscape of Lakes along the Grand Canal

The research domain of this dissertation covers southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu, a cross-border region where boat-dwelling fishing families moved back and forth. These boat-dwellers traveled among several lakes via the Grand Canal and its tributaries, especially after the gradual formation of the Weishan Lakes between the 1570s and the 1770s. The current Yellow River and the Yangtze River respectively demarcate the northern and southern boundaries of the boat people's movement. The lakes they frequented include, from north to south, Lake Anshan (安山湖) (now called Lake Dongping 東平湖), Weishan Lakes (微山湖), Lake Luoma (駱馬湖), Lake Hongze (洪澤湖), Lake Baima (白馬湖), Lake Gaoyou (高郵湖), and Lake Baoying (寶應湖). This study focuses on the Weishan Lakes in Shandong, where I conducted fieldwork to observe ritual activities and to interview ritual specialists and lay boat people.

The Grand Canal reaches its highest elevation at the Shandong section, which was artificially dug across the Shandong massif and shortened during the Mongol Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368) and the early Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). Before the Yuan Dynasty, the Grand Canal connecting north and South China did not pass through southwestern Shandong, but detoured through Luoyang (洛陽) in Henan (河南) province, since southwestern Shandong was a hilly region that provided no natural waterways flowing north or south. In order to shorten transportation time, the Yuan Emperor Kublai Khan constructed a shortcut between Linqing (臨清) and Jizhou (濟州) (now called Jining 濟寧). Two new canals resulted: Jizhou Canal (濟州河) and Huitong Canal (會通河), which shortened the overall distance by approximately seven hundred kilometers.¹ The Jizhou Canal connecting Anshan (安山) and Jining was completed in 1283,² and the Huitong Canal linking the Jizhou Canal with the Wei River (衛河) to the north at Linqing was completed in 1325.³ However, the water flow was insufficient to sustain stable transportation through the Grand Canal until the Ming Chengzu Emperor (明成祖 1360–1424) ordered irrigation system improvement in the early fifteenth century. Thereafter, a series of canal engineering works were initiated to make the Grand Canal more efficient and less risky for grain transportation from South China to the capital in Beijing. As a result, a number of small lakes gradually emerged adjacent to the Grand Canal, due to the canal engineering.⁴

The establishment of the Shandong Canal and its adjoining lakes created space for fishing boat people to find a new economic niche. Officially, they were not allowed to pass through canal locks routinely, because the canal was mainly meant for official transportation. However, evidence shows that non-commercial boats could pass locks quickly, since they were free of customs obligations.⁵ In 1696, the Qing Kangxi Emperor (康熙 1654–1722) issued an edict to allow non-official vessels to use the Grand Canal at times when official grain transportation was not in a state of emergency.⁶ Kangxi issued

¹ Dong Wenhui (董文虎), et al. eds., *Jing hang da yun he de li shi yu wei lai* (京杭大運河的歷史與未來 [The history and future of the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal]) (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chu ban she, 2008), 17.

² Song Lian (宋濂), *Yuan shi* (元史 [History of the Yuan Dynasty]) (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1976[1370]), *juan* 65.

³ Song Lian, *Yuan shi*, *juan* 64.

⁴ The lakes adjacent to the Grand Canal were formed at various times and for different reasons. A detailed explanation will be introduced in the following sections.

⁵ Du Lin (杜琳), Yuan Cheng (元成), et al., eds., “Tong xing zhao chuan (通行棹船 [Passage of small boats]),” *Xu zhuan huai guan tong zhi* (續纂淮關統志 [Recompiled Gazetteer of the Huaian customs service]) (Beijing: Fang zhi chu ban she, 2006[1881]), 339.

⁶ Pan Shi'en (潘世恩), et al. eds., *Qin ding hu bu cao yun quan shu* (欽定戶部漕運全書 [Imperially endorsed regulations of the Grand Canal of the Ministry of Revenue]) (Haikou: Hainan chu ban she,

another edict in 1715 confirming that non-official vessels could use the Grand Canal and its locks.⁷ In the 1840s, Wang Peixun (王培荀) recorded that hundreds of fishing boats went through the canal locks into Lake Yishan (嶧山湖), part of today's Weishan Lakes, when the locks were opened every morning.⁸ There also were various alternative waterways available for small boats, especially those of fishermen and salt smugglers, to bypass official locks, thus avoiding long waiting times or customs duties.⁹ All of this canal engineering changed the physical and social landscape of southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu.

Environmental History of Lakes

Environmental change began in the mid-Ming period. The Weishan Lakes were gradually formed between the mid-Ming and early Qing periods. Some of the lakes were designed to be reservoirs to control the level of the Grand Canal. As the lake-reservoirs filled up, the houses and lands of lakeside residents were inundated. When people lost their houses and land, they had to survive without farmland. Boat-dwelling and fishing became alternative livelihoods. Compared with farming or begging, fishing was an easier occupation and supplied staple food sources.

2000[1844]), 131.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Wang Peixun (王培荀), Weishan hu (微山湖[Weishan Lakes]), "Xiang yuan yi jiu lu (鄉園憶舊錄 [Record of reminiscences of the native place]) (Jinan: Qi lu shu she, 1993[1845-1846]), 274.

⁹ Du Lin (杜琳), Yuan Cheng (元成), et al., eds., "Wai he (外河[Outer river])," *Xu zhuan huai guan tong zhi* (續纂淮關統志[Recompiled Gazetteer of the Huaian customs service]) (Beijing: Fang zhi chu ban she, 2006[1881]), 53.



Map 1.1 The Lakes Adjoining the Grand Canal (Adapted from maps.baidu.com)

The history of the Weishan Lakes is relatively short. These lakes formed gradually four centuries ago. During 1572–1573, the Yellow River breached its eastern dikes and flooded the Grand Canal, forming several small lakes in the region of today’s Weishan Lakes.¹⁰ These lakes were later designed to conserve water to assist the artificial channel. In 1604, a new canal called Jia River (加河) was built to bypass the Yellow River in order to reduce the risk and instability of Grand Canal transportation.¹¹ The dikes of the new canal blocked the natural drainage from the small lakes; hence the lakes gradually expanded and inundated neighboring land and villages. When Yao Wenran (姚文然 1620–1678) passed by Lake Weishan, then called Lake Yishan, in the mid-seventeenth century, he saw boat-dwelling fisherfolk.¹² We do not know whether these boat people came from neighboring land or if they had migrated from other waters through the Grand Canal. Nevertheless, this witness’s report demonstrates that boat people already existed in the region while the Weishan Lakes were gradually expanding. When Hao Zhiyu (郝質珩 c. 1736–1795) visited Lake Zhaoyang in 1736, he saw gatherings of boat people, including fishing boats and boats with cormorants; some were cooking, others were

¹⁰ Chen Qiaoyi (陳橋驛), *Zhongguo yun he kai fa shi* (中國運河開發史[Development history of the Chinese Grand Canal]) (Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2008), 166.

¹¹ *Ibid.*; Zheng Liandi (鄭連第) ed., *Zhongguo shui li bai ke quan shu: shui li shi fen ce* (中國水利百科全書·水利史分冊[Encyclopedia of Chinese hydraulics: the hydraulic history volume]) (Beijing: Zhongguo shui li shui dian chu ban she, 2004), 25.

¹² Yao Wenran (姚文然), “Zhou xing ri ji (舟行日記),” in *QSWHB*, Vol. 75, 495.

fixing nets, and the rest were singing or gambling.¹³ By 1775, Lake Nanyang, Lake Zhaoyang, and Lake Weishan had already merged to form the Weishan Lakes.¹⁴ In 1793, the Macartney embassy saw abundant fishing boats when they passed through the Weishan Lakes and Lake Dongping. George Leonard Staunton (1737–1801) wrote that “fishing forms a considerable part of the occupation of the people upon this lake. Various methods were employed for that purpose of which that by nets was perhaps the most general.”¹⁵ He also noticed that “in some parts adjoining to the canal, the lakes and morasses rendered cultivation almost impracticable.”¹⁶

A fishery expert emphasizes that fishing, compared with agriculture, is less influenced by natural or artificial disasters. Hence it is common that shore residents, who usually also have fishing boats and gear, shift from agriculture to fishing during periods of poor harvests.¹⁷ Gui Youguang (歸有光 1507–1571), who lived on the shore of Lake Tai (太湖), stated, “hillsides are inferior to low-lying lands, for the latter could take advantage of the incessant benefits of harvesting fish and aquatic plants as sources of livelihood.”¹⁸ The area of southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu, as well as northeastern Anhui, suffered numerous floods of the Yellow River¹⁹ and Huai River before modern hydraulic technology could minimize natural catastrophes. When floods came, boat-dwelling was a common solution for the residents of this area. Examples abound in the gazetteers of Pei County (沛縣) and Teng County (滕縣) during the Ming and Qing periods.²⁰ In 1529, a flood engulfed the capital and countryside of Pei County. As a result, residents all lived on rafts or small boats.²¹ The lakeshore residents usually

¹³ Hao Zhiyu (郝質玕), “You Zhaoyang hu ji (遊昭陽湖記[A journey to the Lake Zhaoyang]),” in Hu Xing (胡星) and Hu Tao (胡濤), eds., *Weishan hu li dai shi wen xuan zhu* (微山湖歷代詩文選注[Selection of historical poems and proses associated with the Weishan Lakes]) (Jinan: Shandong you yi chu ban she, 1987), 136–38.

¹⁴ Lu Yao (陸燿), *Shandong yun he bei lan* (山東運河備覽) (Haikou: Hainan chu ban she, 2001[1775]), *juan* 3, 15. *Ibid.*, *juan* 4, 3.

¹⁵ George Leonard Staunton, *An authentic account of an embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China* (London: G. Nicol, 1797), 211–12; 221–22.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 224.

¹⁷ Hu Hsing-hwa (胡興華), *Taiwan de yu ye* (台灣的漁業 [Fishery of Taiwan]) (Taipei County: Yuan zu wen hua, 2003), 8. The author was the minister of the Fishery Agency of the Executive Yuan in Taiwan.

¹⁸ Gui Youguang (歸有光), “Lun san qu fu yi shui li shu (論三區賦役水利書[Essay on the taxes, corvée labor, and hydraulics of Sanqu]),” in *Gui Zhenchuan quan ji* (歸震川全集[Collection of Gui Youguang’s essays]) (Taipei: Shi jie shu ju, 1963), 89.

¹⁹ The Yellow River flowed into the Huai River and emptied into the Yellow Sea during the period between 1194 and 1855. During this period, the Yellow River passed through the cross-border area between Shandong and Jiangsu provinces, the center of the region covered in this research.

²⁰ The Weishan Lakes belonged to Pei County and Teng County, as well as several counties. The southwest coast of the Weishan Lakes was governed by Pei County of Jiangsu Province, and Teng County of Shandong Province administrated the southeast coast.

²¹ Wang Zhi (王治) et al. eds., *Jiajing Pei xian zhi* (嘉靖沛縣志[Gazetteer of Pei County during the reign

had boats for occasional fishing or transportation. Furthermore, when floods came, building boats to save lives was performed as a merciful act by wealthy people. During the flooding period of 1727, a widow, Madame Bao (鮑氏), built dozens of boats, saved numerous people, and fed them until the flood subsided.²² In 1755 and 1756, southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu suffered a series of floods caused by the Yellow River and the Huai River. In 1756, when Jiang Shiquan (蔣士銓 1725–1784) and his family navigated through the Grand Canal near today’s Weishan Lakes, they witnessed the submerged houses and dikes, as well as inundated farmlands, and saw residents travelling by boat to console each other.²³ The gazetteers show us that boats were often ready for local residents of frequently flooded areas.

Boats offered alternatives for people to escape from floods or obtain temporary dwellings. Oliver J. Todd (1899–1973), chief and consulting engineer for the China International Famine Relief Commission during 1923–1938, photographed pictures of boat-dwellers along lakes bordering the Grand Canal in the 1920s. As the photograph²⁴ below shows, several small boats were tied together to form a water-borne house.

of Jiajing Emperor]) (Shanghai: Shanghai shu dian, 1990[1543]), 236. The original phrase in Chinese is *min jie fa ju* 民皆筏居. In 1529, Lake Zhaoyang (昭陽湖) was already formed in the middle between Pei County and Teng County.

²² Li Tang (李棠), *Qianlong Pei xian zhi* (乾隆沛縣志[Gazetteer of Pei County during the reign of Qianlong Emperor]) (Haikou: Hainan chu ban she, 2001[1740]), 212.

²³ Jiang Shiquan (蔣士銓), “Zi Xiazhen fu Nanyang you shu (自夏鎮赴南陽有述[Description of the trip from Xiazhen to Nanyang]),” *Zhongya tang ji jiao jian* (忠雅堂集校箋) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chu ban she, 1993), 533.

²⁴ Oliver Julian Todd, “Photographs of Work in Progress,” American National Red Cross and Asian Development Company 1921–1937, O. J. Todd Papers, Box 27 Folder 7, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



Photo 1.1 Boat-dwellers in flood time along lakes bordering Grand Canal. (Photograph by Oliver J. Todd)

Some fishing families still preserve the memory of avoiding floods in their lineage genealogies. For instance, one branch of the Zhao lineage in southwestern Shandong quit their land-based houses and became boat people six generations after resettlement from Shanxi province, because the water level of the Weishan Lakes rose and inundated their property.²⁵ From then on, they became boat-dwellers.

The formation of Weishan Island is the best demonstration of the rising water level of the Weishan Lakes. “Weishan” literally means “Wei Mountain” and takes its name from the legend that Prince Wei (?–987 BC) of the Shang Dynasty was enfeoffed and buried there.²⁶ Because of its height, Wei Mountain became a major settlement point for inundated families. The rising Weishan Lakes eventually turned the mountain into an island. In the 1990s an official of the Hydraulic Bureau of Weishan County, Hu Wenjun (胡文駿), carefully investigated the history of migration around the Weishan Lakes by interviewing local people and consulting extant genealogies. According to Hu, all fifteen

²⁵ *Chong xiu Tengyang Zhao shi zu pu* (重修滕陽趙氏族譜[Revision of the genealogy of the Zhao lineage in Tengyang]) (Zaozhuang: self-publication, 1994), 26.

²⁶ See Liu Daobin (劉道斌) and Yin Xian'en (殷憲恩), *Weishan dao feng wu* (微山島風物[Customs and materials of the Weishan Island]) (Shijiazhuang: Huashan wen yi chu ban she, 1990), 7–8; Bao Yucheng (鮑玉成), *Weishan hu de chuan shuo* (微山湖的傳說[Legends of the Weishan Lakes]) (Jining: Shandong sheng chu ban zong she Jining fen she, 1989), 1–6. According to the *Shiji* (史記[Records of the Grand Historian]), Prince Wei was the elder brother of the last emperor of the Shang Dynasty. See Sima Qian (司馬遷), “Song Wei Zi shi jia (宋微子世家[House of Song Wei Zi]),” *Shiji*, *juan* 38.

remaining villages on Weishan Island had steles or genealogies recording the rising of the water level.²⁷ The expanding Weishan Lakes unfortunately inundated the land of many farmers, but it also created a niche for those who could exploit the new territory for fishing.

The resources of the Weishan Lakes were abundant enough to feed the refugees during natural disasters. The aquatic creatures²⁸ offered sources of food and income for boat-dwellers and residents on the lakeshore. Local people praised the lake for producing a bushel (*dou* 斗) of gold per day.²⁹ The boat-dwellers made their living mainly by fishing, and the part-time fisherfolk who lived on the shores of the lake could catch fish and harvest aquatic plants for sale when not cultivating fertile soil brought by the floods. The boat people and lakeshore residents fled when floods occurred, but they returned to the Weishan Lakes to make a living soon after these natural disasters abated. A rare fisherman's epitaph, reconstructed in 2004, illustrates the boat people's movement:³⁰

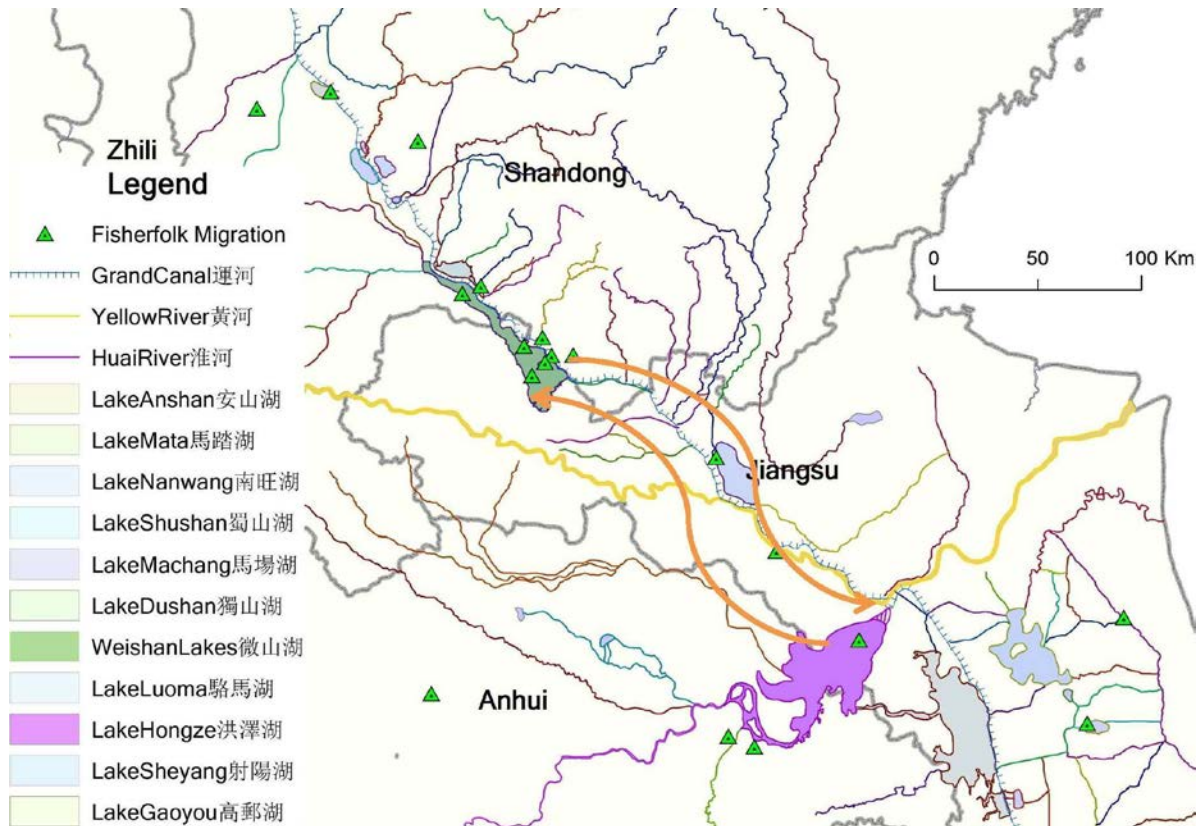
Zhou Jiyou (周繼有) ... suffered a disaster in 1890 and was forced to move his entire family in a broken boat from their hometown in the west of Teng county to Lake Hongze of Jiangsu, making a livelihood by fishing. Zhou was talented and good at observing the weather, and his fishing skills were masterful. In a few years he had saved some money and financially assisted people around him. ... (I)n 1900, Zhou brought the entire family back to the Weishan Lakes.

²⁷ Hu Wenjun (胡文駿), "Nan si hu hu yu min ju zhu sheng huo shi (南四湖湖漁民居住生活史[The history of inhabitation of fisherfolk and semi-fisherfolk in the Weishan Lakes])," *Haiyang huzhao tong bao* (海洋湖沼通報) 2 (1993): 93.

²⁸ Boat people caught not only fish, but also shrimp, freshwater soft-shell turtle (*bie* 鰲), and pond snails. In addition, they harvested aquatic plants for supplementary foods, such as lotus seedpods, foxnuts, water caltrops, wild rice, and so forth.

²⁹ In Chinese, it is *ri chu dou jin* (日出斗金). A *dou* is equal to a decaliter.

³⁰ Epitaph of Zhou Jiyou (周繼有), erected on Weishan Island in 2004, collected by author on November 5, 2009.



Map 1.2 Migration of the Wang lineage.

The boat-dwellers took advantage of the ability to shuttle between lakes to avoid calamities or to catch seasonal fish. They were not as vulnerable and powerless as most written records indicate.³¹ In the past, the boat people even thought that farmers had more bitter lives. They warned their daughters that “if you do not listen, I will force you to marry a farmer and bear that bitter life.”³² The boat-dwellers were better able to avoid catastrophes and survive than their land-based counterparts.

Boat-dwelling was also a way of escaping from wars, bandits, or rebellions. When the Nian (捻) rebels³³ harassed the neighborhood, Wang Weigan (王維幹) resettled from his lakeshore residence to a boat on a lake and continued studying. The sound he recited

³¹ Many of the written records or published books have depicted boat people as victims, especially communist documents or official papers which contain propaganda claiming the communist party or state rescued the vulnerable boat people. For example, NSHDC, 11.

³² Cheng Ping (程平) and Chen Jun (陳軍), “Hu shang yu jia (湖上漁家[Fishing families on the Lake Dongping]),” in Long Baoliang (龍寶良) and Deng Hong (鄧紅), eds., *Dongping hu yu huang he wen hua* (東平湖與黃河文化[Lake Dongping and the culture of the Yellow River]) (Zhengzhou: Huanghe shui li chu ban she, 2009), 136.

³³ The Nian rebellions had lasted from 1853 through 1868 in the cross-border area among the provinces of Shandong, Jiangsu, Henan, and Anhui.

books among the reeds was in accord with the fishermen's songs.³⁴ This example demonstrates that some intellectuals might also resettle on boats. Another family was not as lucky as Wang Weigan. A widow, Madame Zhao (趙氏), and four family members fled from the Taiping rebels by boat in the early 1850s, and were almost caught. Rather than be caught, they drowned themselves.³⁵ Another family also bought a boat to escape from bandits, but, when the boat was surrounded by bandits, the entire family of eleven committed suicide, led by Hou Ying (侯穎) and his wife Madam Li.³⁶ In spite of the outcome of these examples, they do demonstrate the popularity of the boat as a possible means of escape.

In addition, boat-dwellers could avoid government controls, such as taxes, conscription, and corvée labor service. The duty of corvée labor service was burdensome for landsmen in this area. Local people always said, "the boat people provide not labor to the emperor."³⁷ Peasants were summoned to serve as canal lock keepers or dredgers. After the Ming minister Zhu Heng (朱衡) completed the new channel in Nanyang (南陽) town, which did not require locks, Zhu requested the court to close down five official locks.³⁸ As a result, there was no need for lock keepers or dredgers, and 6000 persons were freed from corvée labor,³⁹ including fishing families.⁴⁰ This privilege would have attracted some people to immigrate to this area. Moreover, no fishing tax or boat fee is mentioned in the local gazetteers of this area. Several Offices of River Moorings (*he bo suo* 河泊所) established in northern Jiangsu to levy fishing taxes were canceled by the sixteenth century.⁴¹ Hao Zhiyu also recorded that the abundance of Lake Zhaoyang together with the absence of taxes and landlords fed the poor people around the lake

³⁴ Yü Shuyun (于書雲), *Minguo Pei xian zhi* (民國沛縣志[Gazetteer of Pei County during the Republican period]) (Nanning: Fenghuang chu ban she, 2008[1920]), 186.

³⁵ Yü Shuyun, *Minguo Pei xian zhi*, 218.

³⁶ Wang Zheng (王政), *Daoguang Teng xian zhi* (道光滕縣志[Gazetteer of Teng County during the reign of Daoguang Emperor]) (Nanning: Fenghuang chu ban she, 2004[1846]), 209.

³⁷ Gao Feng (高峰), "Hongze hu yu min he cao min de sheng huo (洪澤湖漁民和草民的生活[Life of boat people and lakeshore residents in the Lake Hongze])," *Ren min tong xun* (人民通訊[People's newsletter]) 15 (November 1941), cited from JSSCZ, 497.

³⁸ Zhu Heng (朱衡), "Cai long fei yi bian min shu ge cai zha fu (裁冗費以便民疏: 革裁闡夫[Cutting unnecessary fees to offer convenience for the people: abrogating the lock officials])," in Chen Zilong (陳子龍) et al. eds., *Huangming jingshi wenbian* (皇明經世文編) (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1962[1638]), *juan* 297.

³⁹ Zhang Tingyu (張廷玉) ed., *Ming shi* (明史[Official history of the Ming Dynasty]) (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1974[1739]), *juan* 223.

⁴⁰ Liu Yingshui (劉迎水), *Yun he ming zhen: Nanyang* (運河名鎮: 南陽[A famous town of the Grand Canal: Nanyang]) (Beijing: Zhongguo wen shi chu ban she, 2007), 7.

⁴¹ Yin Lingling (尹玲玲), *Ming Qing chang jiang zhong xia you yu ye jing ji yan jiu* (明清長江中下游漁業經濟研究[Research on fishery economy in the lower Yangtze Valley during the Ming-Qing period]) (Jinan: Qi lu shu she, 2004), 407–09.

when he visited in 1736.⁴² John Barrow (1764–1848) of the Macartney embassy witnessed the boat people in this area when the embassy’s flotilla traveled through the Grand Canal to meet the Qianlong Emperor in the 1790s. Barrow records, “No rent is exacted by the government, or toll, or tythe [tithe], or licence [license]-money for permission to catch fish; nor is there any form of impediment against the free use of any lake, river or canal whatsoever.”⁴³

Since the Weishan Lakes were newly formed in the late Ming and early Qing periods, fishing tax did not apply to this area, as the tax registration was not updated with the change of landscape. These lakes along the Grand Canal soon attracted a considerable number of boat people.

Most lakes adjoining the Grand Canal were used to aid navigation. If the lake’s water level was higher than the Grand Canal, it was a “water tank” (水櫃) or reservoir which drained water to the Grand Canal during the dry seasons. The lakes with lower level were “water valleys” (水壑) or retarding reservoirs.⁴⁴ The Ming and Qing governments’ priorities were to maintain navigation in the Grand Canal, often to the detriment of the neighboring peasantry. Even spring water had to be exclusively discharged into the canal, instead of being used for irrigating farmlands. Stealing water was a crime. To protect the Grand Canal system, surrounding lands and homes built on them were frequently inundated.⁴⁵ Lake Hongze is a good example. The Gaojia Dikes (高家堰) were rebuilt higher to protect the Grand Canal in 1579. As a result, Lake Hongze expanded and flooded the neighborhood in the early Qing period, including the Ming Imperial Mausoleum (明祖陵) and Sizhou (泗州) City.⁴⁶ Some boat-dwellers

⁴² Hao Zhiyu, “You Zhaoyang hu ji,” 137.

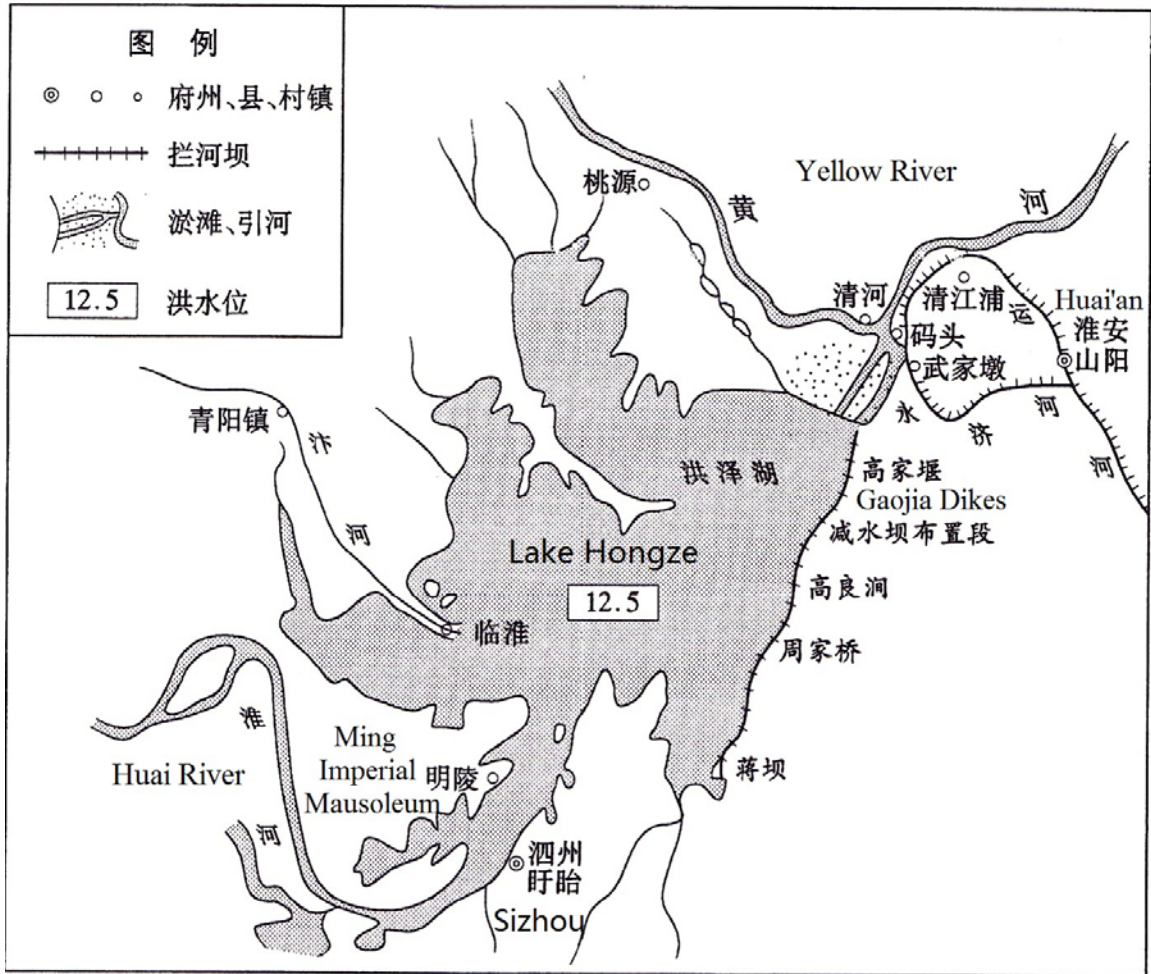
⁴³ John Barrow, *Travels in China* (London: A. Strathan, 1804), 558.

⁴⁴ A water valley or retarding reservoir is designed to detain the flood flow and temporarily store flood water, avoiding the serious ruin in the highly populated regions.

⁴⁵ Ma Junya (馬俊亞), *Bei xi sheng de ju bu: Huaibei she hui sheng tai bian qian yan jiu* (被犧牲的「局部」：淮北社會生態變遷研究) (Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2010).

⁴⁶ Hongze xian di fang zhi bian zuan wei yuan hui (洪澤縣地方志編纂委員會) ed., *Hongze xian zhi* (洪澤縣志) (Beijing: Zhongguo da bai ke quan shu chu ban she, 1999), 8. The dikes were designed to raise the lake level in order to wash away the silt of the Yellow River at Qingkou (清口) where the Grand Canal and the Yellow River intersected during the Ming-Qing period. The rising lake level often caused floods in the neighboring areas and eventually inundated Sizhou City and the Ming Imperial Mausoleum in 1680. See Tsai Tai-Bin (蔡泰彬), *Wan Ming huang he shui huan yu Pan Jixun zhi zhi he* (晚明黃河水患與潘季馴之治河[The floods of the Yellow River in the late Ming and Pan Jixun’s river engineering]) (Taipei: Lexue shuju, 1998), 89–124; Jane Kate Leonard, *Controlling from Afar: The Daoguang Emperor’s Management of the Grand Canal Crisis, 1824-1826* (Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan Press, 1996); Randall A. Dodgen, *Controlling the Dragon: Confucian Engineers and the Yellow River in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai’i Press, 2001). David A. Pietz, *Engineering the State: The Huai River and Reconstruction in Nationalist China, 1927–1937* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002).

claim that their ancestors came from Xianghua County (興化縣) in the northern Jiangsu region, where they were frequently affected by the floods from the Lake Hongze. Since the Weishan Lakes emerged later than Lake Hongze, it is possible that boat people from the Lake Hongze area came into the newly formed lakes to vie for new fishing territory there. But we should not forget that there were also certain boat-dwellers who originally came from the shores of the Weishan Lakes in Shandong, due to the inundation of houses and farmlands there.



Map 1.3 Lake Hongze and Gaojia Dikes during the reign of Yongzheng Emperor. Note this map dates to the moment the Ming Imperial Mausoleum and Sizhou City were nearly inundated.⁴⁷

Different groups of land-based people joined the community of boat-dwellers for various reasons at different times. Some were forced to resettle from the land to boats because of calamities; others chose to make a living by fishing to avoid frequent floods or droughts; and still others hid themselves in the lakes to evade taxes, conscription, or

⁴⁷ Zheng Liandi ed., *Zhongguo shui li bai ke quan shu: shui li shi fen ce*, 126.

corvée labor service. These boat-dwellers took advantage of the lakes' resources to survive. Thus environmental change in the lakes along the Grand Canal in Shandong and Jiangsu forced or attracted a number of people with diverse origins to adapt to the boat-dwelling lifestyle. These people brought in diverse lifestyles and religious practices and beliefs that combined to form a unique popular culture of the boat people.

The Boat People: Internal Diversity and Idiosyncratic Ways of Life

The term *boat people* refers to those who lived on boats as permanent homes and made a living by fishing on lakes and waterways along the Grand Canal. The part-time fisherfolk who lived around the lakes and who occasionally fished to supplement income from farming or folk crafts are not included in the operating definition of boat people, nor are those who fished in salt water.⁴⁸ My study concentrates on the idiosyncratic aquatic life and religious culture of the boat people, and how these became intertwined and transformed over time.

The freshwater boat people of this dissertation lived in southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu. As of 1949, their population was of uncertain size because of their isolation and mobility. When Yao Wenran (姚文然 1620–1678) witnessed boat people in Lake Weishan in the mid-seventeenth century, there were about 500 households.⁴⁹ When the Macartney embassy passed through the Weishan Lakes in 1793, John Barrow estimated that the population of the boat people was comparable to their land-based counterpart;⁵⁰ Aeneas Anderson⁵¹ counted 600 boats passing by daily and estimated 500,000 people living on boats. A 1922 guidebook on agriculture in Shandong indicates that 3,000 boat people lived in the Weishan Lakes. A 1956 statistical report from the provincial department of aquatic production of Shandong claimed the Weishan Lakes had 1,500 households of boat people, or an estimated 8,520 persons.⁵² A 1949 Shandong report shows that there were 100,000 boat people in the Weishan Lakes, and 27,000 in Lake Dongping.⁵³ A 1951 Shandong report indicates there were 10,752 fishing boats before the Sino-Japanese war (1937–1945), 9,124 in 1950, and 9,381 in 1951.⁵⁴ Those numbers are quite inconsistent. Reasons abound. First, these numbers were not taken

⁴⁸ These semi-fisherfolk are called as *humin* (湖民), namely “lake-folk,” by local governments and residents.

⁴⁹ Yao Wenran (姚文然), “Zhou xing ri ji (舟行日記),” in QSWHB, Vol. 75, 495.

⁵⁰ Barrow, *Travels in China*, 557–58.

⁵¹ Aeneas Anderson, *A Narrative of the British Embassy to China, in the Years 1792, 1793, and 1794* (London: J. Debrett, 1795), 73. Anderson's numbers included grain vessels, which exaggerated the population of boat-dwelling fisherfolk.

⁵² WSHZ, 113.

⁵³ SDHBCC, 15.

⁵⁴ NSHDC, 21.

from serious surveys, but were approximations. Second, the boat people moved at times, and they sometimes crossed over provincial boundaries, making accurate surveillance and census taking difficult. Third, the management of the Weishan Lakes was divided between eight counties in two provinces before the establishment of Weishan County under Shandong province in 1953. Fourth, the boat people intentionally avoided direct contact with land people, especially direct contact with representatives of the government. All of these factors render uncertain the population of the boat people. Nonetheless, all of the accounts of boat people in southwestern Shandong demonstrate that they were not rare, and that they had abided in the lakes area for more than 300 years with little being known of their lives and culture.

Their abodes were called “connected house-boat” (*lianjiachuan* 連家船) or “sitting house-boat” (*zuojiachuan* 坐家船). They also had one or two small work vessels for fishing or harvesting water-plants. The whole family lived on the boat all day, all year, and almost all of their lives.



Photo 1.2 “Connected house-boats” and work vessels.

The boat people had diverse sources and internal differences. Internal differences among the boat people worked to create a hierarchy of subdivisions within the larger fishing community. Each subdivision had a different lifestyle, social organization, and religious culture. In the following section, I will explore the internal diversity of the floating community in order to trace the sources of their idiosyncratic lifestyle and religious practices and beliefs.

Three Types of Boat People

The entire fishing population in the freshwaters of southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu in the past consisted of three types of boat people, and each type had a different social status and dissimilar means of achieving economic productivity. The boat people were divided into three types according to their fishing gear and methods: the Big-Netters (*dawang bang* 大網幫), the Shotgunners (*qiang bang* 槍幫), and the Dipnetters (*nan bang* 罟幫).⁵⁵

Within each type, there were numerous subgroups operating as working units. Boat people using the same kind of fishing gear tended to work and live together, naturally forming a subgroup. Subgroups tended to stay together and move as a unit. These subgroups were also called *bang* (幫)⁵⁶ and formed natural units roughly comparable to villages.⁵⁷ Each *bang* had a specific name derived from the leader's surname or the location it frequented. Each *bang* was multi-surname. Households were the basic social units of a *bang*. This dissertation will mainly focus on the *bangs* of the Dipnetters, but I will first provide a general introduction to the three types of boat people.

Each type had a different social organization and subculture. The Big-Netters used larger boats and bigger and better fishing nets to make their catch. As a result, their harvest was more plentiful than that of the other types. The Big-Netters were the wealthiest in the entire fishing community. They did not need to work together to enhance productivity, hence the organization of the Big-Netters was relatively loose. The Shotgunners hunted migratory ducks and geese with boats and shotguns during the winter and caught fish during the rest of the year with special fishing gear, *bo* (箔), fishing weirs made of thin bamboo strips. They were called the “Shotgunners” or “*Bo* Group”. The livelihood of the Shotgunners did not require too much cooperation either. Compared to the previous two types, the Dipnetters developed a more cohesive organization. The Dipnetters were the poorest, as they used inefficient nets, *nan* or *lan* (罟), each of which could hold only a few fish, barely enough for a family. In order to maintain sufficient

⁵⁵ In 1949, the communist cadres recorded the subdivision of boat people in the Weishan Lakes, but the terms were slightly different due to transcription of dialects. See: SDHBCC, 7–9. Besides these three types of fishing boat people, the Weishan Lakes had another type of group called the Carriers (*zai bang* 載幫), whose members owned big transporter boats to trade and transport goods. Its members were not actually boat people, and the boat people never treated them as part of their community.

⁵⁶ The term *bang* (幫) connotes two levels of social units. At the higher level, it refers to the types of the boat people, namely the Big-Netters, the Shotgunners, and the Dipnetters. When referring *bang* to the lower level unit, it means the subgroups within each types of boat people. The first level is a social label, and the second level is a natural unit.

⁵⁷ Zhang Jiushao (張九韶), “Weishan hu yu bang (微山湖漁幫[Fishing groups of the Weishan Lakes]),” *Ai de hu* (愛的湖[Lake of love]) (Jinan: Shandong wenyi chu ban she, 1996), 84.

livelihood, the Dipnetters had to cooperate for fishing, especially during the busiest fishing seasons. They often applied team fishing to compensate for the inefficiency of the *nan* nets. The Dipnetters were therefore relatively well-organized. The relationships among them were closer, while the other types of boat people were more isolated. The richest Big-Netters did not have to move a great deal, because the fishing grounds suitable for big boats and big nets were limited. However, the poorest Dipnetters were highly mobile, because their *nan* nets were inefficient and forced them to travel far afield to find fish in economically viable quantities.⁵⁸

Tensions among the three types of boat people existed. Each fishing gear or method had a niche on the lakes, but fishing territories could overlap, and conflicts resulted. Neighboring fishing weirs or traps could affect one another's production, and fishermen often competed for the better locations. The big nets and boats of the Big-Netters could ruin fishing weirs and traps, and effectively decimate the fishing grounds of other boat people.⁵⁹ Since the Shotgunners had guns, the Dipnetters sometimes needed their protection against "lake bandits" (*hufei* 湖匪).⁶⁰ In general, the Dipnetters and the Shotgunners could get along with each other peacefully, but the Big-Netters were disliked by both.

Fishing families could change the group they belonged to. Liu Yuhua (劉毓華), originally a fisherman and later a communist cadre, provides us with his first-hand observation:

When a member of Big-Netters chanced upon a better fishing season and caught more fish, he could earn more money and make more savings. Then, he could turn his big fishing boat into a Carrier boat trading and transporting goods. On the other hand, when a Carrier member lost money in doing business and suffered calamities, he would have to trade his big boat for a small one, becoming a member of the Shotgunners or Dipnetters. Also, some shore residents sold their houses and land and moved their families onto boats, becoming boat people for various reasons. Some of them perhaps were sued or encountered disasters; others had done something shameful and became unable to face relatives, neighbors, and

⁵⁸ Gao Feng, "Hongze hu yu min he cao min de sheng huo," JSSCZ, 497.

⁵⁹ NSHGZ, 149.

⁶⁰ Wang Chunzhe, April 25, 2010. "Lake bandits," essentially landmen, had infested in the Weishan Lakes and neighboring waters for a long time. They abducted either water- or land-people for ransom and used the water obstacles to avoid arrest by the government. For instance, Hao Zhiyu mentioned that Lake Zhaoyang, being full of reeds and cattails, provided perfect protection for lake bandits led by Wang Kuifeng (王奎峰) and Zhang Duining (張兌寧) during the reign of Ming Chongzhen Emperor (崇禎 r. 1628–1644). See Hao Zhiyu, "You Zhaoyang hu ji," 137. In addition, *Kanhuangqi* (關黃旗) already appeared in the lake in early Qing. See Yü Shuyun, *Minguo Pei xian zhi*, vol. 13, 10a–10b.

friends.⁶¹

Liu's account demonstrates that both upward and downward social mobility were possible.

This dissertation mainly focuses on the Dipnetters and their religious activities, for several reasons. First, the Dipnetters made up 70% of the entire floating community.⁶² At least 38 Dipnetter *bang* existed before the Communist Government tried to resettle the boat people onto land in the 1960s.⁶³

Second, the Dipnetters were too poor to change their fishing gear or social status, because they could only eke out sufficient food to meet family needs. They could not, therefore, accumulate a reserve to invest in better gear or boats. They still maintained the traditional lifestyle before the 1980s; and as a result, the Dipnetters had preserved the richest set of religious practices and beliefs among the entire fishing community. Ironically this was due to their weakness. The contemporary *Duangu* ritualists of the Dipnetters occasionally have to assist other types of boat people by officiating at their rituals because members of the other boat people are no longer familiar with the rituals. The religious activities of the Dipnetters were said to be the most "superstitious" because they were desperate to change their poor situation.⁶⁴ They would worship deities whenever there were storms, the catch was poor, or families got sick. Despite their impoverished situation, the Dipnetters offered lavish sacrifices, such as whole pigs and goats, to *Daiwangs* and other water gods. This shows that the Dipnetters were more concerned about maintaining relationships with divinities than improving their fishing equipment. As a Chinese proverb says, "one would start contemplating changes when he is in extreme poverty."⁶⁵ Without sufficient resources to maintain a basic livelihood, the Dipnetters had introduced innovative religious practices and beliefs in order to adapt to their aquatic lifestyle. I think they illustrate better than the other types of boat people how distinctive ways and rhythms of living can fundamentally change religious practices and beliefs.

The third reason for studying the Dipnetters relates to their solidarity. This solidarity, which originated from the need to fish together during the busiest seasons, linked the

⁶¹ Liu Yuhua, "Weishan hu yu min dou zheng shi lue," 146.

⁶² Li Kongzhang (李孔章), "Weishan hu chuan ju (微山湖船居[Boat-dwelling of the Weishan Lakes])," in WSGJ, 197.

⁶³ Hu Wenjun (胡文駿), "Nan si hu hu yu min ju zhu sheng huo shi (南四湖湖漁民居住生活史 [The history of inhabitation of fisherfolk and semi-fisherfolk in the Weishan Lakes])," *Haiyang huzhao tong bao* (海洋湖沼通報) 2 (1993), 94.

⁶⁴ BDYMC, 159.

⁶⁵ *Qiong ji si bian* 窮極思變.

Dipnetters together physically and psychologically, even though they were spread across distant waters at other times. The lineage rituals could not be held regularly without the seasonal team fishing and the solidarity of the Dipnetters. Therefore, their lineage rituals, the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy, were the most organized and lavish, and took more days and nights to complete.

The fourth reason to focus on the Dipnetters involves my fieldwork. I conducted fieldwork with and among boat people living in Weishan County who belong to the Dipnetters. Therefore, the Dipnetters were my central ethnographic source. I had little information about or contact with other types of boat people. Most Big-Netters became owners of transport boats and resettled on land, since they were wealthier and better able to change their occupation and status than other boat people. I will occasionally mention the Shotgunners, because they were close to the Dipnetters and shared some customs and religious beliefs and practices with them. I shall now discuss the Dipnetters in greater depth.



Photo 1.3 Prototype *nan* net 罾網. (Source: <http://www.mefei.com/blog/live/400.html>)

The Dipnetters' most important piece of equipment, the *nan*, was originally a tool to dredge and drain sludge in rivers, ponds, or lakes for making fertilizer. It was widely used in the Jiangnan (江南) area. It can be made of bamboo or ramie⁶⁶ strips. It is similar to a pair of tongs that fishermen used to catch fish hiding in sludge or water plants.

⁶⁶ The boat people of the Weishan Lakes used ramie to make the *nan* nets. After being woven, the ramie strips had to be soaked in pig blood first and then steamed. After drying the *nan* net in the shade, it was ready for fishing. See SSZYJ, 168.



Photo 1.4 *Nan* net. (Source: SSZYJ, 168)

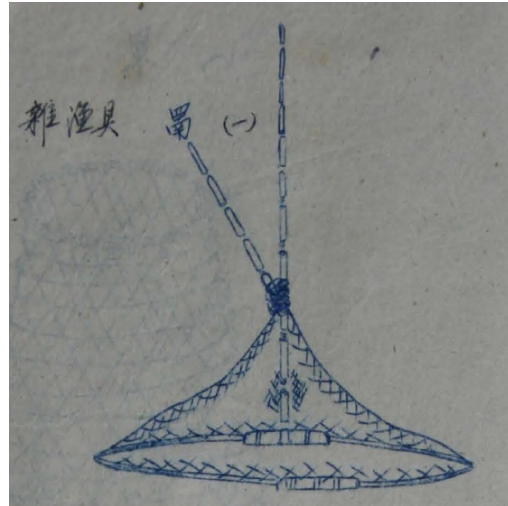


Photo 1.5 *Nan* net. (Source: QYJ, 120)

Written records about the Dipnetters are scarce. Fortunately, a German folklorist, Josef Thiel, recorded how the *nan* net was used to catch fish in the 1940s:⁶⁷ “The net looks like a bag, and the opening is kept open by two crossed bamboo poles.” It is like a clam clasping fish.⁶⁸ The fisherman inserts the open *nan* net into the bottom of the lake and then clips the net shut immediately. If a fish is caught, the fisherman lifts the net above the water and throws the fish on a tilted and slippery board. When the fish struggles, it slips into the boat directly.⁶⁹ The *nan* nets could be used by individual families, or be applied to catch fish through a team effort.

⁶⁷ Josef Thiel, "Die Wirtschaftliche Ausnutzung Des Nan-Yang Sees (南陽湖) in Süd-Shantung [The Economic Exploitation of the Lake Nanyang (南陽湖) in South Shandong]," *Folklore Studies* 7 (1948): 119.

⁶⁸ Yin Yuchuan (殷豫川), “Xian hua Weishan hu (閒話微山湖[Reminiscence about the Weishan Lakes]),” *Lu e ji* (蓼莪集) (Taipei: Xinan shu ju, 1976), 12.

⁶⁹ Liu Yingshui, *Yun he ming zhen: Nanyang*, 63.



Photo 1.6 Clipping fish, part of *Imitation of Zhao Boju's Peach Blossom Spring* (*fang Zhao Boju Taoyuan tu* 仿趙伯駒桃源圖), painted by Wang Bing (王炳) (Source: <http://tech2.npm.gov.tw/literature/beauty/beauty.asp?B=329>)

The freshwater fishery was seasonal and its productivity was linked to the migration and breeding patterns of fish populations.⁷⁰ However, the productivity of the fishery was also linked to the available fishing technology. If a *bang* fished with *nan* nets, the productive season began in the tenth lunar month and ended in the following year's second month,⁷¹ because the inactive fish in winter and early spring were easier to catch by *nan* nets.⁷² As winter weather caused a drop in temperature and the lake's surface to freeze, productivity obviously dropped.⁷³ The productivity of dipnetting was the lowest among the entire fishing community. Hence, the Dipnetters were the least powerful of all boat people.

For the Dipnetters, the relationship of each *bang*'s members was also seasonal.⁷⁴ Although part of a defined group, members could move freely more than ten kilometers away during slack seasons. The members of each *bang* of the Dipnetters usually gathered together only in the winter and early spring,⁷⁵ from September through to March,⁷⁶ a

⁷⁰ NSHDC, 13.

⁷¹ QYJ, 120.

⁷² This refers particularly to the team fishing method. The Dipnetters still fished or harvested aquatic plants individually in other seasons.

⁷³ NSHDC, 18.

⁷⁴ Gao Feng, "Hongze hu yu min he cao min de sheng huo," JSSCZ, 498.

⁷⁵ NSHDC, 12.

⁷⁶ Gao Feng (高峰), "Hongze hu de Shandong bang (洪澤湖的山東幫[The Shandong gang in the Lake Hongze])," *Ren min tong xun* (人民通訊) 15 (November 1941). Cited from JSSCZ, 498–500. For the rest

time for team fishing that was also suitable for ritual activities. Compared with the Dipnetters, other types of boat people were more scattered and less intimate. The Dipnetters' solidarity was due not only to their fishing methods but also to their organization and leaders.

Each Dipnetter *bang* had a headman called *bangtou* (幫頭) who was selected by members according to his ability to represent the members and negotiate with outsiders.⁷⁷ Anyone who wanted to live in the lakes had to join a *bang*; otherwise, one would be kicked out, or have one's boat destroyed.⁷⁸ Headmen also helped collect fish and traded with fish dealers, usually called *pa hu* (扒戶), some of whom collected fish by boat and used cheating steelyards to take advantage of boat people.⁷⁹

Each *bang* headman of the Dipnetters organized his followers to work and defend themselves together. The solidarity of the Dipnetters was stronger than other types of boat people. The *bangs* were the most important social organizations amidst the boat people, especially within the Dipnetters. Nonetheless, lineages, whose members were often diffused in various *bangs* around different waters, still played very important roles in boat people's lives. This is one of the major differences between the Weishan boat people and the Dan boat people in South China.⁸⁰ However, the lineage influence was usually invisible, because the lineage ritual, the Continuation of Genealogy (to be introduced in Chapter Three), was only held every five or ten years.

of the year, the Dipnetter families had to fish or harvest aquatic plants individually to eke out sufficient food for the entire family.

⁷⁷ Interview with Wang Chunzhe (王春哲), a *Duangu* ritualist, at Xinjian Village, Weishan County on April 25, 2010. Also see: Liu Yuhua, "Weishan hu yu min dou zheng shi lue," 146.

⁷⁸ Gao Jianjun, "Weishan hu yu su (微山湖漁俗[Fisherfolk's customs in the Weishan Lakes])," *MSYJ* 28(1993): 69.

⁷⁹ These fish dealers were landmen. NSHDC, 12. Not all fish dealers cheated the boat people. In fact, boat people also relied on them to supply daily necessities and materials for making fishing gear. They usually maintained long term relationships based on mutual trust which Barbara Ward also observed among the Dan peoples in South China. See detailed discussion in the following section on Water versus Land.

⁸⁰ Lineage became more and more important among the Dan peoples after they resettled on land, in order to compete with landmen. Before resettling on land, lineage and ancestor were not clear concepts for the Dan peoples. Their genealogies were not clearly recorded, and the distinction between ancestors and deities was blurred. See the detailed discussion in the following section on Freshwater versus Saltwater.



Photo 1.7 Fishing with the *nan* net.

(Photograph by Liu Qingbao 劉慶寶. Source: <http://www.yandu.gov.cn/dzhcs/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=39424>)

During daily life, the fishing method of the *nan* net could affect the relations between husband and wife. This idiosyncratic fishing method required two persons to cooperate: one handled the boat, and the other used the *nan* dipnet.⁸¹ Usually, a husband and a wife worked together to fish. On many occasions, fishermen's wives rowed the boats at the stern.⁸² Since this fishing method required cooperation of husbands and wives, women were an indispensable part of *nan* fishing. Therefore, females played a crucial role in production. For this reason, the female boat people did not bind their feet as many peasant women did, because this would be inconvenient for working.⁸³ In addition, both genders had to take care of cooking and raising children.⁸⁴ As a result, the gender relations among the Dipnetters were less male-dominant.⁸⁵ This phenomenon was similar to the Dan peoples, whose women also played important roles in production. Among the Dan, both husband and wife welcomed guests, unlike landmen, where husbands played a dominant role.⁸⁶ The similarity in gender relations between the Weishan boat people and the Dan peoples might stem from isolation from landmen and the lack of educated men within the communities. They were both less influenced by the

⁸¹ SSZYJ, 168. Wang Peixun (王培荀 1783–1859) describes how the husband used the net, while the wife handled the oars. See Wang Peixun, *Xiang yuan yi jiu lu*, 242.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Zhang Jiushao, "Weishan hu yu bang," 90.

⁸⁴ Liu Yuhua, "Weishan hu yu min dou zheng shi lue," 177.

⁸⁵ For instance, when I conducted fieldwork and dined with several *Duangu* ritualists, their spouses ate together at the same table. This was quite different from my past experiences when I conducted fieldwork in ordinary villages in southwestern Shandong, including neighboring Jinxiang County (金鄉縣), Tengzhou City (滕州市), Zaozhuang City (棗莊市), and Heze City (荷澤市). This, of course, does not mean the gender relationship between husband and wife is equal.

⁸⁶ Zhang Shouqi (張壽祺), *Dan jia ren* (蛋家人 [Dan peoples]) (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shu ju, 1991), 192.

official Confucian ideology which favored the values of patriarchy. But one thing was different between the Dan peoples and the Weishan boat people: ancestor worship. Barbara Ward considered the absence of ancestral halls, genealogies, and corporate ancestor worship amidst the Dan peoples one of the reasons that the boat people in South China could deviate from the dominant patriarchal and patrilineal ideology.⁸⁷ The boat people in Weishan, however, did preserve lineages, genealogies, and corporate ancestor worship, namely the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy, which could lead to patriarchy.

If we look deeper into the gender relations of the boat people in Weishan, we learn that gender inequality was embedded in various activities either symbolically or concretely.

Women were not allowed to enter the sacred space when ritual activities were held, such as the inner altar of the *Duangu* Ceremony, or the sacred cabin for scrolls of deities and ancestors.⁸⁸ When a son was born, the family offered a sacrifice to the Stove God to report the birth. For a new born daughter, the family offered a simpler sacrifice to the ancestors.⁸⁹ An important rite of passage to protect children, “carrying on the carp-cangue,”⁹⁰ was only applied to boys. Deceased female ancestors were not usually recorded in genealogies, although the Hu lineage decided to include the wives and daughters of the lineage in their newly published genealogy.⁹¹ Gender inequality existed in the boat people, but it did not come from official bureaucracy or education; rather it derived from various ritual activities and beliefs, and especially from lineage rituals and activities.

The mode of production could affect the dynamics of social relations. With small and inefficient *nan* nets, the Dipnetters’ members caught fish through team efforts during the best fishing season for the *nan* net: winter and early spring. They worked in teams involving up to hundreds of boats, starting in a row, gradually forming a circle, and then squeezing a body of fish in towards the center.⁹² Some poor families did not even own

⁸⁷ Barbara Ward, “Varieties of the Conscious Model: The Fishermen of South China,” in Michael Banton ed., *The Relevance of Models for Social Anthropology* (London: Tavistock Publication Ltd., 1965), 127–128.

⁸⁸ Interview with Hu Houzhong (胡后忠) at Xinjian Village, Weishan County, April 22, 2010.

⁸⁹ Interview with Wang Jiali (王家禮) at Laohu Village, Dongping County on November 19, 2009.

⁹⁰ This ritual will be introduced in detail in Chapter Two.

⁹¹ *Hu shi zu pu* (胡氏族譜[Genealogy of the Hu lineage]) (Weishan: n.p., 2010).

⁹² Liu Yingshui, *Yun he ming zhen: Nanyang*, 63; Li Hongwei (李紅微), “Weishan hu shang de chuan bang (微山湖上的船幫[Boat groups on the Weishan Lakes],” *MSYJ* 24 (1992): 61. NSHDC, 18. Yin Yuchuan, “Xian hua Weishan hu,” 12.

nan nets, but could help others who did own them.⁹³ The Dipnetters worked together not only to catch more fish, but also for defense against natural disasters or “lake bandits.” However, I have not found any evidence to suggest that members of the Dipnetters formed self-defense organizations or practiced martial arts. Although one of their scrolls represents deities with various weapons, it is unclear whether the boat people were associated with self-defense or banditry. As Elizabeth Perry has shown, some peasants became part-time bandits when the harvests were really bad.⁹⁴ The boat people may possibly have turned to part-time lake banditry, but their descendants could hardly be expected to reveal this to me in an interview. The interviewees told me that the lake bandits were actually landmen.⁹⁵ They had infested the Weishan Lakes at least since the late Ming period,⁹⁶ and they were still very active during the late Qing and the Republican periods.⁹⁷ Indeed, a native of neighboring county Heze (荷澤) indicated that their local bandits often had their bases in Lake Nanyang.⁹⁸ These “land-bandits” could possibly have become boat people by making a living fishing or hunting ducks. The Shotgunners, having guns, could possibly have associated with bandits, although they claim that their ancestors were hunters in the mountains. Whether or not the boat people became part-time lake bandits, they always needed to defend against banditry.

Migration of Lineages and Transmission of Ritual Elements

Lineages among the boat people were diverse, and tracing the migration history of each lineage can help us learn more about how different cultural elements, and ritual elements in particular, were brought into the floating community. Residents of different native places, from north to south, carried various cultural elements into the community of boat people as a whole when their ancestors resettled from land-based houses to house-boats. The boat people’s ritual tradition was composed of different layers and elements. We need to work out what these layers and elements were and explain how this multi-layered ritual tradition was woven. In this section, I try to relate the transmission of different lineages’ migration histories to the acceptance of various ritual elements. I do not suggest any specific lineage brought in certain ritual objects or practices. Instead, I try to present the possible trajectories of cultural communication and appropriation parallel

⁹³ NSHGZ, 150.

⁹⁴ Elizabeth Perry, *Challenging the Mandate of Heaven: Social Protest and State Power in China* (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2002), 18.

⁹⁵ Wang Chunzhe, April 25, 2010.

⁹⁶ Hao Zhiyu, “You Zhaoyang hu ji,” 137.

⁹⁷ *Shen bao* (申報) 7007 (October 23, 1892): 12; 16348 (August 21, 1918): 7; 20239 (July 10, 1929): 9.

⁹⁸ Jiang Zhenduo (姜振鐸), “Heze feng tu wen wu tan (荷澤風土文物談[On the customs and materials of Heze]),” *Shandong wen xian* (山東文獻[Records of Shandong]) 4:2 (September 20 1978): 76.

to, and correlated with, the migration path. The migration history of lineages provides us with a good window to observe the migration path.

Without fixed ancestral shrines or tombs on the land, lineages were still significant to the boat people in North China. As scholars of the Dan peoples in South China have already pointed out, the boat people in Hong Kong, Guangdong, Guangxi and Fujian provinces did not possess genealogies, lineage organizations, and rituals before they resettled on land.⁹⁹ Reconstructing lineage organizations and genealogies was a strategy to legitimize the Dan peoples' official households and their eligibility to take civil service examinations and to buy land. By contrast, the boat people in the Weishan Lakes preserved lineage genealogies, and they developed an idiosyncratic way of maintaining relationships between lineage members: the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy, to be explored later. The question here is how the lineage relationships and genealogies could be preserved, given that lineage members were spread over large areas and the *bangs* played more important roles than lineages in everyday life and production? Without land for ancestral shrines or tombs, so important in maintaining the relationship with lineage members and ancestors, the Weishan boat people faced a challenge in continuing the tradition of ancestor worship. Today, they are very proud that they have preserved their lineage rituals, while most landsmen in the neighborhood have lost their lineage organizations and genealogies.¹⁰⁰ This can be attributed to the isolation and mobility of the floating community, which made their rituals and ancestor worship less vulnerable to destruction during the Cultural Revolution. The lineage relationship or ancestor veneration was substantially irrelevant to daily life or fishing production. It was the fishing *bang* and its headman that substantially helped the poor, desperate boat people survive hardships on the water, not the lineage members. This phenomenon demonstrates that the lineages and genealogies, or the worship of ancestors in general, have been symbolically significant to the boat people, given that the lineages did not have practical functions. The religious or ideological significance of the ancestor worship would not have been given up easily.

Interestingly, every lineage had different origins from other lineages. The boat people were not as homogenous as they claimed to be with regard to lineage origins.

⁹⁹ Ward, "Varieties of the Conscious Model: The Fishermen of South China," 127–128. Maurice Freedman, *Chinese Lineage and Society: Fukien and Kwangtung* (London: Athlone Press, 1966), 93–94. He Xi (賀喜), *Yi shen yi zu: Yue xi nan xin yang gou jian de she hui shi* (亦神亦祖：粵西南信仰構建的社會史[Being deities and ancestors simultaneously: social history constructed in southwest Guangdong's religious beliefs]) (Beijing: Sanlian shu dian, 2011), 254.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Shen Jiaru (沈家如), a leader of the *Duangu* ritualists and the headman of the Shen lineage, June 21, 2009.

When I interviewed boat people about their origins, most of them would claim their ancestors came from Xinghua County (興化縣) of northern Jiangsu, but then strangely link their lineages to Hongdong County of Shanxi province (山西省洪洞縣), a place associated with massive migration to the North China Plain forced by the state during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644).¹⁰¹ In fact, each lineage had a different story. We have to reconsider where their ancestors came from.

My investigation of boat people's genealogies and lineage histories shows that individual lineages had different stories about how and when their ancestors became boat people.¹⁰² Each family became boat people at different times for various reasons. While I try to track and map out the routes of migration of different boat people's lineages, I am also tracing the origins of the shared cultural elements brought into the floating community from diverse places. Thanks to the mobility of the boat people, their frequent migrations substantially contributed to cultural appropriation, communication, and integration of various cultural elements from diverse places over several centuries.

Before I narrate the migration story of each lineage, I shall introduce the overall demographic data of the whole boat people. I will then turn to Xinjian Village and Aihu Village, Weishan County, where I conducted fieldwork.¹⁰³

According to a boat-dwelling fisherman, Liu Yuhua, boat people can be categorized simply into two origins: native and immigrant. The natives include the Lius (劉) at the west and south side of the Weishan Lakes, the Zhangs (張) of Zhanggushan (張谷山), the Yans (閻) of Yanjia'anzi (閻家庵子), the Dongs (董) of Boliang (薄梁) in Lake Dushan, and the Suns (孫) of Zhongjiaqian (仲家淺) near Jining City.¹⁰⁴ All of them have ancestral tombs on land and preserve genealogies. After suffering natural disasters such

¹⁰¹ What is strange is that the residents of northern Jiangsu, especially around Xinghua County, seldom relate themselves to the Shanxi origin. An expert of the migration history of the Ming Dynasty, Cao Shuji (曹樹基), indicates that the area around Xinghua County (Yangzhou and Huai'an prefectures) seldom received migrants from Shanxi during the Ming Dynasty. Most migrants in this area came from south Jiangsu, especially Suzhou. See Cao Shuji, *Zhongguo yi min shi: Ming shi qi* (中國移民史：明時期 [Chinese migration history: Ming Dynasty]) (Fuzhou: Fujian ren min chu ban she, 1997), 32–42. The discourse of migrating from Shanxi Hongdong has been very popular among many Shandong residents since the Ming Dynasty. I think the main reason that these boat people wanted to link to the migration discourse was to legitimize their presence in Shandong. Having tensions with the land-based Shandong neighbors, the boat people wanted to create a discourse that they were natives of Shandong, although not all of them actually were.

¹⁰² These genealogies and discourses do not necessarily reflect the reality of their lineage histories. But even if they have been reconstructed to justify the legitimacy of their presence in Shandong, they still show a desire to be identified with Shandong.

¹⁰³ The two *bangs* were resettled on land and became land-based villages in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

¹⁰⁴ Liu Yuhua, "Weishan hu yu min dou zheng shi lue," 144. The author does not indicate the dates of the arrivals of the natives and the immigrants. From Cao Shuji's *Zhongguo yi min shi: Ming shi qi*, we learn that immigrants in this area came during or after the Ming Dynasty. The so-called "natives" should have arrived in this area prior to the Ming Dynasty.

as floods, droughts, and locusts, and military conflicts between the Nian (捻) rebels (1853–1868) and the Qing armies, the population around the Weishan Lakes dropped steeply. However, the expanding lake with little population soon attracted boat people from Jiangsu and Zhejiang. These immigrant boat people included the Lins (林), Luos (羅), Hus (胡), and Yangs (楊) of the Big-Netters, the Lius of the Shotgunners, and the Wangs (王), Shis (史), Nis (倪), and Zhangs (張) of the Dipnetters.¹⁰⁵ Most of them came from Xinghua County (興化縣) and Yancheng County (鹽城縣) of northern Jiangsu and Jiashan County (嘉善縣) of Zhejiang province. Today, these boat people, whether resettled on land or not, still have accents of the south. Both the natives and the immigrants contributed to the lately formed general subculture of the boat people.

The native and immigrant boat people mingled together through intermarriage and fishing. Boat people usually intermarried with spouses from the same type of boat people, and their spouses could come from other neighboring *bangs*. Through marriage and lineage relations, the same-type *bangs* built networks, which benefited cooperation and self-defense. Besides lineage members, the *Duangu* ritualists also accepted younger affinal relatives as their pupils. When the Continuation of Genealogy was held, the in-laws had to send greetings and gifts to honor the host lineage, which was a way of demonstrating the influence and reputation of the lineage. The ritual activities of the *Tangshen* Assemblies usually occurred within one *bang*, but cross-*bang* participation was acceptable, because of the intricate networks of marriage and lineage ties. However, the intermingling of native and immigrant boat people also caused the reconstruction and distortion of lineage histories. That is why Weishan lineages from northern Jiangsu would wrongly claim Shanxi origin, in order to relate to most Shandong natives. Imperfect memory is a possible reason, but borrowing the natives' lineage histories could have been a strategy to legitimize the outsiders' presence in Shandong. This phenomenon has also been seen in the Dan peoples of South China,¹⁰⁶ who wanted to deny the non-Han labels and so claimed an origin in the Chinese heartland in North China.

The situation of the boat people in the Weishan Lakes in Shandong was more complicated than that of the Dan peoples. The natives and immigrants were both Han Chinese, but they were still despised by landmen. When they stayed in Shandong waters, it is understandable that they tried to fabricate a Shandong origin. But when they moved to Jiangsu to fish or escape from disasters, the boat people as a whole were considered Shandong natives by Jiangsu landmen.¹⁰⁷ From the perspective of landmen of

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 145–146.

¹⁰⁶ Michael Szonyi, *Practicing Kinship: Lineage and Descent in Late Imperial China*, 28–29.

¹⁰⁷ Gao Feng, “Hongze hu de Shandong bang,” *JSSCZ*, 498–500.

Shandong and Jiangsu, these boat people were outsiders, although they had blood ties or marriage relationships with land-based natives. No matter how they endeavored to construct a discourse to legitimize their presence, the land-people still despised them and treated them as outsiders, and this had nothing to do with the ethnicity issue of Han Chinese that the Dan peoples of South China had to struggle with.

The situation in Shandong was also different from that in *Subei* (蘇北[northern Jiangsu]) or *Jiangbei* (江北[north of the Yangtze River]), which Emily Honig addressed.¹⁰⁸ Here it was not a case of native places defining ethnicity, as Honig found in Shanghai. These boat people, many of them from *Subei*, were defined as outsiders or “others” by Shandong landmen for their boat-dwelling lifestyle. This did not concern their occupation as fisherfolk, because the shore residents also fished. Nor did it concern their economic status, because the Big-Netters were wealthy. Rather, it was because the boat people’s distinctive lifestyle that caused discrimination. Here we see that lifestyle itself can be a criterion for discriminating against people and reconstructing ethnicity. As a matter of fact, it is difficult, even meaningless, to argue whether the boat people were from Shandong or Jiangsu, because they constantly moved between these two provinces.¹⁰⁹

Now we can return to explore the migration history of the two *bangs* of the Dipnetters in the Weishan Lakes: Xinjian (新建) and Aihu (愛湖), the boat people I interviewed and observed during my fieldwork. Most members of these two *bangs* now resettle on land, except a few old boat people or poor ones. These two *bangs* best preserve the ritual tradition of the *Duangu* Ceremony. Their *Duangu* ritualists now lead the rituals held by boat people throughout Shandong, Jiangsu, Anhui, Shanghai, and even Hubei (湖北), because those who used to lead rituals in those regions are too few or too old to conduct their own rituals.¹¹⁰ Only the Xinjian and Aihu *bangs* still preserve the connection of migration history with the *Duangu* ritual tradition. By exploring their

¹⁰⁸ Emily Honig, *Creating Chinese Ethnicity: Subei People in Shanghai, 1850–1980* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

¹⁰⁹ The local gazetteers of Shandong often claim that these fisherfolk were from Jiangsu, while the Jiangsu gazetteers call them Shandong fisherfolk.

¹¹⁰ In the past, almost every *bang* had its own *Duangu* ritualists, and most fishermen could sing some ritual operas. When they held *Duangu* Ceremonies, the ritualists of individual *bangs* could take care of them on their own, as in the state of “ritual autarky” suggested by David Johnson. However, this ritual autarky was interrupted by political intervention in religious activities during the People’s Republic. Many *Duangu* ritualists were arrested and persecuted, especially in Jiangsu where the rituals were labeled as feudal superstitious reactionary sectarianism *Hongsan jiao* (紅三教) and there was a serious crackdown on their practice. In Shandong province, there was no hunting for *Hongsan jiao*. Because of the unintentional ignorance of local government, the *Duangu* Ceremony was preserved with the least political intervention in the Weishan Lakes, part of which was re-demarcated from Jiangsu to Shandong in 1953.

migration history, we also learn how they brought together cultural elements from different places into the floating community to form a unique ritual tradition.

The surnames Hu (胡), Wang (王), Shen (沈), and Ni (倪) are in the majority in Xinjian Village, while the Yang (楊), Shi (史), Jia (賈), and He (何) are in the majority of the Aihu Village. The descendants of the Hu and Yang, including all kinsmen outside the two villages, grew to be so many that their lineages were divided into two branches. In addition, there are two different Wang lineages which each have different origins. Besides these surnames, there are also other minor surnames that have *Duangu* ritualists, including the Jins (金) and the Dings (丁). By reviewing the migration history of the lineages of the *Duangu* ritualists, we can find the clue to the origin of the *Duangu* ritual tradition.

Most of the *Duangu* ritualists' lineages came from northern Jiangsu. The native landsmen's lineages around the Weishan Lakes, such as the Yins (殷) and the Chus (褚), who have lived in this area for centuries, never have had anyone who can practice the *Duangu* Ceremony.¹¹¹ Apparently, the *Duangu* ritual tradition did not originate from Weishan, but was brought in by latecomers from somewhere else. Those *Duangu* ritualists with a long family tradition, including the Ni Youcai (倪友才 1917–), Shen Jiafu (沈家福 1923–?), and Yang Guangde (楊廣德 1924–2003), claim that their lineages came from Xinghua County in northern Jiangsu. Ni Youcai says “the Ni lineage migrated to Weishan during the reigns of the Qing Jiaqing (嘉慶 r. 1796–1820) and Daoguang Emperors (道光 r. 1820–1850). The first ancestor Ni Kangchao (倪康朝), ten generations ago, could practice the *Duangu* Ceremony, and so could my father Ni Dehe (倪德合) and grandfather Ni Shangrong (倪尚榮).”¹¹² Indeed, Xinghua County suffered frequent floods after the dikes of Lake Hongze were raised to maintain the Grand Canal in the early Qing period.¹¹³ The floods were diverted to pass through Xinghua before discharging into the sea, but the floods often stayed in Xinghua for longer periods due to the county's low level.¹¹⁴ During the reign of the Qing Daoguang Emperor, Zheng Luan (鄭鑾) compiled a book of folksongs about floods called *Shuihuang yin* (水荒吟[Flood Songs]).¹¹⁵ These songs vividly reflect the sufferings of the Xinghua residents and their

¹¹¹ XQYSD, 887.

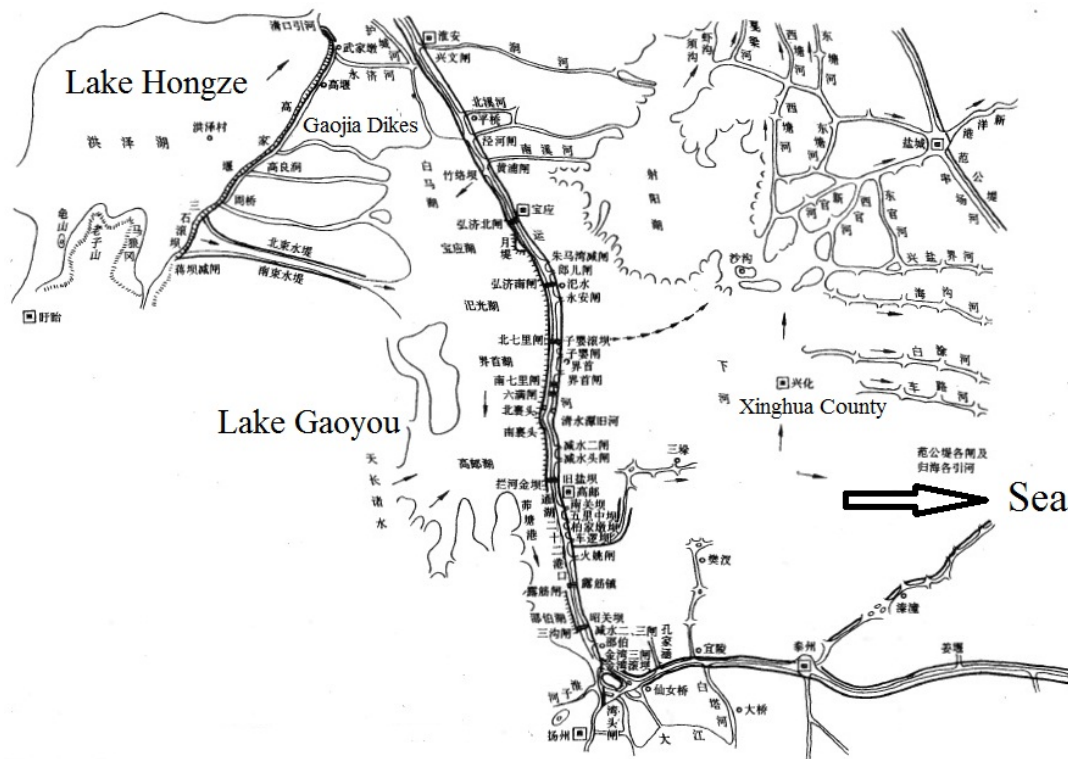
¹¹² QYZSD, 87.

¹¹³ Tsai Tai-Bin (蔡泰彬), *Wan Ming huang he shui huan yu Pan Jixun zhi zhi he*, 153–155. These dikes of the Lake Hongze are the same as the aforementioned ones that caused the inundation of Suzhou City.

¹¹⁴ Zheng Liandi ed., *Zhongguo shui li bai ke quan shu: shui li shi fen ce*, 125–127; 132. Also see Ma Junya, *Bei xi sheng de ju bu: Huaibei she hui sheng tai bian qian yan jiu*, 99. According to Ma Junya, the central officials in charge of water control intentionally sacrificed the residents of this area in order to protect and maintain the Grand Canal. This was a human disaster rather than a natural one.

¹¹⁵ Zheng Luan (鄭鑾), *Shuihuang yin* (水荒吟[Flood songs]), in Li Wenhai (李文海) and Xia Mingfang

sense of being environmental refugees.¹¹⁶



Map 1.4 Waters near Lake Hongze and Xinghua County in the early Qing period. Note the floods discharged into the sea via Xinghua County.¹¹⁷

One of the Wang lineages also came from Xinghua County. This Wang lineage says they were “originally” from Xinghua County in northern Jiangsu, and then moved to Lake Hongze. Thereafter they moved through the Grand Canal to the Weishan Lakes in the 19th century. Some family members later migrated to Lake Dongping, or even farther to the sea at Bohai. The migration map of the Wang lineage below may resemble the Ni’s migration history. The migration of the boat people assisted the transmission of the *Duangu* Ceremony. It is said that five or six families of boat people migrated into Lake Dongping during the reign of the Tongzhi Emperor (同治 r. 1861-1875), and during the Republic there were about 100 boat people.¹¹⁸ Some of these Dongping boat people were

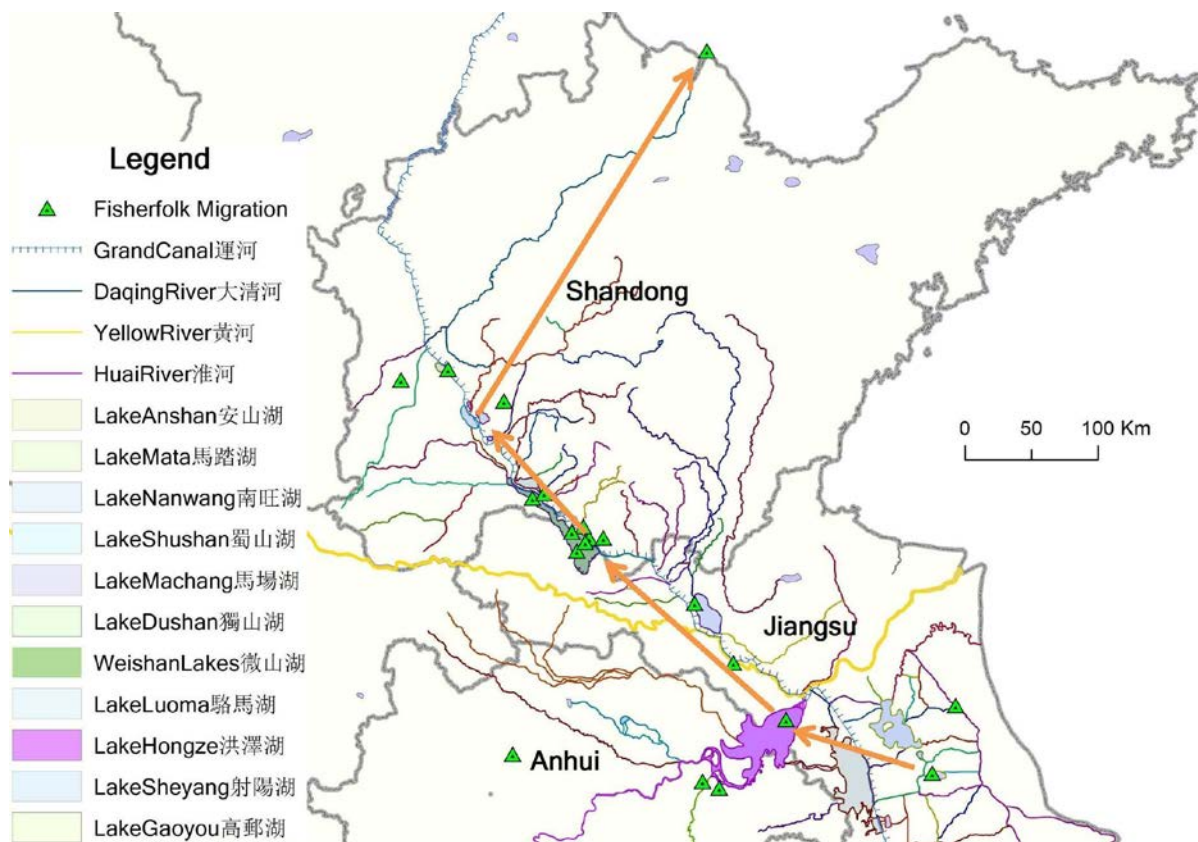
(夏明方), eds., *Zhongguo huang zheng quan shu* (中國荒政全書[Complete collection of the Chinese disaster policies]) (Beijing: Beijing guji chu ban she, 2002[1834]), vol. 4, 585–605.

¹¹⁶ Wang Rigen (王日根), “Cong Subei shui huang yao yan kan Qing dai zao min xin tai (從蘇北水荒謠諺看清代災民心態[Looking at the environmental refugees’ mentality through reading the flood folksongs of northern Jiangsu],” in Cheng Biding (程必定) and Wu Chunmei (吳春梅), eds., *Huai he wen hua zong lun* (淮河文化縱論[On the culture of the Huai River]) (Hefei: Hefei gongye daxue chu ban she, 2008), 368–75.

¹¹⁷ Yao Hanyuan (姚漢源), *Jing hang yun he shi* (京杭運河史[History of the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal]) (Beijing: Zhongguo shui li shui dian chu ban she, 1997), 362.

¹¹⁸ Cheng Ping and Chen Jun, “Hu shang yu jia,” 136.

later moved to Dongying County (東營縣) on the coast of Bohai Sea (渤海), just as some members of the Wang lineage were, and became saltwater fishermen. The *Duangu* Ceremony was also transmitted into this community of saltwater fishermen.¹¹⁹ The distribution of the *Duangu* ritual tradition is not limited to the freshwater boat people, but also covers a few saltwater fisherfolk. However, the ritual tradition has been circulated only among the migrants since then.¹²⁰



Map 1.5 Migration of the Wang lineage.

The *Duangu* ritualists from Xinghua County brought the prototype ritual tradition from northern Jiangsu, where the landsmen have a similar ritual tradition called *Xianghuo xi/Tongzi xi* (香火戲/童子戲 [“Incense and fire opera”/“Young lad opera”).¹²¹ The

¹¹⁹ The saltwater fisherfolk in Dongying County had permanent houses on land, so it would be odd to call them “boat people.”

¹²⁰ Visiting Dongying County is one of my future projects. I am interested in learning how the migrants readapted to the saltwater fishery and how the saltwater ecology transformed their lifestyle and religious culture.

¹²¹ Both *Duangu* Ceremony and *Xianghuo* Opera perform the ritual opera associated with Wei Jiulang (魏

languages, liturgies, and opera scripts of these two ritual traditions are different, but they share the legend of Wei Jiulang (魏九郎) as the core ritual opera. All ritualists are incarnations of Wei Jiulang, who travels across three realms of the world to invite deities and ancestors to participate in the ceremonies. These two ritual traditions certainly have a close relationship, but it is difficult to verify which one was earlier. The language of the *Duangu* Ceremony is more vernacular. If the development of an opera's language is from the simple toward the sophisticated, the *Duangu* Ceremony might be the earlier version, but we do not have direct evidence to prove it. We know at least that the *Duangu* Ceremony probably originated from northern Jiangsu, according to the migration history of the *Duangu* ritualists' lineages, as we learn from the Nis and the Shens.

The Shen lineage also came from Xinghua County of northern Jiangsu. Interestingly, their genealogy claims that they were the descendants of Shen Wansan (沈萬三 1330–1376), a famous wealthy fisherman of Suzhou (蘇州), but they lost the link to him because the old genealogy was lost due to wars.¹²² It is a common strategy to honor one's lineage by establishing a connection with famous figures. When we look at the written genealogy and the family tree of the ancestral scroll carefully, it is clear that the discourse concerning Shen Wansan was falsified. The genealogy only traces the line back to the generation of *gao* (高), but the ancestral scroll records seven generations before *gao* back to the generation *wan* (萬)—four apical ancestors. As a matter of fact, Shen Wansan is not listed in the *wan* generation among the four progenitors on the ancestral scroll.¹²³

Shen Jiafu has said not only that his uncle Shen Xuwu (沈學武) and grandfather Shen Xinggui (沈興貴) could practice the *Duangu* Ceremony, but that his ancestors in Xinghua County of northern Jiangsu had already done so before his lineage migrated to Weishan.¹²⁴ Unlike Shen Jiafu, Shen Jiakuan (沈家寬 1932–) did not learn the *Duangu* Ceremony from his own family tradition, but met his teacher Shi Xiangyu (史向雨 1886–?) in Lake Hongze in northern Jiangsu when he escaped from calamities in the Weishan Lakes during 1943–1950.¹²⁵ Though Shen Jiakuan received his training in Lake

九郎) who is the incarnation of the ritualists. However, the liturgies and opera scripts of these two traditions are different. The language of the *Duangu* Ceremony is more vernacular.

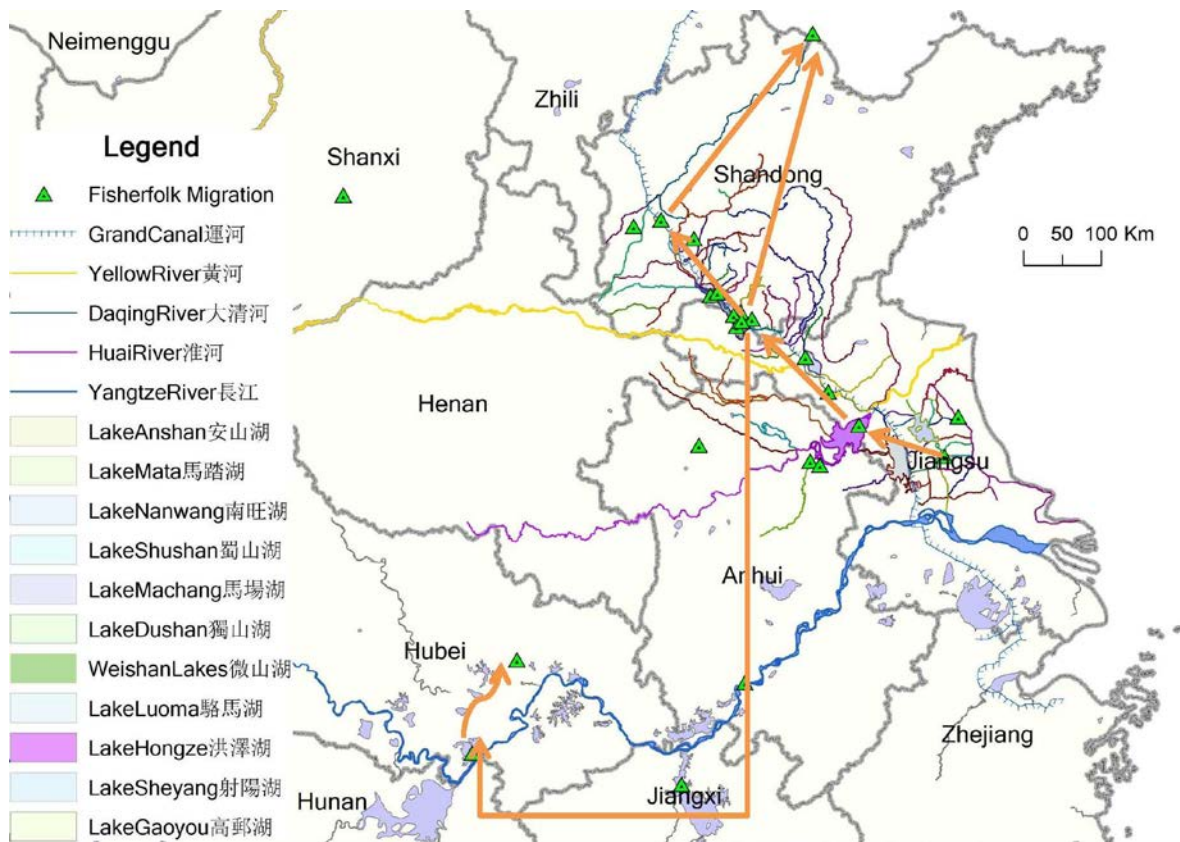
¹²² *Shen shi zu pu* (沈氏族譜[Genealogy of the Shen lineage]) (Weishan: n.p., 2002), 9.

¹²³ Their names are: Shen Wanliang (沈萬良), Shen Wancai (沈萬彩), Shen Wanku (沈萬庫), and Shen Wanfu (沈萬富).

¹²⁴ Chen Daoting (陳道庭), “*Duangong xi* (端公戲[*Duangu* Ceremony]),” in Zhang Yuzhu (張玉柱) ed., *Qi lu min jian yi shu tong lan* (齊魯民間藝術通覽[Overview of the Shandong folk arts]) (Jinan: Shandong you yi chu ban she, 1998), 463.

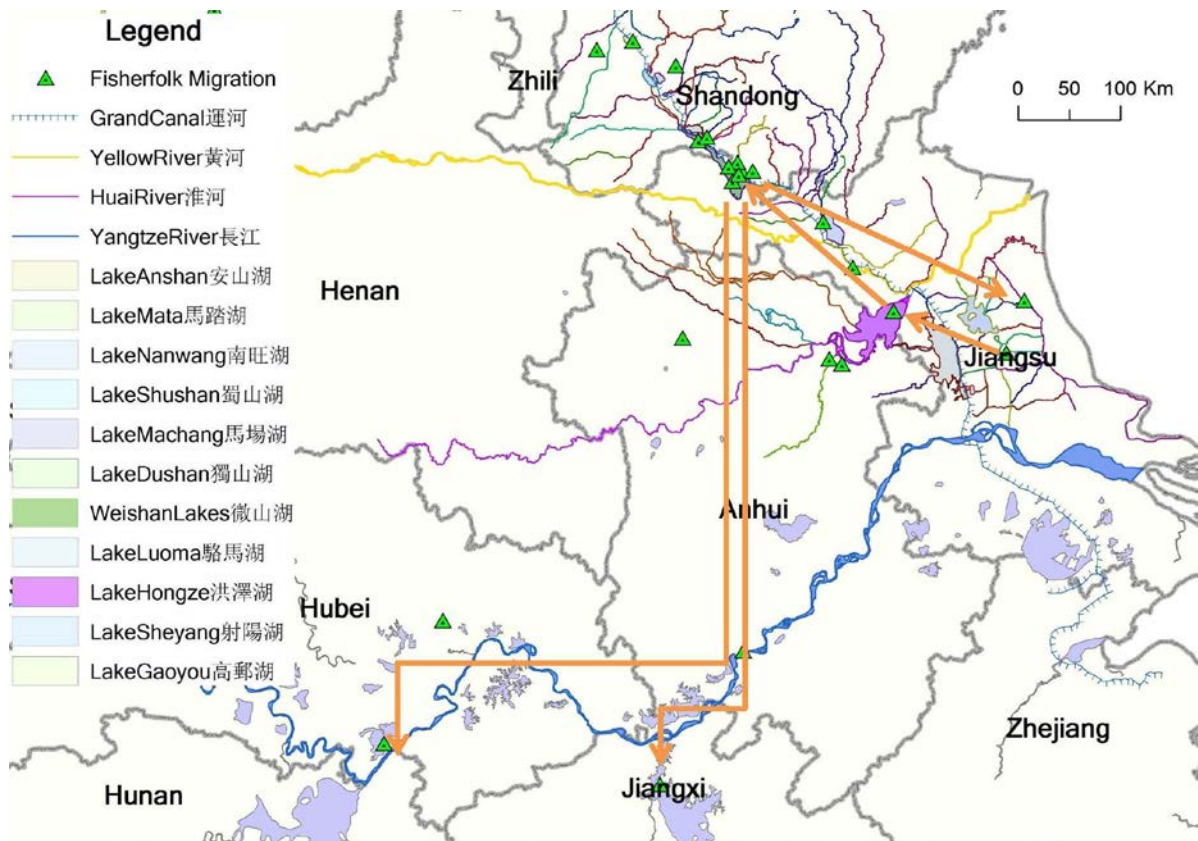
¹²⁵ Interview with Shen Jiakuan (沈家寬) at Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong, November 4, 2009.

Hongze in northern Jiangsu, not at the Weishan Lakes, there was no difference between his liturgies and opera scripts and those of Weishan *Duangu* ritualists. He could cooperate with other ritualists in the Weishan Lakes without any problem, which proves that the boat people in Lake Hongze and the Weishan Lakes share the same ritual tradition. Some members of the Shen lineage and the Yang lineage went south through the Grand Canal and Yangtze River to Hubei province in the twentieth century, transmitting the *Duangu* Ceremony to the Yangtze River valley. The lineage history of the Yangs below can represent the transmission to the south.



Map 1.6 Migration of the Shen lineage.

The Yang lineage was also from northern Jiangsu. Some kinfolk went to Hubei and Jiangxi through the Yangtze River in the twentieth century. The *Duangu* Ceremony was communicated to the Yangtze River valley through waterways. Some Yangs went to the coast in Yancheng County (鹽城縣) in Jiangsu, and then became saltwater fisherfolk. In this way the *Duangu* Ceremony was also transmitted to the saltwater boat people, as was the case with some Wang kinfolk mentioned earlier.



Map 1.7 Migration of the Yang lineage.

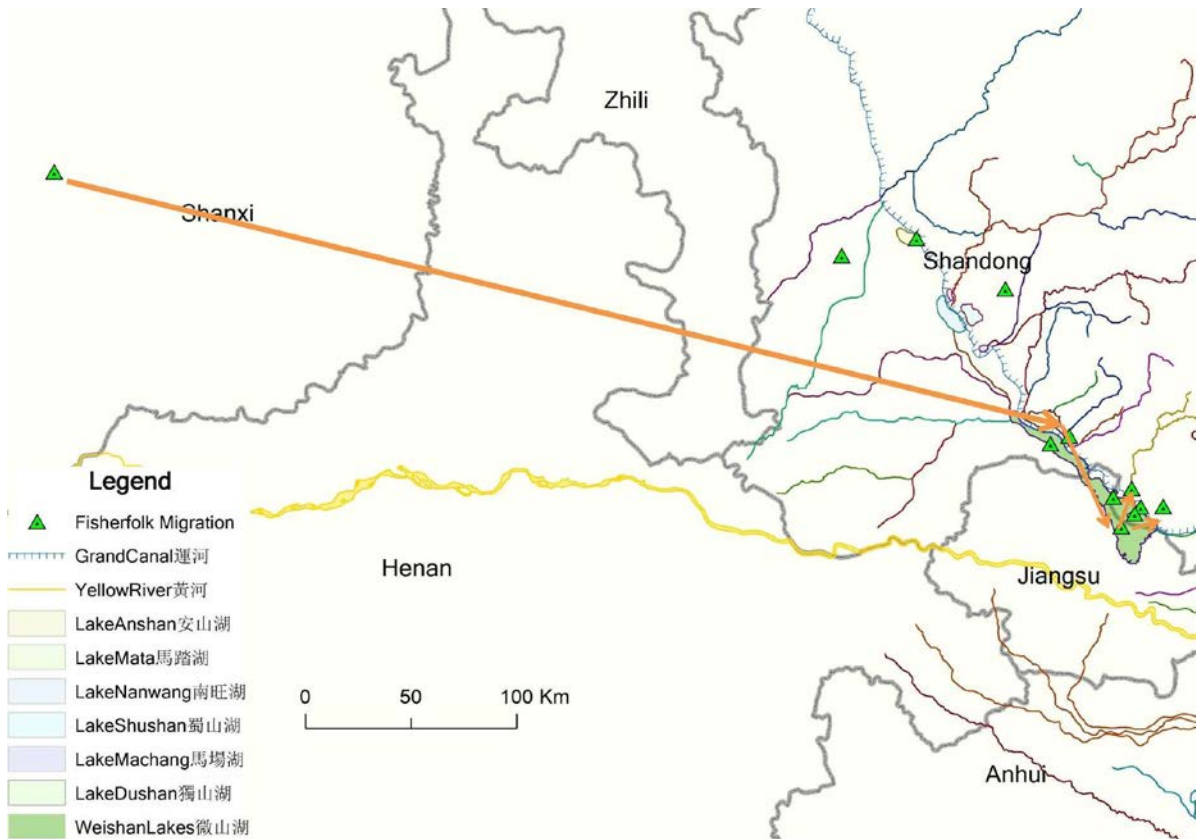
Not all lineages originated in northern Jiangsu. The Zhao family is a good example. Their genealogy says the apical ancestor moved from Hongdong County (洪洞縣) of Shanxi to Liucheng (留城) town in Shandong in 1369.¹²⁶ At that time, the Weishan Lakes had not yet formed. His descendants later moved to Weishan Mountain,¹²⁷ due to the rising level of the lake. Weishan Mountain is now Weishan Island, because the Weishan Lakes rose and inundated lower lying land. Their genealogy claims that there were tombstones erected during the reign of the Ming Wanli Emperor (萬曆, r. 1572-1620).¹²⁸ Some kinfolk moved inland while a few became boat people.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ *Chong xiu Tengyang Zhao shi zu pu* (重修滕陽趙氏族譜) (Zaozhuang, 1994), *juan* 1, 2a.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 3b; 5b.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 3b.

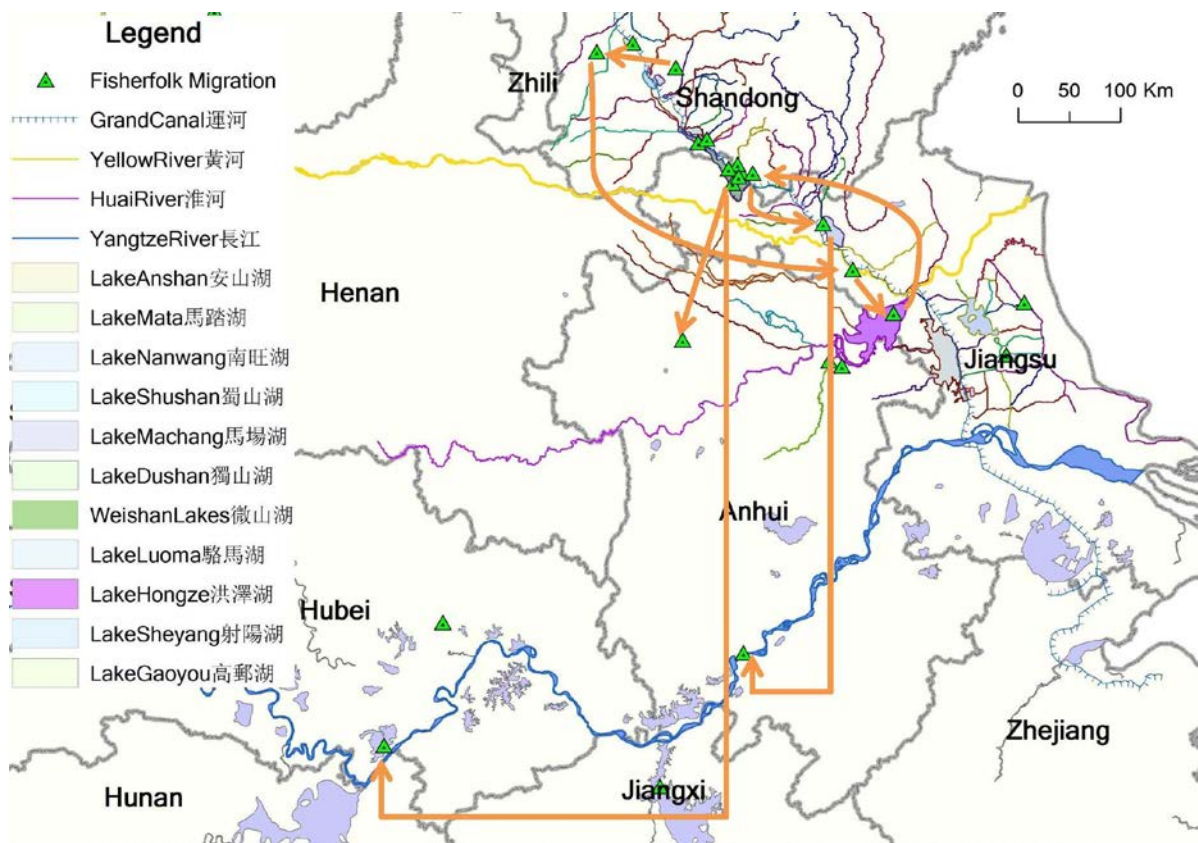
¹²⁹ Unfortunately, the genealogy does not specify a date when they became boat people. The Zhao kinfolk do not know the date either. One of the dates given for moving inland was 12 generations before 1994. See *Chong xiu Tengyang Zhao shi zu pu*, *juan* 1, 26a.



Map 1.8 Migration of the Zhao lineage.

In other words, compared to those from northern Jiangsu, the Zhao lineage was a “native” family from the fourteenth century. Zhao Famei (趙法美) performed the role of Wei Jiulang when he was young. He said that every fisherman could sing some passages of ritual operas, because it was the only everyday pastime. The boat people branch of the Zhao lineage had already accepted the cultural tradition of the entire boat people and became a part of the floating community. I nevertheless found that the Zhao lineage highlighted the Shanxi patron Guangong (關公) and placed him in the scroll of the Chief Divinities, but other lineages did not. Jin Zhongyu, a head *Duangu* ritualist, even said that boat people never worshiped Guangong.¹³⁰ The emphasis on Guangong could be related to the Shanxi origin of the Zhao lineage. It is hard to know if the Zhaos, or other native boat people, tried to bring in Guangong, or other cultural elements in general, from local Shandong or even distant Shanxi.

¹³⁰ Jin Zhongyu, April 17, 2010. I do find that Guangong is placed in two scrolls of *Pusa* (菩薩 [Bodhisattvas]) of the Shen lineage.



Map 1.9 Migration of the Hu lineage.

Another native lineage of southwestern Shandong, the Hu lineage, might also have introduced some ritual elements to the boat people, such as a symbolic ritual to open a pillory-like cangue for sick patients or people who fulfilled a vow. I witnessed a ritual of removing cangues from children in a *Duangu* Ceremony of the *Tangshen* Assembly. The founder of the *Tangshen* Assembly was Hu Yufeng (胡玉風) whose lineage originally came from Yanzhou, Shandong, where a fan-drum ritual tradition *Dapengpeng* was popular.¹³¹ *Dapengpeng* ritualists helped villagers release cangues and exorcize demons.¹³² It is possible that the Hu lineage brought the ritual of removing cangues into the floating community. In addition, the scrolls of deities and ancestors, another critical ritual element of the *Duangu* Ceremony, were also used in the *Dapengpeng*. We have no evidence of the content of the scrolls of *Dapengpeng* to verify the direct connection, but the use of ancestral scrolls with family trees was very popular in southern Shandong, southern Shanxi, and other places over North China. Such scrolls were called “lineage shadows” (*zuying* 族影/祖影), “family genealogy” (*jiapu* 家譜), or “main hall scroll”

¹³¹ Ji Genyin (紀根垠), “Tan Shandong *guniang qiang* (談山東姑娘腔[On Shandong *guniang qiang*]),” *Xi qu yan jiu* (戲曲研究[Studies of opera]) 42 (Beijing: Wen hua yi shu chu ban she, 1992), 27–39.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 33.

(*jiatang zhouzi* 家堂軸子), which are what the boat people call their ancestor scrolls. The names of the ancestors of all generations were recorded in the family tree on the ancestor scroll. The lowest register depicts the open gate of an ancestral shrine, and the family tree is inside the ancestral shrine. A critical difference between the boat people's scrolls and landmen's scrolls is that images of ancestral graves are added on top of the boat people's scrolls. This apparently relates to the fact that boat people did not remember where the graves were since they sloppily buried bodies on lakeshores without marks and moved away.¹³³ Therefore, the boat people symbolically drew images of graves on the ancestor scrolls, substituting for the physical tombs they could not have. This type of ancestor scroll was not common outside of North China. The use of ancestor scrolls among boat people possibly came from lineages from North China, like the Zhaos and the Hus.

The Hu family has a more complex and compelling migration story. The progenitor was from Hujiaying Village in Yanzhou Prefecture, Shandong (山東省兗州府胡家營) during the reign of the Yongle Emperor (永樂 r. 1402–1424). The village name *Hujiaying* means “the barracks of the Hu lineage,” and it implies the Hu lineage had a military affiliation. Then, during the reign of the Wanli Emperor (萬曆 r. 1572–1620), one ancestor moved to Hujiakeng Village in Fan County of Puzhou Prefecture, Henan (河南省濮州范縣胡家坑), now belonging to Heze County of Shandong (山東省荷澤縣). After several generations, one or two ancestors went south to Jiangsu and then became boat-dwellers.¹³⁴ In fact, the story of the ancestors before they became boat people was not remembered by the boat people themselves. They could only trace their family history to the first boat-dweller Hu Xiang (胡箱) (i.e., roughly seven to eight generations). In 2008, the kinsmen tried to find their founding ancestor by visiting several Hu villages in Henan, because family memory indicated they were from Fan County of Puzhou Prefecture in Henan. The mission almost failed, because the old Hujiakeng Village now belongs to Heze County of Shandong. Almost at the same time, the Hu lineage in Hujiakeng Village in Heze County, Shandong was also searching for the missing descendant Hu Xiang (胡襄) in 2007. The two sides bumped into each other in November 2008 by accident. A young man from Hujiakeng of Heze applied for party membership in a hospital where a lady from Weishan worked. The Weishan lady then realized that Hujiakeng was under the jurisdiction of Heze of Shandong. The family had

¹³³ Li Hongwei, “Yü min de xi su (漁民的習俗[Fisherfolk's customs]),” WSHZL, 170–171. Zhou Zongyao(周宗堯), “Chang jiang yu min su suo ji (長江漁民俗瑣記[Anecdote of the folklore of fisherfolk of the Yangtze River]),” MSYJ 18: 57.

¹³⁴ *Hu shi zu pu*, 15.

been looking in the wrong county. The two sides eventually met and confirmed the connection.¹³⁵ The reconstructed connection might not be authentic, however. This is a usual strategy for low-ranked lineages to promote themselves and legitimize their long-term presence in order to compete with other lineages, and can also be seen in the Dan peoples in South China. It requires more investigations to verify the connection, but at least the two Hu lineages strongly believe the connection exists.

The Hus may have joined the floating community in order to avoid their duties as a hereditary military household. In the Ming Dynasty, the *Weisuo* military system regulated the military household registration. In order to secure sufficient military service, the *Weisuo* system required each military household to inherit the post.¹³⁶ However, the duties were burdensome, and the military households also needed to provide corvée labor service. As a result, avoidance of military service increased. Besides intentionally injuring their bodies to avoid military service, some military households ran away with all family members.¹³⁷ The progenitor of the Hu lineage was possibly one of these. Becoming a fishing family would have given them a better chance of avoiding capture as well as making a living by fishing and harvesting aquatic plants.

The Hu lineage was not the only case of runaways from the state. The Ding (丁) lineage says their ancestor Ding Zhicheng (丁志成) committed a crime and fled to northern Jiangsu where the Dings then became boat people.¹³⁸ Gao Feng (高峰) inspected the boat people in the Lake Hongze in 1941 and found that some of them avoided military service or escaped after committing crimes by living on boats.¹³⁹ These fugitive experiences were embedded in the mentality of some boat people, which resulted in them intentionally keeping a distance from the state. When the communists penetrated into the boat people in northern Jiangsu to launch the class struggle imitating the model used in villages, some wealthy boat people fled from Lake Hongze to the Weishan Lakes.¹⁴⁰ Like the hill peoples in mainland Southeast Asia described by James Scott,

¹³⁵ Interview with Hu Xiancai (胡憲才) at Xinjian Village, Weishan County, April 18, 2010.

¹³⁶ *Da Ming hui dian* (大明會典), *juan* 155, *bing* (兵[soldier]) 28, 23–40.

¹³⁷ Wu Chih-ho (吳智和), “Ming dai zhi ye hu de chub u yan jiu (明代職業戶的初步研究[Preliminary research on the occupational households of the Ming Dynasty]),” *Ming shi yan jiu zhuan kan* (明史研究專刊[Journal of Ming Studies]) 4 (1981), 79.

¹³⁸ Interview with Ding Chuanfu (丁傳富), an experienced *Duangu* ritualist, at Xinjian Village, Weishan County on April 25, 2010.

¹³⁹ Gao Feng, “Hongze hu de Shandong bang,” 498.

¹⁴⁰ NSHGZ, 147. Jiangsu sheng zheng xie wen shi zi liao wei yuan hui (江蘇省政協文史資料委員會) and Zhonggong Hongze xian wei dang shi ban gong shi (中共洪澤縣委黨史辦公室), ed., *Hongze hu feng yun lu* (洪澤湖風雲錄[Record of battles in Lake Hongze]) (Nanjing: Jiangsu wen shi zi liao bian ji bu, 1990), 176–177; 180.

these boat people used water obstacles to prevent the government extending its control,¹⁴¹ which indirectly helped preserve the unique *Duangu* Ceremony intact from political intervention.

By reviewing the history of the different boat people lineages, we find out that internal diversity certainly existed within the boat-dwelling community. Even if they had had different lineage histories and joined the fishing community at different times, once they joined the community, they took on the identity of boat people. They had a common lifestyle and religious culture, and they lost their connection with their original homeland. More importantly, when those boat-dwellers of diverse origins came together to form an exclusive floating community, they amalgamated the cultural elements of their native places into the *Duangu* Ceremony. What we can learn from this section is the multi-layered formation of the idiosyncratic boat-dwelling lifestyle and religious culture fashioned by boat people from different places.

Freshwater versus Saltwater

Freshwater and saltwater fisherfolk¹⁴² had very different modes of fishing production, and faced dissimilar risks on the water. In the sea there are currents and tides, while the lakes are relatively static. Different types of fish inhabit fresh and saltwater environments. Thus, fisherfolk must employ different types of fishing gear and methods. As the aforementioned memorial of the Governor General of Jiangsu and Jiangxi describes, the saltwater fisherfolk had permanent homes on land as bases for routine daily fishing while freshwater boat people lived on the water. The fishing seasons were also different. A fishing *bang*'s methods and gear determined its fishing seasons. To take the Dipnetters as an example, the Dipnetters fished through team efforts in winter and spring, and spread out to fish individually for the rest of the year. If the *bang* planned to move to another place for fishing or harvesting aquatic plants, all the members of the *bang* would migrate together.¹⁴³ They also followed the cycles of aquatic plants to decide when and where to move for livelihood. The aquatic plants included reeds, cattails, foxnuts, wild rice, water caltrops, and lotus seedpods, which they harvested when fishing was bad. The life cycles and lifestyles of the freshwater and saltwater fisherfolk are dissimilar by virtue of the environments in which they fished for a living. They developed distinctive

¹⁴¹ James Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

¹⁴² In this section, I use "fisherfolk" occasionally, because not all saltwater fisherfolk lived on boats. In fact, the majority of the saltwater fisherfolk had settlements on the land. It would be strange to call them "boat people."

¹⁴³ Though they might migrate together, individual boats could move several kilometers away from the *bang*, except when the time came for team fishing.

lifestyles and had different relationships with nature and divinities. Thus the boat-dwelling Dan peoples in South China had very different lifestyles and religious beliefs and practices from the freshwater boat people in southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu.¹⁴⁴ The most significant difference centered on the continuing genealogies of each lineage among the freshwater boat people in Shandong and Jiangsu. The Dan peoples did not have lineage genealogies or corporate ancestor worship before they resettled on the land.¹⁴⁵

Before modern technology improved fishing gear and methods as well as boats, the freshwater fisherfolk were far more numerous than their saltwater counterparts in North China. For instance, a Jiangsu provincial survey says there were 210,000 freshwater fisherfolk in the province during the Republican period, but only 20,000 seawater fisherfolk. However, most studies on fisherfolk have centered on the saltwater fishery in South China. The freshwater fisherfolk have been overlooked by academia.

The deities worshiped by the freshwater and saltwater fisherfolk were quite different, as were, not surprisingly, their respective rituals. As a number of outstanding studies have shown, the saltwater fisherfolk often worshiped the Heavenly Empress Mazu (*tianhou mazu* 天后媽祖), the Dragon Kings (*longwang* 龍王), and Guanyin (觀音). Some saltwater fisherfolk worshiped deities of oceans, such as Yang Fu (洋府) in the Zhoushan Archipelago¹⁴⁶ and immortal ladies and whale relics¹⁴⁷ at the Shandong coast. Although the freshwater boat people also worshiped Guanyin, they also sacrificed to many *Daiwangs* (大王) and *Jiangjuns* (將軍), spirits of rivers and lakes, as well as a number of unidentifiable water spirits, including various goddesses. Their respective aspirations or emotions might be similar—the wish to catch more fish, the hope for safe navigation, and fears of shipwreck and drowning. However, the deities worshiped by the freshwater boat people are as diverse as the number of freshwater territories. Each river or lake was believed to have an overseer or patron deity. Moreover, educated and uneducated people might have different perceptions about the patron deities of each body of water. The pantheon(s) of freshwater territories deserves further exploration.

¹⁴⁴ Some Dan boat people went upstream to freshwater domains, but their lifestyle remained basically identical to their saltwater cohorts. I therefore still treat them as saltwater fisherfolk. It is worth further investigation whether or not becoming freshwater fisherfolk changed their lifestyle.

¹⁴⁵ Ward, “Varieties of the Conscious Model: The Fishermen of South China,” 127–128. Freedman, *Chinese Lineage and Society: Fukien and Kwangtung*, 93–94. He Xi, *Yi shen yi zu: Yue xi nan xin yang gou jian de she hui shi*, 254.

¹⁴⁶ Micah Muscolino, *Fishing Wars and Environmental Change in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), 40–42.

¹⁴⁷ Ye Tao (葉濤), “Hai shen xin yang yu ji si yi shi: Shandong yan hai yu min diao cha (海神信仰與祭祀儀式：山東沿海漁民調查[Deities of the oceans and their sacrifice rituals: a survey of the fisherfolk at the Shandong coast]), *MSYJ* 2002(3): 69–72.

The current research focuses on the freshwater boat people living along the Grand Canal between the Yellow River and the Yangtze River, especially in the area of southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu. The lifestyle and culture of these freshwater boat people differed not only from that of their saltwater brethren but also from that of the nearby landmen.

Water versus Land¹⁴⁸

The life of water-borne boat people differed in numerous ways from that of land-based peasants and part-time fishermen.¹⁴⁹ The boat people were more mobile and spread out in various waters, while the peasants or the part-time fishermen were fixed and gathered in settlements. The landmen's horizon was usually limited to the distance of a one-day round trip; whereas the boat people could float freely wherever they wanted.¹⁵⁰ In addition, the boat people migrated annually to different places following the fishing seasons, while the peasants had to stay in one spot.

The boat people under discussion include boat-dwelling fisherfolk, but exclude the part-time fisherfolk who lived in villages near the lakes. The boat people might have come from the land several generations ago, but once they accepted the boat-dwelling lifestyle, their daily life, annual calendar, and life cycle would fundamentally change. As a result, their religious beliefs and practices, as well as social relationships, would transform accordingly.

The boat people still preserved ancestor worship but had no attachment to graves, which is a fundamental difference between boat and land people. According to sixteenth-century gazetteers, the landmen of both Pei County and Teng County had no tradition of establishing ancestral shrines, but sacrificed to their ancestors at their graves.¹⁵¹ When I visited a neighboring county, Zou (鄒), I noticed that family trees were inscribed on the backs of gravestones erected in the late Ming and early Qing periods.¹⁵² This can explain how landmen relied on grave worship to preserve the genealogies. By

¹⁴⁸ In this section, "boat people" refers to all types of boat people, unless I specify otherwise.

¹⁴⁹ While I emphasize the distinctions between boat people and land-people in the following paragraphs, I do not mean to dichotomize them. I clearly understand the ambiguity. A number of boat people's ancestors came from the land, and boat-dwellers might choose to resettle on the land. The boat people and the landmen were not absolutely mutually exclusive. In addition, many lakeshore or riverside residents caught fish during fallow periods. What I try to emphasize here is the evidently distinctive lifestyle differences between boat people and land-people.

¹⁵⁰ Wu Chih-ho, "Ming dai yu hu yu yang zhi shi ye," 124.

¹⁵¹ Luo Shixue (羅士學), et al, eds., *Pei zhi* (沛志[Gazetteer of Pei County]) (Beijing: Zhongguo shu dian, 1992[1597]), 358. Yang Chengfu (楊承父) and Wang Yuanbin (王元賓), eds., *Wanli Teng xian zhi* (萬曆滕縣志[Gazetteer of Teng County during the reign of Ming Wanli Emperor]) (Beijing: Shu mu wen xian chu ban she, 1992[1585]), 46.

¹⁵² Those family trees do not resemble the family trees on the scrolls of the boat people. In some cases, the names of the sons-in-law were recorded.

contrast, graves were relatively unimportant to the boat people, as explained earlier. The boat people utilized ancestor scrolls, which included images of graves, ancestral shrines, and family trees, and which, most importantly, were portable.

Ecological differences not only transformed the ways and rhythms of living, but they also changed the social and economic status of the boat people. The mobility and isolation advantaged and disadvantaged the boat people along different dimensions. For instance, their mobility empowered the boat people to escape from natural disasters, wars, and governmental control; it also enabled them to seek aquatic plants for food more easily, thereby avoiding starvation. However, the dependence on natural resources for food and for the accumulation of wealth made them vulnerable to the unstable fluctuations of nature. Floods and droughts could limit food and restrict wealth accumulation dramatically. The boat people's only physical assets were their fishing gear and boats.¹⁵³ The condition of Dipnetters' fishing gear and boats was very poor, rendering them ineffective. Most Dipnetters could only catch enough fish to feed themselves, with little surplus to sell. Unlike farmers who had a chance to accumulate wealth by investing surplus into estates or to progress by passing the civil service examinations, the water-borne boat people were unable to change their social and economic status.

Moreover, frequent moving limited the boat people's opportunities to receive education; no school or tutor moved with the floating community. Therefore most boat people were illiterate,¹⁵⁴ except for a few *Duangu* ritualists and scroll painters who could barely write ritual texts or scroll captions. As a result, the floating population did not have a chance to improve their social status by passing the civil service examinations in the late imperial period.¹⁵⁵ The lack of education, however, did free them from official ideology. Lacking Confucian values, which repressed women's status, female boat people were not treated as inferior, as peasant women generally were. Instead, thanks to the fishing wives' equal contribution to the family fishing enterprise, they had a better status in the family. In general, however, lacking education, the boat people were vulnerable, especially to literate landmen.

Differing statuses impacted on boat people's and land people's attitudes toward each other. Boat people avoided landing, because the land-people had a saying that "lake cats' landing is itself the beginning of a crime."¹⁵⁶ The land-people despised the boat people,

¹⁵³ NSHDC, 13.

¹⁵⁴ NSHDC, 12; NSHGZ, 147.

¹⁵⁵ No official regulation prohibited the boat people's right to take the civil service examination. They were not treated as outcasts officially, and did not appear in any edicts that emancipated various types of outcasts all over China during the Qing period, as explained in the Introduction.

¹⁵⁶ In Chinese, "孚〔貓〕子下地三分罪." See NSHDC, 12.

and derided them as “lake cats” (*hu maozi* 湖貓子), meaning they liked eating fish.¹⁵⁷ The boat people called the land-people “bulky Shandong guy” (*kua zi* { 兗 子 })¹⁵⁸ or “sage egg” (*shengren dan* 聖人蛋).¹⁵⁹ Boat people had their own folktales about “lake cat,” which related them to the offspring of Zhao Kuangyin (趙匡胤 927–976), the founder of the Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127).¹⁶⁰ Like the Dan peoples, the Weishan boat people were said to have a different leg shape because of the limited space on boats.¹⁶¹ The boat people had a taboo against marrying land-people, and vice versa.¹⁶² Another taboo was that boat people, whether rich or poor, never bought land.¹⁶³ The landmen also prohibited boat people from buying land or houses.¹⁶⁴ The boat people also avoided direct contact with land-people. Selling fish and water plants and buying equipment as well as daily necessities were done through middlemen—fish dealers and vending boats.¹⁶⁵ Some fish dealers, usually called *pa hu* (扒戶), used unfair steelyards and paid less for fish products. The vending boats (*xiao fan chuan* 小販船) provided the boat people with food, daily necessities, and the materials for making fishing gear in exchange for fish. The transaction was usually made by the heads of the fishing *bangs*, so most boat people did not have to confront fish dealers or boat vendors. More than 1,000

¹⁵⁷ Josef Thiel, “Die Wirtschaftliche Ausnutzung Des Nan-Yang Sees (南陽湖) in Süd-Shantung [The economic exploitation of the Lake Nanyang in south Shandong],” *Folklore Studies* 7 (1948): 117. Thiel transliterated it as *Nau-tzū* (孛子), according to the local dialect. Zhang Jiushao, “Weishan hu yu bang,” 88. Yin Yunling (殷云 [允] 嶺), *Wei niao* (葦鳥[Reedbird]) (Jinan: Shandong wen yi chu ban she, 1999), 248.

¹⁵⁸ The character *kua* 兗 is composed of three individual characters *shan* 山, *dong* 東, and *ren* 人 which means “Shandong people.”

¹⁵⁹ Zhang Jiushao, “Weishan hu yu bang,” 89. “Sage egg” is a variation of “tortoise egg” (*wangba dan* 王八蛋) which is a common revilement. Sage refers to Confucius, whose hometown is very close to the Weishan Lakes.

¹⁶⁰ The folktales says Zhao Kuangyin was a son of a boat-dwelling girl who fell in love with a cat spirit. The cat spirit transformed into a human every night to date the girl. The girl got pregnant and gave birth to Zhao Kuangyin. For the details about the folktale, see Li Jinren (李近仁), *Weishan hu qu shi zhui 3: Zeng zhuan ji kao* (微山湖區史綴 3：增撰紀考[History and anecdotes of the Weishan Lakes: addition and investigation]) (Jining: Jining shi xin wen chu ban ju, 2000), 187–188.

¹⁶¹ Zhang Jiushao, “Weishan hu yu bang,” 88. Yin Yunling, *Wei niao*, 124. The discourse about boat people’s legs was constructed out of landmen’s imagination. Physical anthropologist Huang Xinmei (黃新美) found no difference between the legs of landmen and boat people. See Huang Xinmei, *Zhujiang kou shui shang ju min (Dan jia) de yan jiu* (珠江口水居民(蛋家)的研究[Study of the Dan peoples at the Pearl River delta]) (Guangzhou: Zhongshan University Press, 1990).

¹⁶² See Sun Mingjing (孫明經), *1937 nian: zhan yun bian shang de lie ying* (戰雲邊上的獵影 [Photographs taken at the edge of war, 1937]) (Jinan: Shandong hua bao, 2003), 41. The author learned this taboo from an official of Shandong Provincial Department of Construction, who just investigated the fishery in Weishan Lakes in June of 1937.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Wang Peixun, *Xiang yuan yi jiu lu*, 235.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. These fish dealers and boat vendors usually had land-based houses.

vending boats existed in the Weishan Lakes, most of whom were fish dealers, too.¹⁶⁶ These vendors could extend credit to the boat people, thus ensuring that future catches would be brought to them. Debt created an informal contract. Both sides took advantage of this relationship.¹⁶⁷ This phenomenon is very similar to what Barbara Ward describes as the personalization of credit among the Dan peoples in South China.¹⁶⁸ However, the Hong Kong fish dealers did not carry on retail business like the vending boats in the Weishan Lakes. The dual functions of fish dealer and vending boat made the lives of the Weishan boat people easier, but kept them isolated from the landmen. These middlemen provided a buffer for the boat people to avoid direct contact with land-people. The floating community isolated themselves in waters far away from the shores.



Photo 2.8 Vending Boat. Aihu Village, Weishan County, Shandong. October 28, 2008.

Life on the Boat

The boat people had a unique lifestyle adapted to aquatic life. This section will briefly introduce the reader to life on the boat: the spatial arrangement of the boat, what was worn and eaten, and how family issues and the division of property were dealt with. The boat people managed all of these issues through their religious practices and beliefs.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. BDYMC, 163.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Barbara Ward, "Cash or Credit Crops? An Examination of Some Implications of Peasant Commercial Production with Special Reference to the Multiplicity of Traders and Middlemen," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, vol. VIII, no. 2 (January 1960): 148–163.

The “house-boat” or “boat-house” is a general term for a variety of boats with different sizes and functions. The Dipnetters usually owned small flat-bottomed boats with square-cut bows called *qitou liuzi* (齊頭溜子). A traditional *liuzi* was about 3–5 meters long and 1.25–2.5 meters wide. The sides were about 0.5–1 meters high.¹⁶⁹ Both the bow and the stern were cut square; the bow had a long shallow “swim,” that is to say, the underside of the boat sloped very gently at the front. Another similar type, called *jiantou huazi* (尖頭划子), was used particularly for fishing or for harvesting aquatic plants. A traditional *huazi* was about 4.5–6 meters long and 1.6–3 meters wide.¹⁷⁰ Both the bow and stern of *huazi* had a long shallow “swim.”¹⁷¹ Both *huazi* and *liuzi* were fishing boats, whereas the boat people’s house-boats generally did not move around much.¹⁷² The poorest boat people used *huazi* or *liuzi* with awnings to make their house-boats and had no additional working boat. These were called *wopeng* boats (窩篷船 [nest-awninged boats]). *Gaiban* boats (蓋板船 [plank-covered boats]) had planks covering all sides except a small door at the stern and were more desirable.¹⁷³ Higher quality house-boats were *paozi* boats (拋子船), which had three compartments: front, middle, and back. The front compartment had a bow cabin (*tou cang* 頭艙), with a mast cabin (*wei cang* 桅艙) for storage or a guest room. The middle compartment had the front cabin (*qian cang* 前艙) for the heads of the family and the rear cabin (*hou cang* 後艙) for children. The back compartment was called “rear storage” (*hou ao* 後廩), and was for the kitchen or for an extra child’s room.¹⁷⁴ When the boat-house needed to sail, the bed sheet or quilt would be used as a sail.¹⁷⁵

Families divided as they outgrew their boats. When a son married and formed his own family, the parents would buy a new small boat and attach it to their house-boat. The son and new wife dined with his parents until a child was born and the space on the house-boat was no longer adequate for the two families.¹⁷⁶ Before that happened, all the

¹⁶⁹ Li Kongzhang (李孔章), “Weishan hu chuan ju (微山湖船居[Boat-dwelling of the Weishan Lakes]),” in WSGJ, 197. Gao Jianjun (高建軍), “Weishan hu chuan ju (微山湖船居[Boat-dwelling of the Weishan Lakes]),” MSYJ 37(1996): 78.

¹⁷⁰ Gao Jianjun, “Weishan hu chuan ju,” 78.

¹⁷¹ Interview with boat craftsmen, Liu Peihua (劉培華) and Shi Guiyin (石貴銀), at Xinjian Village, Weishan County on April 25, 2010. They were making a special Shotgun *liuzi* (槍溜子) designed for hunting wild ducks.

¹⁷² SDHBCC, 8. The boats were not necessarily at anchor. Boat people sometimes tied several boats together instead of anchoring or berthing.

¹⁷³ Gao Jianjun, “Weishan hu chuan ju,” 78.

¹⁷⁴ Li Jinren (李近仁), “Weishan hu yu jia qing *huoji* (微山湖漁家請‘伙計’[Fishing family’s hiring a *huoji* spirit in the Weishan Lakes]),” in WSGJ, 246.

¹⁷⁵ Gao Jianjun, “Weishan hu chuan ju,” 78.

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Ni Jiyun (倪繼雲) at Xinjian Village, Weishan County, October 29, 2009. Interview with Wang Jiali at Laohu Village, Dongping County, November 19, 2009. Gao Liang (高梁), “Jiu shi Jiangsu yu

income of the son went to the parents to defray the cost of foods and to repay the debt on the new boat. Once the son was ready for independence, the new family would leave the original *bang* to find their own fishing ground.¹⁷⁷ Sons returned to their parents' boats on festivals, especially the Chinese New Year. The most important aspect of New Year was to worship deities and ancestors which were painted on scrolls by the head of the family. The ownership of these scrolls essentially defined the family. If a son moved out without having his own scrolls, he and his family still needed to return to his parents' boat to worship deities and ancestors during New Year. The scrolls were usually inherited by the first son, and other sons went to the eldest brother's boat to worship deities and ancestors, unless they had their own scrolls. Sons could make their own sets of scrolls to become independent if they were told to do so by spirit-mediums, especially when unfortunate things happened involving the sons. This involved a ritual called *chu laozu* (出老祖 [Bringing out the Ancestors]), requesting the family to make a set of scrolls of deities and ancestors for a son.¹⁷⁸ Once a family had its own scrolls, they did not have to return to the boat of parents or to the eldest brother during New Year. Such was family division among the boat people.¹⁷⁹ These scrolls were carefully stored in a specific place on the boats.

The space within the house-boat was hierarchically arranged. The left side, called the rear pole (*hou gan* 後杆), was the superior, and the right side, called the front pole (*qian gan* 前杆), was the inferior. The cabin of the rear pole was the sacred space for storing the scrolls of divinities and ancestors. If the boat owner hired a boat guardian spirit, called *huoji* (伙計 [laborer deity]), set up by the boat craftsman, the idol would be secretly embedded in the cabin of the rear pole.¹⁸⁰

All of these boats were flat-bottom craft, suitable for lakes or slow waterways like the Grand Canal. This physical feature differentiated freshwater from saltwater boats. Flat-bottom boats would have been too dangerous in oceans. In lakes, however, flatboats

min de xi su he zong jiao xin yang (舊時江蘇漁民的習俗和宗教信仰[Jiangsu fisherfolk's old customs and religious beliefs])," *Gu jin nong ye* (古今農業[Agriculture of the present and the past]) 2 (1991): 75.

¹⁷⁷ Zhou Zongyao, "Chang jiang yu min su suo ji," 56–57.

¹⁷⁸ *Laozu*, literally "old ancestors," is a set of scrolls of deities and ancestors. Details will be introduced in Chapter Two, and also see: She Kangle and Liu Xing (劉星), "Yü min chun jie ji zu yu zong zu ju he (漁民春節祭祖與宗族聚合：以魯南微山湖區為中心[Fisherfolk's New Year ancestor worship and lineage gathering: centering on the Weishan Lakes])," *MSYJ* vol. 2011, no. 2: 188–189. The two authors followed me to Xinjian Village in Weishan County, Shandong in October and November, 2009 to observe a *Duangu* Ceremony and later returned to observe the ritual activities during Chinese New Year in 2010. This essay provides us with a deeper investigation of the ancestral sacrifice in individual boat people's families. I appreciate the authors' sharing with me some detailed information collected in their fieldwork.

¹⁷⁹ She Kangle and Liu Xing, "Yü min chun jie ji zu yu zong zu ju he," 188–189.

¹⁸⁰ Li Jinren, "Weishan hu yu jia qing *huoji*," 246. The details about the *huoji* spirit will be introduced in Chapter Two.

provided a superior platform for catching fish or hunting ducks.

The foods of the freshwater and saltwater fisherfolk were also different. The saltwater fisherfolk had land-based homes, so grain was always available, if not always affordable. Part-time fisherfolk also had their own farmlands. As for pure saltwater boat people like the Dan peoples, they were not as fortunate as their freshwater brethren, who could harvest aquatic plants, such as wild rice, water caltrops, foxnuts, and lotus seeds, to supplement their diets.¹⁸¹ In order to coordinate with the fishing routine, the boat people usually ate only twice a day: breakfast in early morning and supper after sunset.¹⁸² During a year, freshwater boat people, at least including the Dipnetters and Shotgunners, harvested wild rice in late August and early September and relied on them for food for four months and cut off reeds to make shoes or baskets.¹⁸³ Unfortunately, this led to conflict between the boat people and lakeshore residents. Landsmen's indiscriminate harvests ruined the water caltrops, foxnuts, and lotuses, which were boat people's staples in certain seasons.¹⁸⁴ Moreover, landsmen harvested immature reeds for cattle feed or stove fuel, but boat people needed grown reeds to weave shoes or baskets for sale. These conflicts increased the distance between boat people and landsmen, and worsened their relationships with and perceptions of each other.

A few boat people cultivated vegetables or kept livestock on their house-boats. In 1793, George Leonard Staunton, a member of the Macartney embassy, witnessed boat people growing various vegetables, such as mustard, on attached rafts covered with soil.¹⁸⁵ Another embassy member, John Barrow, states that some boat people bred hogs and ducks on board and exchanged dried salted ducks for rice or other grain.¹⁸⁶ Although we cannot verify whether these boat people were the Dipnetters or not, they demonstrate that the boat people in general were not passively vulnerable, but actively innovative and able to adapt to life on water.

¹⁸¹ NSHGZ, 149.

¹⁸² Li Hongwei, "Yü min de xi su," 163.

¹⁸³ Yin Yunling (殷允岭), ed., *Feng qing yu lie* (風情·漁獵[Customs, fishing, and hunting]) (Weishan: Weishan hu wen hua xi lie cong shu bian wei hui, 2001), 134. Gao Feng, "Hongze hu de Shandong bang," JSSCZ, 499.

¹⁸⁴ NSHGZ, 149.

¹⁸⁵ Staunton, *An authentic account of an embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China*, 243.

¹⁸⁶ Barrow, *Travels in China*, 559.



Photo 2.9 Tiger-head harness (front)



Photo 2.10 Tiger-head harness (back)



Photo 2.11 Tiger-head harness and its end in the shape of an anchor.

The “tiger-head harness” (*hutou panzi* 虎頭襁子) is another example of the boat people’s ability to adapt to aquatic life.¹⁸⁷ This harness with a protective tiger-head symbol in the front was made by mothers for infants and toddlers to prevent drowning. The two crossed two-meter long straps with an end in the shape of an anchor or water caltrop were tied to the mast.¹⁸⁸ Sometimes, dried bottle gourds or pieces of Styrofoam

¹⁸⁷ Thanks to my colleague She Kangle’s (佘康樂) assiduous study, *panzi* is correctly transcribed as 襁子. In most written records, it was wrongly put as 祥子. See She Kangle, “Weishan hu yu min zong zu de dang xia shi jian (微山湖漁民宗族的當下實踐[Practice of the fishermen’s lineage in the Weishan Lakes])” (MA thesis, Shandong University, 2012), 22.

¹⁸⁸ Li Hongwei, “Yü min de xi su,” 166.

were tied to infants and toddlers, which would help them float if they fell into the water.¹⁸⁹ The Dan peoples had similar devices to prevent children from drowning.¹⁹⁰ Both of these devices displayed protective symbols, such as an exorcising tiger head, which reflected the belief that demons could cause drowning. This similarity mirrors the common risk of drowning faced by boat people in general. The fear of being drowned is at times bound together with rituals and beliefs. In the next chapter, we will turn to boat people's ritual activities.



Photo 2.12 Floating harness with Styrofoam.



Photo 2.13 Child harness tied to a pole on the boat.

Concluding Remarks

Physical settings had conditioned the social and cultural settings of the boat people. This chapter describes the landscape and ecology of the places the freshwater boat people of North China frequented in the past. I also introduce the environmental history of rivers and lakes, as well as natural disasters. All these environmental factors could have affected boat people's social organizations and reshaped the distinctive ways of living on boats. These physical, social, and cultural conditions thus further reshaped the religious practices and beliefs of the boat people, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 164.

¹⁹⁰ Zhang Shouqi, *Dan jia ren*, 192–194.

CHAPTER TWO

The Religious Life on the Water

Boat-dwelling and a fishing livelihood changed the boat people's relationships with nature and the ecology-related spirits. The lifestyle on the water reshaped the boat people's ritual activities and the ways they practiced rituals. The heterogeneous backgrounds of the boat people meant disparate elements of lifestyle, religious practice and beliefs from diverse origins came together and eventually nurtured a unique religious culture on the water. The close relationship with the water created a new pantheon of water-related deities. Most of these rituals and deities were little known to people outside the boating community. This chapter endeavors to reconstruct an overview of the religious life of the boat people and will center on the Dipnetters' experiences.

I will introduce the ritual activities and specialists of the Dipnetter boat people, analyze their scrolls of deities and ancestors, decode their pantheon, and illustrate this by identifying several significant spirits. All of these religious elements vividly reflect the idiosyncratic character of life on the water. These boat people developed an idiosyncratic pantheon of water deities and created a unique ritual tradition, the *Duangu* Ceremony which will be introduced briefly in this chapter and closely reviewed in the next. In short, the first half of this chapter centers on ritual practices, and the second half of the chapter concentrates on the religious beliefs represented on the scrolls of deities and ancestors.

Ritual Practitioners and Activities

The Dipnetter boat people had a variety of ritual activities officiated over by different types of ritual practitioners. At least six types of ritual practitioners served the boat people: *Duangu* ritualists, deity painters, paper-cutters, spirit-mediums, ritual officiants, and family heads. **Family heads** managed the rites of passage and domestic annual festivals; some **ritual officiants** presided over a communal ritual called Venerating *Daiwang* (*jing Daiwang* 敬大王) and also assisted those families without family heads capable of managing domestic rituals. **Spirit-mediums** practiced spirit possession and communicated or negotiated with spirits to cure patients of diseases at the houses of the spirit-mediums or the clients. ***Duangu* ritualists** (*Duangong* 端公) were in charge of both the performance and ritual of the ritual operas throughout the *Duangu* Ceremony, including several spirit possessions, whereas **paper-cutters** and **scroll painters** made ritual objects for the Ceremony. In general, the *Duangu* ritualists were the most respected by the boat people on account of their religious skills and knowledge. All

of these ritual practitioners fished for their livelihood. Ritual specialties were not their major occupation. These ritual specialists¹ were tied to the community by kinship or marriage, as well as through various social relationships. They were fishing partners, too. All of them were male, except for female spirit-mediums (*shen ma ma* 神媽媽).

In the following sections, I will introduce the ritual activities and their practitioners in detail.

Family Heads and Domestic Rituals

Family heads managed the domestic rituals each within their own household, including annual festivals and rites of passage. The most significant domestic rituals included the Chinese New Year festival, birth and death of family members, and weddings. A number of common domestic rituals of the farmers were irrelevant to the boat people, due to distinctive ways of life on the water.

The annual calendar of the boat people followed the fishing season; therefore their annual festivals were not identical to those of the villagers. Among the annual festivals most important to the farmers, only Chinese New Year was also significant to the boat people. The Dragon Boat Festival (*duanwu* 端午)² and the Mid-Autumn Festival (*zhongqiu* 中秋)³ were almost irrelevant to the boat people. Since they did not celebrate these two festivals, they did not eat rice dumpling (*zongzi* 粽子) or moon-cakes (*yuebing* 月餅) which most land-based farmers traditionally enjoyed during these two festivals respectively. Several special days for tomb-sweeping, such as *Qingming* (清明) and the first day of the tenth lunar month, were also meaningless to the boat people, since they did not create permanent tombs.⁴ The Ghost Festival⁵ and its related rituals, such as the Universal Passage of Hungry Ghosts Out of Hell (*pudu* 普渡), were also not observed by the boat people of the Weishan Lakes. The boat people developed different rituals to communicate with ancestors and demons, which will be explained in the following

¹ I use the term *specialist* because these ritual practitioners had more knowledge about various ritual procedures than lay boat people and were capable of practicing ritual activities. They acquired the ritual knowledge and skills through certain apprenticeships; therefore family heads were not specialists. However, ritual specialties were not their major occupation. During daily life, these ritual specialists still had to fish for their livelihood.

² The date is fifth day of the fifth lunar month.

³ The date is fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month.

⁴ Interview with Jin Zhongyu, April 17, 2010. Zhou Zongyao, "Chang jiang yu min su suo ji," 57. Only a few native families had lands to bury ancestors. They lost land and houses and became boat people, but still visited tombs on these dates to offer sacrifice to ancestors. See Liu Yuhua, "Weishan hu yu min dou zheng shi lue," 144. However, this kind of situation was probably rare. For instance, the Zhaos are natives, and they have ancestral tombs on Weishan Island, but they did not practice the tomb-sweeping rituals regularly. Therefore, I tend to accept the fact that most Dipnetters did not practice tomb-sweeping rituals.

⁵ The date is the fifteenth day of the seventh lunar month.

sections.

The New Year festival was observed seriously by the boat people. A sequence of ritual activities was managed by the family heads. The ritual activities during the lunar New Year were called “sacrificing to the ancestors” (*ji zu* 祭祖), as distinct from “venerating deities” (*jing shen* 敬神) during the Observance for Continuation of Genealogy.⁶ These two periods were the only times that the boat people could take out and set up all the scrolls of deities and ancestors to receive incense and offerings.⁷



Photo 2.1 Setting up scrolls of deities and ancestors (Source: Photograph by She Kangle).

⁶ She Kangle, “Weishan hu yu min zong zu de dang xia shi jian,” 33.

⁷ From the boat people’s names for these two ritual activities, we find that the major function of the New Year rituals was renewing relationships with ancestors, whereas the Continuation of Genealogy was meant to renew relationships with deities. This is confirmed by my fieldwork. Both She Kangle and Liu Xing were my assistants when I conducted the fieldwork in October and November of 2009 for the Shen lineage’s Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. She worked with me again in April 2010 investigating another Continuation of Genealogy held by the Hu lineage. Thereafter, She decided to study the boat people’s lineage as her MA thesis. We shared plentiful information about the boat people. I appreciate her generosity in providing first-hand observation of boat people’s New Year ritual activities, which I was unable to witness. For details of boat people’s New Year ritual activities, see She Kangle, “Weishan hu yu min zong zu de dang xia shi jian,” 33–50.



Photo 2.2 Setting up scrolls of deities and ancestors (Source: Photograph by She Kangle).

New Year was the only time in the year to reconnect with ancestors. The ritual activities were divided to three stages. The first stage, “Sending off *laozu*⁸ (*song laozu* 送老祖),” was actually similar to the landsmen’s “Sending off the Stove God” on the twenty-third day of the last lunar month. The boat people not only burnt a picture of the Stove God as most Chinese did,⁹ but they also set up several representative scrolls of deities who were also sent to Heaven to report to the Jade Emperor.¹⁰ When the ritual was finished, the scrolls were carefully rolled up and stored. It is worth noting that the scroll of ancestors was not set up, but the liturgical script of sending off included ancestors. Boat people’s ancestors, along with all divinities, could ascend to Heaven to meet the Jade Emperor. This shows that the boat people thought their ancestors were comparable to deities. In the next stage, “Welcoming *laozu* (*jie laozu* 接老祖),” the ancestors, along with all the deities, were invited to come back home from Heaven to celebrate the New Year.¹¹ Rituals similar to the first stage were performed again six days later. Some families stored the scrolls, and others kept the scrolls hung until the first day

⁸ Here *laozu* refers to not only the “old ancestors” literally, but also includes the scrolls of deities. So I do not translate the term as “old ancestors.”

⁹ Liu Yingshui, *Yun he ming zhen: Nanyang*, 89. Li Hongwei, “Yü min de xi su,” 171.

¹⁰ She Kangle, “Weishan hu yu min zong zu de dang xia shi jian,” 38.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 44.

of the New Year.¹² In the third stage, on New Year's Eve, a similar liturgy was performed to “bid farewell to the old year” (*ci nian* 辭年).¹³ Then, a ritual of purification followed to exorcise negative spirits.¹⁴ This ritual was called *datuo* (打碓 [Beating the weight]). A dipper carried a weight and some paper money soaked in alcohol. The family head in the household ignited the alcohol and carried the burning dipper around the house-boat, sometimes even a group of boats tied together.¹⁵ The ritual activities of the New Year not only renewed a family's relationships with deities and ancestors, but also symbolically purified their living space. Boat people also raised a green bamboo decorated with peanuts, dates, hawthorns, and paper ingots in golden and silver colors, symbolizing a “shaking money tree” (*yao qian shu* 搖錢樹).¹⁶



Photo 2.3 The “shaking money tree” on a boat (Source: photograph by She Kangle).

The New Year festival continued through *Yuanxiao* (元宵)¹⁷ and ended on the

¹² Ibid., 45.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Li Hongwei, “Yü min de xi su,” 171.

¹⁵ Interview with Jin Zhongyu on April 17, 2010. Li Hongwei, “Yü min de xi su,” 166. She Kangle, “Weishan hu yu min zong zu de dang xia shi jian,” 45–56. This purification ritual *datuo* was widely used on different occasions: before childbirth, the Continuation of Genealogy, after suffering a series of unfortunate things, and New Year.

¹⁶ Gao Jianjun, “Weishan hu chuan ju,” 79. Yin Yunling, *Wei niao*, 355.

¹⁷ The date is the fifteenth day of the first lunar month.

Double Two¹⁸ (*er yue er* 二月二). Each family made twelve “dough lamps,” symbolizing the twelve months of the next year. Those lamps that burnt out quicker meant the catches in the corresponding months would be good, and vice versa.¹⁹ The dough lamps could be made in the shape of fish, shrimp, birds, or dragons, and had to be kept until the Double Two, the day that dragons would wake up. Landsmen usually had some special customs and foods to show their respect toward dragon kings, but the boat people chopped up the dragon dough lamp and swallowed it with rice. By doing so, the boat people believe they could avoid disasters, such as floods, tornados, and storms caused by the dragon kings.²⁰ This conduct vividly symbolized the boat people’s hatred for the dragon kings, who they held responsible for the floods that made them refugees.

She Kangle emphasizes the major difference in New Year festivals between boat people and landsmen: The landsmen welcomed ancestors home from tombs, while the boat people sent off ancestors from home to Heaven first, and then welcomed them home from Heaven, and they then stayed with families on boats throughout the year.²¹ This difference directly relates to boat people’s ways of living, or “dying,” in that they treated the deceased bodies in a very different way.

Boat people had distinctive rites of passage, mainly centering on birth, death, and weddings. Most Chinese considered the funeral to be one of the most important events in life, but the boat people could not afford lavish funerals or burial rituals. Only wealthy families could buy land for tombs, but it was almost impossible for the Dipnetters. In most cases, corpses were hastily buried on the lakeshore without markers.²² Even if a family’s ancestors were buried in tombs, the living descendants often moved back and forth with the fishing seasons and could not do the tomb-sweeping rituals regularly.²³ The boat people were not attached to land, let alone to tombs. This can explain why the ancestors were not invited home from tombs during the New Year festivals.²⁴ The

¹⁸ The date is the second day of the second lunar month.

¹⁹ Li Hongwei, “Yü min de xi su,” 171.

²⁰ Gao Jianjun, “Weishan hu jing Daiwang (微山湖敬大王[Venerating Daiwang in the Weishan Lakes]),” *MSYJ* 25 (1993): 71.

²¹ She Kangle, “Weishan hu yu min zong zu de dang xia shi jian,” 50.

²² Li Hongwei, “Yü min de xi su,” 170–171. Zhou Zongyao, “Chang jiang yu min su suo ji,” 57.

²³ Interview with Jin Zhongyu, April 17, 2010. Zhou Zongyao, “Chang jiang yu min su suo ji,” 57.

²⁴ Philosophically, the souls of the deceased dissipated into three heavenly *huns* (魂) and seven earthly *pos* (魄). See Yü Ying-shih (余英時), “O Soul, Come Back: A Study of the Changing Conceptions of the Soul and Afterlife in Pre-Buddhist China,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 47(1987): 363–95. Parts of the *hun* souls were thought to be either reborn in Heaven or attached to ancestral tablets in ancestral shrines or home altar. The *po* souls remained with the corpses in the tombs. See Maurice Freedman, “Ancestor Worship: Two Facets of the Chinese Case,” in Maurice Freedman ed., *Social Organization: Essays Presented to Raymond Firth* (London: Frank Cass, 1967), 85–103; also see James Watson, “The Structure of Chinese Funerary Rites: Elementary Forms, Ritual Sequence, and the Primacy of Performance,” in

fengshui (風水), or geomancy, of tombs was never a concern for the boat people.

Whenever there was a birth or death in a family of boat people, they reported it to the Stove God, who then informed the City God, who registered that person in the “Book of Life and Death.” People on the land reported to the Earth God, but boat people lived on boats almost all of their lives and had no attachment to the earth. The role of the Earth God, who had close relationships with land-people in farming villages, was replaced by the Stove God on boats. We will return to this point in the following sections.

Regarding birth, boat people had a sequence of birth rituals and customs. Before a baby was born, the purification ritual *datuo* (打碓[beating the weight]) would be practiced to welcome the newborn. Before a child’s first birthday the mother had to prepare a “tiger-head harness” to put on the child on the birthday.²⁵



Photo 2.4 *Datuo*

In addition, in order to prevent a child from catching diseases or dying young, a series of rituals were performed. A child would wear a “carp-cangue” (see picture below) during the ceremony for the *Tangshen* Assembly and ask for pardon for his “sins.” Then the carp-cangue would be released, and a paper-substitute child would be burned to serve the deities, exchanging it for the life of the child. This ritual had to be practiced at age

James Watson and Evelyn Rawski eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 3–19. It was a common custom to invite ancestors home from their tombs before the Eve of Chinese New Year in southwestern Shandong. See Shandong sheng Jining shi zheng xie wen shi zi liao wei yuan hui (山東省濟寧市政協文史資料委員會) ed., *Jining feng su tong lan* (濟寧風俗通覽[Overview of customs in Jining]) (Jinan: Qilu shu she, 2004), 238; Shan Man (山曼) et al., *Shandong min su* (山東民俗[Folklore of Shandong]) (Jinan: Shandong you yi shu she, 1988), 60–61. People of some places even had a custom of sending ancestors back to their tombs after New Year. See *Shandong min su*, 8.

²⁵ Li Hongwei, “Yü min de xi su,” 166.

three, six, nine, and twelve.²⁶ The last time, at age twelve, the ritual was similar to the coming of age ceremony. This ritual only applied to boys.



Photo 2.5 A *Duangu* ritualist is releasing a carp-cangue.



Photo 2.6 Submitting a paper substitute to exchange for the life of a child. Note the child (right) is wearing a carp-cangue on his neck.

When a boy matured sufficiently to marry, his parents had to prepare a wedding and buy a new house-boat. The day before the wedding, both families would position their

²⁶ Jin Zhongyu, April 26, 2010.

boats at a convenient distance apart, roughly one hundred meters.²⁷ On the wedding day, the groom departed as soon as the sun rose. Accompanied by a pair of welcoming old women and a pair of young ladies, the groom took a red “sedan raft” (*jiao fazi* 轎筏子) all the way to the bride’s boat and picked her up there. The bride was also accompanied by two old women and a pair of young ladies. When the wedding raft reached almost to the groom’s house-boat, it had to slow down and stop, symbolizing a harness for the bride.²⁸ After the wedding, a banquet was held on several tied boats. Dishes were made on a kitchen-boat and served with small boats. After the banquet, anyone could tease the bride and groom on their house-boat. Young siblings were sent to take small boats around the house-boat of the just married to peek and overhear.²⁹ These practices were basically similar to those of most Han Chinese.

All the domestic rituals mentioned above were principally managed by family heads, except the ritual involving the carp-cangue and the paper substitute. However, in some cases, if family heads were absent or incapable of handling rituals, elderly relatives or ritual officiants would step in to assist.

Ritual Officiants³⁰

Ritual officiants presided at minor rituals held for the family or small groups of people. For instance, they guided a series of sacrifices for ancestors and deities during the New Year festival. Moreover, when family members suffered illness or accidents, ritual officiants were hired to comfort ancestors or deities, because the boat people believed that unfortunate things happened due to their offenses against those supernatural beings.³¹ Senior family members were supposed to supervise these rituals, but not all families could conduct domestic rituals appropriately, hence ritual officiants were invited to conduct the rituals and recite the prayers. This might be an indication that the boat people’s ritual tradition had been fading away.

Ritual officiants also presided over the annual sacrifices for *Daiwang*, called Venerating *Daiwang* (*jing Daiwang* 敬大王), held by fishing groups or transportation

²⁷ Li Hongwei, “Yü min de xi su,” 169.

²⁸ Ibid. This symbolic action means the temper of the bride should be tamed down.

²⁹ Ibid., 170.

³⁰ There is no specific Chinese term for this role. These ritual officiants were similar to the “masters of ceremony” (*li sheng* 禮生) who were employed to officiate over family or communal rituals in villages. Ritual officiants were enthusiastic about assisting at minor rituals, but they could not preside over ceremonies. For details of the masters of ceremony, see Liu Yonghua (劉永華), “The World of Rituals: Masters of Ceremonies (*Lisheng*), Ancestral Cults, Community Compacts, and Local Temples in Late Imperial Sibao, Fujian” (Ph.D. diss., McGill University, 2003).

³¹ Interview with painter and paper-cutter Wang Chunku in Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on November 8, 2009.

boat flotillas.³² It is worth taking several paragraphs to describe the Venerating *Daiwang*. Everyone who worked or traveled on the Grand Canal and its tributaries worshiped the water gods called *Daiwang* (大王) and *Jiangjun* (將軍) from the time of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE), which I will explain in detail later. *Daiwang* and *Jiangjun* were believed to be patron deities of aquatic workers and oversaw the waters. Hence they were not only occupational protectors, but also geographic patrons.

Boat people believed that *Daiwang* and *Jiangjun* could help them catch fish in abundance and protect them from drowning or shipwreck. Fishing groups held Venerating *Daiwang* twice every year, on the third day of the third lunar month and the ninth day of the ninth lunar month.³³ The ritual was usually presided over by the *bang* leader, with help from a ritual officiant. All *bang* members participated in the ritual to pray collectively for an abundant harvest and aquatic safety.³⁴ All participants donated some money to offer sacrifices, such as pigs, goats, chickens, fruits, snacks, and paper money. The list of sacrifices for specific spirits can be seen in the table below.³⁵ The ritual took about half a day. After the ritual ended, all participants had a feast, sharing all the offerings. The ritual of Venerating *Daiwang* helped the boat people to solidify the working *bangs* as a community and to reinforce *bang* identity.

Table 2.1 List of deities and correspondent sacrifices

Sacrifices	Spirits
6 Whole Goats	Jade Emperor, <i>Jinlong si Diawang</i> (金龍四大王), <i>Huang Daiwang</i> (黃大王), <i>Bai Daiwang</i> (白大王), <i>Old Zhang Daiwang</i> (老張大王), and the rest of <i>Daiwangs</i>
2 Whole Pigs	<i>Tian Daiwang</i> (田大王) and <i>Seventh Duke Geng</i> (耿七公)
3 Whole Cocks	God of Wealth and <i>Xiangshan Daiwang</i> (香山大王)
1 Whole Hen	<i>Zhang Jiangjun</i> (張將軍)
Pork Meat	Ancestors
1 Live Carp	Third Lady of Fish King (魚王三娘娘)
1 Dough Goose	Vanguard Zhao (趙先鋒)
3 Spiral Oil Cakes ³⁶	First Ranking Little Lady (一品小娘娘)

³² Some fishing boat people purchased transportation boats and became transporters during the past two decades.

³³ Interview with Wang Chunku (王春庫) in Xinjian Village, Weishan County, October 27, 2009. Li Jinren says “the seventeenth day of the ninth lunar month.” See Lin Jinren, *Weishan hu qu shi zhui*, 183.

³⁴ This ritual was shared by transportation fleets and canal boatmen. The owner of the boats or the captain presided over the ritual. All boatmen participated in the ritual to pray for aquatic safety and prosperous business.

³⁵ The list was provided by Hu Xianfu, interviewed on April 24, 2010.

³⁶ *you quan bing* 油旋餅.

The ritual officiants learned the skills from the elderly as they grew up. These minor rituals usually took half a day or several hours. The ritual officiants usually did not receive fees, but only a feast, because they were mostly hired by relatives or friends, and the close relationship made it impossible for them to charge fees.³⁷ Most *Duangu* ritualists, scroll painters, and paper-cutters could also practice the role of ritual officiant and so could male spirit-mediums.

Spirit-mediums

The spirit-mediums helped solve everyday problems by communicating with spirits—deities, ancestors, or demons. The boat people believed that illness was usually caused by spirits who human beings unintentionally offended or who were asking for something. The ill person or their family would ask for a spirit-medium's help to settle down the conflict between humans and the spirits. The spirit-mediums negotiated with the spirits and then either fulfilled their requests or expelled them. Patients with mental disorders were believed to be possessed by evil spirits, so the spirit-medium had to bargain with or fight the evil spirit. In addition, when people lost someone or something significant, spirit-mediums were also consulted to locate what was lost. The responses usually pointed out the direction in which the object would be found or suggested the impossibility of getting it back. Spirit-mediums were consulted for almost everything. When elderly or sick people had not awakened for several days, the family asked a spirit-medium to determine whether the person was still alive. Spirit-mediums were used by spirits to communicate with people. For instance, Hu Xianqun (胡憲群), the most authoritative spirit-medium in Xinjian Village, was called upon by an immortal in a dream when he was twelve. At first he refused and escaped the duty until he capitulated and took the duty in his thirties. He received training from the immortal for two years and two months. Some others' training could be as short as 13 to 16 months. Mr. Hu even learned medical skills, such as performing a diagnosis by taking a patient's pulse and curing a patient with acupuncture and moxibustion.³⁸ The spirit-mediums were deeply trusted by the boat people.

Some elite spirit-mediums played another key role: hosting the *Tangshen* Assembly

³⁷ Interview with ritual officiant Hu Xianfu (胡憲富) on his houseboat near Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on April 24, 2010.

³⁸ Interview with spirit-medium Hu Xianqun (胡憲群) on his houseboat in the marina of Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on November 3, 2009.

(*huizhu* 會主).³⁹ I was the first scholar to witness the ritual activities of the *Tangshen* Assembly in person, which has never been studied or reported in any publication before. It is worth several paragraphs to introduce the *Tangshen* Assembly here. The *Tangshen* Assembly had alternative names such as Ceremony of Praying for an Abundant Harvest (*sheng chan hui* 生產會 or *da sheng chan* 打生產) or Ceremony for *Daiwang* (*Daiwang hui* 大王會). Each of the elite spirit-mediums initiated and hosted a *Tangshen* Assembly which included a multi-day *Duangu* Ceremony regularly every five years or at times of natural disasters or other bad events. The ceremony was structurally similar to the Continuation of Genealogy which will be explored in detail in Chapter Three. During normal times, the assembly had no specific activity, but only held meetings at the host's house on the third day of the third lunar month and during the New Year festival to offer sacrifices to the deities they worshiped.⁴⁰ Each *Tangshen* Assembly had its own organizers, called Headmen (*huitou* 會頭), who managed the organization and took care of the affairs of the *Duangu* Ceremony. During the ceremony, the host was only a figurehead and did not practice spirit possession. The assembly would invite *Duangu* ritualists to perform the rituals and opera performances. The assembly headmen dealt with administrative affairs, such as receptions, preparation of sacrifices, management of membership fees, and so forth. Each assembly had an "assembly writer" (*huixie* 會寫), in charge of writing documents and recording membership. Each assembly had its own followers called "assembly friends" (*huiyou* 會友), who were responsible for paying fees. As the members of an assembly expanded, and the number of spirit-mediums grew, another well-respected spirit-medium might establish a new branch from the original *Tangshen* Assembly. Each person could join different assemblies at the same time. Sometimes multiple assemblies held a *Duangu* Ceremony together to save money, especially for those branches that were divided from the same assembly. Among the two *bangs*, Aihu and Xinjian, I investigated during my fieldwork, there were five assemblies, and followers of each assembly came from both *bangs*.

Households were the basic units of the *Tangshen* Assembly. If one family member joined an assembly, the entire family became members of the assembly. The membership of *Tangshen* Assembly was voluntary; therefore not all *bang* members joined *Tangshen* Assemblies. However, when a *Tangshen* Assembly held the *Duangu* Ceremony, non-members usually still attended it to send greetings and presents, depending on the relationships and network of the assembly.

³⁹ "Elite spirit-medium" means the spirit-medium was more experienced and "efficacious" than others and that he attracted more believers.

⁴⁰ Wang Chunku, October 27, 2009.

The purposes and activities of a *Tangshen* Assembly were multifaceted. It not only hired *Duangu* ritualists, scroll painters, and paper-cutters to hold the *Duangu* Ceremony as the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy did, but also conducted other religious practices, such as healing and exorcism, and the rite of passage “carrying the carp-cangue” for boys mentioned earlier. Believers could make or redeem a vow during the ceremony. The *Tangshen* Assembly had some functions of land-based temple festivals, and the spirit-mediums performed the roles of regular temples on the land for the floating community, given that boat people had little access to temples and that the sporadic boat people could not stay together at all times. The multi-day ceremony was an occasion for believers to renew their relationships with deities collectively. The aforementioned carp-cangue ritual for children is a good example. Healing, or praying for health, was a pivotal part of the *Tangshen* Assembly. Among Xinjian and Aihu boat people, the oldest *Tangshen* Assembly was originated by Hu Yufeng (胡玉風) in 1870 who later became a deity, “Mighty and Efficacious Immortal Master” (*weiling xianshi* 威靈仙師), worshiped by the two *bangs* of boat people.⁴¹ There is a scroll of three deified spirit-mediums led by the Mighty and Efficacious Immortal Master.

⁴¹ Interview with Hu Xiancai on April 18, 2010.



Photo 2.7 The scroll of Mighty and Efficacious Immortal Master

<p>Mighty and Efficacious Immortal Master Third Immortal Master Hu, Mighty and Efficacious Wudao 威靈仙師 胡老三仙師、威靈五道（各有 3 男侍）</p>

Table 2.2 The identities of deities in the scroll of Mighty and Efficacious Immortal Master

Three deities are depicted in this scroll, all of whom are ancestors of the Hu lineage. The topmost one is “Mighty and Efficacious Immortal Master.” Below are the “Third Immortal Master Hu” (*Hu lao san xianshi* 胡老三仙師) to the left and “Mighty Efficacious Wudao” (*weiling Wudao* 威靈五道) to the right. The latter deity’s name is Hu Guangli (胡廣禮 1895–1975)⁴² whose great-grandson is an educated man in charge of calligraphing most “yellow proclamations,” (*huang bang* 黃榜) for the *Duangu*

⁴² The date of birth and death comes from the Application for National Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Cultural Bureau of Weishan County, Shandong, 2007.

Ceremonies in Aihu and Xinjian *bangs*. Hu Yufeng was the father of Hu Guangli.⁴³ As revered *Duangu* ritualists and spirit-mediums, they also founded and presided over the *Tangshen* Assembly. Their posthumous titles celebrate their spiritual communicability and responsive efficacy before and after their deaths. The third deity's identity is unclear, but he is another ancestor of the Hu lineage. All followers of the *Tangshen* Assembly now worship these three Hu ancestors. These Hu ancestors have been transformed from ancestors to deities because of their spiritual power. Such types of deification are also seen in the land-based cults in the villages. Deceased spirit-mediums are deified if they demonstrate posthumous efficacy, which is somehow comparable to the process of sainthood in Catholicism.⁴⁴ It is worth noting that these deities already demonstrated their efficacy when they were alive.

The significance of this grouping of deities is revealed by the medical imagery in the foreground. In the lower corners, two lads are making medicine, and in the center are bottles of medicine. Like the spirit-mediums today, these deities, or their lifetime identities, are thus associated with healing which incorporates medicine with exorcism. Health was a serious concern for the floating community. Unlike their counterparts on the land, boat-dwellers moved around frequently and could not easily find physicians to heal them. Therefore, among the boat people healers were desperately needed. Spirit-mediums who negotiated with or even fought evil spirits to restore patients' health certainly fulfilled their demands for healers. The three deities on this scroll include just such healers, but they have competition.

Quacks and quasi-physicians also existed among the floating community. They learned how to cure diseases from their fathers or masters. Some of them, like the spirit-mediums, claimed that they learned healing from their masters in dreams. They could prescribe herbal medicine and practice acupuncture and moxibustion, although their skills and knowledge were quite limited, and not as profound as their counterparts on land. All healers who lived on the water, including spirit-mediums, organized an assembly called the Patriarch Hua Assembly (華祖會) in honor of their patron Hua Tuo (華佗 145–208), who was a renowned physician in the Eastern Han Dynasty (25–220). The healers included in the assembly were not only physicians, but also quacks and spiritual healers, and spirit-mediums. These healers had special flags on their boats so

⁴³ Hu Xianfu (胡憲富), a Hu descendant, shared with me the names and the relationships. He was interviewed at his houseboat berth at Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on April 24, 2010.

⁴⁴ Daniel Overmyer, "Shenming, xintu, shengtu, lingmei he raojing: cong Zhongguo wenhua guandian bijiao defang minjian xinyang chuantong (神明、聖徒、靈媒和遶境：從中國文化觀點比較地方民間信仰傳統[Gods, Saints, Shamans and Processions: Comparing Local Religious Traditions from a Chinese Point of View])," *Taiwan Journal of Religious Studies* (台灣宗教研究), no. 2 (June 2003): 1–16.

that boat people could easily identify them.⁴⁵ The Patriarch Hua Assembly held a *Duangu* Ceremony every three or five years, in which sacrifice was offered to the patriarch of physicians, Hua Tuo.⁴⁶ The ritual, the performances, the painting, and paper-cutting were all simpler than the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. I did not have the opportunity to observe a ceremony of the Patriarch Hua Assembly, because it is not held regularly, perhaps every three or five years. In the past 20 years, only three ceremonies have been held, according to an active organizer of the assembly.⁴⁷ Leaving the discussion of spirit-mediums aside for a moment, I will now turn to the issue of the assembly of healers.

The ceremony for the Patriarch Hua Assembly is usually held on the third day of the third lunar month or the ninth day of the ninth lunar month.⁴⁸ The current assembly host, Shen Jiaru (沈家如), who is also the head of one of the *Duangu* ritualist troupes, says that he learned medicine from the physician Zhang Fulou (張富樓 ?–1984) when he was sixteen years old.⁴⁹ Shen actually received shorter medical training in an official workshop and became a “barefoot physician,” (*chijiao yishi* 赤腳醫生)⁵⁰ during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1977). The deity selected Shen to inherit the assembly from Zhang and he became the sixteenth generation host. The assembly host is not typically involved in daily or ceremonial organizations which are managed by about ten “assembly headmen,” (*huitou* 會頭), or organizers. The assembly followers include more than a hundred families. Besides them, there are currently 13 healers in the assembly, including traditional Chinese medicine physicians and modern Western medical clinicians. Some healers conduct spirit possessions and can communicate with the spirits. Shen, however, does not. Instead, he burns “paper substitute lads,” (*tishen tongzi* 替身童子) to exchange for the souls of his patients. This ritual is called “submitting lads,” (*jiao tongzi* 交童子). People believe that if the demons, the ancestors, or the divinities are offended, they will cause the offenders to become ill or, even worse, to die. Ritual specialists have to

⁴⁵ Gao Jianjun, “Weishan hu chuan ju,” 79.

⁴⁶ The structure and content are basically the same as the *Tangshen* Assembly. Ritual operas for four days and nights are performed as the *Duangu* Ceremony is held. The major difference is the story about Liu Wenlong (劉文龍): it has to be the episode of wedding in the Continuation of Genealogy, but other ceremonies can present the scene of his wife lamenting his death. Details will be introduced in Chapter Three.

⁴⁷ Hu Xianfu (胡憲富), April 24, 2010.

⁴⁸ The birthday of Hua Tuo is generally believed to be on the eighteenth day of the fourth lunar month. Therefore, the two dates for the ceremony are irrelevant to Hua’s birthday.

⁴⁹ Shen Jiaru (沈家如), April 18, 2010. Hu Xianfu says the previous host was Zhang Zhiyuan (張之袁) and indicates that Zhang was not a fisherman, but that he lived on a ranch. Hu, as well as his father, is the main organizer of the assembly. I interviewed him on April 24, 2010.

⁵⁰ The barefoot physicians received minimal medical training and served in rural areas, an expedient way to cover the population which lived without proper health care, hygiene, and family planning.

negotiate with the offended deities and exchange substitute lads for the souls of the diseased. The burnt lads then become scapegoats or the servants of the offended. Paper-cutters are the main makers of paper substitute lads, though I discovered a lady who is good at needlework,⁵¹ who also produces lads.

Paper-cutters and scroll painters also participate in the *Duangu* Ceremony for the Patriarch *Hua* Assembly. Paper-cutting and scroll painting are simpler for these events than they are for the “Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy” and the *Tangshen* Assembly. Three scrolls are hung for the ceremony. The first scroll includes *Hongtian laozu* (鴻天老祖) who integrates the three⁵² major teachings, and his three disciples. *Hongtian laozu* is the founder of Daoism, the Heavenly Master Zhang (張天師), according to the assembly host. The second scroll depicts Guanyin on the topmost, under whom are *Yingling daxian* (鷹靈大仙 [Great Immortal of Eagle Spirit]) and three “Immortal Ladies,” (三仙姑). The third scroll contains medical experts: Patriarch *Hua Tuo* (華佗), “Medicine King,” (*yaowang* 藥王), “Medicine Sage,” (*yaosheng* 藥聖), and “Immortal Master” Zhang Fulou (張富樓仙師). The assembly emphasizes the differences between *Hua Tuo* and *Daiwangs* (the main deities for *Tangshen* Assembly). Patriarch *Hua* attained immortality on account of his meditation, whereas the *Daiwangs* were “drowned spirits”. The *Duangu* Ceremony for the Patriarch *Hua* Assembly also stages ritual operas identical to those of the *Tangshen* Assembly and similar to those in the “Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy”. The main alternative operas stemming from the latter are “Inviting Ancestors” and the story about Liu Wenlong (劉文龍). Assembly ceremonies are not lineage rituals; therefore, there is no need to invite the ancestors. As for the opera about Liu Wenlong, a different episode is performed: “Lady Xiao Lamenting Husband Liu Wenlong,” (*Xiao shi nu diao xiao* 蕭氏女吊孝). It is probably the most appealing episode for the audience, especially for women, but it is banned from being performed during the “Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy”. As a lineage ritual is considered a joyful occasion, the wedding episode of the Liu Wenlong opera replaces the lamenting scene.

⁵¹ The lady Hu Xianmei (胡憲美) makes various sorts of needlework, including “Tigerhead Harness” (虎頭祥子) and traditional pillows and shoes. Her father Hu Chengshan (胡成山) was the master of the prominent paper-cutter and scroll painter, Wang Chunku (王春庫).

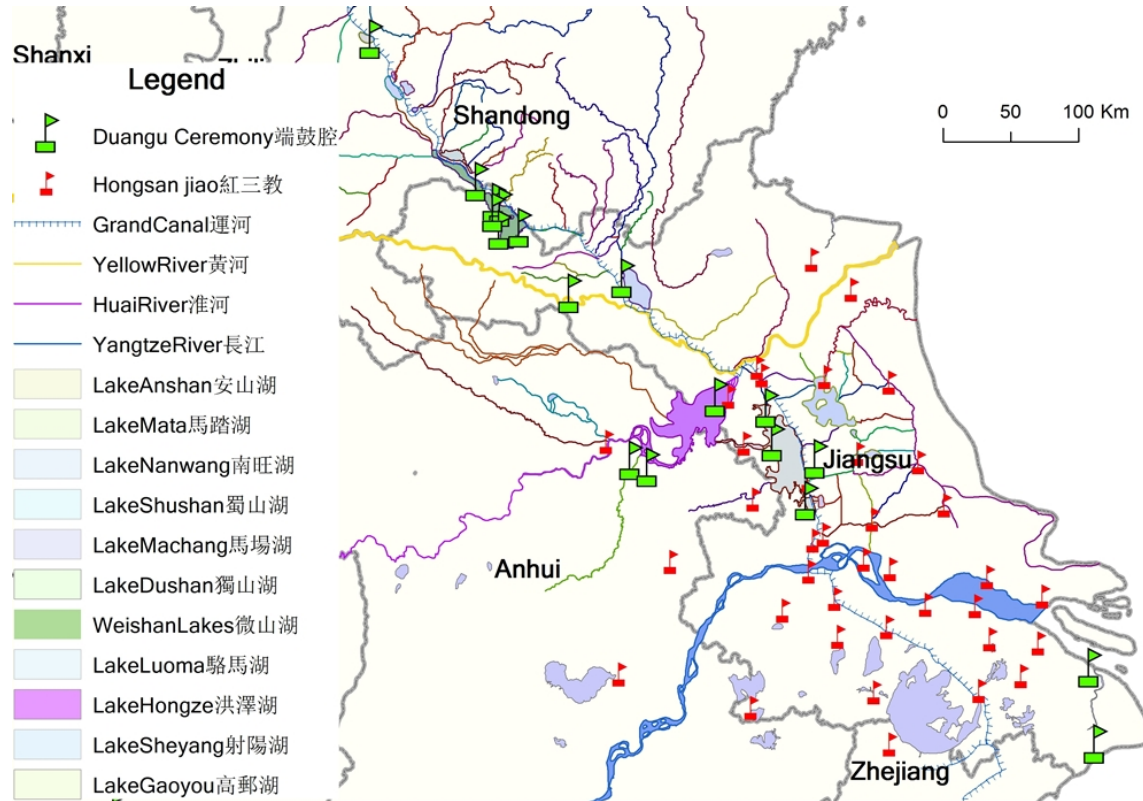
⁵² Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. The original phrase is “three teachings unify in one” (三教歸一). Shen Jiaru, April 18, 2010.



Photo 2.8 Two Pictures of the Patriarch Hua Assembly (Photos of Shen Jiuru's family)

It is important to note, in passing, that no ritual opera is associated directly with Hua Tuo or other healers. In general, the purposes and the functions as well as the organization of the Patriarch Hua Assembly are parallel to those of the *Tangshen* Assembly, because both involve not only healing diseases, but also praying for prosperity in business or success in school. The most distinctive characteristic of the Patriarch Hua Assembly is the participation of various healers, including “real physicians” and spirit-mediums. Thus, I return to the main subject of this section: the spirit-mediums and the *Tangshen* Assembly.

I found that in the neighboring Jiangsu province, the ritual practices of the boat people were astonishingly similar to the *Tangshen* Assembly, but there the government had labeled them a religious sect: the *Hongsan jiao* (紅三教[Red Three Teaching]) in the 1950s and had seriously cracked down their activities and organizations since then. This “sect” prevailed among boat people in the waters of northern Jiangsu where my main subjects, the Weishan boat-dwellers, frequently visited and stayed for seasonal fishing or the harvesting of aquatic plants, or even for shelter from natural disasters or wars in Shandong.



Map 2.1 Distribution of *Hongsan jiao* (red flag) and *Duangu Ceremony* (green flag). The location of *Duangu Ceremony* is based on the interviews of the *Duangu* ritualists. The location of *Hongsan jiao* is based on the records in local gazetteers.⁵³

It seems reasonable to suppose that the *Hongsan jiao* was closely related to the *Tangshen* Assembly, or the *Duangu Ceremony* in general, and the boat people in Jiangsu shared the ritual tradition of the *Duangu Ceremony*, which was usually called “Hongze Fishing Drum” (*Hongze yugu* 洪澤漁鼓) in Jiangsu. The *Hongsan jiao* had a host (*xiangzhu* 香主), several organizers (*xianghuo* 香伙), and followers (*xiangke* 香客).⁵⁴ It held ceremonies for the Continuation of Genealogy or for fulfillment of vows associated with healing diseases.⁵⁵ Its memorials for deities had similar formats, and many of its deities overlapped with their counterparts in the *Duangu* ritual tradition in Shandong.

⁵³ Zhao Jiazhu (趙嘉珠), ed., *Zhongguo hui dao men shi liao ji cheng: jin bai nian lai hui dao men d zu zhi yu fen bu* (中國會道門史料集成：近百年來會道門的組織與分布[Collection of historical materials about Chinese sectarianism: the organization and distribution of the sectarianism in the recent centuries]) (Beijing: Zhongguo she hui ke xue chu ban she, 2004).

⁵⁴ HSJHB, 9; HSJZL, 8–12; Lu Zhongwei (陸仲偉), “Hongsan jiao (紅三教),” (Manuscript, 2006), 23–27.

⁵⁵ HSJHB, 22; HSJZL, 35–37; Lu Zhongwei, “Hongsan jiao,” 54–58.



Photo 2.9 A scroll of deities of the *Hongsan jiao* (Source: Photography of Shen Shunya).⁵⁶



Photo 2.10 A scroll of deities of the *Tangshen* Assembly (Source: Photography of Hu Houzhong). The scroll was painted by Hu Chengshan (胡成山), the master of most current scroll painters.

⁵⁶ HSJZL, 133.

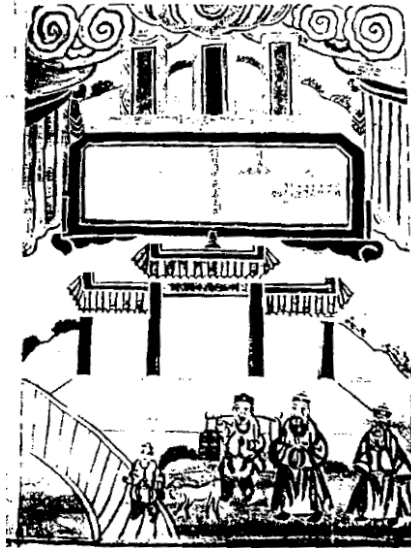


Photo 2.11 A scroll of ancestors of the *Hongsan jiao* (Source: Photography of Shen Shunya).⁵⁷



Photo 2.12 A scroll of ancestors of the Continuation of Genealogy (Photograph Courtesy of Zhao Famei)

Due to the Jiangsu government's repression, the so-called *Hongsan jiao* has almost disappeared today. As a result, the ritualists in charge of the Hongze fishing drum became too few to continue the ritual tradition. Therefore, the boat people of Jiangsu today have to invite the *Duangu* ritualists from the Weishan Lakes to preside over their *Duangu* Ceremonies, or Hongze Fishing Drum.⁵⁸ Both the *Hongsan jiao* and the *Tangshen*

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ For instance, Shen Jiaru's *Duangu* troupe had at least ten ceremonies to serve in Shandong, Jiangsu, Anhui, Hubei, and Shanghai. Interviews with Shen Jiaru on October 27, 2009 and Yang Zhenping on

Assembly warrant future research to reveal the details of their religious practices and beliefs. Having examined this special case of the *Tangshen* Assembly, as well as the *Hongsan jiao*, we may now return to the main subject, the ritual practitioners and activities of the boat people in the Weishan Lakes. The ritual specialists and the activity I will discuss in the next section are the *Duangu* ritualists and the *Duangu* Ceremony, which are very distinctive and more complicated than the common rituals in villages that most current studies of Chinese popular religion have concentrated on to date.

***Duangu* Ceremony and its Practitioners: *Duangu* Ritualists, Scroll Painters, and Paper-cutters**

The *Duangu* ritualists, or *Duangong* (端公), were mainly in charge of a series of ritual operas or operatic rituals, called *Duangu qiang* (端鼓腔) or *Duangu xi* (端鼓戲), which I term “*Duangu* Ceremony” hereafter in the dissertation. The *Duangu* Ceremony was applied during various occasions: the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy, the Rotation of Lineage Scrolls, Praying for Rain or Sunshine, Welcoming *Daiwangs* or *Jiangjuns*, the *Tangshen* Assembly, and the Patriarch Hua Assembly. The contents for each occasion could vary, but the structures of the ceremonies were basically identical. All ceremonies had a sequence of inviting deities, opening the altar, entertaining the deities, receiving gifts from guests, treating guests with a lavish banquet, sending off deities, and closing the altar. Chapter Three will illustrate the *Duangu* Ceremony by describing a complete and detailed ceremony for the Continuation of Genealogy. *Duangu* ritualists not only practiced ritual activities, but also performed operas. They were performer-ritualists. Some of them even practiced spirit possession during the *Duangu* Ceremony, but they did not do so outside the *Duangu* Ceremony as the aforementioned spirit-mediums did.

Duangu ritualists considered themselves communicators between the human and divine worlds. They were highly respected by the boat people for their ritual profession, knowledge, and virtue.⁵⁹ They were cultural communicators as well.⁶⁰ Given the overall illiteracy of the floating community, the *Duangu* ritualists, as well as scroll painters and paper-cutters, learned some basic characters from their masters in the process of

October 31, 2009.

⁵⁹ Zhang Shishan (張士閃) and Gao Jianjun (高建軍), “Weishan hu yu min *Duangu xi yi shu tan jie* (微山湖漁民端鼓戲藝術探解[Exploration of fisherfolk’s *Duangu* Ceremony of the Weishan Lakes]),” *Qi lu yi yuan* (齊魯藝苑) 1 (1996), 31.

⁶⁰ David Johnson, “Communication, Class, and Consciousness in Late Imperial China,” in David Johnson Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 34–72.

training.⁶¹ *Duangu* ritualists were literate and self-sufficient mediators bridging the gap between the learned and illiterate. Although their literacy was limited, they could read almanacs and chapbooks and translate to the lay boat people in simpler language. Their literacy, though limited, has helped most illiterate boat people record their genealogies on the scrolls of ancestors for more than ten generations without interruption back to the early Qing or late Ming period, which did not happen with the Dan boat peoples in South China. It seems not uncommon that religious specialists could help record genealogies, as Fei Hsiao-tung (費孝通) noticed in the early twentieth century, when he observe that temple priests kept the ancestor records for the people in the temples, which became the priests' personal property that could be sold or bought.⁶² Here the boat people kept their own genealogies, but the *Duangu* ritualists, as well as scroll painters and paper-cutters, earned some income by helping record genealogies through a series of lineage rituals, namely the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy.

In the past, the *Duangu* ritualists possessed four basic skills: "making [paper-cuts and paintings], reciting [scriptures], singing [scripts], and playing [instruments]."⁶³ In other words, the *Duangu* ritualists would have functioned as ritualists, opera performers, scroll painters, and paper-cutters simultaneously. The rituals, opera performances, scrolls of deities and ancestors, and paper-cuts were indispensable and inseparable elements of the *Duangu* Ceremony.⁶⁴ The profession was usually inherited within a family or lineage, but there were some exceptions. When a child was sick, parents would make a pledge that if the boy recovered, he would serve as a *Duangu* ritualist.⁶⁵ Currently, however, not all *Duangu* ritualists can paint deity scrolls or make paper-cuts. There are professional scroll painters who can make scroll paintings of deities and ancestors. As for paper-cutting, now there are some non-*Duangu* ritualists called paper-cutters who manage paper-cutting decoration and ritual objects for the *Duangu* Ceremony. In the past it was the duty of the leading *Duangu* ritualist called the Altar Head (*tantou* 壇頭), who was in charge of the whole ceremony, including paper-cuts and ritual objects. However, now not all leading *Duangu* ritualists are capable of making scrolls or paper-cuts. Some paper-cutters take the position of Altar Head and symbolically lead the *Duangu* Ceremony, but they do not

⁶¹ The basic characters are limited to the common names, deity titles, and ritual documents. They are not plentiful enough to help the *Duangu* ritualists document the scriptures and scripts of the *Duangu* ritual operas. The disciples had to memorize them by heart.

⁶² Fei Hsiao-tung (費孝通), *Peasant Life in China: A Field Study of Country Life in the Yangtze Valley* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1939), 105.

⁶³ In Chinese: 做念唱打. Interview with the head *Duangu* ritualist Shen Jiaru at Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on June 21, 2009.

⁶⁴ Ironically, today's local and central governments only emphasize the performance.

⁶⁵ QYZAH, 63.

perform operas. *Duangu* ritualists, paper-cutters, and scroll painters are the key persons of the *Duangu* Ceremony, and highly respected by the boat people. For last two decades, they have been hired to perform the *Duangu* Ceremony in other lakes and waters in Jiangsu, Anhui, Jiangxi, and Hubei provinces and to serve boat-dwellers who share the same ritual tradition. The distribution of their ritual service is shown in the map below.



Map 2.2 Distribution of the *Duangu* Ceremony

The most common ceremonies the *Duangu* ritualists presided over were the Observances for the Continuation of Genealogy. Each lineage held an Observance every five or ten years to reunite the boat-dwelling kinfolk from different places. Since the floating community had no ancestral halls in which to hold the Observance, boats in odd numbers were tied together to form a ritual arena and stage. *Duangu* ritualists presided over the ceremony, which combined a series of rituals with several dramas. Participants and bystanders sat on their own boats to watch the ritual operas. During the four days and nights of the ceremony, dispersed kinfolk had a chance to reconnect with each other. Through the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy, the kinfolk not only maintained their relationship with the deities and ancestors, but also renewed kinship connections. With the help of literate *Duangu* ritualists and scroll painters, each lineage was able to preserve their family trees for more than ten generations back to the early

Qing or late Ming period.⁶⁶ The ritual also helped each lineage continue the generational names, so the generational order would remain intact.⁶⁷ This helped kinfolk dispersed throughout different provinces see themselves as members of a single lineage regardless of spatial distance and obstacles. This is very different from the saltwater boat people, especially the Dan. Even though the Shandong boat people did not have ancestral shrines or written genealogies, they devised a way to preserve their family history and maintain the coherence of their lineages. The details of the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy will be presented in Chapter Three. Let us, for the moment, consider another lineage ritual at which the *Duangu* ritualists officiated.

The lineage ritual of the Rotation of Lineage Scrolls (*guo wei* 過位) was similar to the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. A set of scrolls of deities and ancestors, called *wei shen* (位神), was held by each family in the lineage for one year, during which time they had responsibility for the scrolls. Every year, a *Duangu* Ceremony lasting three days and nights was held for the Rotation of Lineage Scrolls, during which the scrolls were transferred to the next family on duty. The rotation list was announced in the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. The family on duty had to offer sacrifice, incense, and paper money regularly throughout the year. The family could not refuse the obligation unless they had some special difficulty. In fact, lineage members fought hard in the past to hold the scrolls, because they were believed to bring fortune to the family on duty. In order to prevent disputes, the rotation order is currently pre-arranged by lot. Only two lineages, the Wangs (王) and the Shens (沈), still preserve this tradition but hold the ritual in their own lineages separately. Having preserved such ritual tradition confers esteem upon these two lineages in the sight of other lineages. There is also risk associated with guarding the lineage scrolls, because the scrolls are very potent. Inappropriate offerings, procedures, or arrangements of lineage rituals can cause offense to the ancestors. The ancestors might reveal their displeasure through dreams or via spirit-mediums. The ancestors might ask for offerings of food or paper money.

⁶⁶ In most cases, only the male ancestors were recorded. Their family trees were patrilineal.

⁶⁷ Traditional Chinese lineages used generational names to signify each descendant's position in the family tree. All kinsmen of the same generation used the same character, usually the first in their given names. This rule usually applied to male descendants only. The lineage decided the sequence of the generational names and usually announced this in the genealogy books if they had them. The sequence was often a poem or couplet. When the last one or two characters of the generational names were applied to new born kinsmen, the lineage organizations had to create a new sequence of generational names. See Susan Naquin, "Two Descent Groups in North China: The Wangs of Yung-p'ing Prefecture, 1500–1800," in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and James L. Watson, eds., *Kinship Organization in Late Imperial China, 1000–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 221–22.

For instance, the Shen lineage's scrolls were renovated in 2010 by the painter Liu Peizhi (劉培志), because a series of accidents and unfortunate things that happened to the kinfolk, which were ascribed to scrolls that had been wrongly painted many years before.⁶⁸ The contents and structure of the Rotation of Lineage Scrolls were simpler than the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. It had only three scrolls: one for ancestors, another for *Tangshen*, and the other for Chief Divinities.⁶⁹

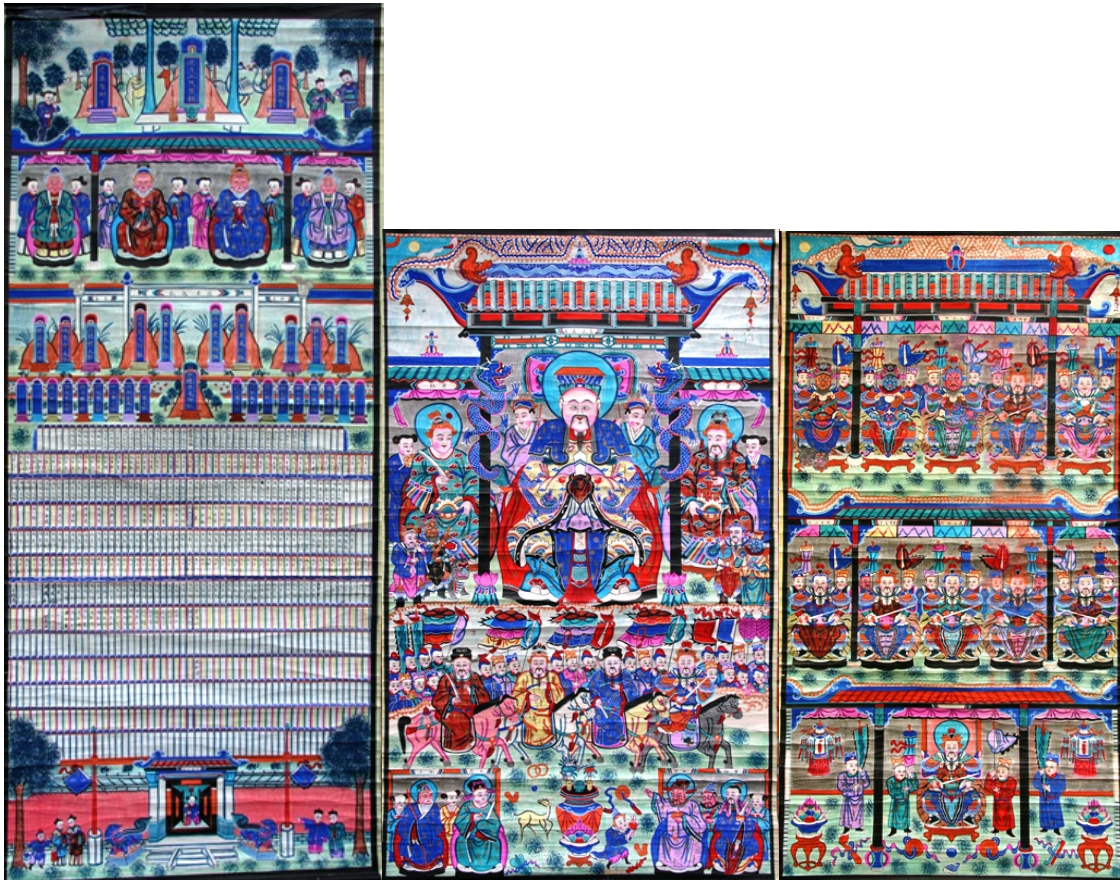


Photo 2.13 The lineage scrolls of the Shen Lineage: Ancestral Scroll (left), Chief Divinities (center), and *Tagnshen* (right).

Besides serving at lineage rituals, the *Duangu* ritualists also presided over ceremonies for the fishing community. As the cults of *Daiwang* and *Jiangjun* prevailed in the Grand Canal basin, they have become a unique phenomenon shared by the fisherfolk and boatmen in the Grand Canal basin and throughout the waterways of the valleys of the Yellow River and Yangtze River. The communal rituals of the boat-dwellers who lived

⁶⁸ Interview with painter Liu Peizhi (劉培志) in Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on April 19, 2010.

⁶⁹ Interview with Shen Jiaru on April 18, 2010. Scrolls of deities and ancestors will be introduced in the next section.

there naturally centered on them. Certain water snakes were believed to be incarnations of *Daiwang* or *Jiangjun*. The presence of a *Daiwang* or *Jiangjun*'s incarnation was a significant occurrence for the local community that all members had to recognize.

The other significant communal ritual relates to the natural disasters of flood or drought. Whenever there was a flood or drought, the community leader of the boat people would invite *Duangu* ritualists to hold a *Duangu* Ceremony to pray for rain or sunshine. Ritual operas were performed, including *Bald Tail Old Li [Dragon] Pours down Rain to Save the People* (秃尾巴老李降雨救民) and *Wei Zheng Beheads Little White Dragon in a Dream* (魏徵夢斬小白龍).⁷⁰ The performance of the former is understandable, but the latter usage is really unusual, because the latter drama was prohibited in rain prayers on land.⁷¹ However, the boat-dwellers hated the Dragon King, because they believed he caused the inundation of their ancestors' houses and land, which forced them to live on boats permanently. This hatred against the Dragon King is quite different from the feelings of land-based farmers.

The chart below mainly shows the network and genealogy of the *Duangu* ritualists and covers some other ritual practitioners. The *Duangu* ritualists can be roughly separated into two groups. The left side is the Aihu troupe composed mainly of members of the Yang lineage. On the right side is the Xinjian troupe whose members are mostly affinal relatives of Shen Jiaru and Jin Zhongyu, the troupe head and deputy. In fact, most *Duangu* ritualists usually worked together to perform ceremonies. It was not until 2008 that local officials of the Cultural Bureau artificially separated the *Duangu* ritualists into two troupes, in order to maintain competition and prevent monopoly. But the boundary between two troupes was not absolute. In the ceremonies I observed during 2008-2010, cross-troupe performance was still applicable. Members of two troupes had relationships by marriage or blood. The Yang lineage members are currently the majority of the *Duangu* ritualists. Yang Guangde (楊廣德 1924–2003) was said to be an all-round *Duangu* ritualist, capable of practicing rituals, performing operas, and painting scrolls. His grandson Yang Chengxing (楊成興 1978–) began learning various skills of *Duangu* ritualists from the time he was six years old and succeeded to the leadership on the basis of the all-round capability after the death of his grandfather.⁷² Although the Aihu troupe

⁷⁰ QYZSD, 524.

⁷¹ A keeper Gu Aixia 郭愛霞 and a believer Du Chuanlan 杜傳蘭 of a Dragon King Temple in Heze County of southwestern Shandong told me this taboo on April 3, 2009.

⁷² Zeng Xianjin (曾現金) and Jia Hongmei (賈紅梅), “Yang Chengxing: cong yi 23 nian de shao zhuang Weishan hu *Duangu qiang chuan cheng ren* (楊成興：從藝 23 年的少壯微山湖端鼓腔傳承人[Yang Chengxing: a young successor of the *Duangu* Ceremony, who has practiced for 23 years].” *Qi lu wan bao*

was composed of numerous Yang lineage members who were senior to Yang Chengxing by age or generational ranks, Yang Chengxing's leadership showed that professional ability determines leadership. He has been popular among audiences because of his vivid performances and professional ritual practices. Besides practicing rituals, Yang Chengxing also catches fish and crabs and owns a grocery store on the lakeshore when not presiding over ceremonies.

The *Duangu* ritualists of the Yang lineage currently host the *Tangshen* Assembly initiated by Hu Yufeng (胡玉風), namely “Mighty and Efficacious Immortal Master” (*weiling xianshi* 威靈仙師). The Hu lineage used to be influential in the *Duangu* Ceremony, but now it has no descendants playing a significant role in this *Tangshen* Assembly. Among remaining *Duangu* ritualists, members of Hu lineage are few. Hu Qianbao (胡乾寶 1952–), whose father Hu Xianyun (胡憲運 1918? –?) was a famous all-round *Duangu* ritualist, can still practice *Duangu* ceremonies, but has already migrated to Dongying County on the coast of the Bohai Sea, therefore he seldom gets involved with the ritual activities in the Weishan Lakes. Members of the Hu lineage succeeded in the skills of ritual painting. Scroll painter Hu Houzhong (胡后忠 1954–) inherited this from his father and now passes down the tradition to his son Hu Chuancheng (胡傳成 1990–). The aforementioned famous spirit-medium Hu Xianqun was chosen by a spirit in his dream; he did not inherit the ritual profession from lineage members. The Hu lineage has faded from the important roles in the *Duangu* Ceremony. Interestingly, several of its kinfolk hold important local official posts at the village and county levels. These officials are cadres of the Chinese Communist Party and supposed to be atheists, but they not only attend ritual activities, but seriously believe in the so-called “superstitious” beliefs and practices of the *Duangu* Ceremony.⁷³

Besides the Yang and Hu lineages, the Jins (金) have also been influential in the *Duangu* tradition. Jin Mingzheng (金明正 ? –1999) was a famous *Duangu* ritualist and had several apprentices who are current *Duangu* leaders, such as Shen Jiaru (沈家如 1955–) and Jin Zhongyu (金中玉 1964–). Jin Mingzheng did not pass down his ritual knowledge and skills to his own sons, but to his younger brother Jin Mingshun (金明順 1930–) and nephew Jin Zhongyu. Shen Jiaru did not teach his son either. Instead, they passed down *Duangu* knowledge and skills to nephews. Among the boat people, the relationships by marriage seem to be more significant than they are for their counterparts on land. Thus the *Duangu* ritualists could pass down their ritual tradition to either their sons or nephews.

The criteria for selecting apprentices include good memories for remembering thousands of sentences of scripts by heart, fine voices for singing, and handsome figures and faces for performing.⁷⁴ Senior *Duangu* ritualists orally instructed young apprentices in dozens of sentences of scripts and asked them to memorize these by heart during daily

⁷³ Several fishermen told me that these officials spent a lot of money associated with ritual activities, because they truly believe that deities can influence their official career and guarantee their wealth.

⁷⁴ Shen Jiaru, October 31, 2009.

life. The initiation ritual was not complicated and formal. To become an apprentice, firstly, one's father would speak to the master and then buy the master gifts, such as cigarettes and soup. Secondly, he would treat the master to a banquet. Thirdly, he would offer a table of sacrifices to the patriarch(s)⁷⁵ and make a deep obeisance to the master. Thus the master-apprentice relationship was built.⁷⁶ However, the gifts and sacrifices were not usually affordable for boat people in the past, therefore becoming an apprentice was not easy.⁷⁷

Different types of ritual practitioners usually performed rituals together and formed a complex network through marriage and kinship relations as shown in the chart below. These ritual specialists were tied by kinship or marriage, as well as through various social relationships. They were fishing teammates, too. All of them were male, except for female spirit-mediums (*shen ma ma* 神媽媽). For instance, the deputy troupe chief Jin Zhongyu was the actual center of the *Duangu* troupe. The elderly brother of Jin's father was the master of the troupe Shen Jiaru. Shen adopted several young pupils who were nephews of Jin. Jin's maternal uncle Hu Xianqun (胡憲群) was an eminent spirit-medium among the fishing community. Hu Xianqun could not practice the *Duangu* Ceremony, but his uncle's family passed down the heritage for three generations from Hu's grandfather Hu Guangzhong (胡廣忠), and the aforementioned Hu Xianyun was his cousin.

Table 2.3 5 Types of Rituals Practitioners

Practitioners	Ritual/function	Activity
<i>Duangu</i> ritualist	<i>Duangu</i> Ceremony	Ritual and Performance
Scroll painter	Deity Scroll for <i>Duangu</i> Ceremony	Painting
Paper-cutter	In charge of <i>Duangu</i> Ceremony	Paper-cutting; Leading Ceremony
Ritual officiant	Domestic rituals Sacrifice for <i>Daiwang</i>	Guiding the procedure of rituals; reciting prayers
Spirit-medium	Spirit Possession	Communicating with spirits: healing, finding missing persons or things; exorcism <i>Tangshen</i> Assembly

After reviewing the ritual activities among the boat-dwellers, we can understand that

⁷⁵ There are different sayings about the patriarch(s) of the *Duangu* ritualists. Shen Jiaru and Wang Chunku say the ninth daughter of the Jade Emperor (*jiugu* 九姑) passed down the ritual tradition. Another edition of the origin of the *Duangu* Ceremony attributes the originators to five patriarchs: Yang Long (楊龍), Hua Feng (化鳳), Shen Sihai (沈四海), Hu Qing (胡清), and Hu Lan (胡蘭).

⁷⁶ Jin Zhongyu, June 22, 2009; Zhao Famei, October 26, 2009; Shen Jiaru, October 27, 2009.

⁷⁷ Wang Chunzhe, April 21, 2010.

the *Duangu* ritualists represented the most important ritual roles, and that the *Duangu* Ceremony was conducted within various rituals, especially those of significance. The *Tangshen* Assembly and the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy are the two most significant and characteristic rituals of the boat-dwelling community. In the next chapter, I will closely explore the latter.

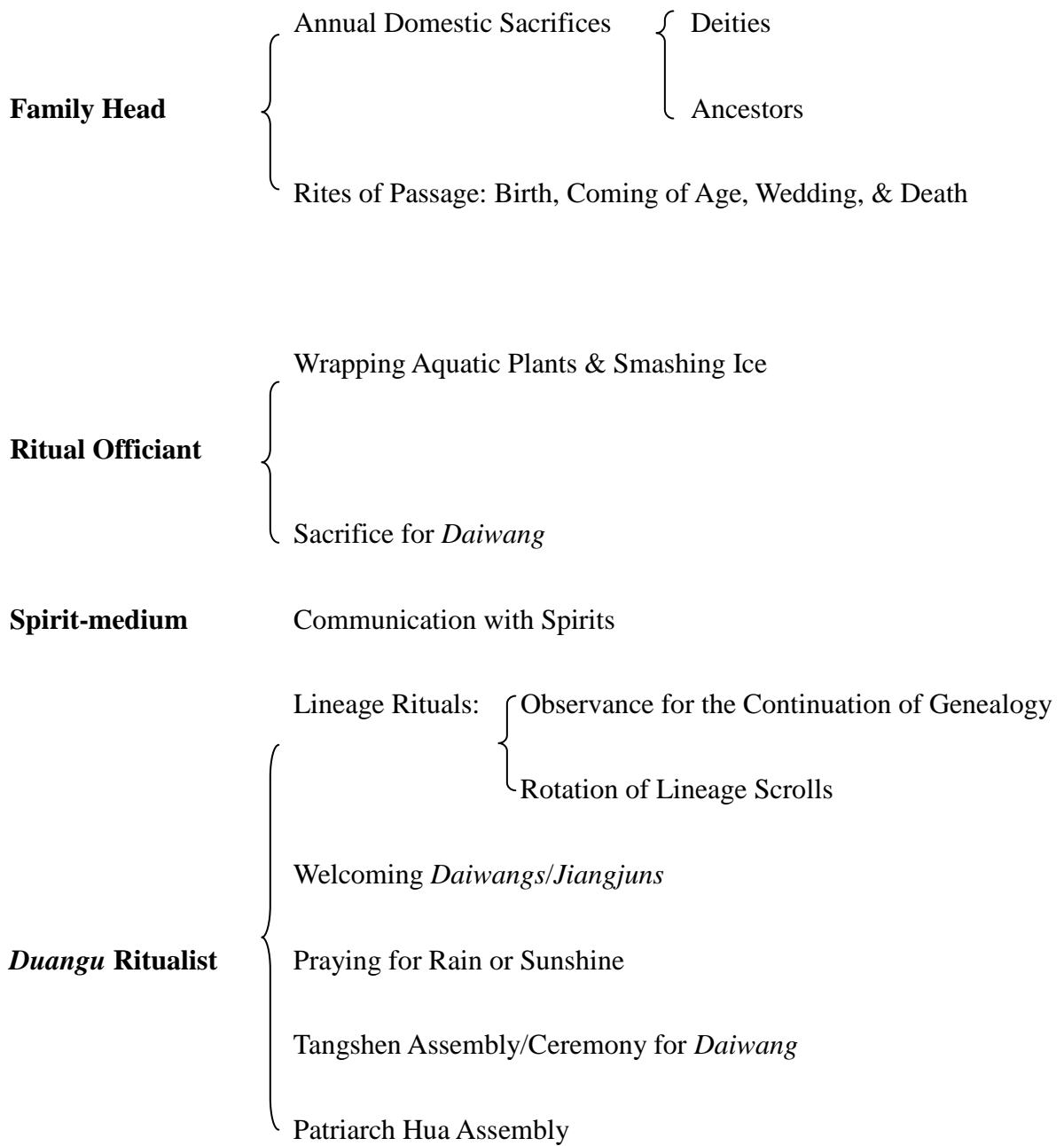
We also learn that the traditions of the boat-dwellers were not as vulnerable as written records previously indicated. The boat people have, with the assistance of ritual specialists, created innovative ways of maintaining their relationship with deities, ancestors, and kinfolk without losing their family history. Various ritual specialists also assisted boat people who worked together to pursue collective interests and prevent common hazards.

In the previous chapter, we reviewed the physical and socio-economic conditions that influenced the boat people's social relations and organization. These conditions also affected the ritual practices of the boat people. All these rites of passage and daily life rituals reflected to some extent the features of their aquatic lifestyle and its living rhythms. Some rituals that are significant to landsmen, such as tomb-sweeping, were omitted by boat people. Their rituals were not greatly influenced by the official Confucian ideology. The Weishan Lakes is physically very close to Confucius's birthplace, Qufu (曲阜), and there were still some sacrificial lands (*jitian* 祭田) of the Confucius Temple and the Mencius Temple on the eastern bank of the Weishan Lakes during the Republican period.⁷⁸ However, the lakes' boat people had become far removed from official Confucian ideology. The lake was called "a place that Confucius would never reach," meaning a cultural desert.⁷⁹ Ironically, the emphasis on ancestor worship, one of the core values of Confucianism, has been preserved in the values of boat people, but the lineage rituals were preserved by various ritual specialists, including spirit-mediums and *Duangu* ritualists, who were opposed by Confucius.

⁷⁸ NSHDC, 11. The Confucius Temple had 716 *qing* (頃) (nearly 120 km²) of sacrificial lands, and the Mencius Temple 530 *mu* (畝) (0.88 km²). The tenant farmers of these sacrificial lands annually paid rents to the Confucius Temple in Qufu and the Mencius Temple in Zou County respectively. The rents were used to pay for the expense of the temples' ritual activities.

⁷⁹ Zhang Jiushao, "Weishan hu yu bang," 87–89.

Figure 2.1 Ritual Practitioners and Activities



Scrolls of Deities and Ancestors

The boat people's scrolls of deities and ancestors feature their unique religious culture on the water and bridge the religious practices and beliefs. I am the first scholar to record the complete contents of the scrolls and to observe how the scrolls were made by painters, used in ceremonies, and worshiped in houseboats. In this section, I will describe how the scrolls were created, used, and passed down, and why they were so important to the boat people. The scrolls not only reflect the imagined religious world of the boat people, but also convey their moral or religious teaching. In several scrolls, scenes from ritual operas or ceremonial activities are vividly represented.

Boat-dwellers, the freshwater boat people of Shandong and Jiangsu, developed a distinctive way of worshiping deities and ancestors in order to adapt to their mobile lifestyle on the water. Their religious world was previously little known, due to the isolation and mobility of their community. Their pantheon and way of worshiping were both different from those of land-based farmers. As David Johnson and Po Sung-nien (薄松年) point out, pantheons help reveal how ordinary people perceive gods and imagine their hierarchy.⁸⁰ In the following sections, I will describe the boat people's spirits and how they sacrificed to them on houseboats. I will also explore how these water-related deities interacted with the floating population as if the deities were active in the real world.

The boat people's lifestyle fosters a distinct religious world. Their pantheon does not mirror the imperial bureaucracy as Arthur Wolf suggests.⁸¹ Instead, it is rather non-bureaucratic, as one would expect of people who intentionally kept their distance from the state.⁸² Since the boat-dwellers avoided direct contact with land-based people, the influence of Confucian ideology or governmental controls, such as bureaucratic organization and taxation, on the floating community and their pantheon must have been rather weak. In fact, the boat people enjoyed a considerable degree of freedom to create their own pantheon, which I will further explain below. Their pantheon is unique in terms of its structure and content. It is completely different from the findings of religious surveys in North China conducted by other scholars, such as J.J. M. de Groot,⁸³ Willem

⁸⁰ Po Sung-nien and David Johnson, *Domesticated Deities and Auspicious Emblems: The Iconography of Everyday Life in Village China* (Berkeley: Chinese Popular Culture Project, 1992), 84.

⁸¹ Arthur Wolf, "Gods, Ghosts, and Ancestors," in Arthur Wolf ed., *Religion and Ritual in Chinese Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 131–182.

⁸² Robert Weller suggests the deities in the peripheries, where government control was limited, did not mirror the imperial bureaucracy in the state center. See Robert Weller, "Matricidal Magistrates and Gambling Gods: Weak States and Strong Spirits in China," in Meir Shahar and Robert Weller eds., *Unruly Gods: Divinity and Society in China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), 250–68.

⁸³ J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious Systems of China*, 6 vol. (Leyden: Brill, 1892–1910).

A. Grootaers⁸⁴, Prasenjit Duara,⁸⁵ Jing Jun,⁸⁶ Susan Naquin,⁸⁷ Thomas DuBois,⁸⁸ Adam Yuet Chau,⁸⁹ Fan Lizhu (范麗珠),⁹⁰ Daniel Overmyer,⁹¹ and David Johnson⁹². The unique ritual tradition of the boat people is a good example of the “ritual autarky” that David Johnson has suggested is characteristic of village religion in North China.⁹³

The risks and the dangers that the boat-dwellers encounter and try to avoid are quite dissimilar from those that farmers have to deal with. Therefore, boat people developed a distinctive pantheon reflecting their desire for prosperity and security. Most deities in their pantheon reflect the practical demands of life on the water. Besides deities, ancestors were equally important to boat people who endeavored to maintain an unbroken connection, given that they had no land-based tombs or ancestral shrines as farmers usually had. In order to conveniently maintain the relationship with deities and ancestors, the frequently moving boat-dwellers created new ways and devices: the mobile “temple” and “ancestral shrine.”

Mobile “Temple” and “Ancestral Shrine”: The Shrine Box

In order to adapt to life on the boats, boat-dwellers transformed temples and statues of gods into paper scrolls, which could easily be carried with them when they needed to move about. The boat people called these scrolls “household deities” (*jiashen* 家神), “spirit tablets” (*shenzhu* 神主), “scrolls of the house” (*jiatang*⁹⁴ *zhouzi* 家堂軸子), or “deity paintings” (*shenhua* 神畫). The scrolls were displayed for worship only during the New Year or during the “Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy”. The scrolls

⁸⁴ Willem A. Grootaers, Li Shih-yu (李世瑜), and Wang Fushi (王輔世), *The Sanctuaries in a North-China City: A Complete Survey of the Cultic Buildings in the City of Hsuan-hua (Chahar)* (Bruxelles: Institut Belge des hautes études chinoises, 1995).

⁸⁵ Prasenjit Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State: Rural North China, 1900–1942* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

⁸⁶ Jun Jing, *The Temple of Memories: History, Power, and Morality in a Chinese Village* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

⁸⁷ Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

⁸⁸ Thomas DuBois, *The Sacred Village: Social Change and Religious Life in Rural North China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005).

⁸⁹ Adam Yuet Chau, *Miraculous Response: Doing Popular Religion in Contemporary China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

⁹⁰ Daniel Overmyer and Fan Lizhu (范麗珠) eds., *Huabei nongcun minjian wenhua yanjiu congshu* (華北農村民間文化研究叢書 [A Series of studies of the popular culture of North China villages]) (Tianjin: Tianjin gu ji chu ban she, 2006–2007).

⁹¹ Daniel Overmyer, *Local Religion in North China in the Twentieth Century: The Structure and Organization of Community Rituals and Beliefs* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

⁹² David Johnson, *Spectacle and Sacrifice: The Ritual Foundations of Village Life in North China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).

⁹³ Johnson, *ibid.*, 11.

⁹⁴ *Jiatang* 家堂 means the main hall of the house, and it is the space for worshiping deities and ancestors. A main hall represents the entire house; therefore I translate *jiatang zhouzi* as “scrolls of the house.”

were rolled up and stored carefully in a wooden box, usually called “shrine box” (*shenkan* 神龕)⁹⁵, “box board” (*xiangban* 箱板)⁹⁶, “divine pavilion” (*shenge* 神閣)⁹⁷, or “temple” (*miao* 廟)⁹⁸. Indeed, the shrine box with its roof and pillars looked like a miniature temple. Each family had one set of scrolls on their boat. When a young man married and formed his own family, he moved onto a new houseboat and requested a painter to create a new set of scrolls for his new home. Ancestors in dreams would remind the married males who did not have their own set of scrolls to order a set from the scroll painters. This symbolized the division of the family. Once a man had his own set of scrolls, he and his family did not need to return to the original family to celebrate New Year festivals.⁹⁹ The boat people said that their ancestors transformed physical statues and temples, as well as their ancestral tombs and shrines, into paper scrolls, so wherever they moved to escape from floods or droughts, they could take their temples, gods, and ancestors with them.

Each family had a set of scrolls of gods, ghosts, and ancestors. The number of scrolls varied from eight to thirteen, depending on the economic situation of the family. Each scroll had a unique arrangement of portraits of specific deities responsible for different practical demands or ritual functions. Most current scrolls date from the 1980s or later on account of the extensive destruction of religious objects prior to and during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. Although these scrolls were created from the 1980s onwards, today their patterns and styles are essentially identical to the traditional ones. Old masters resumed painting scrolls and teaching apprentices after the end of the Cultural Revolution. Young painters followed the instructions of their masters or imitated old scrolls, which survived destruction thanks to the mobility and the isolation of the boat-dwelling lifestyle. The traditional patterns and styles were so sacred that most painters and believers dared not change them, as they felt that it might jeopardize their fortune or even cause them serious consequences.¹⁰⁰ Hence it is possible to rely upon these more recently reproduced scrolls to learn what the traditional patterns and contents were before the interruption of the Communist iconoclasm.

I collected five complete sets of scrolls during my fieldwork, as well as several

⁹⁵ Interview with a ritual officiant Hu Xianfu (胡憲富) on his boat berthing Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on April 24, 2010.

⁹⁶ Both Hu Qianzhu (胡乾柱), a ritual officiant, and Jin Zhongyu (金中玉), a prominent *Duangu* ritualist, use *xiangban* (箱板). Interview with both of them separately on April 21, 2010.

⁹⁷ Hu Qianzhu also terms it as *shenge* (神閣) in the aforementioned interview.

⁹⁸ Interview with one of the most prominent scroll painter and paper-cutter Wang Chunku (王春庫) at Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on November 8, 2009.

⁹⁹ She Kangle, “Weishan hu yu min zong zu de dang xia shi jian,” 29.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with the preeminent scroll painter Wang Chunku, November 8, 2009.

partial sets (see Appendix 1.2~1.8, pp. 6–20). They came from four lineages and were created by four scroll painters who specialized in boat people’s traditional religious scrolls, ritual decoration, and paper-cuts. Moreover, the painters’ manuals also provide important evidence on the structure and content of the boat people’s pantheon.

Floating Gods, Ghosts, and Ancestors of Boat People

A variety of materials provide information about the pantheon and spirits of the boat people. Scrolls of deities and ancestors reveal the pantheon directly; liturgies and opera scripts, as well as tablets and pennons, of the *Duangu* Ceremony also disclose the hierarchy of deities. In addition, some boat people even worship one or two statues of deities at home. These diverse sources suggest the content and hierarchy of deities, but they are not always coherent as we will see in the following sections.

Scroll painters are the foremost experts to consult concerning the boat people’s pantheon. While conducting my fieldwork, I interviewed six painters and collected parts of manuals from three of them. The manuals reveal clearly the religious world of the boat-dwellers, a pantheon which can be divided into three realms: upper, middle, and lower.¹⁰¹

Liturgies and opera scripts of the *Duangu* Ceremony also delineate hagiographies of the most significant deities. Five operas are usually performed through the entire “Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy” (see Appendix 5, p.33). The first concerns mainly the glorious history of the ancestors, but the other four relate to several significant gods of the floating community. These operas tell us how the boat-dwellers perceived their origins as well as the functions of certain gods.

The four scenes of spirit possession during the “Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy” provide yet another opportunity to observe how the boat people interact with their deities and with what expectations they pray to them. Three deities and the apical ancestor are summoned at different phases of the observance. Each of them represents a certain wish (see Appendix 7, p. 35). I will discuss the details in the next chapter.

The liturgy of Inviting Deities used by *Duangu* ritualists details the origins of each deity, clearly revealing how the deities are perceived and imagined by the boat people. Fifty-six deities are invited in the script text (see Appendix 4, p. 32 for a list). Since these deities are invited to oversee ceremonies, they can be expected to play eminent roles in the pantheon of the floating community. Most invited deities are water gods who are closely related to the life of the boat people. I will discuss several significant deities in

¹⁰¹ Details can be found in Appendix 2, pp. 21-30.

detail in the following sections when I describe the scrolls of the deities.

A few domestic statues can be found in some boat-dwellers' homes (see Appendix 6, p.34). Besides gaining expert knowledge from painter manuals, ritualist scripts and scroll paintings, observing domestic deities is another direct way of exploring the mentality of boat-dwellers. Guanyin and the "God of Wealth" are the most common deities, although their stories are not reflected in the ritual operas. The presence of Guanyin and the God of Wealth in homes, however, reflects their close relationship with boat-dwellers and also the wishes of the floating community.

Moreover, the setting of the platform for the *Duangu* Ceremony can help in interpreting the structure of the pantheon. For instance, four or five ceremonial pennons raised during the "Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy" or *Tangshen* Assembly, represent the overseers of the ceremony and indicate their place in the pantheon's hierarchy (see Appendix 8, p. 35). The spirit tablets on the altar also represent symbolically the most significant deities in the pantheon (see Appendix 3, p.31). Scroll painters are usually in charge of the making of these pennons and spirit tablets. Their knowledge is essential for the interpretation of the pantheon.

An analysis of the scrolls and painters' manuals, as well as a few domestic statues, reveals more about the beliefs of the boat people than it does about their ritual practices. Beliefs are the foundation of practices, but practices often "speak louder" than beliefs. When I interviewed a spirit-medium, his response made me rethink the relationship between ritual practice and belief. In order to persuade him to share his experiences and knowledge about spirit possession, I shared vividly the ritual practices of spirit-mediums I had observed in Taiwan. He responded "Do you also have faith in this?"¹⁰² For the spirit-medium, having faith was more important than practice. People first have to have faith in the efficacy of rituals before they can practice them, even though they might not completely understand the meaning of the rituals or the identities of the deities. Descendants do not know all of their ancestors, but they always believe venerating ancestors is very important. To have faith is one thing; to know the content and significance of deities or rituals is another; to practice ritual activities is yet another. In this section, I will attempt to reveal the content and meanings of the beliefs---the floating gods, ghosts, and ancestors, some of whom are not completely understood even by the boat people and ritual specialists. I will occasionally consult historical materials to decode the boat people's beliefs and contextualize them in the history of Chinese

¹⁰² The original sentence in Chinese is *ni na ye xin zhe ge* (你那也信這個). To my surprise, he did not respond "Do you also practice this," or *ni na ye gao zhe ge* (你那也搞這個). For the spirit-medium, believing is prior to practicing.

religions.

Most religious beliefs do not express themselves explicitly, and can only be revealed through deeper interpretation and investigation of religious images, folktales, myths, and daily practices. In the following paragraphs, I will use the aforementioned materials to analyze the structure and the pattern of the pantheon and the functions of the principal or peculiar deities of the boat-dwellers. I will center on the scrolls and use supplementary materials to decode the pantheon reflected on the scrolls. Little evidence exists in the written records, due to the illiteracy of most boat people and/or the ignorance of the educated. Most materials for this section come from ethnographical studies which compensate for the scarcity of historical sources and help to give voice to the voiceless floating population of whom little was known in the past.

Standard Forms of Each Scroll

Each set of scrolls has eight to thirteen paintings, and each scroll has a standard form with certain deities. The number of deities within the entire set of scrolls ranges from 83 to 168. Nonetheless, variations exist. Each family can add or omit certain deities or order a special scroll to fulfill their own demands. In the following discussion, I will mainly adhere to the standard form.

Certain scrolls are fundamental, while others are optional. The fundamental scrolls include Ancestral Scroll (*mingtang* 明堂), Chief Divinities (*zhushen* 主神), *Daiwang* (大王), *Tangshen* (唐神), Patriarchs (*zushi* 祖師), Masters (*shifu* 師父), Bodhisattvas (*pusa* 菩薩), Eight Spirits (*baxian* 八仙¹⁰³), Goose Spirit (*eling* 鵝靈), Zhong Kui (鍾馗), and Cloud Immortal (*yunxian* 雲仙). Each family can add scrolls optionally, such as River Patrols (*xunjiang* 巡江), God of Wealth Who Increases Blessings (*zengfu caishen* 增福財神), and spiritual maids (*daxian guniang* 大仙姑娘 or *zhuangtang guniang* 撞堂姑娘). The *Hu* lineage owns two distinctive scrolls, Venerable Patriarch Holding a Ruyi Scepter (*ruyi laozu* 如意老祖) and Mighty and Efficacious Immortal Master (*weiling xianshi* 威靈仙師), which honor ancestors who founded or who presided over the *Tangshen* Assembly (*tang shen hui* 唐神會). In some ways, these scrolls reflect the lifestyle, aspirations, and religious motivations of the floating community, especially the Dipnetter Group.¹⁰⁴

Table 2.4 Number of Deities of Each Scroll of Five Sets of Scrolls

¹⁰³ The eight spirits are different from the commonly known “Eight Immortals”. I use a different translation in order to avoid misunderstandings.

¹⁰⁴ Besides the scrolls of the Dipnetter Group mentioned above, the Shotgun Group has a distinct scroll to worship their patriarch and patron divinities: *Junwang* (君王), “five hunters” and their master Zhao Dabang (趙大幫).

Owner	Zhao	Shen	Shen	Hu	Ding
Painter	Liu Peizhi	Liu Peizhi	Wang Chunku	Yang Chengxing	Hu Houzhong
Scrolls	13	12	11	13	8
Total	118	168	166	150	83
主神	15	15	14	11	11
明堂	○	○	○	○	○
大王	17	22	22	22	17
唐神	12	21	21	14	19
祖師	X	29	22	20	X
師父	19	19	19	20	20
菩薩	18	32	45	39	X
八仙	8	9	9	X	X
鵝靈	7	7	X	8	10
鍾馗	1	1	1	1	1
雲仙	1	10	○ 10 (普師亦有)	10	10
巡江五道	X	3	3	X	X
增福財神	3	X	X	X	X
大仙姑娘	10	X	X	1	X
撞堂姑娘	7	X	X	X	X
如意老祖	X	X	X	1	X
威靈仙師	X	X	X	3	X

These scrolls construct a unique pantheon for the fishing community. By investigating the pantheon of boat-dwellers, it is possible to understand how they imagine their world and how they interact or communicate with their gods, ghosts, and ancestors. Most sets usually include eleven to thirteen scrolls. After analyzing the five sets of scrolls, I found that each scroll has a standard form, as shown in the Appendix 1.1 (pp. 3–5). These scrolls provide a complete pantheon of the floating community.

The order of storing scrolls in the shrine box reflects the hierarchy of the scrolls and deities. The shrine box has three or four levels of compartments, and the inner spot is higher in each level.¹⁰⁵ The scrolls of the Chief Divinities, Ancestors, *Daiwang*, and God of Wealth, bundled in a roll, are placed in the most respectful position. Then, another roll with the Tangshen, Patriarchs, and Zhong Kui scrolls is placed at the outer position of the

¹⁰⁵ Hu Xiansheng (胡憲生) explained the positions and order of the scrolls in the sacred altar. Interview at Xinjian Village, Weishan County on April 18, 2010.

first level. The overall hierarchy of the scrolls can be seen in the table below.¹⁰⁶

Level	Scrolls
1	Chief Divinities, Ancestors, <i>Daiwang</i> , God of Wealth (inner) Tangshen, Patriarchs, Zhong Kui (outer)
2	Bodhisattva, Cloud Immortal, Maids
3	Master
4	Goose Spirit (inner) Eight Spirits (outer)

Table 2.5 The Arrangement of Scrolls in the Shrine Box

Each scroll follows a specific form and includes certain divinities that are associated with the people’s aspirations. However, individual families can adjust the deities in some scrolls according to their customized needs, especially those scrolls of lesser importance, such as the spiritual maids. The lower ranking deities can be approached by each family more closely and can thus satisfy their special aspirations more effectively. What is interesting is that worshipers enjoy a certain degree of liberty to manipulate the deities they revere on each scroll. The lower the scroll is hierarchically, the more liberty the worshipers have in their ability to manipulate the deities. It is possible to observe this phenomenon in the following description of each scroll.

Divinities are hierarchically arranged on each scroll, with the patterns being similar to the land-based temples in the neighboring region. Ordinary temples in southwest Shandong usually include several side shrines, each of which contains a cluster of deities associated with particular aspirations. The boat people’s scrolls show similar patterns. Clearly there is a connection between the pantheons of neighboring land-based temples and the deity scrolls of the boat people—the containers of which are, after all, called “temples.” The boat people’s “temples” provide the best evidence to explore their pantheon. Fortunately, most scrolls have identifying labels for their deities, which help scholars to identify the deities correctly. The exact hierarchy of the scrolls is uncertain,¹⁰⁷ but the scroll of the Chief Divinities is supposed to be the most eminent.

Significant Spirits

In this section, I will discuss some deities significant to the boat people. These

¹⁰⁶ The orders of hierarchy vary in different families. This table is based on the interviews with Hu Xiansheng and Hu Xianqun on November 18 and 23, 2009 respectively.

¹⁰⁷ As each family stores the scrolls in a different order, it is difficult to confirm the hierarchy of the scrolls. However, the Chief Deity scroll is usually placed in the most prominent position. During the “*Duangu* Ceremony”, the Chief Deity scroll is the only representative scroll displayed to receive the rituals of invitation and sending off deities.

significant deities can reflect the aspirations and mentalities of the boat people. I will begin by introducing significant deities from the Chief Divinities.

Guanyin (觀音) and the Chief Divinities (zhushen 主神)

The scroll of the Chief Divinities contains many of the most common deities worshiped by ordinary Chinese. The topmost deity is Guanyin, flanked on the left by the Goddess of Mount Tai. At the extreme left and right are either *Samantabhadra* and *Manjusri* bodhisattvas or Dragon Maid and *Sudhana* (or *Shancai* 善財). The main figure in the middle register is River King Li, flanked on the left by Eighth Minister Jingji and Fourth Minister Manlong and on the right by Minister Zhou and Second Minister Kangfu. The main deity in the center of the lowest register is the God of Wealth Who Increases Blessings, flanked on the left by the Immortal Official of Profitable Trade and on the right by the Wealth-Summoning Lad. On the far left is the Earth God, with the Lord of the Stove on the far right. At the very bottom, Guanyin sits in a tribute sailboat, sent off by a military deity on the left and greeted by a kneeling civil deity on the right. Tribute sailboats were commonly seen on the Grand Canal, and their quality was much better than that of fishing boats. The boat-dwelling fisherfolk who lived on the waters adjoining the Grand Canal for generations must have known and admired them. Placing the great deity Guanyin in a tribute sailboat shows how much she was respected.

Table 2.6 The identities of deities in the scroll of Chief Divinities. Note: Deities whose names are in boldface are at the central position in each register, symbolizing their superior status.

{ 普賢/龍女 }、{ 泰山 }、 南海觀音 、{ 文殊/善財 } 京吉八相公、滿龍四相公、 李河王 、陳祖周相公、康福二相公 土地公公、利市仙官、 增福財神 、招財童子、司命灶君
{Puxian/Samantabhadra or Dragon Maid/Longnü }, Lady Taishan, Guanyin , {Wenshu/ Manjusri or Sudhana/Shancai } Eighth Minister, Fourth Minister, Li River King , Zhou Minister, Second Minister Earth God, Immortal Official of Profitable Trade, God of Wealth Who Increases Blessings , Wealth-Summoning Lad, Stove God



Photo 2.14 The scroll of Chief Divinities of the Shen Lineage

Guanyin plays a prominent role in the religious beliefs of the floating community. She is the main figure on the topmost register of the first scroll, which symbolizes her supreme position in the pantheon. This scroll is always hung up in the first place above

others for certain liturgies during the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. Besides, Guanyin also appears among the spirit tablets on the altar of the platform for the *Duangu* Ceremony (see Appendix 3, p. 31). In addition, of the four pennons raised on high poles during the ritual, Guanyin's is the highest. Her pennon is also placed in the center, along with that of *Jinlong si Daiwang* (金龍四大王), which further signifies her importance.

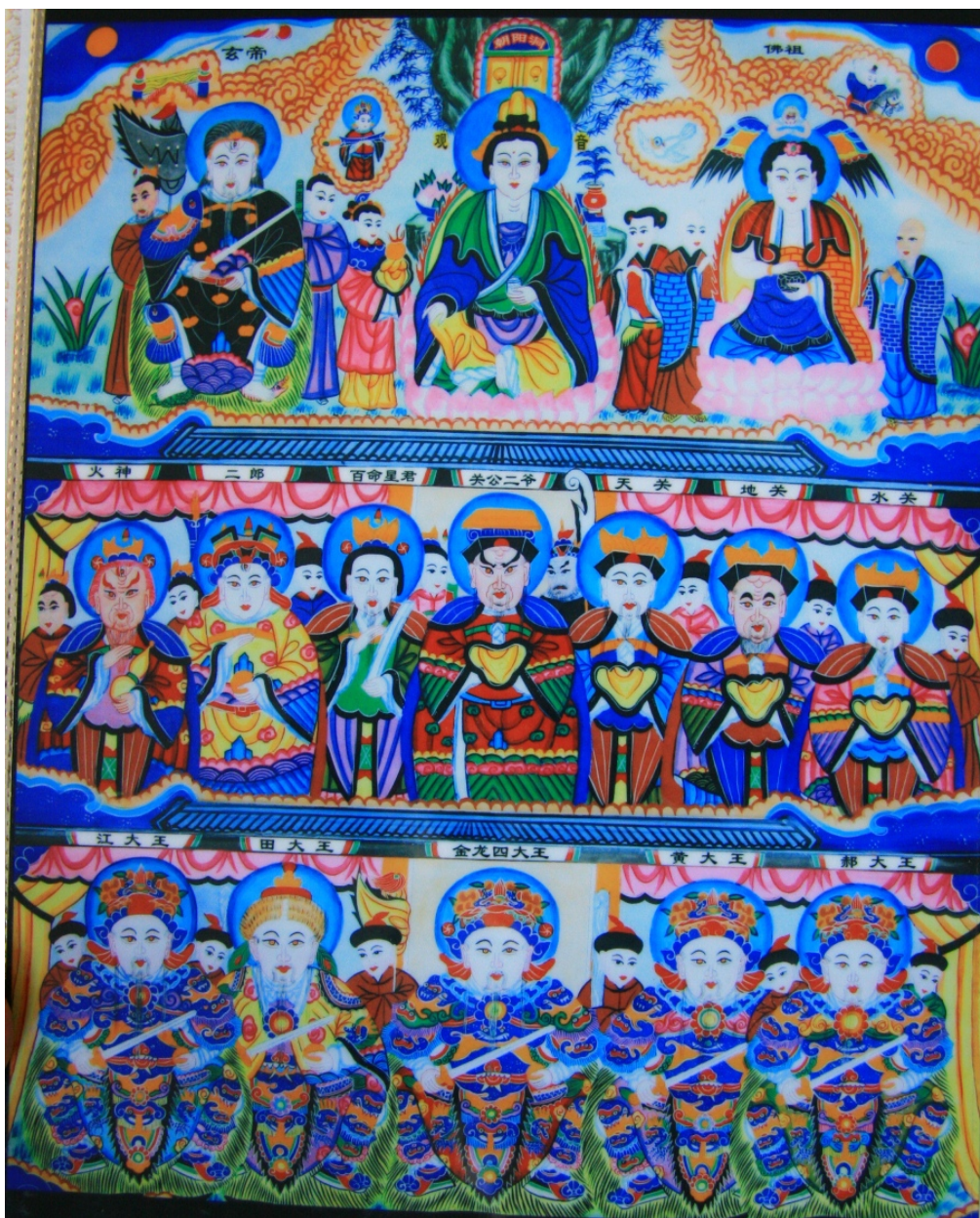
Guanyin appears in various forms in the pantheon of the floating community. As is revealed in the following scrolls, such as Masters and Bodhisattvas, there are the Guanyin Who Sends Children (*song zi guan yin* 送子觀音) and Guanyin with Fishing Basket (*yu lan guan yin* 魚籃觀音), which are well known, but also Refreshing Breeze Guanyin (*qing feng guan yin* 清風觀音) and Spirit Raising Guanyin (*zhen shen guan yin* 振神觀音), which are seldom encountered. More forms¹⁰⁸ of Guanyin can be found in the manuals of scroll-painters Wang Chunku (王春庫) (see Appendix 2.1.1, p. 21) and Yang Zhenping (楊鎮平) (see Appendix 2.2.1, p.25). They all belong to the realm of upper divinities (*shang jie shen* 上界神), showing the great importance of this deity.

The significance of Guanyin is equally strong in the domestic setting. Among the statues worshiped in the household, either on boats or in houses on land, most families revere Guanyin (see Appendix 6, p. 34). In the sixteen households I visited, twelve families displayed statues, portraits, or prints of Guanyin. She was the only deity who appeared so often. The other most commonly seen deity in the household was the “God of Wealth”, who only appeared eight times. It is obvious that Guanyin plays an eminent role in the pantheon of the Weishan Lakes boat people. However, their worship of Guanyin is not unique. Seawater fisherfolk also place Guanyin in a prominent place. Even among the land-based people, Guanyin is widely revered. Lake fisherfolk have probably passed down the belief in Guanyin since their ancestors resettled from their homes on the land onto the boats.

It is worth noting that the identity of the Chief Divinities can be changed. The picture below shows another Chief Divinities scroll. Note that all the deities are changed except Guanyin. This proves that the boat people really enjoy the liberty to manipulate the deities to meet their aspirations. In the following discussion, I will usually refer to the most common pattern of each scroll, but will occasionally refer to exceptions.

¹⁰⁸ In Chinese: 漂江、道坐/到做、過海、見坐/見做、白臉、紅臉、撒金、魚籃、白衣、八難、撒銀、響苓。

Photo 2.15 The scroll of Chief Divinities of the Zhao Lineage



<p> 玄帝、觀音、佛祖 火神、二郎、百命星君、關公二爺、天關、地關、水關 江大王、田大王、金龍四大王、黃大王、郝大王 </p>
<p> Black Emperor, Guanyin, Buddha God of Fire, Erlang, Star of Hundred Ages, <i>Guangong Erye</i>, Official of Heaven, Official of Earth, Official of Water <i>Jiang Daiwang</i>, <i>Tian Daiwang</i>, <i>Jinlong si Daiwang</i>, <i>Huang Daiwang</i>, <i>Hao Daiwang</i> </p>

Table 2.7 The identities of deities in the scroll of Chief Divinities of the Zhao Lineage. Note: Deities whose names are in boldface are at the central position in each register, symbolizing their superior status.

Ostensibly, Guanyin is most highly revered; however, she does not appear in some of the most significant ritual activities of the boat people, such as the *Tangshen* Assembly or the ritual operas of the *Duangu* Ceremony. Perhaps Guanyin seems too distant to them. When the boat people have concrete demands, they prefer praying to less august deities, such as the Stove God, who is also depicted on the Chief Divinities scrolls.

The Stove God, however, plays a more important role in the boat people's everyday lives as well as in the *Duangu* Ceremony. One of the five ritual operas pertains to the Stove God. In everyday life, the role of the Stove God replaces that of the Earth God, given a living environment in which boat-dwellers have no attachment to the land.

Since boat-dwellers live on boats almost all their lives, they do not share the same psychological and physical attachments to the land as do the farmers. Therefore, the Earth God no longer has as prominent a role in the pantheon of the floating community as in farming villages, although he does appear on the scroll of the Chief Divinities. People on the land need to report to the Earth God whenever a baby is born or when someone in the family dies, so he can report to the City God, who registers that person in the "Book of Life and Death." Boat-dwellers report such events to the Stove God instead, a deity they encounter every day, since his picture is pasted above the stove in every boat.¹⁰⁹ The importance of the Stove God is demonstrated by the *Duangu* Ceremony. The Stove God's story, "Master Zhang Abandons *Ding Xiang*" (張郎休丁香), is one of the five ritual operas. A small ritual, "Spreading Stove God Sweets" (*sa zao wang* 撒灶王), occurs on the first night of the ceremony to excite the audience. In addition, the Stove God pennon (*zao wang fan* 灶王幡) is one of five pennons that are raised on masts during the ceremony. However, the Stove God is also the closest deity, and thus one whom people can offend. Boat people believe that offending the Stove God can cause diseases or accidents. They consult spirit-mediums to help resolve the conflict.¹¹⁰

God of Wealth Who Increases Blessings (*zengfu caishen* 增福財神)

Another important divinity is the God of Wealth Who Increases Blessings, flanked by the Immortal Official of Profitable Trade (*lishi xianguan* 利市仙官) on the left and the Wealth-Summoning Lad (*zhaocai tongzi* 招財童子) on the right in the third register of the standard style scroll. The God of Wealth appealed and still appeals to people of all classes all over China. Praying for wealth is a common practice among Chinese people,

¹⁰⁹ Interview with *Duangu* ritualist Jin Zhongyu (金中玉) in Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on April 26, 2010.

¹¹⁰ Interview with spirit-medium Hu Xianqun (胡憲群) on his houseboat in the marina of Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on November 3, 2009.

from the richest to the poorest, from the most powerful to the powerless. The boat people were no exception. Some fishing families asked the scroll painters to create an individual scroll for the portrait of the God of Wealth. The Zhao family has such a scroll. Mr. Zhao Famei was a fisherman and practiced the *Duangu* Ceremony before he shifted careers to business. Perhaps his status as a businessman made him request such a scroll to promote more wealth. Such scrolls might be a new trend among the fishing community as a result of more and more fisherfolk turning to business or transportation.

Photo 2.16 The God of Wealth Who Increases Blessing



增福財神

God of Wealth Who Increases Blessings

Table 2.8 God of Wealth Who Increases Blessings. Note: Only Zhao Famei has this scroll.

The scroll of the Chief Divinities is symbolically pre-eminent among all scrolls, but these chief deities seem too abstract and aloof to the boat people, except for the Stove God and those unknown deities in the second register. The scroll is also ritually important

for representing all scrolls during some ritual activities of the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. But in practice the most important scroll is the Ancestral Scroll, which I discuss in the next section.

Ancestors

Other spirits who can be easily offended are that of the ancestors. There are four occasions when boat people need to offer sacrifices for ancestors throughout the year: the Lantern Festival, the Dragon Boat Festival, the Mid-Autumn Festival, and Chinese New Year's Eve.¹¹¹ Inappropriate offerings or procedures can cause offense to ancestors. The ancestors might reveal their displeasure through dreams or via spirit-mediums. The ancestors might ask for offerings of food or paper money. They might also remind the married males who haven't yet obtained their own set of scrolls to order one from scroll painters, thereby symbolizing the division of the family. Once a man has his own set of scrolls, he and his family do not need to return to the original family to celebrate New Year festivals. In addition, the inadequate arrangement of deities on the scrolls can impact on the owner's family. For instance, the Shens' Lineage Scrolls were renovated in 2010 by painter Liu Peizhi (劉培志), because a series of accidents and unfortunate events among the kinsfolk were ascribed to scrolls wrongly painted many years before.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Interview with Jin Zhongyu, April 17, 2010.

¹¹² Interview with painter Liu Peizhi (劉培志) in Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on April 19, 2010.



Photo 2.17 Ancestral Scroll (*mingtang* 明堂) of the Zhao Lineage

祖墳祖林、牌位：X 氏三代宗親，立于公元 XX 年 X 月
 先祖母、先祖父
 家前族譜
 祠堂大門

Three Ancestral Tombs with Inscriptions: X Lineage's Ancestors of Three Generations, erected date
 Apical Ancestress and Ancestor
 Family Tree of the Ancestral Tablets
 Opened Gate of the Ancestral Shrine

Table 2.9 The content of the Ancestral Scroll of the Zhao Lineage



Photo 2.18 Ancestral Scroll of the Shen Lineage. Note: This scroll is not yet completed. The names of ancestral tablets will be filled in.

The Ancestral Scroll is the center of the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. The scroll has four registers: ancestral tombs are on the top, next there are representations of the founding ancestors, then there is an array of ancestral tablets on which no names are entered, and finally the gate of an ancestral shrine. The boat people explained that their ancestors did not own land for graves or ancestral shrines. When a person died, the family could not afford to buy land for a grave, let alone hire a *fengshui* [geomancy] master or erect a tombstone. So the body was usually buried perfunctorily

along the shore of a lake or river. Therefore, they used painted representations of tombs and ancestral shrines on the ancestral scroll.

With the help of scroll painters and *Duangu* ritualists who were relatively literate, the boat people were able to record the names of male ancestors on the scrolls. This was how the illiterate boat-dwellers recorded their genealogies and maintained their relationships with their ancestors. Because the scroll painters were not well educated, these genealogies contain numerous miswritten characters. Such portable genealogies or ancestral shrines recorded on paper or cloth are not unique to the boat people in northern China. There were *ying* (影)[shadows] in Shanxi Province and *jiatang* paintings [family hall] (家堂畫) in Shandong, which recorded family trees on scrolls or on cloth. Reginald Johnston saw ancestral scrolls in eastern Shandong in the 1900s. The scrolls were set up for the first few days of the lunar New Year and carefully stored for the rest of the time.¹¹³ Although the source or the reason for creating these portable genealogies is not clearly known, it probably reflects the unstable circumstances of the society or of the environment, due to frequent wars or natural disasters, which caused massive population movement and migration. A clear distinction between the ancestral scrolls of boat people and landmen pertains to the representations of tombs and ancestral shrines, however. Landmen's scrolls did not include images of tombs and shrines, but boat people symbolically represented these two land-based artifacts closely associated with ancestor worship on their ancestral scrolls. Boat people could not carry the tombs and ancestral shrines when they were forced to leave their native hometowns. Perhaps these paintings with symbolic tombs, ancestral shrines and portable genealogies were more affordable and became more expedient ways for them to maintain unbroken relationships with their ancestors.

This unbroken family tree helps validate the significance of the *Duangu* ritualists and painters. In the past, scroll painters could also perform the *Duangu* rituals and operas. Shen Jiuru (沈家如), the head of one of the only two *Duangu* troupes in the Weishan Lakes region, says “making [paper-cuts and paintings], reciting [scriptures], singing [opera], and fighting [or performing] were the basic skills that *Duangu* ritualists should master in the past.”¹¹⁴ Yet currently, only painters, not ritual masters, can make paper-cuts and scroll paintings of the deities and the ancestors. Ritualists and painters learned basic Chinese characters, as well as skills, from their masters; therefore they were relatively literate among the mainly illiterate boat people community. While painting

¹¹³ Reginald Johnston, *Lion and Dragon in Northern China* (London: J. Murray, 1910), 276–279.

¹¹⁴ In Chinese characters: 做念唱打. Interview at Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on June 21, 2009.

ancestral scrolls, the ritualist-painters helped each family preserve their family tree, given the fact that no written genealogical records were passed down in the past. However, their limited knowledge of Chinese characters sometimes meant they mis-recorded the names and even the deity designations. The ancestral scrolls play an extraordinarily pivotal role among the floating community, continuing their family trees, at least on the male side, and symbolizing their ancestral tombs and shrines in portable form.

The worship of the ancestors is necessary to the floating community. Although real tombs and shrines were difficult to obtain, the boat people still endeavored to maintain their unbroken relationship with the ancestors through their ancestral scrolls and the “Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy”. Through the apparently distinct forms and content of their ancestor worship, the boat-dwelling community shares one of the core essences of “Chineseness.”

***Daiwang* (大王), *Jiangjun* (將軍), and Other Water Gods**

The cults of *Daiwang* and *Jiangjun* were the most important to the boat people and have become a unique phenomenon shared by boat-dwelling fisherfolk and canal boatmen in the Grand Canal basin and throughout the waterways of the valleys of the Yellow River and Yangtze River.

Daiwang and *Jiangjun* are believed to assist boat people in catching abundant fish and preventing drowning. Boat people believe *Daiwang* grips a sword in the right hand to direct the Old Woman of Wind and Rain (*feng yü po po* 風雨婆婆) and holds a whip in the left hand to chase fish into fishing nets. He can prevent boat people from shipwreck and guarantee an abundant catch.¹¹⁵ Fishing groups practice Venerating *Daiwang* twice every year as mentioned earlier. Transportation flotillas also hold a similar ritual to worship *Daiwang*. When flotillas set sail or crossed a river, the captains and boatmen also hold a simple ritual to worship *Daiwang* or *Jiangjun* which involves setting off firecrackers, offering sacrifice, and burning paper money. This phenomenon was witnessed by the Macartney Embassy in 1793, as well. George Leonard Staunton (1737–1801) recorded:

“a sacrifice necessary to the spirit of the river, in order to ensure a safe passage ... the master, surrounded by the crew of the yacht, assembled upon the forecastle, and holding, as a victim, in his hand a cock, wrung off his head, which committing to the stream, he

¹¹⁵ Chen Minghai (陳明海), “Weishan hu shang jing Daiwang (微山湖上敬大王[Venerating Daiwang in the Weishan Lakes]),” in WSGJ, 242.

consecrated the vessel with the blood spouting from the body, by sprinkling it upon the deck, the masts, the anchor, and the doors of the apartments; and stuck upon them a few of the feathers of the bird. Several bowls of meat were then brought forward and ranged in a line across the deck. Before these were placed a cup of oil, one filled with tea, one with some ardent spirit, and a fourth with salt. The captain making at the time three profound inclinations of the body, with hands uplifted, and muttering a few words, as if of solicitation, to the Deity. The loo or brazen drum was beaten in the meantime forcibly; lighted matches were held towards heaven; papers, covered with tin or silver leaf, were burnt; and crackers fired off in great abundance, by the crew. The captain, afterwards, made libations to the river, by emptying into it from the vessel's prow, the several cups of liquids, and concluded with throwing in also that which held the salt. All the ceremonies being over, and the bowls of meat removed, the people feasted on it; and launched afterwards, with confidence, the yacht into the current. As soon as she had reached the opposite shore, the captain returned thanks to heaven, with three inclinations of the body.”¹¹⁶

Fishing *bangs* had a similar ritual when they started a team fishing trip, called “Wrapping Water-plants and Smashing Ice” (*qi cao za ling* 起草砸凌).¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Staunton, *An authentic account of an embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China*, 201, 227–228.

¹¹⁷ Gao Jianjun, “Weishan hu jing Daiwang,” 69.



Photo 2.19 The scroll of *Daiwang* and *Jiangjun*

Table 2.10 The identities of deities of the scroll of *Daiwang* and *Jiangjun*

黃或郝大王、朱大王、田大王、**金龍四大王**、香山大王、劉大王或劉柳二大王
 晏公、蕭公、**耿七公**、魚王三娘娘、壇相公
 黨將軍、楊四將軍、**九龍將軍**、張將軍、柳將軍、柴將軍
 把水柳爺、浪頭將軍、湖口御史、押糧御史、黑風五道、六甲丁

Daiwang Huang or Hao, *Daiwang* Zhu, *Daiwang* Tian, ***Jinlong si Daiwang***, Xiangshan *Daiwang*, *Daiwang* Liu or *Daiwangs* Liu and Liu Duke Yan, Duke Xiao, **Seventh Duke Geng**, Third Lady of the Fish King, Minister of Altar Dang *Jiangjun*, Yang Si *Jiangjun*, **Chen Jiulong *Jiangjun***, Zhang *Jiangjun*, Liu *Jiangjun*, Cai *Jiangjun*
 Lord Liu Who Manages the Water Gate, General of the Waves, Censor of the Lake Gate, Censor of the Grain Tribute, Wudao of Black Wind, Six Soldiers

This group of water gods reveals the uniqueness of the cults of the floating community and reflects the gods' relevance to life on the water, whether involving fishing, safety, or tribute grain transportation. Most of them were originally human beings who drowned and were then apotheosized as water gods. The boat-dwellers believed that a specific water god oversaw each body of water. This belief is similar to the cults of City Gods and Earth Gods---each god protects a given area, but the boundaries of lakes and rivers can shift. The cult of *Jinlong si Daiwang* first appeared around the Xuzhou (徐州) area, the convergence of the Grand Canal and the Yellow River; therefore he later became the guardian deity of both waterways and their tributaries. From the boat people's perspective, *Jinlong si Daiwang* is the dominant leader of the *Daiwangs* and the *Jiangjuns*, who protect all water-borne people. Boat-dwellers always say that there are "thirty-six *Daiwangs* and seventy-two *Jiangjuns*," which demonstrates the imagination and the interpretation of the boat-dwelling fisherfolk and contradicts the written records of the educated community.

Li Henian (李鶴年), governor-general of the eastern Yellow River, compiled the hagiographies and portraits of six *Daiwangs* and sixty-four *Jiangjuns* in the book, *Chifeng Daiwang Jiangjun jilue* (敕封大王將軍紀略) [Brief records of the enfeoffment of *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns*] in 1881.¹¹⁸ This book centers on exploring the stories of the water gods in Henan Province and records some oral traditions that are associated with the Yellow River and the Grand Canal. Some water gods that show up on the list also appear in the pantheon of the boat-dwelling fisherfolk in the Weishan Lakes between Shandong and Jiangsu provinces, an area that the Grand Canal and former Yellow River route intersected from 1128 through to 1855. Li's record reflects the long tradition of water gods that pertained to both the Yellow River and the Grand Canal. From this

¹¹⁸ Li Henian, *Chifeng Daiwang Jiangjun jilue* (敕封大王將軍紀略) [Brief records of the enfeoffment of *Daiwangs* and Generals] (Shanghai: Dianshi zhai (點石齋), 1881).

written record, it is clear that educated officials and lay people shared some water god cults, although diverse interpretations of each deity might still exist.

For instance, the boat people in the Weishan Lakes have a totally different story about *Jinlong si Daiwang*, the “chief water god”, from the one found in mainstream texts. The standard account identifies the god as a loyalist of the Southern Song Dynasty, Xie Xu (謝緒) who later as a spirit demonstrated his efficacy by assisting the founder of the Ming Dynasty to expel the Mongols. By contrast, the ritualists of the *Duangu* Ceremony perform a unique story of the “Lake God”, also named *Jinlong Daiwang*.¹¹⁹ The god’s name is said to have been Zhao Jinlong (趙金龍). Zhao, as a *xiucai* (秀才 [licentiate scholar]), was from Zhao Village of Suzhou Prefecture and had postponed his civil service examination twice because he was serving his parents. After his parents passed away, he took the examination in the capital and won first place. Zhao assumed the official position of “waterway transportation superintendent” (*shui lu du yun* 水路督運) and had a great reputation for dredging channels and constructing dikes. Once, when he was escorting grain tribute boats to the capital through the Grand Canal, his boat was overturned by a storm in Lake Hongze (洪澤湖) and he drowned. He was deified as the “Lake God” by the “Upper Emperor” (*shang di* 上帝) on account of his loyalty and filial piety. *Jinlong si Daiwang* is perhaps the most well-documented deity in the pantheon of the boat people, but they ignored the written tradition and invented a new version of his hagiography from their own perspective. This demonstrates that the boat people had their own ways of imagining and interpreting their deities.

The floating population believes that a specific *Daiwang* or *Jiangjun* oversees each body of water. For instance, *Bai Daiwang* (白大王) is in charge of the Weishan Lakes; *Ma Daiwang* (馬大王) oversees Lake Hongze; *Zhang Daiwang* (張大王) manages Lake Luoma (駱馬湖). When the *Duangu* Ceremony is held in the Weishan Lakes, both *Ma Daiwang* and *Zhang Daiwang* are invited to enjoy the ritual operas.¹²⁰

Daiwang and *Jiangjun* were past patrons of the Grand Canal boatmen and hydraulic engineering. Randall Dodgen has performed outstanding research concerning how the cult of *Jinlong si Daiwang* was established and standardized from the government’s perspective.¹²¹ However, the boat people’s version, or the laity’s in general, has previously rarely been known.

¹¹⁹ Zhongguo qu yi zhi Shandong juan Editorial Committee ed., *Zhongguo qu yi zhi Shandong juan* 中國曲藝志·山東卷 [Chinese Folk Art Records, Shandong Volume] (Beijing: China ISBN Center, 2002).

¹²⁰ Gao Jianjun (高建軍), *Shandong yun he min su* (山東運河民俗) (Jinan, Jinan chu ban she, 2006), 276.

¹²¹ Randall A. Dodgen, "Hydraulic Religion: 'Great King' Cults in the Ming and Qing." *Modern Asian Studies* 33, no. 4 (Oct., 1999): 815–33.

Certain water snakes with special markings are believed to be incarnations of *Daiwang* or *Jiangjun*. Whenever they were seen, the whole community, on the shore or water, held a ritual Welcoming of *Daiwang* or *Jiangjun* to honor it, in the hope of preventing disaster and praying for a better catch. The leader of the community used a hat to invite the snake. If it was truly the incarnation of the “water god” it would curl up on the hat. The leader would place the snake reverently on the altar, offer a sacrifice, and hire a theater troupe to entertain it for days until the deity was satisfied and left. It was said that the snake could change colors and pick out a favorite drama by nodding its head on a list of scripts. Such beliefs associated with *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns* were not recorded in official documents, but lay people clearly knew them. In fact, even officials followed the beliefs. For instance, *Shen Bao* (申報) reported that the renowned Shandong Governor Ding Baozhen (丁寶楨) witnessed the appearance of *Jinlong si Daiwang*, *Huang Daiwang*, *Zhu Daiwang*, *Bai Daiwang*, *Chen Jiulong Jiangjun*, and *Cao Jiangjun* when the hydraulic works were completed in the early 1870s.¹²² *Shen Bao* also comments on the operas dedicated to *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns*, which were sponsored by local officials.¹²³ The cult of *Daiwang* and the operas dedicated to them were recorded in detail in the famous critical novel, *Bizarre Phenomena Witnessed in the Past Twenty Years* (二十年目睹之怪現狀) which was written in the late Qing period.¹²⁴ The belief has lasted for centuries, and survives even today. A 72-year-old fisherman who witnessed the presence of the *Daiwang* snake when he was young, recalled a similar occurrence in 1990.¹²⁵ The presence of a *Daiwang*'s or a *Jiangjun*'s incarnation is such a significant event for the local community that all members have to show their sincerity.

Each *Daiwang* and *Jiangjun* has a specific function in fulfilling the aspirations of the fishing families. The liturgy of “Inviting the Deities” provides a detailed description of the sources of each *Daiwang* and *Jiangjun*, which I cannot cover due to limited space. In general, all these water gods vividly reflect the aspirations of the boat-dwelling fisherfolk, from hopes for good fishing and safe navigation to protection from drowning.

The deities of the lowest register and the foreground are associated with the operation of the canal tribute boats. They can be understood as the aspiration for safe navigation. They might also suggest a connection between the boat-dwellers and the canal boatmen. These *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns* were patrons of the Grand Canal and its

¹²² *Shen Bao* (申報), no. 92: 3–4, August 15, 1872.

¹²³ *Shen Bao* (申報), no. 2289: 1–2, September 14, 1879.

¹²⁴ Wu Yanren (吳趸人), *Er shi nian mu du zhi guai xian zhuang* (二十年目睹之怪現狀) [Strange phenomena witnessed in the past twenty years], chapter 68.

¹²⁵ [Gao] Jianjun (劍君[高建軍]), “Weishan hu jing *Daiwang* (微山湖敬大王),” *Min su yan jiu* (民俗研究) no. 25 (1993): 69.

tributaries. All passengers on the boats sailing through the Grand Canal had to offer sacrifices to them. *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns* also appeared in the pantheons of the canal boatmen's sects after the mid-1930s.¹²⁶ Among the deities on this scroll, Zhang *Jiangjun*, Chen Jiulong *Jiangjun*, and Yang Si *Jiangjun* also appear on the next scroll, *Tangshen*.

***Tangshen* (唐神) and the Origin of the *Duangu* Ceremony**

¹²⁶ Among the limited materials of the canal sects I looked up, *Jinlong si Daiwang* did not appear in their pantheons until 1935. See Chang Shengzhao (常聖照) ed., *Anqin xitong lu* (安親系統錄[Genealogy of the Anqing sects]) (Taipei: Guting shu wu, 1975[1935]), 31. An encyclopedic handbook of the canal sects described the hagiography of *Jinlong si Daiwang* in 1940, because the temples of the canal sects had begun worshipping the deity. See Zhang Zhenyuan (張振元), *Daoyi zhengzong* (道義正宗 [Orthodox model of the way and righteousness]) (Beiping: Zhengxiu tang, 1940), 40.



Photo 2.20 The scroll of Tangshen

Table 2.11 The identities of deities of the scroll of *Tangshen*

	{趙玄壇}、炳靈、東岳、真君、{朱太尉}
	收/催兵御史、楊四/守龍將軍、陳九龍將軍、趙玄壇、朱太尉、張將軍、大楊將軍、代財五道、領兵/神御史（上騎）
	收/催兵御史、楊四/守龍將軍、陳九龍將軍、趙玄壇、朱太尉、張將軍、大楊將軍、代財五道、領兵/神御史（下坐）
	天壇/平安/行山五岳
	[端鼓戲場景：刀梯、天地三界之神位、唐王遊地府、幡旗、端公做法事、開刀子]
1	Zhao Xuantan (Dark Altar), Bingling, Emperor of the Eastern Peak (Mount Tai), True Lord, Grand Commandant Zhu
2&3	Censor of Troop Withdrawal and Advance, Yang Si or Shoulong <i>Jiangjun</i> , Chen Jiulong <i>Jiangjun</i> , Zhao Xuantan, Grand Commandant Zhu , Zhang <i>Jiangjun</i> , Big Yang <i>Jiangjun</i> , Bringing Wealth Wudao, Censor Who Leads Soldiers/Deities
4	Deities of Five Peaks
	Foreground: Scene of a <i>Duangu</i> Ritual Opera [Tang Emperor Taizong appears in front of the court of Hell; <i>Duangu</i> ritualists are performing special skills, such as climbing blade ladders, practicing spirit possession with cutting themselves, and playing <i>Duangu</i> drums; the long pennon and decorative lanterns are similar to the real ones applied in the <i>Duangu</i> observance.

The *Tangshen* scroll of the boat-dwelling fisherfolk is also unique and closely associated with the origin of the *Duangu* ritualists. The main reason it is called *Tangshen*, literally “Tang Deity”, is due to the appearance of the Tang Emperor Taizong (*Tang taizong* 唐太宗) in the lowest register, which reflects vividly a key scene in the *Duangu* ritual opera Beheading the Dragon King, in which the Tang Emperor is summoned to the court of Hell. The whole story associated with this scene explains the origin of the *Duangu* Ceremony and the projective role of ritualists such as Wei Jiulang (魏九郎) [the ninth son of the Taizong’s famous chancellor Wei Zheng 魏徵] who performs the role of messenger and who invites the deities during this observance. Wei Jiulang, also called *Zhifu* (執符), or “talismán holder”, appears in several scrolls, symbolizing his work of inviting deities. On this scroll, he appears riding a white horse in the upper right and left corners. This scroll portrays vividly the *Duangu* ritualistic practice during the ritual opera both realistically and symbolically.

The deities on this scroll, like those on the *Daiwang* scroll, are also of central importance to the boat-dwelling community. The main deity on the topmost register is the “Emperor of the Eastern Peak [Mount Tai]” (*Taishan dongyue dadi* [泰山]東岳大帝), flanked on the left by his third son *Bingling* (炳靈) and on the right by the unidentifiable True Lord (*zhenjun* 真君), a title commonly appearing in Taoist rituals and texts. The Emperor of the Eastern Peak is commonly believed to oversee the lives and deaths of

Chinese people, and he plays the same role in this scroll, which depicts Emperor Taizong's judgment in Hell. Censor Zhu (*Zhu taiwei* 朱太尉) also plays a role in Hell, assisting Emperor Taizong to return to the human world. Apparently the boat-dwellers share this cult of the "Emperor of the Eastern Peak" with land-based inhabitants. The rest of the deities on this scroll are rarely seen outside the floating community. They are associated particularly with safety on the water. Most of them were drowned and then deified as water gods in charge of navigation safety and transportation security. According to the scroll painters' manuals, these deities belong to the lower realm, which consists of deceased spirits who were later enfeoffed as deities on account of their contributions to water control, to fishing production, or to navigation safety before or after their deaths. The Dragon Kings, the *Daiwangs*, and the *Jiangjuns* all belong to this lower realm.

Goose Spirit (*eling da xiangu* 鵝靈大仙姑), Boat Immortals, and *Huoji* (伙計)



Photo 2.21 The scroll of Goose Spirit

Table 2.12 The identities of deities of the scroll of *Tangshen*

<p>鵝靈大仙姑</p> <p>船仙張姑、船仙老祖、船仙老母</p> <p>麵姑、黃姑、米姑、月姑</p>
<p>Grand Immortal Aunt of Goose Spirit</p> <p>Boat Immortal Aunt Zhang, Venerable Patriarch of Boat Immortal, Venerable Mother of Boat Immortal</p> <p>Aunt Noodle, Aunt Yellow, Aunt Rice, Aunt Moon</p>

This scroll surely features daily life on the boat, but the sources of these deities are

still unknown. Out of six sets of scrolls I collected, four contain this picture. The uppermost register includes the “Grand Immortal Aunt of Goose Spirit,” (*eling da xiangu* 鵝靈大仙姑), also known as “Goose Feather Grand Immortal,” (*emao daxian* 鵝毛大仙). Below her are the “Venerable Patriarch Boat Immortal,” (*chuanxian laozu* 船仙老祖), accompanied by his wife the “Venerable Mother Boat Immortal,” (*chuanxian laomu* 船仙老母), to the right and daughter “Boat Immortal Aunt Zhang,” (*chuanxian zhanggu* 船仙張姑), to the left. At the bottom are three or four goddesses, “Aunt Noodle,” (*mian gu* 麵姑), “Aunt Rice,” (*mi gu* 米姑), “Aunt Yellow,” (*huang gu* 黃姑), and “Aunt Moon,” (*yue gu* 月姑).¹²⁷ “Aunt Yellow” is repeated on the scroll of Eight Spirits in one set of scrolls, although the repetition of these deities in different scrolls is not uncommon.

The sources of the deities on this scroll are mostly unknown. “Goose Spirit” holds a feather fan in her right hand, while two attendants swing giant feather fans. Geese are familiar to the boat people; some fishing families even raise geese and ducks on board.¹²⁸ The belief in the “Goose Spirit”, however, is still mysterious; no painter can explain her significance or source. The source of the “Boat Immortal’s” family is also unclear.

Nevertheless, many boats in the past used to have one or more protector deities, called “laborer deities” or *huoji shen* (伙計神). *Huojì* is the “patron of boats”. The cult of *Huojì* spread in the areas of the Grand Canal and lower Yellow River valley. Not only boat-dwelling fisherfolk, but also people who worked on board believe in the *Huojì* as the “boat patrons”. Many transportation ships have *Huojì*. Whenever a new boat is almost completed, before sealing any crevices, the chief boat craftsman will secretly ask the owner if he would like to “hire” a *Huojì* for the boat. The owner can decide whether or not to worship the *Huojì*.¹²⁹ The chief boat craftsman carves wooden statues and then applies cock blood to them.¹³⁰ After clearing out the other craftsmen, the chief craftsman and the owner carefully embed the *Huojì* image into the front beam of the boat.¹³¹ The image is hidden in a specific cabin where the scrolls of the deities and the ancestors are stored. Then the boat owner is expected to prepare a table of food offering, with three

¹²⁷ Wang Chunku said these goddesses were nieces of Venerable Patriarch and Mother of Boat Immortal. November 8, 2009.

¹²⁸ Gao Jianjun (高建軍), “Weishan hu chuan ju (微山湖船居 [Boat-dwelling in Weishan Lakes],” *Min su yan jiu* (民俗研究 [Folklore Studies]) 37 (1996): 78.

¹²⁹ Li Jinren (李近仁), “Qing huoji (請伙計 [Hiring Laborer Deities],” in Zheng xie Weishan xian wei yuan hui wen shi wei (政協微山縣委員會文史委) ed., *Jining, Yuan he wen hua Weishan bu fen gao jian* (濟寧·運河文化：微山部分稿件) (unpublished, 1998), 246–247.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Weishan xian Nanyang zhen xin wen tong xun zhan (微山縣南陽鎮新聞通訊站) ed., *Yun he ming zhen Nanyang* (運河名鎮——南陽) (Jining: Jining xin wen chu ban ju, 2001), 59.

sticks of incense and three piles of gold and silver paper ingots in front of the *Huoji*.¹³² The owner then leads the entire family and the sailors to invite and to worship the *Huoji* to protect the boat and its passengers. Sometimes the laborer deities might appear without any invitation. They can be male or female, old or young.¹³³ Boat owners do not usually know the identities of the *Huoji* before the laborer deities appear when they come on board for the first time and then disappear afterward. If the *Huoji* turns out to be female, the entire crew cannot be naked; otherwise, the *Huoji* would be offended.¹³⁴ But in some cases, boat owners can also decide which laborer deities to hire. For instance, a well-known story recounts:¹³⁵

A boat owner asked some boat craftsmen to make a row of officers and soldiers as *Huoji*. The owner soon became rich. Bandits plotted to rob, but whenever they approached the boat, they saw numerous officers and soldiers with weapons standing on the deck. The boat was spared from robbery.

A *Huoji* is believed to be not only a patron, but also a helper. In the past, most boats were sailboats; hence adjusting sails was critical for good fishing and safe navigation. A *Huoji* was expected to assist in sailing.¹³⁶ In addition, a *Huoji* is in charge of operating the rudder. When boats pass through waterlocks, the captain shouts out loudly to remind the *Huoji* to “take care of the rudder”. If the boat travels downstream, the captain will say “*Huoji*, passing the lock.” When traveling upstream, the captain will change this to say, “*Huoji*, we are starting to pass the lock. Be aware!”¹³⁷ The *Huoji* are believed to protect the boat and its passengers from danger. A local folktale depicts how the *Huoji* helped punish Japanese soldiers and protected the boatmen during the Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945).¹³⁸ The *Huoji* became part of nationalist mobilization, although the relationship between the floating community and the state was not apparent before.

Boats with *Huoji* are called “*Huoji* boats” (伙計船). The *Huoji* on each boat are not identical, and the owners never reveal the identities of their particular *Huoji*, unless their boats are traded to new owners. Previous owners inform new ones of the identities of the *Huoji* on board the boats, or the new owners ask if there are any *Huoji* on the boats. After the boat is traded to a new owner, when the buyer departs, he says, “*Huoji*, please follow

¹³² Shan Man (山曼) [Shan Peigen 單丕艮] et al., *Shandong huang he min su* (山東黃河民俗 [Folklore of Yellow River in Shandong]) (Jinan: Jinan chu ban she, 2005), 194. Interviews with Zhao Famei on June 22, 2009 and Wang Chunku on October 27, 2009 confirmed the offerings.

¹³³ Shan Man et al., loc. cit.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 193.

¹³⁵ Li Jinren, loc. cit.

¹³⁶ Liu Peizhi, October 26, 2009.

¹³⁷ Gao Jianjun (高建軍), *Shandong yun he min su* (山東運河民俗) (Jinan: Jinan chu ban she, 2006), 49.

¹³⁸ Shan Man et al., 194–195.

me. I hope you can help.”¹³⁹ No more worship or offerings are required. On ordinary days, no specific rituals are dedicated to the *Huoji*. If the household has joyful occasions, such as weddings, however, the *Huoji* should not be ignored. Whenever there are festivals or feasts, the owners should spill a little wine on deck to greet the *Huoji*, saying, “Please enjoy the wine together,” before the feast begins.¹⁴⁰ The *Huoji* are treated like other crewmembers.

The *Huoji* are not usually painted in scrolls, but some families request that the *Huoji* be represented. Liu Peizhi reveals that the Zhang family asked him to add two male deities, called Ma *Jiangjun* (馬將軍), on a boat on their scroll. Liu did not know the identities of these two deities, which the owner explained were *Huoji*. This demonstrates that individual fishing families enjoyed a certain degree of liberty to manipulate the identities of their deities within the household pantheon. These scrolls are functional for fishing families. Boat people can then, in essence, deploy deities to satisfy certain practical demands of their families.

***Shuigui* (水鬼) and the Evil Spirits**

How boat people perceive the evil spirits and how they cope with them is not reflected in the scrolls of deities and of ancestors. Even in the interviews I conducted with them, the boat-dwellers said that no “water ghost,” *Shuigui* exists. The fishing families do not express their beliefs about the evil spirits explicitly. Nevertheless, when I looked more closely at their beliefs about the causes of diseases or other unfortunate events, their ideas about evil spirits revealed themselves unambiguously.

A rumor about *Shuigui* or water demons circulated widely in the late 1940’s and early 1950’s. Wang Jiali (王家禮), a leader of boat people from Lake Dongping, recalls that when the rumor circulated throughout various provinces in 1948, he was just ten years old, living on his family’s boat on the Weishan Lakes.¹⁴¹ People said that at night the *Shuigui*, who wore fur, would steal children’s hearts, penises, testes, and eyes. Soon there was a *Shuigui* panic in the floating community as well as in households on shore. Everyone living along the waters on which the boat people moved had heard of the *Shuigui*. Boat-dwellers could not leave the water and thus were the most vulnerable to the attacks of water demons. Fishermen took turns to patrol their own fishing groups at night. Boat-dwellers moved their beds to the highest places on the boats to avoid the *Shuigui*’s

¹³⁹ Li Jinren, loc. cit.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Wang Jiali (王家禮), November 19, 2009.

attacks.¹⁴² The *Shuigui* scare genuinely terrified boat-dwellers for a while, not only because of the threat of being killed, but also because of the threat to the continuity of the lineage, a matter of the gravest importance. Boys were considered to be the main targets of the *Shuigui*, especially their reproductive organs. In fact, rumors about demons attacking boys' sexual organs have long history in Chinese society, as Barend ter Haar has demonstrated in his recent book.¹⁴³ This *Shuigui* scare signifies the deep concern of the boat people to continue their family lines and how it has been embedded in the collective memory of the floating community since the mid-twentieth century.

Communist Party cadres tried to step in to stop the rumors. They claimed that the *Shuigui* rumors were started by Nationalist undercover agents who were trying to create panic and to shatter unity between the boat-dwellers and the communists.¹⁴⁴ In other areas, the *Shuigui* were connected with sectarianism, including *Yiguandao* (一貫道) and *Hongshan jiao* (紅三教).¹⁴⁵ The latter was a religious association of boat people, whose rituals shared many elements with the *Duangou* Ceremony. I will discuss the relationship between the two ritual traditions in the next chapter. As the rumors grew, people began to say that the *Shuigui* attacked women's breasts and stole fetuses from pregnant women. All the stolen things were said to be raw materials to make Russian atomic bombs. The fear of *Shuigui* persisted for a long time. Three old fishermen remembered that the scare reappeared in the early 1960's and lasted for about half a year,¹⁴⁶ but nobody actually

¹⁴² Zhao Famei (趙法美), June 22, 2009.

¹⁴³ Barend ter Haar, *Telling Stories: Witchcraft and Scapegoating in Chinese History* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 92–153.

¹⁴⁴ Ji Ru Yü qu dang wei she hui bu (冀魯豫區黨委社會部[Social Department of District Party Committee in Hebei, Shandong, and Henan]), "Kai zhan fan *shuigui* yao yan de jin ji zhi shi (開展反水鬼謠言的緊急指示[Emergent direction on campaign against the water ghost rumor])," *Tongbao* (通報) no. 29 (5 March, 1949): 7–10.

¹⁴⁵ Several scholars have studied this topic. The term *shuigui* was later transformed to become *mao ren shui guai* (毛人水怪[Hairy Man Water Monster]). Please see Zhang Yongsong (張永松) and Wu Zhixiao (吳志霄), "Jie fang chu qi fa sheng zai Wuwei xian de mao ren shui guai shi jian (解放初期發生在無為縣的“毛人水怪”事件[The incident of “Hairy Man Water Monster” in Wuwei County during the early period of liberation])," *Jian huai wen shi* (江淮文史[Literature and history of the Yangtze River and the Huai River]), no. 04 (1999): 165–68. Li Ruojian (李若建), "She hui bian qian de zhe she: 20 shi ji 50 nian dai de mao ren shui guai yao yan chu tan (社會變遷的折射:20世紀50年代的“毛人水怪”謠言初探[The reflection of social change: a preliminary study on the “Hairy Man Water Monster” rumor during the 1950's])," *She hui xue yan jiu* (社會學研究[Sociological Research]), no. 05 (2005): 182–201+45–46. Nakane Kenichi (中根研一), "1950 nian dai Chukoku no ichi dai fusetsu jiken mao ren shui guai: ye ren sodo zenya no Chukoku ni hirogatta kaiju mono (1950年代中国の一大風説事件「毛人水怪」:「野人」騒動前夜の中国に広がった怪獣物語[The Hairy Man Water Monster rumor in China in the 1950's: Monster stories in China preceding the Ye Ren incident])," *Tao-Tie* (饕餮) 15 (2007): 27–43.

¹⁴⁶ Zhao Famei, loc. cit. Hu Xianyuan (胡憲遠), November 8, 2009. Jin Mingshun (金明順), November 8, 2009.

witnessed any *Shuigui* attacks. Since then, the *Shuigui* were demystified and became a collective memory that boat people made fun of. Nowadays, whenever people talk about the *Shuigui*, they recall the “scare” and say they do not believe in the existence of the *Shuigui*. However, this does not mean that they have no beliefs about the evil spirits.

First of all, the boat people fear the souls of the drowned. Seeing a drowned body is a malign offence to the boat people, which can bring about diseases, accidents, or deaths. Whenever a boat encounters a drowned body in the water, the boatmen have to set off firecrackers and practice the ritual of *Datuo* (打碇).¹⁴⁷ A sliding weight (*tuo*) of a steelyard is placed in a dipper with alcohol. Then they ignite the alcohol. The burning dipper is carried around the boat in order to expel the soul. *Datuo* is a very common exorcism that lay boat people practice by themselves without the help of a ritual specialist. When a pregnant woman is ready to deliver a baby, *Datuo* is practiced in the houseboat to protect the newly born baby from the forces of evil.¹⁴⁸ Before worshipping deities and ancestors, either in the household or at a ceremony, boat people also carry out *Datuo* to purify the space. When a family suffers serial misfortunes, *Datuo* is also practiced, because boat people believe that evil spirits cause these misfortunes. Besides *Datuo*, other exorcism rituals take place during the *Duangu* Ceremony to expel evil spirits and to purify the space.

The practice of purification rituals proves the community belief in evil spirits. Boat people believe many evil spirits reside in the West. Hence, a ritual on the first evening of the *Duangu* Ceremony occurs as a part of the worship of the “Heavenly Soldier *Wudao*,” (*tianbing Wudao* 天兵五道) and the “White Cloud *Wudao*,” (*baiyun Wudao* 白雲五道) who are in charge of pacifying the West.¹⁴⁹ When the *Duangu* Ceremony begins,¹⁵⁰ the ritualists first invoke four guardian generals to protect the ceremony platform from the evil spirits.¹⁵¹

Duangu ritualists and spirit-mediums expel the evil spirits as well. Spirit-mediums negotiate with evil spirits who cause misfortunes or diseases. For example, more than 100 years ago, the legendary “Mighty and Efficacious Immortal Master,” (*weiling xian shi* 威靈仙師), whom I will introduce in the following section, helped a woman who was possessed. It was said that an evil spirit haunted the lady and asked her to be his wife in

¹⁴⁷ Wang Jiali (王家禮), November 19, 2009.

¹⁴⁸ Li Hongwei (李紅微), “Yü min de xi su (漁民的習俗 [Customs of the fisherfolk]),” *Weishan hu: Weishan hu zi liao zhuan ji* (Weishan: Jining shi zheng xie wen shi zi liao wei yuan hui and Weishan zheng xie wen shi zi liao wei yuan hui, 1990), 166.

¹⁴⁹ Jin Zhongyu talked about this ritual twice in interviews on November 7, 2009 and on April 26, 2010.

¹⁵⁰ *Duangu* ritualists suggest that the real beginning of the *Duangu* Ceremony for continuing genealogy is on the second day, because the first evening of the ritual opera is only for inviting ancestors to come.

¹⁵¹ Jin Zhongyu, April 26, 2010.

the underworld. That meant the lady had to die. The spirit-medium stepped in to bargain with the haunting spirit. If the spirit would spare the lady's life, the spirit-medium would provide two deceased women for the spirit. The lady survived and died in her eighties.¹⁵²

Other spirits who cause misfortunes and diseases are ancestors. When family members suffer serial troubles or illnesses, they consult with spirit-mediums. In some cases, because of the inappropriate arrangement of the scrolls of the deities and ancestors stored in the houseboats, ancestors might cause woeful misfortunes. Sometimes misfortunes occur because young sons do not create their own sets of scrolls after family divisions.¹⁵³ Thus, spirit-mediums have to communicate with the ancestors to discern the origin of the complaints. Then scroll painters are hired to create new, correctly arranged scrolls in order to satisfy the ancestors. The Shen lineage also renovated their "lineage scrolls," (*wei shen* 位神) after a number of kinsfolk suffered from accidents or diseases, as I mentioned earlier in this chapter, where I mentioned the ritual of "submitting a paper substitute lad," (*jiao tongzi* 交童子), which also relates to belief in evil spirits.

When children are seriously sick, "paper substitute lads" are burned to appease the evil spirits who haunt sick children. *Duangu* ritualists and spirit-mediums both practice this ritual. The boat people believe that evil spirits want children to die, so the children can serve the evil spirits. If paper substitutes are burned as servants to replace the children, the evil spirits will spare the sick.¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, deities may request servants as well. Guanyin and the Goddess of Mount *Tai* can also cause children's illness if children offend¹⁵⁵ the goddesses. Paper substitutes are then required to be used in exchange for the health or the life of children.¹⁵⁶

In some cases, evil spirits' requests are relatively simple. They might ask only for some paper money or food offerings. Once the family or the spirit-medium offers what they demand, they will leave and bad luck will disappear.

All rituals of exorcism or the abovementioned submission of paper substitutes reveal the boat people's belief in evil spirits. The scroll of Zhong Kui, which is present on houseboats, helps each family to suppress or to terrify evil spirits. This function is similar to the way land-based people use the portrait of Zhong Kui. The belief in evil spirits also reveals more similarities than differences between the boat people and the farmers. One significant difference relates to the "drowned spirits", often called *Shuigui* by land-based

¹⁵² Hu Xianfu (胡憲富), April 24, 2010.

¹⁵³ Hu Xiansheng (胡憲生), April 18, 2010.

¹⁵⁴ Wang Jiali (王家禮) and Wang Yunfu (王雲富), November 19, 2009.

¹⁵⁵ How the offense is caused is unclear. Usually spirit-mediums explain that the sick children have offended specific deities, called "*fan tongzi* 犯童子" in Chinese.

¹⁵⁶ Hu Xianfu, April 24, 2010. Jin Zhongyu, April 26, 2010.

people. A popular *Shuigui* folktale depicts how a merciful drowned spirit spares several people from drowning to replace his position as a *Shuigui*, and he is then deified as a City God by the Jade Emperor on account of his having shown mercy. Nevertheless, this folktale is not told among the floating communities I investigated for this study. The boat people still believe that drowned spirits can be deified, but the identification of City Gods as entities in charge of urban areas are not relevant for deities in the boat people's floating pantheon. Again, the boat people's belief in evil spirits reveals that believers have their own ways of imaging and interpreting deities and ghosts. This phenomenon is revealed in the following scrolls as well.

Junwang (君王)¹⁵⁷

The *Junwang* scroll is exclusive to the Shotgun Group and represents the origin of the group. The scroll has four registers, depicting the story of the Shotgun Group patrons. The top two registers represent the patrons in two styles. The topmost section depicts a hunting scene on the mountain in which the patron deities are riding horses to chase and to enclose wild animals, including a tiger, a monkey, boars, birds, and unidentifiable white animals. The hunt is assisted by attendants with nets, snares and hounds, who use various Chinese traditional weapons, such as bows and arrows, swords, and red spears, whereas each deity possesses a different weapon. The central commander is "Fifth Sagely *Junwang*," (五聖君王) holding a fork. At his right side are "Grand *Junwang*," (大君王) with a melon-shaped hammer with a "long pole," (長柄瓜錘) and "Third *Junwang*," (三君王) with a shotgun. To the left of the "Fifth Sagely *Junwang*" are "Second *Junwang*," (二君王) with a red spear and "Fourth *Junwang*," (四君王) with *Guandao* (關刀), a "broadsword with a long pole". The second register portrays the same five patrons in a sitting posture, similar to those of ordinary statues or portraits of deities in temples or on scrolls. Below the sitting patrons are various scenes of how the game is handled afterwards. In the center is a boar, which has been killed and boiled in a cauldron. At the left are a killed deer on the ground and a killed tiger on someone's back. At the right is a man carrying birds with a pole on his shoulder. The lowest register depicts a deity, Zhao Dabang (趙大幫) on the right. To Zhao's left is a scene showing how the Shotgun Group people shoot birds with a shotgun from a small boat or catch them with a net. A hunter hiding on a gunboat shoots birds in the center of the bottom register. On the far left is a houseboat with a family. The husband is casting out a net to catch birds, while the wife

¹⁵⁷ *Junwang* 君王 in Chinese means literally "monarch and king", but the term used for Shotgun Group's patrons does not refer to "king" or "emperor". It is a unique title, so in this case, I have termed the patrons as *Junwang*.

and son are sitting on the houseboat. The entire scroll depicts vividly the hagiography of the Shotgun Group's patrons and the lifestyle of its group members.

The scrolls and the rituals of the Shotgun Group are little known. I have not had an opportunity to observe them. Fortunately, Liu Peizhi (劉培志), one of the scroll painters I interviewed, is from the Shotgun Group, although he now serves mostly the boat people of the Dipnetter Group. He showed me a rarely seen painting he had just finished. Besides the *Junwang* scroll, the Shotgun Group worships three to five scrolls, including one for the "cardinal river god," *Jinlong si Daiwang*, and one for the ancestors, according to a prominent *Duangu* ritualist.¹⁵⁸ He also told me about the hagiography of *Junwangs* and indicated that the *Duangu* Ceremony for *Junwang* is shorter and simpler than the ceremonies in the Dipnetter Group. The Shotgun Group have their own *Duangu* ritualists to practice the Ceremony for *Junwang* (*Junwang hui* 君王會). They can only perform their own ritual operas, whereas the *Duangu* ritualists for the Dipnetter Group can service the Shotgun Group's ceremony for *Junwang*. In addition, the official report of *Hongsan Jiao* (紅三教) in Jiangsu documents the Shotgun Group's ceremony for *Junwang*.¹⁵⁹ Although my main subject focuses on the Dipnetter Group, it is worth including this rare and unique painting as a reference.

Table 2.13 The identities of deities of the scroll of *Junwang*

四君王持關刀、二君王持紅纓槍、 五聖君王持叉 、大君王持長柄瓜錘、三君王持火炮槍（騎馬打獵） 四君王、二君王、 五聖君王 、大君王、三君王（坐像）		趙大幫坐像
1	Fourth <i>Junwang</i> with Guan's Broadsword, Second <i>Junwang</i> with Red Spear, Fifth Sagely <i>Junwang</i> with Fork , Great <i>Junwang</i> with Long-Pole Melon-Shaped Hammer, Third <i>Junwang</i> with Shotgun	
2	Fourth <i>Junwang</i> , Second <i>Junwang</i> , Fifth Sagely <i>Junwang</i> with Fork , Great <i>Junwang</i> , Third <i>Junwang</i> [sitting still]	
3		Zhao Dabang

¹⁵⁸ Jin Zhongyu (金中玉), a *Duangu* ritualist of the Dipnetter Group, who also has experiences of practicing *Duangu* Ceremony for the Shotgun Group before, has seen the scrolls. Interview at Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong on April 26, 2010.

¹⁵⁹ Security Office of Public Security Bureau of Yancheng City (鹽城市公安局保安科), *Fan dong hui dao men Hongsan jiao zi liao hui bian* (反動會道門“紅三教”資料匯編) (Nanjing: Jiangsu Provincial People's Procuratorate 江蘇省人民檢察院, Jiangsu Provincial Higher People's Court 江蘇省高級人民法院, and Jiangsu Provincial Justice Department 江蘇省司法廳, 1984), 23.



Photo 2.22 The scroll of *Junwang*

The Shotgun groups believe that their ancestors were originally hunters in the mountains and that they became fisherfolk later. It is said that five sworn brothers hunted in the mountains. The surname of the biggest two was Zhai (翟), and the rest, Tian (田). Zhao Dabang, the deity in the right lower corner, who was their teacher, was originally a mountain spirit and later became a fishing patron.¹⁶⁰ One day, as they chased a spotted deer running from the Eastern Ocean, the ice cracked. The quarry ran away, but the five hunters drowned. The hunter spirits later assisted any hunters in chasing fowls and

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Liu Peizhi on April 25, 2010.

animals. Thus the Jade Emperor enfeoffed them as five *Junwangs*, “patrons of hunters”.¹⁶¹ Another version says that the five sworn brothers were incompetent at everything: hunting, fishing, or doing business. When they sailed on the lake, the boat was blown away and began to sink. The five brothers drowned. They were later enfeoffed as *Junwangs* to protect hunters along the lakes.¹⁶²

It is interesting that land-based people can have their own interpretations of the *Junwang*. A diviner in a temple on Weishan Island, who lives on the lakeshore and knows the boat people on Weishan Lakes very well, thinks that the *Junwang* is the “Grand Supreme Elderly Lord” (*taishang laojun* 太上老君). He has been a painter for thirty-two years and occasionally painted deity scrolls for boat people. Even so, he still fails to understand the details of the boat people’s pantheon. Perhaps he only imitated old scrolls and did not have a chance to view the ritual operas held in the center of the lakes. He is, after all, still an outsider.

Even insiders have different perceptions of the *Junwang*. When Shen Jiaru transcribed the script of the “Inviting Deities”, he used “soldier king” (*jun wang* 軍王).

Concluding Remarks

The boat-dwellers have created new ways of maintaining the relationship with their peculiar gods, ghosts, and ancestors. By transforming physical statues and temples, as well as ancestral shrines into portable paper scrolls, the floating community creates a distinctive pantheon and a dissimilar worldview, both of which reflect the inspirations and the religious motivations of the frequently moving population. The desire for better fishing harvests and fear of navigation danger are vividly reflected in the boat people’s pantheon.

After analyzing the pantheon and interpreting each scroll, I also discovered the flexibility of the pantheon and the liberty in manipulating deities on each scroll. Each boat family enjoys a certain degree of agency to adjust the pantheon in their “mobile temple” to their needs. Boat people, like most Chinese lay people, have their own ways of imagining and interpreting the deities they worship and the evil spirits they fear. They can freely patchwork the preferred deities into scrolls, although some degree of structure and scope still restrains their liberty in manipulating the deities and pantheon.

Boat people also share some common religious ideas and beliefs with most Chinese lay people, especially those concerning ancestor worship. Each fishing family and lineage documents their family tree and maintains an “unbroken genealogy,” genuine or

¹⁶¹ *Fan dong hui dao men Hongsan jiao zi liao hui bian*, 23.

¹⁶² Interview with Jin Zhongyu on April 26, 2010.

reconstructed, with the help of the *Duangu* ritualists and scroll painters. Given their distinctive living environment, the boat-dwellers still endeavor to maintain and renew the relationship with ancestors, demonstrating the significance of ancestor worship among the Han Chinese people. The common elements shared by both the boat-dwellers and the land-based people can shed light on the nature of “Chineseness” in the religious world, which will be discussed in the conclusion and in future studies.

CHAPTER THREE

Duangu Ceremony (端鼓腔)

In order to adapt to a mobile life on the water, the boat people of southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu created an idiosyncratic means of maintaining their relationships with ancestors, divinities, and demons: the *Duangu Ceremony*. The sporadic boat-dwellers from different waters reunite on several tied boats every five or ten years, in order to collectively worship their common ancestors or divinities, because they do not have fixed temples or ancestral shrines for maintaining their relationships with spirits in the way that landmen do. The existence of these ritual activities and specialists help the boat people preserve unbroken genealogies and ancestor worship. Other groups of boat people, like the Dan people of south China, have not been able to do this. The content and symbolism of their ritual practices and beliefs also reflect the boat people's distinctive worldview, their sense of space, and their attitudes, emotions, and values toward nature. This chapter will focus on the ritual practices the boat people of southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu. I will provide details of the proceedings of the *Duangu Ceremony*, because this little-known ritual has never before been completely recorded by anyone from the outside world, and the boat people cannot document it on their own. I am the first scholar to observe the entire Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy and to witness part of the clandestinely held *Tangshen Assembly*.

The *Duangu Ceremony* (*duan gu qiang* 端鼓腔) revolves mainly around two different types of ritual activities: the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy and the *Tangshen Assembly*. The former is specifically for lineage rituals, and the latter can be considered an aquatic version of a temple and its festival. In this chapter, I will first introduce the *Duangu Ceremony* in general and then explore the details of the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy.

The boat people's ritual tradition has enjoyed autonomy and independence from outsiders, a good example of the "ritual autarky" described by David Johnson in his recent book.¹ As a consequence of the mobility and isolation of the boat people, they escaped state control and avoided direct contact with landmen, and they had no access to traditional education and social advancement through the civil service examination.

¹ David Johnson, *Spectacle and Sacrifice: The Ritual Foundations of Village Life in North China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), 11; 333–5.

Therefore their ritual tradition was relatively autonomous and less influenced by official Confucian ideology or state orthodoxy. These floating villages demonstrate the creativity, self-consciousness and independence of the boat people in terms of ritual practices and beliefs. The boat people's distinctive ritual practices and beliefs can help us rethink our current understanding of Chinese popular religion which is based solely on the experiences of the peasantry.

Besides these distinctive elements, we will also observe some elements commonly shared by the boat people and landmen. These similarities are shared across ecological and occupational differences. They may help us rethink the core essence of "Chineseness." I shall start by introducing the unique ritual tradition of the boat people.

Introduction of the *Duangu* Ceremony



Photo 3.1 *Duangu* (Source: Photography by author)

The name of the *Duangu* Ceremony comes from its main musical instrument, the *Duangu* or Upright Drum. This fan-like drum is made from steel wire and goat skin by *Duangu* ritual masters. Ritualist-performers beat the drum with a thin bamboo stick while performing rituals or operas. The drum has two parts: the drum head and handle. *Duangu* ritualists are the ones who make the drums. The drum head is made of goat skin which usually comes from the sacrifice in the ceremony. The drum rim has a diameter of 33–37 centimeters and the handle is about fourteen cm. long, made of a one-centimeter wide iron wire. The handle is one-centimeter in diameter, with a 14-centimeter long iron tube, connecting the drum head on the top and the so-called “chain of nine rings” (*jiu lian huan* 九連環) at the bottom. The “nine rings” section has a large ring (10–14.5 centimeters) and a small ring (3–4.5 centimeters). The small ring interlocks with three little rings (3 centimeters), while the other six little rings interlock with the large ring, and are equally

separated by the small ring in the middle. When the ritualists play the drum, they beat the drum head with a bamboo stick in the right hand and hold the drum with the left hand. Besides beating the drum head, the drummers can tinkle the rings by shaking the drum.

Scholars claim that the fan-drum was adopted by the *Duangu* ritualists after the boat people moved to the Weishan Lakes, and they think the *Duangu* Ceremony was a simplified version of the *Xianghuo* Ceremony which was popular among landmen in northern Jiangsu.² I disagree with this argument and contend that the *Duangu* Ceremony originally used the fan-drum before it was transmitted to the Weishan Lakes. As for the *Xianghuo* Ceremony, it possibly appropriated ritual objects and musical instruments used in other ritual traditions around northern Jiangsu, which are not the focus of this dissertation.

The use of this type of fan-drum was not exclusive to the *Duangu* Ceremony. Similar fan-drums have been seen in other places and were used by diverse ritualists or performers. For instance, the fan-drum (*shan gu* 扇鼓) ritual in Shanxi province has no similarities to the *Duangu* Ceremony, except for the drum.³ Fan-drums were already widely used in southern Shandong and other provinces of North China at least by the early Qing period (1644-1911). Pu Songling (蒲松齡 1640–1715) described spirit-mediums in southern Shandong using fan-drums with iron rings to cure diseases in the early Qing period.⁴ In fact, several old performers of the *Liuqin* Opera (柳琴戲) recalled in the early 1950s that a ritual tradition using fan-drums to help villagers worship deities and exorcise demons was popular in southern Shandong in the first half of the twentieth century, and that even opera performers participated in this type of ritual activity.⁵ The ritual tradition was called *Zhouguzi* (肘鼓子 [Twisting the (?) Drum]) in southern Shandong and was also called *Dapengpeng* (打砰砰 [“Beating the Drum”]) around the area of Qufu (曲阜), Zou County (鄒縣),⁶ and Yanzhou (兗州), which are

² QYZSD, 88.

³ Huang Zhushan (黃竹三), *Shanxi sheng Quwo xian Renzhuang cun Shangu shen pu diao cha bao gao* (山西省曲沃縣任莊村《扇鼓神譜》調查報告[]) (Taipei: Shih Ho-Cheng Folk Culture Foundation, 1994). See also David Johnson, *Spectacle and Sacrifice: The Ritual Foundations of Village Life in North China*, 25–68.

⁴ Pu Songling (蒲松齡), “Tiao shen (跳神 [Spirit possession]),” *Liao zhai zhi yi* (聊齋誌異 [Strange tales of Liaozhai]), *juan* 6.

⁵ Cong Yue (叢月) et al., “Shandong Liuqin xi de qi yuan yu fa zhan (山東柳琴戲的起源與發展 [The origin and development of the Shandong Liuqin opera]),” *Xi ju cong kan* (戲劇叢刊 [Journal of opera]) (April 1982), cited by Zhou Wuyan (周武彥), “Hongze hu yu gu wu jian jie (洪澤湖漁鼓舞簡介 [Introduction of the Yugu dance of the Lake Hongze]),” *HZWSZL* 1 (1985): 80. Ji Genyin (紀根垠), “Tan Shandong guniang qiang (談山東姑娘腔 [On Shandong guniang qiang]),” *Xi qu yan jiu* (戲曲研究 [Studies of opera]) 42 (Beijing: Wen hua yi shu chu ban she, 1992), 33.

⁶ Ji Genyin, “Tan Shandong guniang qiang,” 37.

adjacent to the northeast of the Weishan Lakes. According to Ji Genyin (紀根垠), a reputable scholar of Shandong local opera, all the local ritual traditions associated with Wei Jiulang originally used fan-drums.⁷ Ji Genyin has linked the boat people's *Duangu* with this fan-drum ritual and related it to the *Taiping* Drum (太平鼓[Great Peace Drum]), which has a long history and is spread widely through North China.⁸ The *Taiping* Drum has also been popular in Northeast China.⁹

According to Wu Zeng (吳曾 1127–1160), the term “*Taiping* Drum” already appeared in the Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127) and originated from a drum playing called “*daduan*” (打斷) during the reign of Song Huizong Emperor (宋徽宗). *Daduan* was prohibited at the beginning of the Zhenghe period (政和 1111–1117) and the name was changed to *Taiping* Drum.¹⁰ The *Duangu* ritualists call “playing the *Duangu* drum” (*da Duangu*). *Duangu* is possibly related to *daduan*. Unfortunately, written records from earlier periods about the *Duangu* Ceremony are so rare that it is difficult to prove the connection. However, in later periods the fan-drum called *Taiping* Drum remained popular in Beijing, Shaanxi, southern Shandong and elsewhere in northeast China.¹¹ The *Taiping* Drum is very similar to the *Duangu* drum. The *Taiping* Drum ritual in northeast China and the *Zhouguzi*¹² and the *Shaozhidiao* (燒紙調[chanting of burning paper])¹³ in southwestern Shandong share not only the fan-drum, but also several ritual operas and legends of their origin, namely the stories centering on Wei Jiulang.

A nineteenth century anecdote describes a local ritual opera that is very similar to the *Duangu* Ceremony. Xuan Ding (宣鼎 1832–1880) mentions a ritual activity of *wu* (巫) spirit mediums:

The tradition of *wu* has spread for a long time, which can be called *duangong* (端工), *xianghuo* (香火), or *tongzi* (童子). Despite the different names, all of them are the remains of countryside *Nuo* (儺). The ancient *Wu* only expelled epidemics and pestilences and prevented droughts and floods. The recent *Wu* have become more and more illusory and strange. They hit

⁷ Ji Genyin, “Tan Shandong *guniang qiang*,” 35.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁹ Ren Guangwei (任光偉), *Liaoning min xiang de kao cha yu yan jiu* (遼寧民香的考察與研究[Study of the *Minxiang* in Liaoning]) (Taipei: Shih Ho-Cheng Folk Culture Foundation, 1994); Ren Guangwei and Sun Ying (孫英), *Dongbei Han jun qi xiang de kao cha yu yan jiu* (東北漢軍旗香的考察與研究 [Investigation and study of the flag incense of the Han soldiers]) (Taipei: Shih Ho-Cheng Folk Culture Foundation, 1998).

¹⁰ Wu Zeng (吳曾), “Shi shi yi (事始一),” *Neng gai zhai man lu* (能改齋漫錄) (1162), *juan* 1.

¹¹ Ji Genyin, “Tan Shandong *guniang qiang*,” 27–39. “*Taiping gu* (太平鼓),” *Ci hai, yi shu fen ce* (辭海·藝術分冊) (Shanghai: Shanghai ci shu chu ban she, 1980), 267.

¹² Ji Genyin, “Tan Shandong *guniang qiang*,” 27–39.

¹³ QYYSD, 887.

waist drums, blow horns, and sing with *Qin* accent (秦腔). The disciples sound gongs to resonate and dance hysterically. Moreover, some erect stages on which they perform like actors and actresses and practice spirit possession for several days and nights without fatigue. Men and women sit around to watch the operas about the *Jiulang* official (九郎官) and *Shuimu niangniang* (水母娘娘[Lady of Water Mother]) and then enjoy the sacrifice food. No one returns without being drunk.¹⁴

Almost all of the activities mentioned above appear in the *Duangu* Ceremony that I observed in the Weishan Lakes. This passage provides very important information indicating the spread of certain ritual operas during the mid-nineteenth century very similar to those performed during the *Duangu* Ceremony. The author Xuan Ding came from the valley of Huai River and served as a local official in Jining (濟寧), located on the north shore of the Weishan Lakes. The activities he described are closely related to the *Duangu* Ceremony. The *Jiulang* Official appears in the key ritual opera “Wei Zheng Beheading Dragon King,” which explains the origin of the *Duangu* Ceremony. *Jiulang* is believed to be the messenger who invites all deities and sends messages to the upper, middle, and lower realms, and the *Duangu* ritualists are the incarnation of *Jiulang*. It is very likely that Xuan Ding had seen the *Duangu* Ceremony or something like it. Moreover, the *Duangu* ritualists can trace their lineage migration history back to the first half of the nineteenth century, indicating that their ancestors already practiced the *Duangu* Ceremony in the Weishan Lakes.¹⁵ Combining the written record and the oral history, it should be possible to say that the *Duangu* Ceremony already existed in the region around the Weishan Lakes from at least the mid nineteenth century.

The Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy (*xu jia pu* 續家譜) was one of the two major ritual activities of the *Duangu* Ceremony. Since the dispersed boat-dwellers could not easily gather to worship ancestors at land-based ancestral halls or grave sites annually they developed distinctive ways of reuniting kin members. Every five or ten years they held an Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy, in the hope of reconnecting and renewing relationships with ancestors and deities. It was a lineage ritual hosted by each lineage independently. Some larger lineages, such as the Hu (胡) and Wang (王), even split into branches, and each branch has its own ritual. The standard observance was composed of various rituals and five operas over four days and nights. Numerous ritual objects were utilized throughout the whole observance, including sets of

¹⁴ Xuan Ding (宣鼎), “Wu xian (巫仙),” *Yie yu qiu deng lu shi liu juan ben* (夜雨秋燈錄十六卷本).

¹⁵ QYZSD, 87.

scroll paintings of deities and ancestors, decorative and symbolic paper-cuts, pennons, tablets, yellow proclamations and memorials, and so forth. In addition, four spirit possessions with blood sacrifice were incorporated into the whole process. In the following sections, all the components of this significant *Duangu* Ceremony will be introduced in detail to demonstrate how the floating community created a distinctive and innovative way to overcome environmental barriers to maintaining the relationship with ancestors and deities, as well as kinfolk and the entire community. I will start by discussing the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy.¹⁶

The main purpose of the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy relates to lineage ritual. Lineage members, floating around several provinces, have an opportunity to gather to commemorate ancestors and to deal collectively with issues associated with the whole lineage, such as the compilation of genealogy and continuation of generational names for newly born offspring. Unlike land-based lineages with ancestral shrines or graveyards and corporate property or businesses, the boat-dwelling population does not need to deal with property issues and cannot worship ancestors annually at fixed locations. What draws them together, despite great distances and ecological barriers, has nothing to do with property; it is instead symbolism and a sincere belief in ancestor worship.

Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy is not only a lineage ritual to commemorate ancestors, but is also a ritual to reconnect with deities. The lineage ritual is certainly at the core of the ritual activity, but the renewal of the relationship with deities is also brought about throughout the whole process, in the hope of protecting and blessing the lineage members. Each participating family brings a set of 11-13 scroll paintings of deities and ancestors, and of this set only one scroll is dedicated to ancestors. All scroll paintings are set up in the inner altar for several days to receive incense, offerings of food and sacrifice, and obeisance from lineage members. In addition, scroll painters help renovate the pictures before the observance, and the ritual masters symbolically freshen up all deities with a ritual needle, comb, and towel. When lineage members leave the observance, they take home a set of physically and symbolically renewed scroll paintings of deities and ancestors to protect and bless the family for the next five or ten years. These scrolls are carefully rolled up and stored in a shrine box called the “divine pavilion” (*shen ge* 神閣), “shrine box” (*shen kan* 神龕), or “temple” (*miao* 廟). The interpretation of the identities, hagiographies, and the structure of the spirits within this “floating temple” were presented in the previous chapter.

The Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy also has a vital social function

¹⁶ Although most boat people now resettle on land, their religious activities fundamentally remain unchanged. In the following sections, I will use the present tense to describe my fieldwork observation.

for the lineage: it solidifies blood ties among dispersed boat-dwelling kinfolk and shapes a sense of community. Lineage descendants have a chance to meet their blood relatives who perhaps live far away. Besides attending the observance for four days, kinfolk are usually invited to stay in the houses of local lineage members and enjoy numerous banquets before and after the ceremony. The bonds of each lineage are strengthened or reinforced every five or ten years, thanks to the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy.

The quinquennial or decennial lineage ritual solidifies the collective identity of a floating community and plays the role of a communal ritual. A banquet is held in the middle of the observance to treat relatives and friends who come with greetings and presents. It is an important arena for constructing or renewing social networks. Non-kinfolk are also integrated into the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. The cross-lineage networks and reciprocal relationships help create a sense of community.

In the following sections, the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy will be described in detail, based on observations of three lineages in my fieldwork. Variations exist between the three observances, but the fundamental structures and main procedures and performances, as well as core elements, are essentially identical. I will focus on the identical aspects and discuss any dissimilarities where necessary.

Procedure

The entire observance is composed of five¹⁷ operas, four spirit possessions, and various liturgies over four days and nights. Rituals and operas are intertwined and inseparable. After setting up the platform and offering altar, the ritualist-performers launch the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy by inviting ancestors through performing the first opera, *Qing jiaqin* (請家親) or *Qing jiaqian* (請家前) on the first evening.

The second day begins with the formal initiation ritual *Starting Beating the Drums* (*Qigu* 起鼓), followed by the second opera *Beheading the Little Dragon* (*Zhan xiaolong* 斬小龍).¹⁸ This story covers not only the punishment of the Dragon King's,

¹⁷ The standard decennial observance for continuation of genealogy requires five ritual operas for four days and nights, while the quinquennial observance can skip one: *Liu Wenlong Hurries to Take the Civil Service Exams*. The decennial observance is held for ancestral sacrifice and continuation of genealogy, but the quinquennial one only focuses on ancestral sacrifice, though they are both termed “observance for continuation of genealogy.”

¹⁸ The Dragon King is believed to be the deity in charge of rain. In this opera, the Dragon King was punished, due to his misbehavior in causing floods. Note that it was floods that caused the boat people to leave the land, according to the collective memory of the floating community.

but also the origin of the *Duangu* ritual tradition, which was connected with the famous Tang Emperor Taizong (唐太宗) and his renowned prime minister Wei Zheng (魏徵), whose ninth son (*jiu lang* 九郎) becomes the messenger who invites the ancestors and all the deities. An opera about the ninth son of Wei Zheng ends in the evening of the second day.

The third day presents a long opera, *Liu Wenlong Hurries to Take the Civil Service Exams* (劉文龍趕考), which runs all day long until the critical lineage ritual takes place at midnight. The *Duangu* ritualists practice a series of ancestor worship rituals throughout the night while lineage kinsmen are busy setting up hundreds of scrolls in the inner altar. In the meantime, a spirit possession of “Bringing Wealth Wudao (代財五道)” is practiced by one *Duangu* ritualist, symbolizing the opening of the wealth gate for the lineage offspring.

The early morning of the fourth day begins with another spirit possession of a prominent river god, Zhang Jiangjun (張將軍), followed by greetings and donations from friends and relatives of the host lineage. Afterwards, another prominent river god, Chen Jiulong Jiangjun (陳九龍), possesses a *Duangu* ritualist in order to verify and accept a sequence of animal sacrifices, including goats, pigs, and chickens just killed and cooked. These sacrifices soon appear on the tables of the banquet for friends and relatives. The banquet is a momentous occasion for social interaction and integration. Two hours after the banquet, *Duangu* ritualists perform a half-day opera: *Zhang Xiang Prepares the Dowry for Sister’s Wedding* (張相打嫁妝), from late afternoon through to midnight of the fourth day, centering on the origin of Zhang Jiangjun. Next comes an indispensable ritual “Comforting the Constellation” (*shun xing* 順星) which helps all participants, including non-kinfolk onlookers, reduce disasters and prevent sufferings.

Afterwards, the last opera, *Master Zhang Abandons his Wife Guo Dingxiang* (張郎休丁香), is staged at midnight of the fifth day and ends at 4 o’clock in the early morning. The *Duangu* ritualists thereafter perform a series of rituals to wrap up the whole ceremony, including a possession by the ancestor. The ancestor reviews the lists of all sacrifices and presents and decides if he is satisfied with the whole observance. Once the ancestor is satisfied and leaves, kinfolk flood into the inner altar to roll up scrolls of deities and ancestors. At the end, the head *Duangu* ritualist chops off a pair of red chopsticks, the ritual “cutting off divinities” (*zhan jue shen* 斬絕神), symbolizing the completion of the ceremony and that no more observance will be offered before the next one. Then all participants take their own scrolls back to their houses to store in the shrine boxes immediately. *Duangu* ritualists or ritual assistants are asked to preside at the ritual of restoring the scrolls. This ends the ritual.

In short, five ritual operas and four spirit possessions, as well as a banquet are interwoven into the *Duangu* Ceremony for the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. In the following sections, I will present the details in sequence, interpreting significant rituals, symbolic materials, and exciting episodes. Each of the five ritual operas relates to certain deities, connoting the processes and stories of deification, shown in the table below. These stories are directly or indirectly associated with the aquatic life of the boat-dwellers. In some scenes, the performers mime the actions of casting fishing nets or rowing, thus vividly representing the everyday life of the boat people.¹⁹ This provides us with an alternative vantage point, alongside the deity scrolls, to investigate the pantheon and mentality of the boat-dwellers.

Table 3.1 Five Ritual Operas

Time	Story Title	Related Deity
First Day Evening	Inviting Ancestors 請家前	Ancestors 祖先
Second Day	<i>Beheading Dragon King</i> 斬小龍	Messenger Wei Jiulang 執符魏九郎 (Origin of <i>Duangu</i> ritualist 端公起源)
Third Day	<i>Liu Wenlong Hurries to Take the Civil Service Exams</i> 劉文龍趕考	Heavenly Soldier Wudao 天兵五道 (劉文龍) White Cloud Wudao 白雲五道 (蕭素珍) Returning Temple Wudao 回廟五道 (說媒姬公) Falling in River Wudao 落河五道 ²⁰ (宋延中)
Fourth Day Afternoon & Evening	<i>Zhang Xiang Prepares the Dowry for Sister's Wedding</i> 張相打嫁妝	Huai River God Zhang Jiangjun 河神張將軍
Fifth Day Midnight	<i>Master Zhang Abandons Dingxiang</i> 張郎休丁香	Stove God (Mr. Zhang) 灶君 (張郎) Seventh Lady (Guo Dingxiang) 七姑娘 ²¹ (丁香) Well Spirit King (Mr. Fan) 井靈王 (范郎) Silk Lady 綢絲娘 (范媽媽)

The ritual of four spirit possessions is another source demonstrating the religious beliefs and practices of the floating community. The *Duangu* ritualists call this ritual “pulling the knife” (拉刀子) on account of its blood sacrifice. The spirit possessions with blood sacrifice are the climaxes of the entire *Duangu* Ceremony. The blood is highly

¹⁹ Wang Mingsheng (王明生), Jiang Hansong (蔣寒松), and Tang Daoyan (湯道言), “Hongze hu yu gu wu (洪澤湖漁鼓舞[Fishing drum dance of Lake Hongze]),” in Zhang Shoushan (張壽山) and Jin Quansheng (靳全生), eds., *Huai'an te se wen hua* (淮安特色文化[Idiosyncratic culture of Huai'an]) (Suzhou: Suzhou University Press, 2006), 138.

²⁰ Some say he became Southwest Wudao (*xinan Wudao* 西南五道).

²¹ Another version says she became the wife of the Stove God (*zaojun niang niang* 灶君娘娘).

esteemed by the crowds. The lineage host expects plenty of blood which denotes the spiritual power of the ancestors or deities. The blood is also sprinkled on the Lineage Scrolls in the ceremony of rotation of Lineage Scrolls.²² People also believe the blood of the possession can heal diseases or exorcise evil spirits. After finishing the possession, the *Duangu* ritualists use water, towels, talismans, or paper money to clean the blood. The crowds vie for these materials stained with blood.

Table 3.2 Four Spirit possessions with Blood Sacrifice

Divinity	Time
Bringing Wealth Wudao 代財五道	third day night
Zhang <i>Jiangjun</i> 張將軍	fourth day morning
Chen Jiulong <i>Jiangjun</i> 陳九龍 (fourth day morning
Apical Ancestor 老祖先	fifth day dawn

There are some shorter interludes or skits that are out of context with the original stories, but their exaggeration and farce are more appealing to the audience. For instance, when Zhang Xiang and his attendant meet a bald bargeman on the way to prepare the dowry for Zhang’s sister, the scene changes to “The Shivaree of the Bald Couple (雙禿鬧房).”²³ Whenever they meet a blind person, the *Duangu* ritualists perform “Luo Cheng Makes a Divination (羅成算卦).”²⁴ Such interludes are usually borrowed from non-*Duangu* operas. From these interludes, we can observe the influence of other operas on *Duangu* performances.²⁵ The core of the *Duangu* Ceremony centers on the five major ritual operas, however. The following section will explore the detailed sequence of operas and rituals.

First Day: Preparation and the “Inviting Ancestors”

Time	Opera	Proceeding
10–16:00		(Setting up tent and platform, preparing tablets, making <i>shengdous</i> , raising flagpoles and Stove God pennons, preparing sacrifices, etc.)
17:00		<i>Duangu</i> ritualists meeting: assigning roles

²² She Kangle (佘康樂) observed the Rotation of Lineage Scrolls and gave me this information. She will write an essay on the ceremony later.

²³ Che Jixin (車吉心), Liang Zijie (梁自潔), and Ren Fuxian (任孚先) eds., *Qi Lu wen hua da ci dian* (齊魯文化大辭典) (Jinan: Shandong jiao yu chu ban she, 1989), 252. Chen Daoting (陳道庭) and Guo Xuedong (郭學東), “*Duangu qiang* (端鼓腔), *QLMJYS*, 620.

²⁴ Chen Daoting and Guo Xuedong, “*Duangu qiang*,” 620. *QYYS*, 1295.

²⁵ *XQYSD*, 900. *QYZSD*, 89; 404–5.

		in ritual operas and liturgies
18:50		<i>Duangu</i> leader announcement of programs
18:55		Lineage headman announcement: genealogy, budget, regulation, rotation of lineage scrolls, etc.
19:00	Inviting Ancestors (請家前)	Start making lamps and an ancestor doll with dough
21:30		Running to the Lamps (跑燈)
22:00		Raising the Stove God Pennon (打灶王旗)
23:00		Spreading the Stove God Sweets (撒灶王)

Table 3.3 Day 1 Schedule

A series of preparations for the *Duangu* Ceremony takes place before the ritual operas are staged. The making of deity scrolls, paper-cuts, and pennons takes several months to complete. Then boats in odd numbers are tied together with ropes and masts to form the ritual platform.²⁶ If the ceremony is held on the lakeshore, on the day before the ceremony the lineage has to offer a table of sacrifices for the local Earth God to symbolically ask for permission to do so.²⁷ By the same token, the lineage leaders also have to send gifts to the local officials or leaders of the location where the boat people are going to berth their boats and erect the temporary stage.²⁸ Once permission is granted, the lineage kinfolk and the *Duangu* ritualists can start erecting and decorating the stage.

The *Duangu* ritualists gather to set up the platform for the ceremony during the first day. The kinfolk help erect a canvas wall tent and four flagpoles. In the wall tent the space is divided to two zones: inner and outer. The inner zone is for the altar and the outer is for the *Duangu* ritualists. This zone is enclosed; only the front side facing the stage in the outer zone is open. The stage is located in the center of the whole tent with one side facing the altar of the inner zone and the other sides adjacent to the audience. Two reed mats covering the stage form the venue for rituals and operas. The platform is as high as the audience area; hence no clear boundary exists between the audience and the ritualist-performers. The audience zone is covered with dry reeds. If the ritual is performed on a lake shore, people sit on the ground. In the past, the audience sat on their own boats to watch.

²⁶ XQYSD, 887.

²⁷ Interview with Hu Xiancai (胡憲才), one of the elderly leaders, on April 18, 2010.

²⁸ QYZAH, 478.

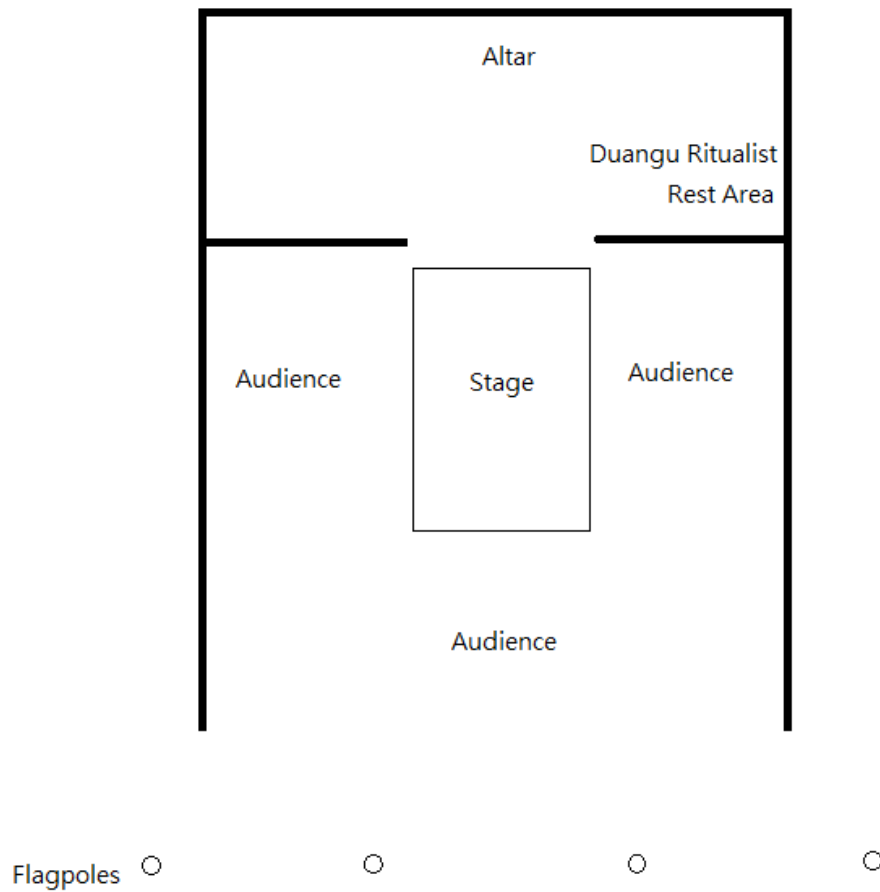


Figure 3.1 The arrangement of the *Duangu* Ceremony platform.

If the platform is set on the boats, the spectators sit on their own boats. Such aquatic settings made the *Duangu* ritual tradition inaccessible to land-based people for centuries. Even the lakeshore residents rarely saw the *Duangu* Ceremony. Given the fact that most boat-dwellers were illiterate, and the *Duangu* ritualists passed down the tradition exclusively within the family or an apprenticeship through an oral tradition, neither land-based educated people nor boat-dwellers documented information about *Duangu* Ceremony. That is why written evidence about this ritual tradition is so scarce. Ironically it is due to this very inaccessibility that the ritual tradition has been mostly preserved. However, it is not completely intact. The aforementioned use of interludes from other opera genres is a good example of this. In addition, more and more ceremonies are now held on the lakeshore. Increased influence from the land-based people has impacted the *Duangu* ritual tradition. Furthermore, several rituals or performances peculiar to the aquatic setting are disappearing. For instance, old fisherfolk recall that there was a ritual on the water in the past that no one practices now. A *Duangu*

ritualist, good at swimming, sat on a mat or rode on a bundle of dry reeds above the water and encircled the entire fishing group while singing and dancing.²⁹ The relocation of the platform might have changed the ritual tradition, but the fundamental structure and contents are still preserved, including the ritual objects and decorations prepared for the *Duangu* Ceremony for continuation of genealogy.



Photo 3.2 A platform on boat. (Source: photography by Tian Shiyu 田詩玉, <http://www.wshwy.cn/show.aspx?page=1&id=361&cid=0>).

Shengdous (升斗), or Chinese grain bushels and pecks, are made and decorated especially for the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. The floating community believes that the evoked ancestors have to “sit” on these *shengdous* while invited deities sit on the altar. Each *shengdou* is supposed to represent a branch of the lineage and includes multiple families from the same branch. However, each *shengdou* is not necessarily composed of families from the same genealogical branch. The representative of each *shengdou* is not necessarily the head of the branch, but can be any successful or powerful person within the branch. Lineage members can join the *shengdou* that they are closest to in terms of social or economic relations. But the “main line” (*zhang fang* 長房)

²⁹ Chen Minghai (陳明海), “Weishan hu shang jing Daiwang (微山湖上敬大王),” WSGJ, 245. Li Jinren (李近仁), “Weishan hu shang yu jia (微山湖上漁家),” *Weishan hu qu shi zhui 3: zeng zhuan ji kao* (微山湖區史綴 3：增撰紀考) (Jining: Jining shi xin wen chu ban ju, 2000), 183.

must be led by the real head of the branch.³⁰ Not all branches are of the same generation. There are usually 10 to 15 *shengdous* in the ceremony. The number of *shengdous* determines how many *Duangu* ritualists are needed, because in some liturgies, each *Duangu* ritualist handles one *shengdou*.



³⁰ The head of the main line is usually of the younger generation, because members of the elder generation within the branch are older and mostly already dead.

Photo 3.3 *Shengdou* (bushel).

The *shengdou* is well decorated and designed for ritual purposes. It is filled with five varieties of grain, of which sorghum (*gaoliang* 高粱) is believed to be the best, symbolizing “getting promotion” (*gao sheng* 高升) in terms of a homophonic pun.³¹ The decorations and performance throughout the entire *Duangu* Ceremony are full of symbolism using homophonic puns. For instance, the *shengdou* has flags (*qi* 旗) and balls (*qiu* 球), and the combination of the two characters “*qiqiu*” means “wish for” or “pray for” (祈求). Five flags are inserted in the *shengdou*, and each flag has a specific color: purple, red, yellow, green, and pink, symbolizing five cardinal directions, east, west, north, south, and center. Besides the flags, five paper spears are also inserted in the *shengdou*, and hanging from each spear is a colorful paper ball with a paper-cut dragon below. There is also a big dragon flag which will be used by *Duangu* ritualists later to direct the ancestors. In addition, there are a mirror and a steelyard. These two items are later used in rituals. The representative scroll will hang from the hook of the steelyard, and the mirror will be used to symbolically clean and comb the deities on the scrolls when *Duangu* ritualists renew their efficacy. On top of the steelyard is a six-petal lotus and a canopy, all made of paper-cuts and bamboo strips. From each petal there hangs a colorful paper ball. The lotus is a common seat for deities, and a canopy was originally used by imperial and noble families and later applied to deities. Since the *shengdou* is the “seat” for ancestors, the boat people use canopies and lotus seats to please their ancestors. The last thing to be inserted in the *shengdou* is the paper tablet of the ancestors, on which is written “ancestors of three generations” (*san dai zong qin* 三代宗親).

This *shengdou* is similar to a Taiwanese ritual container (*li dou* 禮斗) commonly used for praying for fortune and long life in the temples of Taiwan.³² The ritual is usually practiced by Daoists. Within the ritual container are a mirror, a sword, a steelyard, a scissor, and a ruler. There is also a canopy on the top. These two containers share some common ritual objects, but are used for different purposes. The Taiwanese ritual container relates to the cosmology of Daoism, but the *Duangu shengdou* does not have that connotation. The completed *shengdous* are then placed in front of the tablets of the deities in the inner altar.

³¹ Interview with Jin Zhongyu (金中玉), April 17, 2010.

³² For details of Taiwan’s *li dou*, see Wu Yating (吳雅婷), “Taiwan *dou deng de yan jiu: xin yang nei han ji qi zhuang shi yi shu* (台灣斗燈的研究：信仰內涵及其裝飾藝術[Studies on votive lamp among Taiwan: religious context and decorative art])” (MA thesis, Taipei National University of the Arts, 2004). Hsieh Tsung-hui (謝聰輝), “Dao jiao li dou yi shi de yi yi yu nei han (道教禮斗儀式的意義與內涵[Significance and content of the Daoist ritual *lidou*],” *Xin jing zong jiao ji kan* (心鏡宗教季刊) 5 (2005): 34–35.



Photo 3.4 Taiwanese ritual container.

(Source: http://www.taiwanpage.com.tw/cp_view.cfm?id=8163)

The tablets of deities are called *pai su* (牌素).³³ They are paper-cuts. The decennial Continuation of Genealogy has 48 tablets, whereas the quinquennial ceremony has 24. The *Duangu* ritualist explains that because the decennial ceremony has more ritual operas it takes one day longer. In fact, it has nothing to do with the number of deities invited to the ceremony, but relates to the budget of the paper-cutter. The deities of the tablets can be divided into three categories: the upper realm, the middle realm, and the lower realm. The tablets with deities in the upper realm are called “*su*” (素), meaning purity, and *su* deities include Guanyin, Buddha, Jade Emperor, Black Emperor, Lady Mount Tai, Eternal Venerable Mother, and so on. The boat people believe these *su* deities can ascend to the upper realm because of being “vegetarians”—the literal meaning of *su* is vegetarian.³⁴ The *pai* tablets contain all of *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns*, City God, Earth God, Stove God, Emperor of the Eastern Peak, Ksitigarbha, and so forth.³⁵ The order of the tablets is not fixed, except for the central one: the Jade Emperor.³⁶

³³ Interview with Jin Zhongyu, April 26, 2010.

³⁴ She Kangle (佘康樂), “Weishan hu yu min zong zu de dang xia shi jian (微山湖漁民宗族的當下實踐 [Practice of the fishermen’s lineage in the Weishan Lakes]),” MA thesis, Shandong University, 2012, 52.

³⁵ The complete lists of tablets used in three ceremonies I observed can be seen in appendix 3.

³⁶ The tablets set up for the Hu lineage’s Continuation of Genealogy in April 2010 were placed randomly, so the Jade Emperor was not at the center. The preparation was done by many persons, including *Duangu* ritualists, paper-cutters, scroll painters, and lineage members. Clearly not all of them knew the appropriate order of the tablets.



Photo 3.5 Tablets (upper) and woodblock prints of deities (lower).

Below the tablets are hundreds of images of deities made by woodblock printing. The list of these woodblock images can be found in the manuals of paper-cutters who are also nominally in charge of the proceeding of the *Duangu* Ceremony. Like the deities in the tablets, these deities are divided into three realms: the upper, the middle, and the lower, which clearly reflects the worldview of the boat people and how they imagine the structure and hierarchy of the pantheon.³⁷ The roster of the deities combines spirits from Buddhism and Daoism with the boat people's own deities, including numerous *Daiwangs*, *Jiangjuns*, and other water gods. These woodblock prints are overlapped and covered by the paper-cut tablets and decorations, and so cannot clearly be seen. At the center of the wall behind the altar is a large paper-cut of a temple-like shrine.

³⁷ The complete list of the deities of the three realms can be found in appendix 2.1 and 2.2. The list of Yang Zhenping (楊鎮平) in 2.2 has only two realms: the upper and the lower.



Photo 3.6 The paper-cut of the ancestral shrine.

In front of the tablets and *shengdous* are two separate tables for sacrifices to the deities and the ancestors. The sacrifice to the deities is called “breaking the altar offering” (*puo tan gong* 破壇供), consisting of vegetarian foods, fruits, and cookies. On the other table is placed the sacrifice to the ancestors called the “offering in front of the ancestors” (*jia qian gong* 家前供), which includes “three sacrifices” (a pig head with a tail,³⁸ a whole chicken, and a whole fish), wine, and ample dishes ready for the ancestors to enjoy. In a smaller *shengdou* on the ground near the “breaking the altar offering,” a tablet of “Old Wudao” (*Lao Wudao* 老五道, namely the apical ancestor) and five flags in five colors are inserted individually in the grain. The two tables and the chairs around the ancestor offering are covered in red cloth, showing respect to the deities and ancestors. The “three sacrifices” are very common throughout China and have a long history that goes back to 771 BCE in the Pre-Qin period.³⁹ Fish ball soups and fried fish feature prominently in the offering, which are common in boat people’s daily life.

³⁸ The pig head and tail represent a whole pig.

³⁹ Sima Qian (司馬遷), “Qin ben ji (秦本紀),” *Shi ji* (史記[Records of the Grand Historian]), *juan* 5; “Feng shan shu (封禪書),” *Shi ji*, *juan* 28.



Photo 3.7 Ancestor offering (front) and “breaking offering” (back)

The audience zone and the outside area are also prepared for the ceremony. Two flags are hung on the walls near the entrance of the audience zone. One says “welcome the deities’ arrival at the ceremony” (*ying shen fu hui* 迎神赴會), and the other says “The gate of wealth grandly opens” (*cai men da kai* 財門大開). These two flags indicate two major purposes of the ceremony: to worship deities (including ancestors) and to pray for wealth. Outside the tent, four flagpoles which were originally boat masts are raised by lineage members. To each of the central two poles a bushel measure (*shengdou* 升斗) is added on the top, and above the *shengdou* is a flag.⁴⁰ One flag has the name of Zhang *Jiangjun* (張將軍), the other of Heavenly Soldier Wudao (*tian bing Wudao* 天兵五道). These two military deities will protect the ceremony. A long pennon will be hung on each of the two flagpoles on the second morning. At this moment, two smaller pennons of the Stove God (*zao wang qi* 灶王旗) are raised, attached to the two edges of the tent entrance. By now, everything is ready for the commencement of the ceremony. The *Duangu* ritualists then hold a meeting to announce the assignment of roles in the ritual operas and various liturgies. Since the entire ceremony will take several days and nights, ritualists need to take turns. Some roles in an opera are played by more than one person.

⁴⁰ The *shengdou* here also symbolizes great promotion (*gao sheng* 高升).

Thereafter, all ritualists are served with a lavish dinner before the ceremony begins.



Photo 3.8 *Shengdous* on the poles.



Photo 3.9 Pennons of Zhang *Jiangjun* (left) and Heavenly Soldier *Wudao* (right)



Photo 3.10 The pennon of the Stove God

At 6:50 pm, the head of the *Duangu* troupe greets the lineage and makes some announcements about the ritual operas and the regulations or taboos that they need to follow. The taboo that women are not allowed to enter the inner altar is emphasized. Then the headman of the lineage also makes some announcements regarding the budget and regulation of the ceremony. The time and location of the next ceremony will be announced if they have been decided, so the lineage organizers can save time and effort informing dispersed members. The headman also describes what has been done since the last ceremony, either five or ten years ago. If a new genealogy book has been compiled and published, details of its compilation will be explained, especially how difficult it was to trace the lineage's past and organize its erratic lineage members. If new generational naming for the next few generations is decided, the order of characters will be announced. In the lineages of the Wangs and the Shens, the rotation of lineage scrolls will be announced, in order to prevent fighting for the scrolls. These are nominally the main

purposes of the Continuation of Genealogy.

The headman then explains the procedure of the ceremony. The arrangement of *shengdous* and the order of entering the inner altar to set up scrolls are the most significant issues, or arenas, that most lineage members are concerned about. Only the *shengdou* and scrolls of the lineage main line attract no dispute: their *shengdou* is at the center, and their scrolls can enter the inner altar first. It is believed that these two privileges allow the main line to receive the most “incense and fire” (*xianghuo* 香火), namely the blessing and protection from the deities and ancestors. Other patrilineal branches compete for a better place to earn more blessings and protection. Quarrels abound at times. Some lineages even split into two branches and decide to hold the Continuation of Genealogy separately for this reason.⁴¹ Kinfolk who come from distant places are often arranged at marginal spots, because they are far from the lineage authorities and usually unfamiliar with the procedure or significance of the issues. The headman usually has the authority to settle quarrels and comfort the dissatisfied members. After the headman’s announcement, the ceremony formally begins with the first ritual opera: Inviting Ancestors (*qing jia qian* 請家前).



⁴¹ The Hu lineage is a good example. When the members grew too many, some sub-branches were dissatisfied with the arrangement of *shengdous* and scrolls. The lineage was split into two, and since then the later generational names have been arranged separately. This happened about four generations ago.

Photo 3.11 “Running lamps.” Wei Jiulang is represented by the person in white with a crown.



Photo 3.12 Dough apical ancestor and lamps.

The main purpose of Inviting Ancestors is to send the messenger Wei Jiulang (魏九郎) to Hell to bring back the spirits of the ancestors to participate in the ceremony. In the customs of the neighboring landmen in southwestern Shandong, such rituals associated with inviting ancestors start by visiting the grave sites and then guiding the ancestors to the ritual sites. But because boat people, especially most poor Dipnetters, sloppily buried the deceased bodies on shores with marks, revisiting grave sites to evoke ancestors is unlikely. To solve the problem, this ritual opera, Inviting Ancestors, symbolically builds a graveyard. *Duangu* ritualists use dough to create a statue of the apical ancestor (*mian wang* 麵王), and there are five dough lamps (*mian deng* 麵燈) symbolizing five graves.⁴² Four lamps are placed in four cardinal directions, and the dough ancestor and one lamp are put in the center. Each lamp has a string of paper ingots and a paper talisman standing beside it. The messenger Wei Jiulang followed by another *Duangu* ritualist circulates the lamps while singing scripts inviting the ancestors. This ritual called “Running to the Lamps” (*pao deng* 跑燈), is embedded in the ritual opera that the *Duangu* ritualists continue running for more than half an hour, symbolizing the remote distance of the ancestors. The story of Inviting Ancestors begins by narrating the growth of lineage members and the need to continue generational names.⁴³ Then Wei Jiulang descends to the netherworld and negotiates with a lad who looks after the graves and does not know the messenger. When Wei Jiulang tries to take all ancestors away, a

⁴² Jin Zhongyu, April 26, 2010. I think the five lamps also symbolize five cardinal directions, but ritualists did not mention this.

⁴³ QYZSD, 523.

deity *Lanwang Wudao* (攔王五道) stops him, because some ancestors do not have male descendants and cannot leave. Wei Jiulang has to present a petition to take these ancestors out of the netherworld, and the lineage members have to kneel down to beg for permission.⁴⁴ On the way back to the ceremony, Wei starts to sing of the accomplishments and honors of the lineage's ancestors. A couple of the *Duangu* ritualists acting the apical ancestor and ancestress follow Wei to the ceremony and sigh over changes to the lineage.⁴⁵ The role of the male ancestor can only be performed by lineage members. In the past it was common that everyone could sing some pieces of the *Duangu* ritual operas, because they sang them for fun every day. Therefore, it was not too difficult to select someone who was able to perform this role. Next, the *Duangu* ritualists perform a liturgy⁴⁶ to end this ritual opera and they end the liturgy by casting hundreds of candies and nuts to the audience, called "Spreading the Stove God Sweets" (撒灶王). At the same time, the Stove God pennons are taken down and burnt outside the tent.



Photo 3.13 Apical ancestress and ancestor.

⁴⁴ Jin Zhongyu, April 26, 2010.

⁴⁵ QYZSD, 523.

⁴⁶ This liturgy is called *shou jia qian* (收家前), namely to end the ritual opera Inviting Ancestors.

At last, the “Altar Head” (*tan tou* 壇頭), who is the paper-cutter of all the tablets, pennons, and decorations and is nominally in charge of the ceremony, leads all the lineage members to make an obeisance to the ancestor tablet. Once the Altar Head receives a positive response from his divination in front of the altar, the participants can rest for a few hours.

Second Day: *Beheading the Dragon King, Tang Emperor Taizong Journeys to Hell, and Wei Jiulang Invites the Deities*

Time	Opera	Proceeding
4–5:00		Starting Drums (起鼓) Small Opening of the Altar (小開壇) Inviting the Four Guardian Generals(請四位鎮棚將軍)
7–12:00	<i>Beheading the Dragon King</i> (起小龍/魏徵斬龍/小龍行雨)	Raising the Pennons of Zhang Jiangjun and Heavenly Soldier Wudao (打張將軍旗、天兵五道旗)
12–14:00	<i>Tang Emperor Taizong Journeys to Hell</i> (唐王遊地府)	
15–22:20	<i>Wei Jiulang Invites the Deities</i> (九郎請神)	
(16:30)		Posting/Hanging the Yellow Proclamation(掛黃榜)
22:20–40	<i>Jiulang Borrowing Horse from the Eastern Ocean</i> (九郎東海借馬)	Burning the Ocean/ (燒海) Shaking the Bell(拿鈴) Inviting the Deities of the Three Realms (請三界神明) Hanging over Memorials(接表)

Table 3.4 Day 2 Schedule

“Starting Drums” and the Small “Opening the Altar”

The second day begins with “Starting Drums” (*qi gu* 起鼓) and the “Small Opening of the Altar” (*xiao kai tan* 小開壇). These two rituals can be held right after the end of the first day’s Inviting Ancestors or in the early morning of the second day, depending on the request of the host lineage. According to the *Duangu* ritualists, the entire ceremony officially starts at this point, because the previous evening’s *Inviting Ancestors* only evoked the lineage’s ancestors, and no deities have yet been invited. The “Small Opening of the Altar” invites four “Tent Guardian Generals” (*Zhen peng jiang jun*

鎮棚將軍) to exorcise demons and protect the ceremony.⁴⁷ This ritual is conducted by four *Duangu* ritualists in the early morning and has no operatic performance, so there is usually little audience. After breakfast, the audience shows up for the main ritual opera, a series of stories associated with a Dragon King, Tang Emperor Taizong, and Wei Jiulang, which explains the origin of the *Duangu* Ceremony.

Two pennons of deities are raised: Zhang *Jiangjun* and the Heavenly Soldier Wudao. Since the pennons are high, they are visible from boats in distance. These two pennons signify that this ceremony will present two ritual operas about these two deities respectively. *Zhang Xiang Prepares the Dowry for His Sister's Wedding*, usually performed on the fourth day, depicts the legend of Zhang *Jiangjun*, and the third day's *Liu Wenlong Hurries for Taking the Civil Service Exams* is for the Heavenly Soldier Wudao. If the Continuation of Genealogy is a quinquennial one, held over three days, the ritual opera about Liu Wenlong will be skipped, and the pennon of the Heavenly Soldier Wudao will not be raised. Boat people know which operas will be performed by viewing the pennons and can decide whether or not they will come to view the performance. It is a special way the boat people have of communicating with people far away on the water.

⁴⁷ Jin Zhongyu, April 26, 2010. These four guardian deities are different from *Jiangjuns*, because they are not water gods, but military generals. So I translate their title as “general,” not *Jiangjun*. I only discovered three surnames of the four generals through the oral interview and cannot provide written characters: Pan, Zhi, and Du. I missed one of them because of the miscommunication in dialect. After consulting with the scroll painters’ manuals at appendix 2.1.3 and 2.2.2, I highly suspect the missing one is General Huang. So they could be Generals Pan (潘), Huang (黃), Zhi (枝), and Du (杜).



Photo 3.14 Raising Pennons of Zhang Jiangjun and the Heavenly Soldier Wudao.



Photo 3.15 Pennons and the tent of the *Duangu* Ceremony.

The second day's main program centers on the Tang Emperor Taizong and develops a long story. The length of the ritual opera depends on the length of the ceremony and the host lineage's budget, varying from two episodes for one morning to five episodes for one day. It is worth noting that the *Duangu* Ceremony officially begins with beheading the dragon as I will describe shortly, showing the boat people's hatred against the Dragon King in charge of rain and reflecting their collective memory that their ancestors were forced to resettle on house-boats because of floods. The Dragon King, one of the most important water gods worshiped by landsmen, is apparently not a major deity of the boat people.

The story begins with a drought that happens in Shatuo Country (沙陀國).⁴⁸ The Jade Emperor orders the Little White Dragon (*xiao bai long* 小白龍) to send a rainfall to Shatuo to save the people from a serious drought. When the Little White Dragon leaves the Heavenly Palace, he runs into Golden Star Taibai (*Taibai jinxing* 太白金星), namely Li Changgeng (李長庚). As the Little Dragon explains his duty, Li Changgeng ridicules his low status and incompetence, suggesting that he will fail. Infuriated by Li Changgeng's ridicule, the Little White Dragon causes more rainfall, from 49 to 52 "points," resulting in floods in Shatuo. The Jade Emperor sentences the Little White Dragon to death and orders the premier of Tang Emperor Taizong, Wei Zheng (魏徵) to execute him at 1:30 pm. Old Dragon King Aoguang (敖廣), the father of the Little White Dragon, tries to rescue his son and bribes Emperor Taizong with jewelry and treasures from the Dragon Palace. The emperor accepts the bribery and tries to prevent Wei Zheng from carrying out his orders by playing chess with him at the execution time. But when the moment arrives, Wei Zheng falls asleep and his soul ascends to Heaven to carry out the execution.

⁴⁸ The content of the story comes from my observation in the ceremony, interviews with the *Duangu* ritualists and secondary sources. For the latter, see: QYZSD, 222; QYZAH, 367–70.



Photo 3.16 Emperor Taizong and Wei Zheng are playing chess.



Photo 3.17 The Little White Dragon is caught by Heavenly soldiers.



Photo 3.18 Executing the Little White Dragon.

The scene where the Little White Dragon is executed is one of the climaxes of this ritual opera. The Little White Dragon is tied with red straps by two Heavenly soldiers and Wei Zheng holds a sword. As the sword swings down, the performer of the Little Dragon turns a somersault while throwing up the red straps and dropping his crown on the ground.



Photo 3.19 Lineage members kneeled down after the performer.

After the Little Dragon is executed, he considers himself unfairly treated and sues Emperor Taizong and Wei Zheng in front of Yama in Hell. When they are subpoenaed to Hell, the performers narrate what afterworld punishments they witness and experience in person, such as a hot oil cauldron, a burning cylinder, and a mountain of knives. These scenes of afterworld punishments in Hell can also be seen on the scroll of Bodhisattva and the scroll of the Demon Killer Zhong Kui (鍾馗). The combination of this ritual opera and the scrolls is comparable to the vivid images of afterworld punishments presented in the temples of the City God and Taishan on the land. Even without temples, the boat people have created a similar way of conveying moral teachings or didactic messages to the audience that emphasize the afterworld punishments of misconduct during one's lifetime.



Photo 3.20 Emperor Taizong and Wei Zheng are caught by two demons from Hell.



Photo 3.21 The Scroll of Zhong Kui. Note the afterworld punishments under Zhong Kui's feet.

Ritual operas do not necessarily convey moral teachings, but sometimes represent and reinforce immoral behaviors as a realistic means of surviving in the world with all its injustice and corruption. Besides depicting the afterworld punishments, this episode also shows how Emperor Taizong wins the “lawsuit” against the Little Dragon by bribing Judge Cui (崔府君) to alter the Book of Life and Death. Wei Zheng also uses his personal connection with the Judge Cui to help Emperor Taizong. Instead of upholding justice, Yama shows undue favor to Emperor Taizong because of Judge Cui's intercession and the Emperor's promise to send melons from this world to Yama in Hell. The result demonstrates that the strategy of using bribery and utilizing personal connections can overturn a significant verdict on life and death. On the one hand, this mirrors people's daily life experiences of injustice and reinforces unfair and immoral behaviors. People know that the best way to survive in the real world is not necessarily the moral one. They have learned from daily life experiences how persons with privileges or powers can

influence judgments or how bribery can alter results. This also shows people's mistrust of the legal system in that they tend to believe money can buy justice or one's personal connections can interfere with the result in one's favor. On the other hand, this possibly suggests the audience can use their influence or money to alter an outcome in their own favor without moral consideration. This possibly explains why the legal system and political culture of contemporary and traditional China is unable to get rid of the negative aspects of bribery, corruption, and nepotism, which are deeply embedded in ritual activities and popular culture in general.

After the acquittal of Taizong and Wei Zheng, the ghost of the poor, innocent Little Dragon haunts the imperial palace, causing the empress' sudden death and the prince's premature death. Emperor Taizong experiences various punishments in Hell and eventually makes a vow in the hot oil cauldron that he will accomplish three tasks to comfort the Little Dragon: he will send a monk to the West to bring back scriptures, send melons into Hell, and hold a ceremony to invite all deities and pacify the soul of the Little White Dragon. The latter ceremony is the origin of the *Duangu* Ceremony according to the *Duangu* ritualists. They also link various aspects of the *Duangu* Ceremony with the Tang Dynasty. For instance, a scroll called *Tangshen* (唐神) has an image of the episode of Emperor Taizong's judgment in Hell in the lowest register. The *Tangshen* Assembly also claims its origin from the Tang Dynasty.

If this ritual opera is performed in the *Tangshen* Assembly, the ritual of "Wearing Carp-Cangue" for children is practiced in front of the platform. Boys, aged 3, 6, 9, and 12 wear a carp-cangue on their shoulder and cover their hair with a black headscarf as if they were convicts. When the Little Dragon kneels down to beg for pardon, the boys also kneel down to ask for relief from diseases and to pray for a long life. The headman and organizers of the *Tangshen* Assembly then help the boys remove the cangues and headscarves, which symbolize that the boys' "sins" are forgiven by the deities and that their health is guaranteed. As for the Little Dragon, he becomes the scapegoat who bears the punishment for these boys. This is a good example showing how the opera performance and ritual activity intertwine with one other. Since the platform is as high as the audience, and has no clear boundary, the audience can participate in the ritual opera without barrier.⁴⁹ On other occasions, whenever a performer kneels down to worship deities or to pray for something, the lineage members have to follow behind the performer to make an obeisance until the performer stands up.⁵⁰ By so doing, the

⁴⁹ This platform setting was held on the shore. I have not had a chance to observe a ceremony held on tied boats, so I am not sure if it is also the case on the boats.

⁵⁰ I think this situation also applies to the ceremony held on boats, though the lineage members might kneel

audience are able to empathize with the roles.



Photo 3.22 The scroll of *Tangshen*. Note the lowest register depicts the scene of the episode in which Tang Taizong and Wei Zheng are subpoenaed to Hell and questioned by five judges.

Another version of the origin of the *Duangu* Ceremony also has links to the Tang Dynasty.⁵¹ Legend has it that in the Tang Dynasty five ritualists already practiced ritual operas to worship ancestors. They were Yang Long (楊龍), Hua Feng (化鳳), Shen Sihai

down and make an obeisance on their own boats.

⁵¹ Interview with Hu Xianfu (胡憲富) at Xinjian Village, Weishan County, on April 24, 2010. Liu Yingshui (劉迎水), *Yun he ming zhen: Nanyang (運河名鎮：南陽[A famous town of the Grand Canal: Nanyang])* (Beijing: Zhongguo wen shi chu ban she, 2007), 102–103. Two versions have minor differences.

(沈四海), Hu Lan (胡嵐), and Hu Qing (胡清).⁵² One day they were invited by a wealthy bandit to his mountain fortress to perform ritual operas. When they arrived at the fortress, they saw an adorable young boy and girl. For three years, the ritualists and the two children did nothing, but were treated well. The moment for the ritual eventually arrived. The bandit told the ritualists that the following day would be the time to offer a human sacrifice, namely the two children, in order to redeem a vow. Feeling sorry for the children, the ritualists secretly told them the truth. The ritualists asked the children if they had learned anything special from the bandit. They replied that one thing was unusual: the bandit once recited “the forelegs are bended while the hind legs are straight. A broken dog skin is tied at the waist. If you ask me how I died, I was too exhausted to forge iron and died.” The ritualists immediately understood that these words came from a spirit possession communicating with the bandit’s ancestors. They then taught the children a way to avoid being killed. When they performed the spirit possession and splashed hot wine on the children, they wanted the children not to shake their heads. The boy and girl followed their instructions and did not move. Then the ritualists explained to the bandit: “To redeem a vow, using human sacrifice doesn’t work. We have to use pigs and goats.” When the pigs and goats replaced the children, the hot wine made the pigs and goats shake their heads. The ritualists took the moment to recite: “the forelegs are bended while the hind legs are straight. A broken dog skin is tied at the waist...” The bandit immediately believed that the spirits of the ancestors had arrived. The satisfied bandit wanted to reward the ritualists with money. They rejected this, but took an emperor’s robe instead. When they returned to Weishan, their families were holding funerals for them, since they had not been heard from in three years. To celebrate their survival, one of them put on the emperor’s robe and performed a ritual opera which then became the origin of the *Duangu* Ceremony, centering on Emperor Taizong. The splashing of wine on pigs and goats is practiced in the *Duangu* Ceremony. The ritualists and participants judge if the offering has been accepted by observing whether the animals shake their heads or not, which is the other climax of the entire ceremony. The *Duangu* ritualists and the audience believe their rituals and ritual operas originated in the Tang Dynasty.

After Emperor Taizong made the vow to hold a ceremony to invite all deities and pacify the Little Dragon, Wei Zheng, who could ascend to three realms of deities, was the only person capable of fulfilling the duty. But Wei Zheng was angry about Emperor Taizong’s wrongdoings after his return from Hell and had already retired for years.

⁵² Xin Cui (辛翠), “Weishan hu Duangu xi yi shu chu tan (微山湖端鼓戏艺术初探[Preliminary exploration of the Duangu opera in the Weishan Lakes]),” (MA thesis, Fujian Normal University (福建師範大學), 2008), 9.

Emperor Taizong wanted him to come back, but Wei said he was too old and sick to fulfill the duty and then criticized the emperor’s misconduct, which infuriated the emperor who then imprisoned him.⁵³

When Wei Zheng’s ninth son Wei Jiulang grew up and realized his father’s innocence, he decided to meet the emperor and assume his father’s role of inviting deities. Then Wei Jiulang visited the southern ocean to borrow the shoes that can step on clouds, fought with the Dragon King of the eastern ocean to get the horse that can fly, and ascended to Heaven to borrow the whip that can move mountains.⁵⁴ Thereafter, Wei Jiulang became the “Talisman Holder” (*zhifu* 執符), with the ability to invite all the deities from the three realms. He became the model of the *Duangu* ritualists who have to symbolically ascend to the three realms to invite all deities to join the *Duangu* Ceremony.



Photo 3.23 A talisman of the “Talisman Holder”

The *Duangu* Ceremony is not the only one centering on the legend of Wei Jiulang. As the discussion in the previous chapter has shown, there has been a ritual tradition of Wei Jiulang in the *Xianghuo Tongzi* ritual opera of the Tongzhou (通州) area in northern Jiangsu, the *Xianghuo* Opera of the Yanfu (鹽阜) area in northern Jiangsu, the *Huai* Opera (淮劇) of the Huai’an (淮安) area in northern Jiangsu, the *Tongzi* Opera of the Haizhou (海州) area in northeastern Jiangsu, the *Wuyue Luguci* (五岳鑼鼓詞) of the

⁵³ QYZSD, 111–112.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 114.

Lai'an (來安) area in eastern Anhui, the *Duangong* Opera (端公調) of central and northern Anhui, the *Zhouguzi* (肘鼓子) and *Dapengpeng* (打砰砰) of southern Shandong, and the *Minxiang* (民香) and *Hanjun qixiang* (漢軍旗香) of the northeastern China. Most of these regions are adjacent to each other. The legend of Wei Jiulang also relates to the most famous vernacular novel *Journey to the West* (*Xi you ji* 西遊記) which includes the episodes of killing the Dragon King, Emperor Taizong's judgment in Hell, sending melons to Hell, and sending a monk to the West to bring back scriptures. Although Wei Jiulang is not mentioned in the novel, his battles with the Dragon Kings of the eastern and southern oceans are very similar to Nezha's in the novel. Compared to *Xi you ji*, the language used by these local ritual operas is even more vernacular. The author of *Journey to the West* was a native of Huai'an which is located in the center of the great region of the legend of Wei Jiulang.⁵⁵ Some scholars even argue that the author was inspired by the ritual operas mentioned above.⁵⁶ How these ritual operas and folk literature interconnected with and mutually influenced each other is a topic deserving further exploration in the future.

The *Duangong* Ceremony does not include the details of sending a monk to the West to bring back scriptures, which is the main theme of *Journey to the West*. The series of stories centering on Wei Jiulang and Emperor Taizong ends with the fighting between Wei Jiulang and the Dragon King of the eastern ocean. The episode is called "Burning the Ocean" (*shao hai* 燒海), another climax of the ritual opera. Wei Jiulang wants to borrow the horse that can fly, which is actually the third dragon prince of the eastern ocean. The old Dragon King still holds a grudge against Wei Zheng who killed the Little White Dragon, one of his sons. Now that Wei Zheng's son Jiulang wants to borrow the other dragon prince, the old Dragon King has no choice but to seek vindication for his innocent son. The fighting is spectacular. Two performers fight with two bundles of long dried reeds from the platform to the outside, and then someone ignites the two sides of the two bundles of reeds. The performers spin the fire and fight with each other quickly before the reeds burn out, which looks beautiful in the evening. When the fighting ends, the performer acting the part of the third prince runs and jumps inside the platform from outside, and other performers wrap him up with mats, which represent the victory of Wei Jiulang who eventually rides the horse to Heaven. This long ritual opera ends here and is

⁵⁵ The author is commonly considered Wu Cheng'en (吳承恩), but academic debates about the author's identity never cease.

⁵⁶ For instance, see Zhu Huanfu (朱垣夫), "Wu Cheng'en xi you ji yu nuo ge Tang chan zhi guan xi (吳承恩《西遊記》與儺歌"唐儺"之關係[The relationship between Wu Cheng'en's *Journey to the West* and the "Tang chants" of Nuo's songs]," *Ming Qing xiao shuo yan jiu* (明清小說研究) 1994, no. 4 (1994): 136-48.

followed by Jiulang sending invitations and memorials to the three realms of deities and inviting deities by narrating their hagiographies one after the other.

After the ritualist finishes the invitation of the deities, he holds up the yellow memorials to the deities and performs a martial rite similar to the Step of Yü (禹步), pointing the memorials in five cardinal directions. Then he passes the memorials to the headman of the main line. All the lineage members kneel down after the headman of the main line who follows the Altar Head, the paper-cutter in charge of the entire ceremony. The Altar Head makes a divination in a brand new bamboo dustpan, within which are five bowls of “eight treasure rice” and tens of red talismans with the names of deities, cakes, and fruits. The Altar Head communicates with the ancestors, asking if they are satisfied with the first ritual opera. Once the divination gets a positive response, all lineage members make an obeisance. The second day ends here at around eleven o’clock in the evening.



Photo 3.24 A envelope for a memorial.

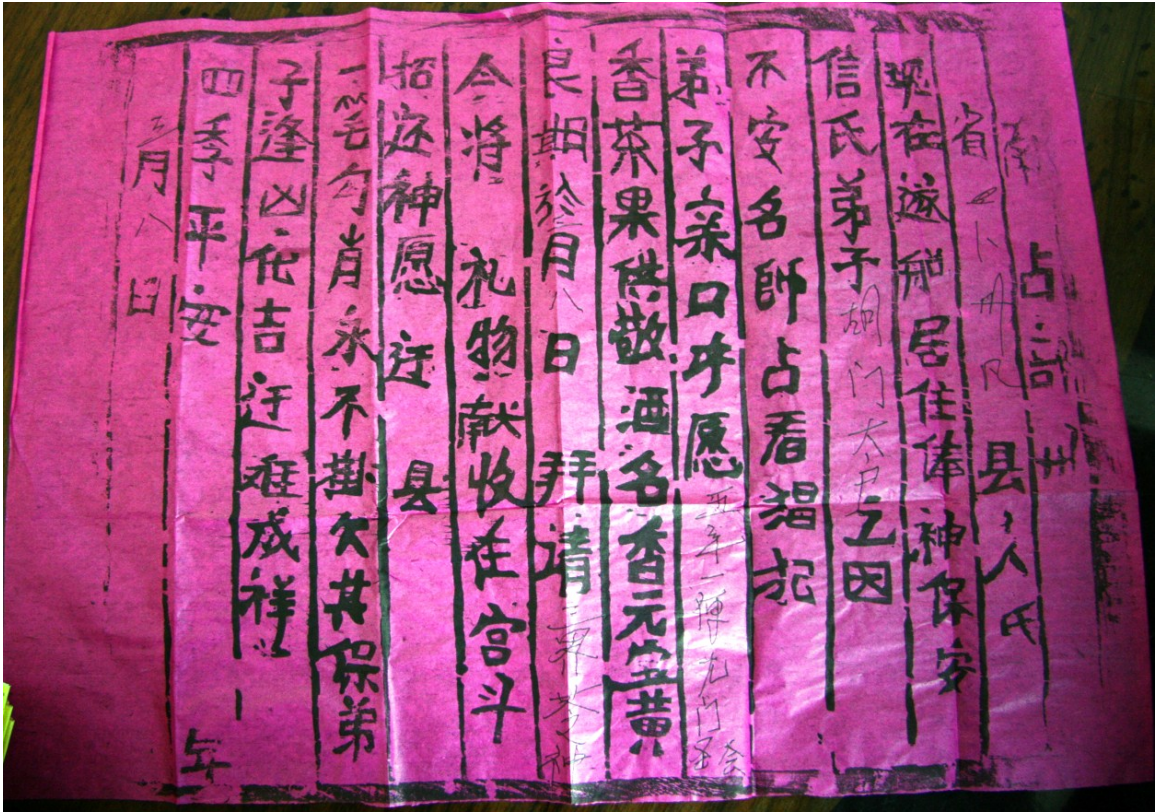


Photo 3.25 A memorial.

Two events of the second day deserve some explanation. First, two long pennons are raised on the two central flagpoles when the first ritual opera begins: Zhang *Jiangjun* and Heavenly Soldier Wudao. The two deities' images are painted on the top of the pennons as if they are overseeing the ceremony. Zhang *Jiangjun* is believed to be the guardian deity of the Huai River, and his story will be performed in the ritual operas on the fourth day. Heavenly Soldier Wudao is the main figure of the third day's ritual opera, Liu Wenlong (劉文龍), which I will describe shortly. If the ceremony is held on a five-year round, the ritual opera about Liu Wenlong will be skipped. The pennon of Heavenly Soldier Wudao will accordingly not be raised. The pennons serve as formal notification of the type and program of the ceremony. The boat people can tell if the ceremony is being held over three or four days from a long distance by looking at the pennons. They are interested in the programs of the ritual operas, since all boat people are welcome to watch the performances, and there are not many entertainments on the water. As I will show in next section, the ritual opera about Liu Wenlong is the most entertaining of all the ritual operas and is loved by most audiences.

The second thing worth noting is that two yellow proclamations are posted in the tent in front of the platform. One lists the names of participants and the locations they came from. The other one lists the major deities and their sacrifices respectively, as well

as the roster of the *Duangu* ritualists. The *Duangu* ritualists call themselves “*Xianghuo* (incense and fire) in Front of Deities (*shen qian Xianghuo* 神前香火)” and “Performers before Deity Images (*ma qian xi zi* 馬[禡]前戲子).” The title *Xianghuo* is a clue that suggests a relationship to the *Xianghuo Tongzi* in northern Jiangsu, as mentioned earlier. The list of long pennons of deities is also announced on the latter yellow proclamation. From the second yellow proclamation, we can observe the most significant deities of the boat people. The list of deities is in the table below.



Photo 3.26 Yellow proclamation

Table 3.5 List of deities and correspondent sacrifices

Spirits	Sacrifices
The Apical Ancestor 老五道	Grand Three Sacrifices 大禮三牲
Ancestors 眾位家親	Small Three Sacrifices 小禮三牲
Heaven and Earth 天地老爺	1 Goat 鳴羊一隻
<i>Jinlong si Daiwang</i> 金龍四大王	1 Goat 鳴羊一隻
Various <i>Daiwangs</i> 眾家大王	1 Goat 鳴羊一隻
Vanguard Zhao 趙先鋒*	(1 Duck 毛鴨一只)*
Heavenly Soldier Wudao 天兵五道*	(1 Goat 鳴羊一隻)*
Masters of Three Realms 三界師傅	1 Pig 真豬一頭
Minister Zhou 周相公	1 Pig 真豬一頭
Wealth Gods of Five Paths 五路財神	1 Cock 公雞一隻
Fierce Zhong Kui 猛烈鍾馗	1 Cock 公雞一隻
<i>Xiangshan Daiwang</i> 香山大王	1 Cock 公雞一隻
<i>Zhang Jiangjun</i> 張將軍	1 Hen 母雞一隻
Censor 太尉	2 Eggs 雙雙雞子

Dark Altar 玄壇	1 Egg 單單雞子
Tangshen 唐神老爺*	(Grand Three Sacrifices 大禮三牲)*
[Chen] Jiulong <i>Jiangjun</i> 九龍老爺	Golden Helmet Baked Cake 金面鍋盔
Guanyin of the Southern Ocean 南海觀音	1 Long Pennon 長帆一道
Heavenly Soldier Wudao 天兵五道*	(1 Long Pennon 長帆一道)*
<i>Jinlong si Daiwang</i> 金龍四大王	1 Long Pennon 長帆一道
Stove God 灶君老爺*	(1 Long Pennon 長帆一道)*
Zhang <i>Jiangjun</i> 張將軍*	(1 Top Flag 頂幡一道)*
Venerable Mother Boat Immortal 船仙老母*	(A Table of Grand Offerings 大供一桌)*
Eight Female Immortals 八仙姑娘*	(A Table of Grand Offerings 大供一桌)*

*These deities only appear once in the three yellow proclamations I recorded.

Third Day: Liu Wenlong Hurries to Take the Civil Service Exams and “Welcoming and Setting up the Deities”

Time	Opera	Proceeding
7 –22: 00	<i>Liu Wenlong Hurries to Take the Civil Service Exams</i> (劉文龍趕考)	21:50 Live Sacrifice for Heavenly Soldier Wudao (獻活羊給天兵五道)
22:30		Welcome <i>Shengdous</i> 請斗
00:00		Welcome Deities into Outer Altar 迎神進棚
0 –1:30		Hang Scrolls on <i>Shengdous</i> (掛神) Singing “Three Doors”: Opening the Door of Wealth (唱三門子:開財門)
1:20		Spirit Possession: Wudao Who Brings Wealth (代財五道)
1:30–3:00		Set up Scrolls in Inner Altar (神進棚)
3:30		Re-Setting up New Paper-cuts and Sacrifices (重站吊子、重新擺供)

Table 3.6 Day 3 Schedule

On the third day the opera *Liu Wenlong Hurries to Take the Civil Service Exams* is presented, starting at 7:00 am and ending at 10 pm. This opera is most entertaining. At the end of the opera, all significant characters die and are enfeoffed with divine titles, even the villains. This rule also applies to other ritual operas. Wei Jiulang is tortured to death when Tang Emperor Taizong is testing him. The spirit of Wei Jiulang is then enfeoffed as a messenger who can ascend and descend to the three realms to deliver messages and invite the deities and ancestors. In this opera Liu Wenlong and his wife Xiao Suzhen (蕭素珍) will eventually be deified as Heavenly Soldier and White Cloud Wudaos who will then guard the following core liturgies of worshiping deities and ancestors.

The story centers on Xiao Suzhen’s loyalty and faith in Liu Wenlong, who leaves to pursue an official career far away from his hometown.¹ Liu Wenlong and his cousin Song Yanzhong (宋延中) study together for the civil service examination. Liu Wenlong leaves his wife three days after their wedding and hurries to take the examination in the capital with Song Yanzhong. When the newly married couple is about to separate at the edge of the village, they sing songs to each other to express their feelings and exhort each

¹ The content of the opera described here is based on my observations of three ceremonies of the Continuation of Genealogy during 2008—2010, my interviews with the *Duangu* ritualists and the audience, and published materials. For the last one, see: QYZSD, 144. Interviews with Hu Houqing (胡厚慶), a retired *Duangu* ritualist, on November 8, 2009 and with Jin Zhongyu on April 17, 2010.

other, using various birds and flowers as metaphors. Liu Wenlong passes the examination and gets promoted in the capital. At first Liu serves as a minister of personnel for three years, and then he receives an imperial edict to go on an expedition in Yunnan where he stays for nine years and becomes the marshal in chief.



Photo 3.27 Lady Xiao in wedding dress.



Photo 3.28 Liu Wenlong and Xiao Suzhen are having the “three bows” ritual (to Heaven and Earth, ancestors and parents, and each other).

While Wenlong pursues his official career outside his hometown, his wife Xiao Suzhen takes care of Liu’s parents assiduously when the village suffers a serious drought, causing crop failure. The cousin Song Yanzhong fails the examination and returns home from the capital. Liu Wenlong asks Song to carry a family letter and a hundred silver ingots back to Liu’s home. Song has coveted Xiao Suzhen for a long time. He misappropriates the money and alters the letter, falsely claiming that Liu Wenlong has

been killed and before dying asked her to remarry Song. Brilliant as she is, Xiao Suzhen recognizes it is not her husband's handwriting and exposes Song's trick. Song does not give up and sends Duke Ji (姬公) as a matchmaker to persuade Xiao and her parents-in-law. Xiao asks Liu's ancestors to send a message to Wenlong through a dream telling him that he should go home immediately; otherwise his wife will remarry. When Liu dreams of Xiao's message, he returns home immediately. When he arrives at the entrance of the village, he meets his wife who wears white mourning clothes. Xiao has pretended she will to remarry after the mourning but has already made up her mind to commit suicide that night. Since the couple has not seen each other for a long time, they do not recognize each other. Liu asks Xiao for whom do you mourn? Wenlong is shocked by Suzhen's answer: Wenlong is said to be dead. The husband and wife start to question each other about the songs and metaphors of birds and flowers they sang when Wenlong left to take the civil service examination. Eventually, they recognize each other. Wenlong requests Suzhen to go home as soon as possible, and he brings a troop to enclose the village. He sees his own house preparing for a wedding and asks his father, who does not recognize him: What fortunate event are you holding? The father replies: my son Wenlong was dead, so my daughter-in-law will remarry Song Yanzong. Wenlong asks who was the matchmaker. Learning Duke Ji was the matchmaker, Wenlong begins his revenge. He kills 36 family members of Duke Ji and 72 members of Song's family. Song Yanzong runs away and throws himself into a river to escape, but is drowned. When Song stands in front of Yama, he falsifies the story again: Wenlong disregarded what I had done for him (referring to the family letter and silver ingots) and forced me to jump into a river. Feeling cheated, Yama sends a pair of Big and Little Ghosts to catch Wenlong who is happily eating the dinner of family reunion. Shocked at being summoned by Yama, Wenlong chokes and dies. When Wenlong dies, Xiao hangs herself, and his parents kill themselves by smashing their heads into walls. But afterwards, all the people who died are enfeoffed by the Jade Emperor with divine titles. Liu Wenlong is Heavenly Soldier Wudao, and Xiao Suzhen is White Cloud Wudao. Duke Ji becomes Returning Temple Wudao, whereas Song Yanzong is Falling in River Wudao. The 36 Ji family members are the Thirty-Six Evil Spirits of the Passes (三十六關煞), the 72 members of the Song the Seventy-Two Divine Evil Spirits (七十二神煞). All these Evil Spirits are also seen in landmen's ritual practices and beliefs. They are associated with diseases, drowning, travel accidents, lightning, children's nightmares, and so on. When people suffer unfortunate things, they consult ritual specialists to "go through the pass," that is the crisis *guo guan* (過關). These boat people seem to have similar beliefs and practices.

All characters, good and bad, have to die in order to be enfeoffed by the Jade

Emperor. These two Wudaos can be found in the second realm of deities in the scroll painter Wang Chunku's manual, and the Forces belong to the Star Lords (*xing jun* 星君), out of the three realms of deities. The latter are unruly spirits that people want to avoid, except. The Heavenly Soldier (Wenlong's incarnation) and White Cloud (Suzhen) Wudaos supervise these malignant forces, as we shall see. This long story can be divided into two major parts in terms of opera performance: the happy wedding and the unhappy mourning. The wedding episode has all auspicious symbols in red, whereas the mourning is composed of ominous signs in white. In the ceremonies for Continuation of Genealogy, only the wedding episode is allowed, because the lineage ritual is an auspicious event (*xi shi* 喜事) that the performance should not offend by presenting gloomy things. The mourning episode is applied in the ceremonies for the Tangshen Assembly or its variation the Patriarch Hua Assembly. From the perspective of the audience, this is the major difference between the two types of *Duangu* Ceremony. These two episodes are the most popular programs throughout all ritual operas held in the *Duangu* Ceremony. The happy or sad scenes connect to the audience emotionally, and they laugh out loud or sob silently with the plots. Some details of the wedding and funeral that are represented on stage exemplify the standard procedures and ritual objects applied in weddings and funerals and so relate to people's real experiences. However, parts of these standard wedding and mourning rituals mainly represent the customs of the landmen, not the boat people, whose counterparts are relatively simple. In fact, the whole story about Liu Wenlong and Xiao Suzhen represents the experiences of literati families and how a man's pursuit of an official career affects the fate of his family, which is irrelevant to boat people's experiences.

This opera also carries some orthodox ideologies that are far removed from the boat people. For instance, the antiphonal songs using birds and flowers as moral metaphors reflect Confucian values about women's chastity and loyalty toward their husbands.² The performers' dialogue goes like this:

Wenlong says, "I say to you, Lady Xiao, when I am in the capital, and you are at home,

What flower should you study, that lowers its head as it sees passing walkers?

What flower should you not study, that creeps high laughing and grinning cheekily and grimacing to flirt with passing walkers?"

Lady Xiao says, "My dear husband, when you are in the Capital, and I am

² Chen Yan, "Duangu qiang (端鼓腔)," WSSJC, 223—5. Also see: WSXZ, 986—7.

at home,
 I will study the eggplant blossom, that lowers its head when it sees
 someone coming.
 I will not study the morning glory, that creeps high laughing and grinning
 cheekily and grimacing to flirt with the passing walkers.”

文龍說，叫蕭氏，我上京，你在家，
 你要學，什麼花，見來人，把頭低下；
 你不學，什麼花，爬得高，嘻皮笑臉，挑逗著來人？
 蕭氏說，丈夫來，你上京，我在家，
 奴自學，茄子花，見人來，把頭低下；
 奴不學，牽牛花，爬得高，嘻皮笑臉，挑逗著來人。

Table 3.7 Symbolic Meanings of the Flowers and Birds

Positive	Metaphor	Negative	Metaphor
蘿蔔花 Radish	在泥心，端端正坐 Sit decently	眉豆花 Black-eyed pea	爬牆頭，觀看來人 Crawl the walls & watch walkers
韭菜花 Bud Chive	在園裡，素素打扮 Dress austerely	雞冠花 Cockscomb	頭頂著紅，顏色重，引動著 來人 Dress colorfully & flirt with walkers
茄子花 Eggplant	見人來，把頭低下 Lower the head/Hiddeness	牽牛花 Morning glory	爬得高，嘻皮笑臉，挑逗著 來人 Grin & Grimace cheekily & flirt with walkers
蒿子花 Wormwood	在荒郊，少有人見 Be rarely seen desolately	葛針花 Spine date	站路旁，勾拐來人 Seduce walkers on the roadside
鶉鴉 Quail	見人來，草棵裡去躲 Hide from walkers	蝙蝠 Bat	到晚上，飄搖搖飛出了家門 Leave home at night
喜鵲 Magpie	叫一聲，人人歡喜 Good words	夜貓子 Night owl	叫一聲，落下罵名 Be cursed

The metaphors in the table above reflect men’s anxieties about their wives’ chastity when they have to leave home to work outside for a certain period. Such situations seldom happened to boat people, as husbands and wives often fished together. If fishermen go out fishing alone, they usually return to their house-boats daily. In addition,

these flowers and birds are unfamiliar to the boat people. Without formal education and literati within the boat people, why and how did they absorb elements of orthodox ideology?

The *Duangu* Ceremony carried orthodox Confucian values when the operas of the land people were absorbed. This is the evidence that some boat people originally came from land people. Such kinds of orthodox ideologies are the remains of landmen's values. Since the metaphors of flowers and birds are not familiar to them, the boat people can barely accept the values. These literati's experiences and symbolism cannot evoke the empathetic responses of the boat people. It is the touching emotional fluctuation of vivid wedding and mourning that really connects to the audience, not the unfamiliar orthodox ideology behind the scene.

After the opera ends with the deification of all characters, a sequence of important rituals follows. A living sacrificial goat is brought to the altar and offered to the newly enfeoffed Heavenly Soldier Wudao (Liu Wenlong). The Altar Head splashes wine over the head of the goat, just like the act of the child sacrifice in the aforementioned legend of the *Duangu* ritualists' origin. If the goat shakes its head, it is believed that the deity Heavenly Soldier is satisfied. The goat is immediately killed outside and cooked for hot soup served to the participants of the coming rituals.

Welcoming the *Shengdou* (請斗)

The real sacrifices to deities and ancestors begin with the ritual of Welcome *Shengdou*, the decorated bushel measures with colorful paper-cuts and steelyards, believed to be seats for the ancestors. The mats of the stage are removed and replaced with tables to hold all *shengdous*, which are moved from the inner altar. The arrangement of the *shengdous* is an occasion for competition for a better place to receive spiritual power through the ritual activities. The only consensus is that the main line monopolizes the best spot: the central and front area closest to the inner altar, shown in the figure below. Priority is not determined by genealogical hierarchy, but by influence in the lineage or accomplishment in business or politics.³ The latter often affects one's status in the lineage. The arrangement was previously announced at the beginning of the ceremony, but sometimes quarrels continued until the last moment. Once the arrangement is settled the *shengdous* are moved from the inner altar to the tables. After all the *shengdous* are placed in the assigned spots, the *dougong* (斗供), a small offering composed of one plate of pork, one plate of *muomuo* (饃饃[steamed buns]), five plates of fruits and cookies, and three cups of wine, is set up on the table in front of the *shengdou* of the main line. Then

³ This refers to the contemporary situation that some boat people pursue careers in business or politics.

all families carry their own scrolls of deities and ancestors from their homes and wait in front of the entrance to the platform in the order of the *shengdou* arrangement. At 12:00 am, some dried reeds at the entrance are ignited for the next ritual.



Photo 3.29 Welcoming the *Shengdous*.

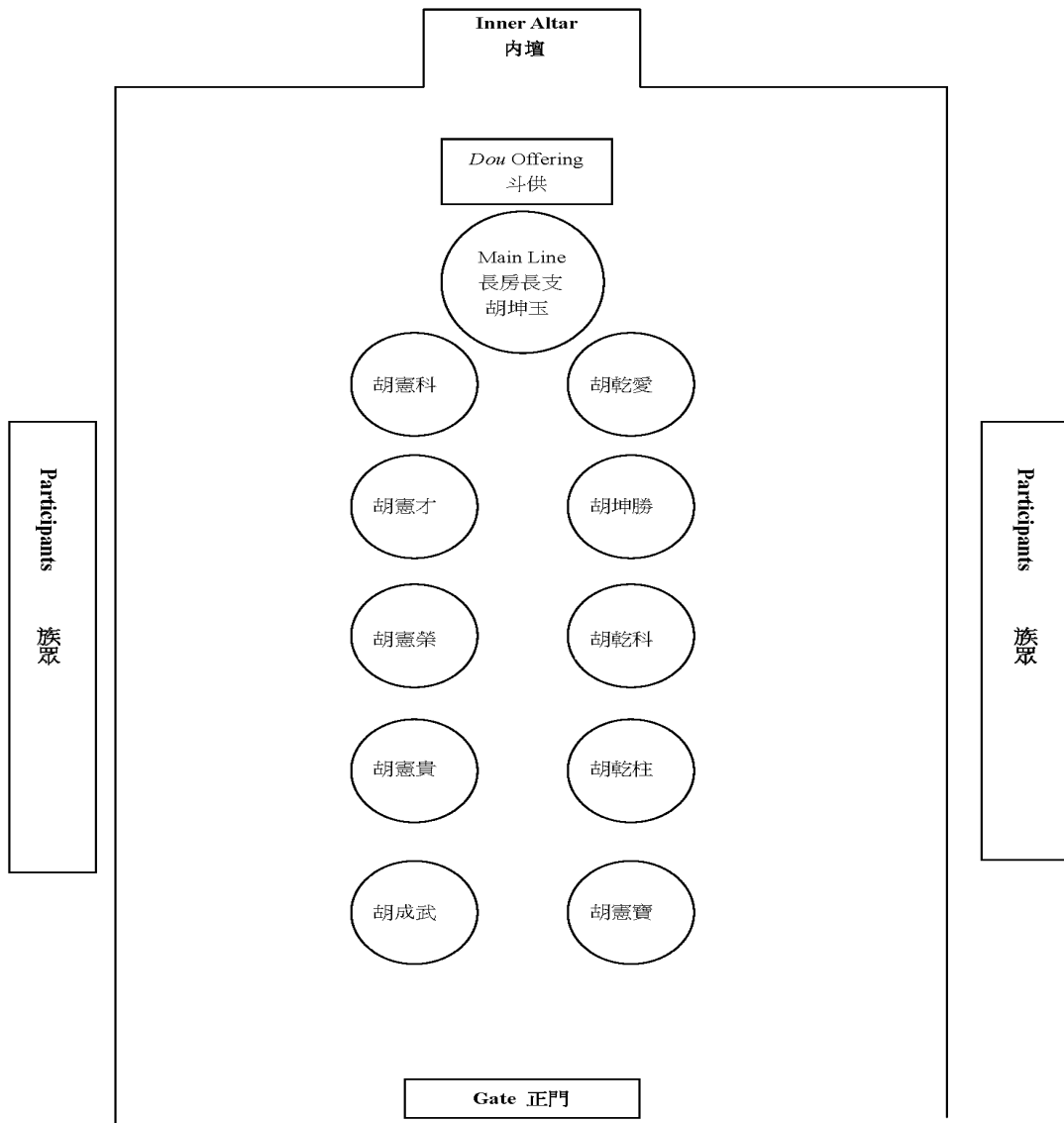


Figure 3.2 Arrangement of *Shengdou*. Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandon, April 20—21, 2010.

Welcoming Deities into the Tent (神進棚)

All scrolls are brought into the tent by crossing over the fire at the entrance. For each family, the scrolls are rolled up individually and bound together in a red cloth. The family head or representative carries the wrapped scrolls in both hands from the home to the ceremony site, and between these two places the scrolls must be shielded under a red or yellow umbrella. When the scrolls enter the tent, they are piled up behind the *shengdou* they join. Only one set of scrolls, usually of the representative of the *shengdou*, is hung on the hook of the steelyard inserted in the *shengdou*. In most cases, only the scroll of Chief Divinities (*zhu shen* 主神) with Guanyin on the top is unrolled to represent all scrolls. This is called “hanging the scrolls of deities” (*gua shen* 掛神). After all scrolls

and *shengdous* are set up appropriately, a liturgy of welcoming wealth and exorcizing demons follows.



Photo 3.30 “Welcoming Deities into the Tent.”

The “Three Doors” (三門子)

Singing the “Three Doors” takes about 50—60 minutes and involves a spirit possession. The *Duangu* ritualists perform this liturgy to open the symbolic doors of three cardinal directions, the east, west, and south, to welcome the wealth, and they have to exorcise the north door which is believed to be infested with evil spirits. This liturgy is also called “opening the doors of wealth” (開財門) and “avoiding the northern door” (避北門). Several *Duangu* ritualists circle the *shengdous* with scrolls as if they are traveling to four cardinal directions while they are symbolically opening the doors of wealth and exorcising the northern door.



Photo 3.31 *Dougong*.



Photo 3.32 “Three Doors” ritual.

“Pulling the Divine Knife” (拉刀子)

A *Duangu* ritualist takes off his shirt and uses a black cloth to cover his waist and

legs as if he is wearing a skirt.⁴ Another black headscarf called *baotou* (包頭) covers his head, and a talisman with the image of The Messenger (Wei Jiulang) is tied with the headscarf. Then the ritualist sips some wine and spits it out. Each hand of the ritualist holds a talisman, actually a woodblock print of Wei Jiulang. A ritual object called the “divine staff” (*shen gun* 神棍) and another called the “divine sword” (*shen jian* 神鐮) are utilized by the ritualist occasionally, and are said to expel other irrelevant spirits. Until this point, the ritualist sits on a bench most of the time. Another *Duangu* ritualist squats opposite the bench and assists the spirit possession, by chanting spells and drawing talismans with his right index and middle fingers in the air. He is called the “knife watcher” (*kan dao* 看刀), because he prepares a small knife, called the “divine knife” (*shen daozi* 神刀子), for the possessed *Duangu* ritualist: putting the knife through fire and spitting wine on it. Then he chants spells and draws talismans on the knife and the left upper arm of the possessed ritualist, followed by another wine-spitting on the arm. The possessed ritualist starts to shake his head and use the knife to prick or cut his upper arm, sometimes even his chest.



Photo 3.33 The “knife watcher.” Note the divine staff before him.

⁴ This dressing style is often linked to “lady’s singing” (*niang niang qiang* 娘娘腔 or *gu niang qiang* 姑娘腔), which had been widely circulated in southern Shandong and northern Jiangsu. All these ritual traditions associated with Wei Jiulang had liturgies where one or more male ritualists dressed like women.



Photo 3.34 "Pulling the Divine Knife"



Photo 3.35 Spirit possession.



Photo 3.36 Spirit possession. Note the Altar Head (standing on the left) guiding the process. The possessed holds a divine staff to prevent demon intervention.



Photo 3.37 The Divine Knife (left) and the offerings for spirit possessions.

Compared with the spirit-mediums I have seen in Taiwan's temple festivals, the knife is tiny, and the bleeding is mild. A retired *Duangu* ritualist even told me that there is a trick applying to this cutting and bleeding—dipping some red ink.⁵ But from my own

⁵ Interview with Shen Jiakuan, November 4, 2009.

observation, the wounds were obvious. In fact, the more blood that trickles, the more satisfied the host lineage is, because it is widely believed by boat people that “no blood, no efficacy” and the ancestors need blood to bring prosperity. An authoritative *Duangu* leader said:

When a person dies, he turns into a ghost; the ghost will become a deity later. A ghost is bad, and a deity is good. Both ghost and deity need to upgrade by accumulating human blood, the *qi* (氣) of this humanly world (*yangjian* 陽間). Therefore, host lineages always ask for more blood. Without “pulling the divine knife,” everything done for the ceremony is in vain.⁶

Another non-ritualist informant, who was the former village party secretary, confirmed that the ancestors need human blood to bring prosperity to the descendants.⁷ The blood is splashed on sacrifices and scrolls to enhance their efficacy.⁸ The onlookers strive for the water and paper money used to clean the blood and wounds, which they believe can expel evil spirits or heal diseases. Several people give the bleeding ritualists their own towels to wipe and clean the wounds, so they can take back their own towels without joining the striving for blood. The host lineage pays more rewards and offers special desserts and clothes to the possessed *Duangu* ritualists who sacrifice their blood.⁹

⁶ Interview with Shen Jiaru, June 21, 2009. He raised this topic first before I mentioned it. Unlike the other *Duangu* troupe constantly denying the existence of blood sacrifice, Shen never conceals it and even feels proud of this service, although he himself never conducts such a ritual.

⁷ Interview with Wang Yunfu at Laohu Village, Dongping County, Shandong on November 19, 2009.

⁸ Shen Jiaru, June 21, 2009. Also see She Kangle, “Weishan hu yu min zong zu de dang xia shi jian,” 58.

⁹ QYZAH, 478. A *Duangu* ritualist told me that the lineages in the Xinjian Village where most ritualists live only reward by an extra 100 RMB, but in other villages they can get an extra 500 RMB which is close to a normal service fee of around 600 RMB per ceremony. Yang Zhenping (楊鎮平), Aihu Village, Weishan County, Shandong on November 8, 2009.



Photo 3.38 Onlookers take yellow paper money (right) and a towel (left) to swipe the blood of the bleeding *Duangu* ritualist.



Photo 3.39 The wound of the “pulling the divine knife.”

Not all *Duangu* ritualists practice this blood sacrifice. Besides being afraid of

hurting themselves, the main reason for not cutting oneself concerns men's reproductive ability. Bleeding causes the exhaustion of vitality¹⁰ and it takes several days to recover. Young ritualists can recover sooner (three days), but the older ones need about a week.

The possessed ritualists told me that the wounds never inflame and always close fast. They claim that with the deities' protection, the cutting is not painful.

There are four spirit possessions throughout the entire process of the *Duangu* Ceremony, each of which invokes different spirits. This first deity's identity is Wudao Who Brings Wealth (*daicai Wudao* 代財五道). Boat people believe he can open the doors of wealth and bring wealth from the five cardinal directions. After finishing "pulling the knife" at the platform, he carries a torch and then patrols the tent outside. At the west, he worships Heavenly Soldier and White Cloud Wudaos who oversee the unruly deities at the west.¹¹ Then he returns to the platform and ends the spirit possession. The transition from trance to normal consciousness is not as dramatic as Taiwan's spirit-mediums who yell and jump back suddenly. The *Duangu* ritualist looks like he is falling asleep and then wakes up as a normal person. The tent is now completely exorcized inside and out. The inner altar is ready for the scrolls of deities and ancestors.

"Standing Deities" (*zhan shen* 站神)

All the scrolls hung on steelyards or piled up behind *shengdous* are now carried inside the inner altar in the order of the *shengdous*. The inner altar has been previously cleaned, and the sacrifice tables removed. Each *shengdou* is allocated a space to hang all the scrolls. The main line undoubtedly occupies the central place closest to the sacrifices and "incense and fire." The hierarchically lowest *shengdou* is placed at the most distant edge. Once the main line has entered the inner altar, all the other groups of scrolls holders stride into the inner altar to set up their scrolls as soon as possible. The longer the scrolls stay in the inner altar, the more prosperous the families will be in the following years. Hundreds of lineage members are setting up more than a thousand scrolls at the same time, a spectacular scene called "Emplacing the Deities" — all scrolls are unrolled and hung with red ropes attached to the roof frame. Some experienced families have already tied the red ropes to the roof before the liturgy. Inexperienced families whose members have not participated in such ceremonies before, have to imitate and ask neighboring kinfolk how to proceed. Some families even have no scrolls and ask the *Duangu* ritualists to write the names of deities on red papers as temporary substitutes. Some families also bring in the statues of deities worshiped at home, including Guanyin, Buddha, Lady

¹⁰ Wang Chunzhe, April 25, 2010.

¹¹ There is a contradiction here. In the previous liturgy, the north was believed to be infested with evil spirits. Now the west is where the unruly gods infest.

Mount Tai, and the God of Wealth. At the Shen lineage's ceremony, I heard the lineage headman reiterate that no unruly or "heterodox" deities are allowed in the inner altar; once spied, they will be destroyed.¹² It seems to me that the boat people know which deities are "orthodox" or accepted in the *Duangu* Ceremony and which cults are unacceptable or "heterodox." Who can decide and what standards are used is still unclear to me. I saw a number of spirit-medium maidens on the scrolls hanging in the inner altar, but did not see anyone in charge of checking for unacceptable deities. How commonly the boat people might worship "unacceptable deities" is difficult to know but is worth exploration in future studies.¹³

¹² Shen Jiachang, October 31, 2009. The so-called unruly or heterodox deities, literally "*luan qi ba zao* (亂七八糟)" or messy deities, refer to some private cults, such as fox, turtle, or spirit-medium maidens and so on. I did not see anyone actually check the contents of hundreds of scrolls. But it is worth noting that the boat people also have their own definition of orthodoxy and heterodoxy.

¹³ Outside the *Duangu* Ceremony, on November 8, 2009, I ran into an old fisherman who worships Jigong (濟公) on his private altar at home, a resettled shack on the lakeshore for the last 30 years. I asked him why he worships this deity who is unusual to boat people but very popular to commoners all over China. His answer displayed how a new cult was created among the boat people: he watched a DVD maxiseries of Jigong's hagiography obtained from his child and felt that the deity was very efficacious, so he bought Jigong's statue at downtown Weishan County and set up a small altar on his own. This Jigong altar and another one of the God of Wealth are placed in the main hall, and the shrine box storing scrolls of deities and ancestors and two statues of Guanyin and the God of Wealth are located in the next kitchen-like room. This case is very unusual and certainly not representative. Mr. Ding learned and created this private cult after resettling on the land; therefore, the newly created cult of Jigong was irrelevant to the boat-dwelling lifestyle. It is worth noting that he created this cult because of watching a modern form of opera through a modern mass media.



Photo 3.40 "Standing Deities"



Photo 3.41 Unrolled scrolls of deities and ancestors.



Photo 3.42 Unrolled scrolls.



Photo 3.43 Old statues of Buddha and Guanyin



Photo 3.44 A statue of Lady Mount Tai and a cloth pennon of *Jinlong si Daiwang*



Photo 3.45 A temporary scroll with written texts on a red paper.

After all the scrolls are set up in the inner altar, a new set of sacrifices and a set of gorgeous paper-cuts are added in front of these scrolls right outside the inner altar. The inner altar is now sheltered by a series of paper-cuts, *diaozi* (吊子), hung seamlessly on a horizontal red rod. Besides a number of paper-cuts with normal good fortune themes, the central one is a splendidly designed paper-cut symbolizing the inner altar as a temple. On top of the paper-cut are three buildings and a pair of flagpoles similar to the ceremony platform's outlook. The central building looks like a temple flanked by two tower-like buildings, which apparently imitates large temples on land. Below the temple-like

buildings are two rows of eight deities, one row of eight cranes, a row of eight *Qilin* (麒麟), and a row of eight lotuses. The first row has eight goddesses and the second row eight gods, whose identities are unknown. The crane usually symbolizes long life in Chinese popular culture, and the Qilin symbolizes having sons to continue the patriline, both of which connotations fit the context of the Continuation of Genealogy. In front of the paper-cut is a table of 40 plates of vegetarian food, cookies and fruits, as well as three cups of wine and five plates of steamed buns offered to the scrolls of deities and ancestors. This offering is called the “grand sacrifice” (*dagong* 大供).



Photo 3.46 The temple-like paper-cut behind a table of sacrifices for ancestors.

**Fourth Day: Noon Altar (午壇) for Receiving Greetings of Relatives and Friends and
*Zhang Xiang Prepares the Dowry for his Sister’s Wedding***

Time	Opera	Proceeding
7:30		Grand Opening of the Altar 大開壇 Raising the Pennons of Guanyin and <i>Jinlongsi Daiwang</i> 打南海觀音旗、金龍四大王旗
8:00		Spirit Possession: <i>Zhang Jiangjun</i> 張將軍
8:30		Guests’ Donations 親友進心

10:30		Spirit Possession: Chen Jiulong <i>Jiangjun</i> 陳九龍
10:45		Sacrifice of Pig, Sheep, and Chicken 交豬、交羊、交雞
11:00		Noon Altar 午壇
Noon		Banquet 宴客
16–23:00	<i>Zhang Xiang Prepares the Dowry [for His Sister's Wedding]</i> (張相打嫁妝/張將軍)	
23–0:00		Comforting the Constellations 順星

Table 3.8 Day 4 Schedule

Grand Opening of the Altar (大開壇) and Raising the Pennons of Guanyin and *Jinlong si Daiwang*

The ritual of the Grand Opening of the Altar is the most solemn and dignified in that it requires six to eight, sometimes even 10 *Duangu* ritualists to beat drums and recite liturgical scripts while arranging different ritual formations. All ritualists are in formal dresses with hats. It can begin immediately after the grand sacrifice is set up in the dark of night, or it can start in the early morning of the fourth day. Most onlookers and participants leave for a short break, not only because of the solemnness of the liturgy, but also because the fourth day is the busiest period for renewing relationships with friends and relatives, as well as social relations within one's subgroup. Lineage members and onlookers, who are usually friends or relatives of the host lineage, have to prepare for the coming liturgies and social events.

Two pennons are raised at the beginning of the fourth day. Guanyin and *Jinlong si Daiwang* are considered the chief divinities of the boat people. Their pennons are raised in the center on the most important day of the entire ceremony. This day is called the “formal day” (*zheng ri* 正日).



Photo 3.47 "Grand Opening the Altar"



Photo 3.48 The pennon of Guanyin.



Photo 3.49 The pennon of *Jinlong si Daiwang*.

Zhang Jiangjun in Charge of the Altar (頂壇張將軍)

The next liturgy is the second spirit possession. A *Duangu* ritualist is possessed by Zhang *Jiangjun*, who oversees the Altar. Zhang *Jiangjun* is believed to oversee waterways, particularly the Huai River, and guarantee the aquatic safety of the boat people. The process of spirit possession is identical to the previous one. The hagiography of Zhang *Jiangjun* will be explained in the following ritual opera *Zhang Xiang Prepares the Dowry for his Sister's Wedding*.

Inviting Deities and Telling their Hagiographies

After the spirit possession, another *Duangu* ritualist begins to chant the hagiographies of deities while inviting them to attend the ceremony. This liturgy of inviting deities details how certain important deities were deified, including where they came from, what they did, and how they died and were then deified. The complete list, including various *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns* as well as other water gods, can be found in appendix 4.1. These deities are the most significant to the boat people, and their hagiographies also provide the most important information for us to decipher the background of the boat people's pantheon, which was explored in Chapter Two. However, since the ritualist chants the scripts fast, and the audience is small, I do not think the content of the hagiographies are seriously believed and understood by most lay boat people. What they are really concerned about are the following ritual activities that attract

the largest audience throughout the ceremony.

Greeting of Friends and Relatives

Friends and relatives of the host lineage carry gifts to the altar to honor the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy, which is called “*qinyou jinxin*” (親友進心[Greeting of Friends and Relatives]).¹⁴ Gifts vary. Married daughters and in-laws bring the most lavish dishes and snacks, which display their filial piety to the host lineage.¹⁵ The most superior gifts from the best friends or closest relatives must include the “three sacrifices”: a chicken, a big fish, and a pig head with hair. Normal gifts contain wine, snacks, sweets, dishes, fruits and steamed buns. All gifts are placed in boxes or on big tables or long boards; therefore, it is called “carrying boxes” (*tai hezi* 抬盒子). This is a common way of honoring auspicious events or expressing condolence at mourning.¹⁶ Long red ribbons are another type of gift to show the filial piety of the married daughters. All these ribbons are hung by males on the frame of the tent for decoration, which is called “hanging reds” (*gua hong* 掛紅). These red ribbons will be taken off and used to cover the *Shengdous* and scrolls at the end of the entire ceremony. Simpler gifts are piles of paper-money, paper gold ingots, or firecrackers. This ritual also attracts several vendors or vending boats outside the ceremony site. Several lineage members register all the contents and congratulators, and the complete list will be written on yellow proclamations, called “bills of devoted hearts” (*jin xin zhang* 進心帳), and posted in the tent soon. Congratulators and their gifts line up from inner altar to outside. Congratulators have to make an obeisance in front of the inner altar when offering the gifts. They often give gratuities to the *Duangu* ritualists who officiate at the ritual, so the ritualists read their names and gifts out loud and say some fortunate words, which increase their prestige.

¹⁴ Sometimes, it is written as “盡心.”

¹⁵ Interview with Shen Yunfang (沈運芳) at Xinjian Village, Weishan County on November 1, 2009.

¹⁶ Li Hongwei, “Yü min de xi su,” 171.



Photo 3.50 “Carrying the Box”



Photo 3.51 Relatives and friends honor the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy

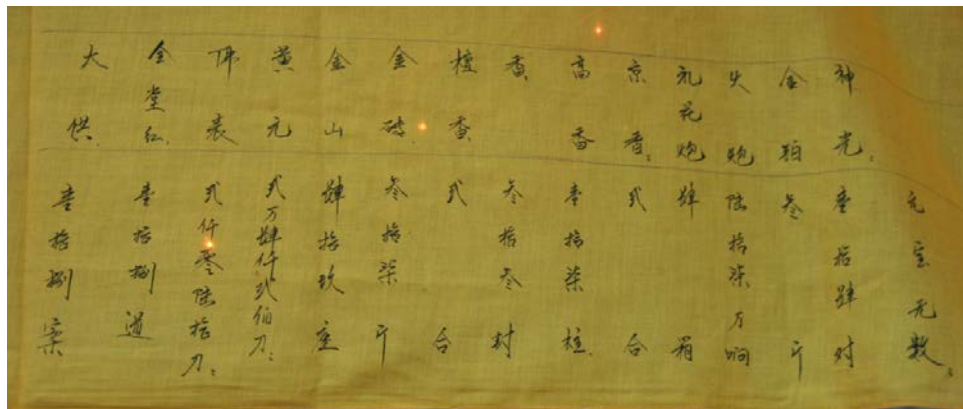


Photo 3.52 The “bill of devoted hearts”



Photo 3.53 “Hanging reds.”

This greeting event is a social arena of “face” for both the host lineage and the congratulators. The line of congratulators with gifts is long, and the onlookers are crowded around. Onlookers comment not only the gifts of individual congratulators, but also on the relations and reputations of the host lineage. All foods are sent to the kitchen for the following banquet, and the paper-money, firecrackers, and paper gold ingots are piled like hills outside the ceremony site. They are all about “face” and performance: the congratulators show off their lavishness and generosity, and the host lineage displays their good social relations. For instance, at the Observance held in 2009, the Shen lineage received gifts from a group of sworn brothers (*ren xiongdi* 仁兄弟). Since the headman of the Shen lineage was a leader of one of the only two existing *Duangu* ritualist troupes, this group of sworn brothers demonstrated the Shen lineage’s good social relations. The sworn brothers included the village head (party secretary), owners of transportation fleets, and the leader of another *Duangu* troupe, all of whom were very influential among boat people.¹⁷ The gifts they sent included a grand table of dishes, a long red ribbon, 200 “cuts” of “yellow dollars” (paper-money), one box of incense, a pair of candles, one string of firecrackers, and wine. These sworn brothers and their gifts honored the host lineage and themselves concurrently.

Like the guestbook used at funerals and weddings of most landmen, the “bills of devoted hearts” are records of gifts and guests that the host has to repay with comparable or even more valuable gifts when the congratulators themselves hold weddings, death rituals, or the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy. These are records of social interactions and networks. For normally dispersed boat people, the Observance provides a

¹⁷ Here “boat people” refers to those whose ancestors lived on boats. Some of them still live on boats, and others already resettled on land.

chance to reunite not only lineage members, but also friends and relatives. For influential lineages, their Observances usually involve the entire community.

Freshening up the Deities (*shu xi shen* 梳洗神)

While the congratulators are offering their gifts, an important liturgy is conducted inside the inner altar: to freshen up the deities on the scrolls. The host lineage prepares several sets of materials for each *Duangu* ritualist to renew the images of the spirits: a washbowl, a towel, a comb, a mirror, a needle, wine and cockscomb blood, all of which have to be brand new. Each *Duangu* ritualist holds a needle, which touches the wine and cockscomb blood slightly, to skim the eyes of deities of a scroll. With the other hand he holds the comb, towel, and mirror from the washbowl and scans the entire scroll. These two actions symbolize “opening eyes” (*kai guang* 開光) and “washing and dressing the deities” (*shu xi shen* 梳洗神). Each ritualist has to repeat the same actions for each scroll until all scrolls are freshened up. This liturgy is one of the most significant rituals throughout the Observance, because the *Duangu* ritualists symbolically renew all scrolls and reactivate the efficacy of all the deities of each family. In fact, before the Observance began, all scrolls were sent to painters to renovate the images and add new decorations with gold ink, which is called “returning to the natal family” (*hui niangjia* 回娘家). With these two symbolic liturgies, dispersed boat people have a chance to collectively renew the efficacy of the deities on scrolls stored on their boats every five or ten years. Outside the Observance, there is no other occasion to do so. Boat people can only offer sacrifices to deities during a series of New Year rituals of sending off and welcoming deities held by individual families.

The liturgy of freshening up deities is held for all spirits, not only the ancestors. Though the Observance is called the “Continuation of Genealogy” and held by lineages, the fundamental meaning is to reconnect to all deities and ancestors and to renew the boat people’s relationships with all the spirits they worship on scrolls. This differs from landsmen’s ordinary lineage rituals, which are only related to the ancestors. All boat people wish to renew the efficacy of the spirits and therefore are willing to spend money on luxurious sacrifices, despite their poor economic situation. The quinquennial or decennial cycle also allows boat people to save money for the Observance. The boat people have thus developed an expedient means of solving the difficulties of scattered distribution and poverty simultaneously.

Beating the Weight (*datuo* 打碇)

After all the scrolls are freshened up, a purification liturgy is held: *datuo* (打碇). A weight is soaked in alcohol in a dipper, and the alcohol is ignited. Then the dipper with its

flame is carried around the inner altar, especially around the scrolls.¹⁸ Now the scrolls of deities and ancestors are completely purified and have renewed efficacy.

Chen Jiulong *Jiangjun* and Offering Living Sacrifices

After the greetings of friends and relatives, another spirit possession follows. The third *Duangu* ritualist practices this ritual, and is possessed by Chen Jiulong *Jiangjun*, another water god overseeing rivers and lakes. The procedure of the spirit possession is basically the same as previous ones. Several live pigs, goats, and cocks are presented one by one in front of Chen Jiulong *Jiangjun*. A *Duangu* ritualist sprinkles wine on the heads of these live sacrifices until they shake their heads, which signifies the satisfaction of Chen Jiulong. Thus these live sacrifices are taken outside and killed immediately. They are presented in front of the deities and ancestors before they are cooked in the kitchen for the coming banquet. The presentation of sacrifices is call *xianbai* (獻白), which means all the live animals are truly killed and presented without cheating.



Photo 3.54 Offering live sacrifices (a goat).

¹⁸ Interview with Jin Zhongyu on April 17, 2010. Li Hongwei, “Yü min de xi su,” 166. She Kangle, “Weishan hu yu min zong zu de dang xia shi jian,” 45–56. This purification ritual *datuo* was widely used on different occasions: before childbirth, the Continuation of Genealogy, New Year, and after suffering a series of misfortunes.



Photo 3.55 *Xianbai*.

Banquet

The host provides a feast for the guests and congratulators who come from different places to honor the Observance. Besides the aforementioned greeting foods from relatives and friends, the host lineage prepares lavish foods not only for treating guests and participants, but also for preserving the “face” of the lineage. Diners tend to judge whether the host is generous or stingy by the food and wine offered. In the past, diners enjoyed the food on their own boats, and the dishes were served by little boats. There were also large boats that could cater for hundreds of diners. As more and more *Duangu* Ceremonies are now held on shore, the banquets are also served ashore.

The banquet also provides a platform for social networks. The friends and relatives usually spread out across various waters now have a chance to reunite and renew their relationships. The banquet and greeting gifts are the main resources for the boat people to maintain their *guanxi* (關係), or social connections, as Mayfair Mei-hui Yang and Yunxiang Yan point out.¹⁹ Although boat people are spread across various distant waters, the need to maintain social connections with relatives and friends remains unchanged. Occasions of reunion, like the Continuation of Genealogy or the *Tangshen* Assembly, provide boat people with the chance to interact with each other and renew their relationships, transcending the natural obstacles. In fact, the interaction occurs throughout the whole process of the *Duangu* Ceremony. When the boat people from distant waters come to the event they are hosted by local friends and relatives. The visiting boat people

¹⁹ Mayfair Mei-hui Yang, *Gifts, Favors, and Banquets: the Art of Social Relationships in China* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994). Yunxiang Yan, *The Flow of Gifts: Reciprocity and Social Networks in a Chinese Village* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

are treated to dishes and wine by different families on different days, since various old friends and relatives want to show their hospitality.



Photo 3.56 Lavish dishes for the banquet.



Photo 3.57 The banquet for relatives and friends.

After the banquet, there is a short break before the next ritual opera is staged.

***Zhang Xiang Prepares the Dowry for His Sister's Wedding* (張相打嫁妝/張將軍)**

This short opera about Mr. Zhang Xiang's preparation for his sister's wedding narrates the hagiography of the guardian deity of the Huai River, Zhang *Jiangjun*. The storyline of the ritual opera is very similar to the written version recorded in a Ming gazetteer. *Huai'an fu zhi* (淮安府志[Gazetteer of the Huai'an Prefecture]) identifies the deity Zhang *Jiangjun* as Zhang Xiang (張襄), a merchant during the reign of the Ming Hongzhi Emperor (弘治 r. 1487—1505), who was drowned by boatmen at Wuzongtang (伍宗堂) when he sailed south to trade.²⁰ He is said to have appeared in his mother's

²⁰ Fang Shangzu (方尚祖), *Huai'an fu zhi* (淮安府志[Gazetteer of the Huai'an Prefecture]) (N.p.,

dream so she could locate his corpse and ask for justice, which demonstrates his efficacy. Zhang Xiang later became a river god of *Xiaohekou* (小河口). The official history of the Qing Dynasty also records the cult of Zhang Xiang (張襄), who was worshiped at Qinghe (清河), namely Huai'an, and enfeoffed with the title of Manifest and Efficacious *Jiangjun* Who Protects the Grand Canal (*Zhangling weicao Jiangjun* 彰靈衛漕將軍).²¹ The ritual opera has a different, but similar story.

The ritual opera *Zhang Xiang Prepares the Dowry for Sister's Wedding* depicts the hagiography of Zhang *Jiangjun*.²² Zhang Xiang loses his parents when he is young and he raises his little sister Zhang Rong (張榮) by himself. When the sister is about to marry, Zhang Xiang begins to prepare her dowry. He orders his attendant to hire a boat to Huai'an for purchasing the dowries. To satisfy his sister, Zhang Xiang buys many gifts and daily necessities. An incense pot is so heavy that the boat owner, Widow Li Suzhen, (李素珍) and her sons Bai Long (白龍) and Bai Hu (白虎) mistakenly think Mr. Zhang carries gold. They treat Zhang Xiang to lavish dishes and wine and drug him to sleep. Then Zhang Xiang is thrown into the water and drowned. The Jade Emperor approves of his conduct in taking care of his little sister and enfeoffs him as a river god to protect navigators around the area of Huai'an. It is worth noting that at the scene of drowning I observed enacted in two different ceremonies, the drugged and drowned figures had to be performed by the lineage members, not the *Duangu* ritualists. The tied extra lay on the ground and were suddenly possessed, making exaggerated motions. The *Duangu* ritualists quickly gave the possessed extras something to smell and drew talismans with fingers on their faces. Thus the possessed extras regained consciousness. The *Duangu* ritualists emphasized that these two possessed extras were not performers, but lineage members; so the possession was real, and not “performed” by the *Duangu* ritualists. I interviewed one of the possessed lineage members, and he told me that he suddenly lost consciousness and remembered nothing during the trance. When he regained consciousness, he made a deep obeisance, and his face looked terrified. The audience believed that Zhang *Jiangjun* was there to demonstrate his efficacy. The spirit possession by amateurs seems to be more convincing. After the unexpected spirit possession, an exorcism *Datuo* is practiced to purify the platform.

Boat people believe Zhang *Jiangjun* is the chief *Jiangjun* among the 72 *Jiangjuns*

1621—1627), *juan* 9, 7. Both 相 and 襄 are pronounced *xiang*. Since most boat people were not well educated, they could have possibly transliterated a wrong character for the deity.

²¹ Zhao Erxun (趙爾巽) ed., *Qing shi gao* (清史稿 [Draft history of the Qing Dynasty]) (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1977—1977[1928]), *juan* 84, 2547.

²² The storyline described here is based on my observation of the ritual opera, interviews with the *Duangu* ritualists and onlookers, and a summary in *Zhongguo qu yi zhi Shandong juan*. See QYZSD, 170.

under *Jinlong si Daiwang*. His cult has been particularly popular in the Huai River basin, where most of the boat people came from and frequented. Traditionally, the river spirit of the Huai River is associated with Pei Yue (裴說)²³, *Wuzhiqi* (無支祁)²⁴ or *Sizhou dasheng* (泗州大聖)²⁵ who conquered *Shuimu* (水母), but the boat people of the Weishan Lakes never linked them to the Huai River.²⁶ Suqian County (宿遷縣), close to Huai'an and the Huai River, has a local legend about the cult of Zhang *Jiangjun*. The name and date of the deity are identical to the account in the aforementioned local gazetteer. The storyline is similar to the ritual opera. After the deity demonstrated his efficacy, the aquatic bandits were scared and disappeared from this area. Hence the navigation and transportation in this area became safe. Therefore the Ming emperor enfeoffed Zhang with the title of *Jiangjun* and built a temple in his honor. The place was called Zhangmiao (張廟[Temple of Zhang]) thereafter. Within the temple one could find not only the statue of Zhang *Jiangjun*, but also the murderer, Widow Bai [Li Suzhen].²⁷ Zhang *Jiangjun* plays a crucial role in the ceremony. The pennon of Zhang *Jiangjun* is one of the four pennons raised throughout the entire *Duangu* Ceremony, and the deity is one of the four spirits appearing in the spirit possessions. Zhang's hagiography is also performed in the ritual opera. Within the boat people's pantheon, Zhang *Jiangjun* is believed to be the chief *Jiangjun* of the 72 *Jiangjuns* under the chief water god *Jinlong si Daiwang*. Zhang *Jiangjun* oversees the Huai River basin where most boat people came from and frequented; therefore, he is the major guardian god for the boat people. From the official records and the local legend, it appears that the cult of Zhang *Jiangjun* began in the mid-Ming period and spread in the valley of the Huai River. The boat people's ritual opera about Zhang *Jiangjun* cannot be earlier than the late fifteenth century, the period when Mr. Zhang Xiang lived. This is further evidence that the *Duangu* ritual tradition was formed after the mid Ming Dynasty, not back in the Tang Dynasty as the

²³ See Lü Zongli (呂宗力) and Luan Baoqun (欒保群) eds., *Zhongguo min jian zhu shen* (中國民間諸神 [Chinese popular deities]) (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiao yu chu ban she, 2000), 300.

²⁴ See Poul Andersen, *The Demon Chained under Turtle Mountain: The History and Mythology of the Chinese River Spirit Wuzhiqi* (Berlin: G und H Verlag, 2001). Also see Luan Baoqun (欒保群), *Zhongguo shen guai da ci dian* (中國神怪大辭典 [Dictionary of Chinese deities and demons]) (Beijing: Ren min chu ban she, 2009), 197 and 547.

²⁵ Luan Baoqun, *Zhongguo shen guai da ci dian*, 464.

²⁶ *Shuimu* was mentioned several times in liturgies or ritual operas, but the goddess was not directly connected with the spirit of the Huai River. For information about *Shuimu*, see Luan Baoqun, *Zhongguo shen guai da ci dian*, 457—8. Also see Li Jianping (李劍平) ed., *Zhongguo shen hua ren wu ci dian* (中國神話人物辭典 [Dictionary of Chinese mythological figures]) (Xi'an: Shaanxi ren min chu ban she, 1998), 133. *Shuimu* is said to be the variant of *Wuzhiqi*.

²⁷ Yang Yongjie (楊永杰), "Huangdi chi jian de Zhangmiao (皇帝敕建的張廟 [The Zhang temple enfeoffed by an emperor])," from Suqian dang an xin xi wang (宿遷檔案信息網 [Archival information of Suqian]), <http://scdaj.cn/age.asp?agid=1>, accessed on April 3, 2012.

Duangu ritualists often claim.

To wrap up the ritual opera about Zhang *Jiangjun*, the *Duangu* ritualists recite scripts of how the deity was enfeoffed. Then the Altar Head leads all participants to make a deep obeisance to end the ritual opera, which is followed by an important ritual about improving luck.

“Comforting the Constellations” (順星)

“Comforting the Constellations” is a crucial ritual for bringing good luck and removing unhappiness for all participants in the following years. The ritual is associated with thought about the way constellations affect human lives. In traditional Chinese astrology, the sky ecliptic is divided into 28 constellations (*er shi ba xiu* 二十八宿), and each constellation corresponds to a human’s good or bad luck.²⁸ In addition, each constellation is linked to an animal²⁹ and associated with one of the “seven luminaries”³⁰ (*qi yao* 七曜). If all the animals are comforted, bad luck is replaced with good luck. The boat people share the same cosmology. In a manual of a scroll painter, the list of the ritual talismans for “Comforting the Constellations” includes the 28 constellations. To begin this ritual, talismans and food offerings are prepared in a bamboo dustpan. Hundreds of incense sticks are ignited and distributed to all participants who kneel down in front of the altar. This liturgy, practiced by one *Duangu* ritualist with a hand bell, lasts about 30 minutes.

²⁸ Luan Baoqun, *Zhongguo shen guai da ci dian*, 119. Also see Richard J. Smith, *Fortune-Tellers and Philosophers: Divination in Traditional Chinese Society* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 63.

²⁹ Smith, *Fortune-Tellers and Philosophers*, 136.

³⁰ The seven luminaries include the sun, the moon, Mercury (water planet), Venus (gold planet), Mars (fire planet), Jupiter (wood planet), and Saturn (earth planet).

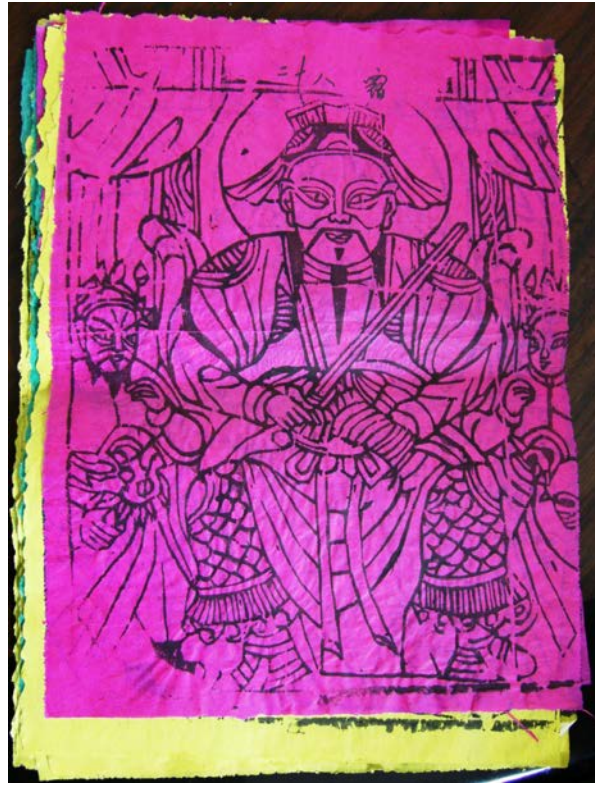


Photo 3.58 A talisman of the 28 constellations for Comforting the Constellations.



Photo 3.59 Talismans and Sacrifices for "Comforting the Constellations"

"Comforting the Constellations" can alter the luck of ceremony participants, says the

leader of *Duangu* ritualists, Shen Jiaru. This is one of the main purposes of the *Duangu* Ceremony. All participants, including lineage members and onlookers, kneel down and hold incense sticks while a *Duangu* ritualist recites the liturgy script and shakes a hand bell. The script describes how a prince discarded royal life and pursued a religious career, which resembled the life of Buddha. The script also narrates how to comfort the constellations and sweep away the bad luck of the 12 Chinese Zodiac animals. The blessing is not only for the lineage members, but also for onlookers. Therefore, this liturgy attracts numerous participants to pray for better luck, though the time is usually very late in the evening and the reciting is monophonic. To the audience, the reciting is fast and incomprehensible, but each paragraph ends with the same sentence *la ma fo lai bai wo fo ming deng* (喇嘛佛來拜我佛明燈), so the audience knows when to make an obeisance. Jin Zhongyu, another leader of *Duangu* ritualists, says the participants have to bow 148 times throughout this liturgy.³¹ Before the *Duangu* ritualist finishes reciting, all incense sticks are collected and offered in the incense burner. At the end, the ritualist leads the participants to make an obeisance. All the ritual talismans are burned. This liturgy ends the programs of the fourth day.



Photo 3.60 A *Duangu* Ritualist is practicing “Comforting the Constellations”

Constellations are closely associated with directions and navigation. For boat dwellers, constellations can provide direction at night on lakes without significant landmarks. This is possibly one of the reasons that the boat people take the constellations seriously.

³¹ Jin Zhongyu, April 17, 2010.

**Fifth Day: Master Zhang Abandons his Wife Dingxiang, “Cutting off the Deities,”
and “Sending off Deities”**

Time	Opera	Proceeding
0–4:00	<i>Master Zhang Abandons Dingxiang</i> 張郎休丁香	
4:00		Sweep <i>Shengdous</i> 掃斗
5:00		Spirit Possession: Apical Ancestor 老祖先
5:30		Roll up Scrolls 收家堂畫
5:45		Cut off 斬絕神
5:45		Take Scrolls Home 神出棚

Table 3.9 Day 5 Schedule

Master Zhang Abandons his Wife Dingxiang

After a short break, the last day of the Continuation of Genealogy begins with the last ritual opera *Master Zhang Abandons Dingxiang* (*Zhang lang xiu Dingxiang* 張郎休丁香) at midnight of the fifth day. This opera narrates the hagiography of the Stove God.³² Thus the opera is also called the “Stove God.” It is said that Mr. Zhang Yunfang (張雲方) and his wife Guo Dingxiang (郭丁香) were two stars in the heaven, serving as the attendants of the Heavenly Empress (*Tianfu niangniang* 天府娘娘). They accidentally broke glasses; as a result, they were punished with descent to the earthly world. Guo Dingxiang was born into a wealthy family, and Zhang Yunfang’s family had a parallel social status to the Guo’s. The two families arranged a marriage when they were children. Mr. Zhang indulged himself in eating and playing, while Guo Dingxiang lived frugally. Zhang had a paramour Li Haitang (李海棠) who defamed Guo by saying she had committed adultery and was doomed to harm her husband, her children, and her parents-in-law. At the time Zhang was annoyed his wife could not get pregnant. After hearing Li’s slander, Zhang beat Dingxiang cruelly whenever she had lapses. The action of beating demonstrates how the *Duangu* ritualists use the fan-drum to perform symbolically. The performer of Sanlang stands and beats the drum above the squatting Dingxiang. As the fan-drum rotates, Dingxiang tumbles on the ground. This performance requires special skills and becomes one of the characteristics of the *Duangu* ritual opera. Zhang’s mother originally tried to stop him from beating the daughter-in-law, but was later persuaded by the slander of Zhang’s paramour. Eventually, Guo Dingxiang was abandoned and carried out by an old ox which was performed by a *Duangu* ritualist

³² The storyline described here is based on my observation of the ritual opera, interviews with the *Duangu* ritualists and onlookers, and a summary in *Zhongguo qu yi zhi Shandong juan*. See QYZSD, 162.

covered by a comforter.



Photo 3.61 Beating Guo Dingxiang.



Photo 3.62 Old Ox Carrying Dingxiang.

Destitute Dingxiang wandered to Fan Village (*Fan jia zhuang* 范家莊). An old woman, Mrs. Fan, took her in. To repay the Fan family, Dingxiang remarried Fan Sanlang (范三郎), the son of Mrs. Fan. Sanlang worked diligently and took care of Dingxiang gently. One day, when he was plowing the farm, he discovered many gold ingots and became wealthy. Meanwhile, Mr. Zhang indulged in a luxurious lifestyle and ran out of property. One day, Zhang's house caught fire and he was blinded trying to put out the fire. Destitute Zhang Yunfang wandered about and begged for a living. When he arrived at the house of his paramour Li Haitang and begged her to take him in, she splashed dirty water to dismiss him. Mr. Zhang had no place to go, and so stayed in a temple of the Earth God. One day, the Earth God appeared in his dream and told him that Fan Village was handing out alms to the poor. Yunfang felt hungry and decided to visit Fan Village. Unfortunate as Zhang had become, he missed the doles of food in a streak of three meals. Every time it was his turn, the chopsticks, soups, bowls, or steamed buns ran out. Dingxiang was kind and told the attendant to let the poor beggar in. Dingxiang recognized him as her former husband. She cooked for him and slipped some gold ingots and her dowry Golden Clove³³ hairpin into the food and alms. As Mr. Zhang ate her dishes, he realized the kind lady was his abandoned wife. He felt ashamed and awakened from his wrongdoings. Repenting what he had done, Mr. Zhang committed suicide by smashing his head into the stove. Guo Dingxiang also hanged herself. Her current husband Fan Sanlang was terrified and threw himself in the well. Fan's mother was too sad to live and then smashed her head into the wall. As mentioned earlier, all the main figures of ritual operas have to die at the end so they can be deified. The Jade Emperor sympathized with the fact that Mr. Zhang repented of his wrongdoings eventually, so Zhang was enfeoffed as the Stove God. Guo Dingxiang was deified as *Qigu* (七姑), a goddess in charge of women's needlework.³⁴ Mr. Fan became the King of the Well Spirit (*Jinglingwang* 井靈王), and his mother became the Silk Madam (*Chousiniang* 綢絲娘)³⁵. The hagiography of the Stove God has various versions. The version of the boat people is similar to a local opera *Zaoshu* (灶書), or the narration of the Stove God, which is popular in the Huai River basin, an area covering the eastern and northeastern Anhui, north and northwestern Jiangsu, and southern and southwestern Shandong. The local

³³ Dingxiang means clove.

³⁴ *Qigu* literally means the seventh maid. She was widely known as *Zigu* 紫姑, or the Purple Maid. This goddess was invoked by ladies in the evening of the Lantern Festival on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month. This custom had been popular nationwide since the Song Dynasty. According to Wang Chunku, a scroll painter, the custom had been observed among the boat people before the Cultural Revolution.

³⁵ Wang Chunku explained that the Silk Madam was also a goddess that ladies invoked.

operas Shandong Huagu (花鼓[Flower drum]) and Shandong Qinshu (琴書[narration with a zither-like instrument]), popular in southern Shandong, also have similar stories. In the Anhui area, *Zaoshu* is performed by the carpenters after they complete constructing a new building. It is not only associated with celebration, but also relates to the ritual of the construction completion.³⁶ The *Duangu* Ceremony also places the ritual opera of the Stove God at the end for the ritual function. As the Stove God and other deities ascend to the heaven, soup is splashed; then a dog sips the soup and ascends with the deities.³⁷ When the *Duangu* ritualists recite the ascending of the deities, all previously invited deities are sent back to Heaven simultaneously.³⁸ Thereafter, the *Duangu* ritualists can finalize the entire ceremony. At the end of the ritual opera, all lineage members reappear to prepare for the closure of the ceremony at around four o'clock in the morning. A series of rituals is held to wrap up the ceremony.

Sweeping *Shengdous*

The first ritual to close the ceremony is “Sweeping *Shengdous*” (*Saodou* 掃斗). All *Shengdous* are removed from the inner altar and placed on tables at the center of the platform. Each *Duangu* ritualist is in charge of a certain number of *Shengdou* for this ritual. The main purpose of this ritual is to bring in more wealth for the lineage members. Five portions of real and paper money are placed around each *Shengdou*. The *Duangu* ritualists use reed brooms and bamboo dustpans to collect the money in five directions symbolically. The ritualists also shake the flags of the five directions in the *Shengdous* to “stabilize the soldiers” (*Wenbing* 穩兵). The flags are called “flags of soldier sacrifice” (*Bingji qi* 兵祭旗).³⁹ After all the money is collected, the *Duangu* ritualists remove all the decorative and ritual objects in the *Shengdous*, except the grain. Then they put all the collected money into the *Shengdous*. This ritual ends here, and the lineage members of each *Shengdou* thereafter arrange how to split the grain and money which symbolize the wealth that they can gain in the following years. At this moment, most rituals of the entire ceremony are completed. It is time to ask whether the ancestors are satisfied with the sacrifices and the rituals performed by the lineage members.

³⁶ QYZAH, 73—74.

³⁷ This part was recited in the script only.

³⁸ Jin Zhongyu, November 7, 2009.

³⁹ The significance of the flags and soldiers is not explicitly explained by the *Duangu* ritualists.



Photo 3.63 Sweeping *Shengdous*.



Photo 3.64 Splitting the Grain in *Shengdous*.

Spirit Possession of the Apical Ancestor

An old lineage member plays the role of the apical ancestor to determine whether the entire ceremony has been successful or not. Since this ritual involves complicated ritual procedures, an experienced *Duangu* ritualist is usually expected to perform it. If the lineage has no one qualified, a non-lineage *Duangu* ritualist can substitute in the role. The person who acts as the apical ancestor puts on a black scarf with one talisman on the top and holds the other two talismans in two hands. A black cloth covers his hip and thighs. Unlike the aforementioned spirit possessions, this time the person possessed by the apical ancestor does not take off his clothes and practice blood sacrifice. Instead, this spirit

possession is more conversational. The chief *Duangu* ritualist stands next to the possessed and communicates with the apical ancestor. At first, the *Duangu* ritualist leads all lineage members to make an obeisance and uses divination to confirm if the apical ancestor arrives at the platform. Then the ritualist asks a series of questions to make sure the ancestor is satisfied with each item offered throughout the ceremony. The possessed person does not say a word, but shakes a ritual staff to respond. The ritualist confirms the answers by making divinations. The yellow proclamation of the sacrifices and donors is then presented in front of the apical ancestor who reads it thoroughly. He then ignites the proclamation and splashes wine for the deities. At the end of this ritual, the chief *Duangu* ritualist makes a divination to confirm the apical ancestor is satisfied and agrees to complete the ceremony. After receiving a positive response, the ritualist announces the closure of the ceremony. All lineage members flow into the inner altar to take back their scrolls.



Photo 3.65 The spirit possession of the apical ancestor.



Photo 3.66 The apical ancestor reviews the yellow proclamation of the sacrifices and donors.

Rolling up the Scrolls and Cutting off the Deities

All scrolls are rolled up and wrapped in red ribbons which were given by guests. After all lineage members have carefully wrapped the scrolls, they line up in the order of the *Shengdous*. The main line will be the first to leave the platform. The gate of the platform is blocked by a bench and a pile of paper money and ingots. On the bench is a pair of chopsticks covered by a paper-cut of twins, and at the center of the paper-cut is a symbol of an ancient coin. The chief *Duangu* ritualist then utilizes an axe to cut the chopsticks and the paper-cut right at the coin symbol. The axing must be a clear cut, because it symbolizes that all the deities and ancestors worshiped during the entire ceremony are happy with the offerings and will not come back to ask for more. The cutting resembles a contract between the worshippers and the spirits. If the ritualist cannot cut clear at once, another ceremony would be required to please the spirits. Any misfortune in the lineage would be ascribed to the unsuccessful axing. The failed ritualist would no longer be trusted. Hence everyone is very serious and nervous about the moment. Once the ritualist successfully cuts the chopsticks, everyone relaxes and proceeds to the final procedure of the ceremony - to cross over the burning paper money and ingots. By crossing over the fire, the lineage members confirm all the scrolls of ancestors and divinities are purified, and there is no evil spirit slipping into the scrolls.



Photo 3.67 Rolling up scrolls.



Photo 3.68 Lining up to leave the platform.



Photo 3.69 The paper-cut and chopsticks for Cutting off the Deities.



Photo 3.70 Cutting off the Deities



Photo 3.71 Crossing over the fire.

Taking the Scrolls Home and Settling down the Scrolls

After leaving the platform, all lineage members carry their own scrolls home immediately by car, three-wheeler, boat, or foot. Another ritual of settling down the scrolls awaits at home. Before the scrolls enter each house, firecrackers are set off to exorcise it. All *Duangu* ritualists are invited to officiate over the last ritual, namely *Anwen* (安文 [Script of pacifying]), in the lineage members' houses. It can take a whole day for the ritualists to finish the task. Some lineage members' houses are too far away to

return immediately, so they may request the ritualist settle down the scrolls in a temporary room. If there is someone in the family who is able to conduct the ritual, no *Duangu* ritualist is required.



Photo 3.72 Taking the scroll home by boat.



Photo 3.73 Taking the scroll home by boat.



Photo 3.74 Taking the scroll home by car (from Shanghai).



Photo 3.75 Taking the scroll home by three-wheeler or on foot.



Photo 3.76 Setting off firecrackers before the scrolls enters the house.

To settle down the scrolls, the ritual requires a memorial of *Anwen*, five colorful paper-cut flags of the five directions, a live cock, a knife, and wine and food sacrifice. The incense sticks are inserted in grain from the *Shengdous*. The *Duangu* ritualist leads the male family members to make an obeisance and then recites scripts of the ritual. He then holds the cock in his left hand and the flags in the right hand and waves the flags to indicate the direction home for the ancestors and divinities on the scrolls. The ritualist also utters some blessing words to please the family. Then he uses the knife to cut the cock's neck slightly, avoiding killing it immediately. Some cock blood is collected in a bowl, and the dying cock is held by the ritualist again. The ritualist asks a series of questions about whether the family will have a fortunate and safe life for the following years, and the cock is nudged to make a sound after each question, symbolizing positive responses. After the questions, the cock is placed in a bamboo dustpan. The ritualist leads

the family to make an obeisance again to complete the ritual. Some paper money and ingots, as well as the flags, are burned.

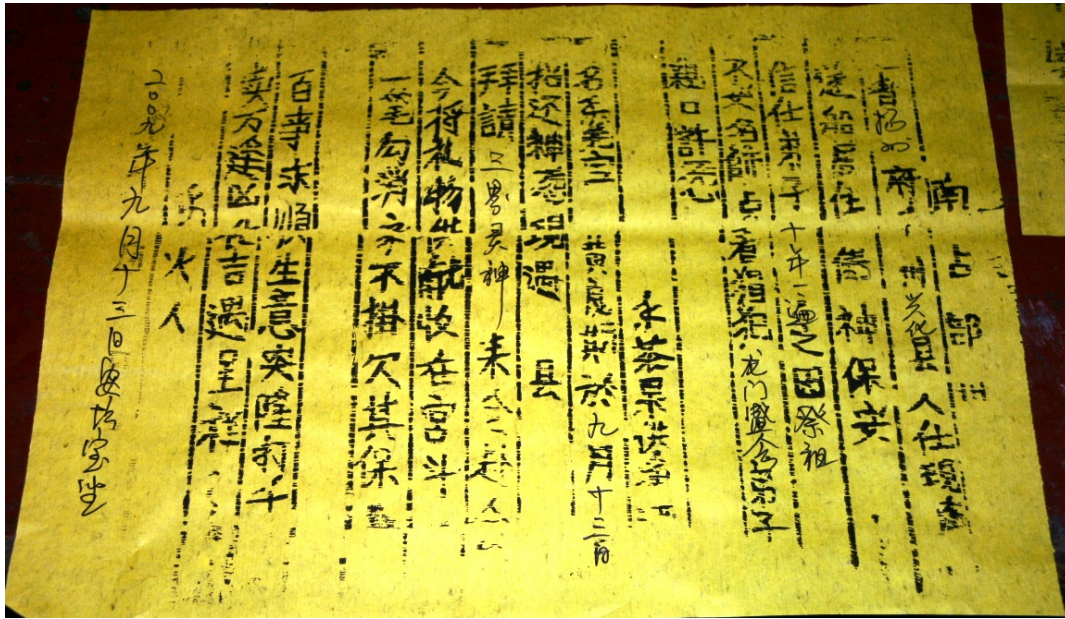


Photo 3.77 Memorial of Anwen.



Photo 3.78 Ritual objects for Anwen.



Photo 3.79 Anwen: Settling down the scrolls.



Photo 3.80 Burning the ritual objects and paper money and ingots.

To restore the scrolls in the shrine box, the position and order of the scrolls matters. The shrine box has three or four levels of compartments, and the inner spot of the highest level is for the most respected.⁴⁰ The scrolls of the Chief Divinities, Ancestors, *Daiwang*, and God of Wealth, bundled in a roll, are placed in the most respectful position. Then, another roll with the Tangshen, Patriarchs, and Zhong Kui scrolls is placed at the outer position of the first level. The hierarchy of the scrolls can be seen in the table below.

⁴⁰ Hu Xiansheng (胡憲生) explained the positions and order of the scrolls in the sacred altar. Interview at Xinjian Village, Weishan County on April 18, 2010.

After all scrolls are carefully rolled up and placed in the shrine box, a red cloth covers the whole altar, which finally ends the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy.

Level	Scrolls
1	Chief Divinities, Ancestors, <i>Daiwang</i> , God of Wealth (inner) Tangshen, Patriarchs, Zhong Kui (outer)
2	Bodhisattva, Cloud Immortal, Maids
3	Master
4	Goose Spirit (inner) Eight Spirits (outer)

Table 3.10 The arrangement of scrolls in the shrine box.



Photo 3.81 Shrine box storing the scrolls.



Photo 3.82 Shrine box storing the scrolls.

Concluding Remarks

Lineage rituals, such as the Continuation of Genealogy and the Rotation of Lineage Scrolls, involve people descended from the same ancestors through the male line. The main purposes of lineage rituals are to commemorate common ancestors and pray for prosperity of the kin. They helped reinforce the solidarity of kinfolk, regardless the ecological difficulties for the sporadic boat-dwellers to reunite. Unlike the lost memory of family history among the Dan peoples in south China,⁴¹ the kinship rituals of the boat-dwellers in Weishan Lakes, as well as other waters covered in this study, helped preserve their genealogies and connected disperse kinfolk to an imagined indivisible lineage. Although the ways the boat people maintained the kinship relationship were distinct from those of land-based people, the core ideas and values of ancestor worship and family solidarity are identical, transcending their ecological differences.

All lineage rituals have helped people with the same blood tie reinforce solidarity through commemorating ancestors and praying for a better life for offspring. In addition, various ritual specialists assisted the floating population preserving genealogy through

⁴¹ He Xi, *Yi shen yi zu: Yue xi nan xin yang gou jian de she hui shi*, 254. In her finding among the Dan peoples in south China, boat-dwellers were illiterate and could not preserve genealogy.

ritual activities and materials, especially the ancestral scroll. The importance of ancestor worship to the boat-dwelling community was identical to the land-based people, albeit the fundamental differences in lifestyle and ecology.

CONCLUSION

As a student of Chinese popular religion primarily interested in the ritual tradition of the majority of the population, why did I select the non-mainstream boat-dwelling fishing population as my subject, and how can this research contribute to our understanding of Chinese popular religion? Little is known about the constantly mobile and isolated boat people and for their own sake they deserve close attention. The boat people can also help us rethink and broaden our current knowledge about the majority of the population if we contrast the distinctions and compare the similarities between them and the land-based farmers. Because of their mobility and isolation, these boat people have preserved original ritual practices and beliefs that can be traced back two centuries. As most recent studies of Chinese popular religion deal with the post-1980s restoration, my research centers on the continuity of an unbroken ritual tradition. The boat people's isolation reduced external influences on their culture, such as the institutions and ideologies of the state or established religions. The influence of the environment on their religious culture thus became more obvious. The study of these boat people can therefore effectively showcase how a living environment and religious culture interact with each other. The isolated floating population also provides an excellent example of ritual autarky, and the declining number of the *Duangu* ritualists reveals the transition from ritual autarky to ritual professionalization. I will elaborate upon these findings in the following sections.

“A Living Fossil” of a Local Ritual Opera

The *Duangu* Ceremony has been passed down for more than two centuries and has not been interrupted by political or ideological anti-religious campaigns. The boat people intentionally avoided direct contact with landsmen and kept their distance from state control. Their mobility on the water made their culture inaccessible to landsmen. Moreover, the boat people were culturally conservative in that they dared not change their ritual tradition, fearful of offending deities and ancestors. Although the members who joined the floating community later might have brought in new cultural elements, the changes to the culture were relatively minor. As a result, their ritual tradition, a series of ritual activities and objects centering on the *Duangu* Ceremony, has remained intact. The *Duangu* Ceremony indeed deserves the title of National Intangible Cultural Heritage, granted by the Ministry of Culture of the PRC Government in 2011. Today scholars have an opportunity to observe an austere form of ritual opera, in that *Duangu* ritualist-performers use simple fan-drums and unpretentious dresses to deliver semi-oral and semi-dramatic performances. The *Duangu* Ceremony showcases a transition from

storytelling to operatic drama.

In addition, the *Duangu* Ceremony is a missing piece in a jigsaw puzzle concerning the entire Wei Jiulang ritual tradition, which has been influential in eastern and northern China. Scholars now can piece together all ritual operas centering on Wei Jiulang's story from Anhui, Jiangsu, through Shandong to Northeast China. The ritual tradition of Wei Jiulang warrants more trans-regional studies in the future.

Distinctive Characteristics of Boat People's Religious Culture

This study of a group of little known freshwater boat people reveals a number of distinctive customs and religious practices and beliefs. To adapt to life on the water, boat people created new materials and social organizations to cope with difficulties of the boat-dwelling lifestyle. The Tiger-head harness helped prevent children from drowning. The creation of new sets of the scrolls of deities and ancestors to mark family division was also a custom related to the aquatic way of life. The fishing gear and methods also reshaped the boat people's social organizations (*bangs*) and their interaction with *bang* cohorts. Their fishing skills and technologies also conditioned boat people's fishing seasons and the range of their seasonal migration. The boat-dwelling lifestyle and fishing livelihood transformed the customs and social organizations of boat people, which became quite different from those of their counterparts—the farmers on the land.

The change of lifestyle and livelihood thus transformed the religious culture of the boat people. The people on the water maintained a distinctive relationship with nature and faced dissimilar challenges to those faced by farmers. To report the birth or death of a family member to the spiritual world, the boat people informed the Stove God whose picture was posted in the kitchen of every boat. The Stove God then transferred the report to the City God to be registered in the Book of Birth and Death. On boats, the Stove God replaced the position of the Earth God, who reported farmers' birth and death on the land, and this was because boat people spent most of their lives on boats and had little psychological attachment to the land. The cults of *Daiwangs* and *Jiangjuns* certainly characterized the aspirations and fears of the boat people, such as better catches and freedom from shipwreck or drowning. Nonetheless, the deities of lower rankings had the more distinctive characteristics of the aquatic lifestyle. The belief in *Huoji* and *Shuigui* vividly reflect the reality of life on the water.

Other religious practices and beliefs of boat people were transformed to adapt to aquatic life as well. The boat people had imagined a number of water-associated deities that were little known by landmen. The physical ancestral tombs and shrines were transformed into representations on the ancestral scroll, along with an unbroken family

tree of patrilineal tablets. The temples and statues of water-associated deities were also transformed into portable shrine boxes and scrolls on boats. These scrolls of deities and ancestors, along with the lustral or decennial Observance for Continuation of Genealogy, enabled the boat people to maintain their unbroken relationships with floating gods, ghosts and ancestors. The Continuation of Genealogy also reunified lineage members who were spread across various waters in distant provinces and thus it solidified the sense of lineage community. Besides lineage rituals, the boat people also created the *Tangshen* Assembly, which incorporated the *Duangu* Ceremony every five years, or whenever special events occurred, in order to maintain their relationships with deities, given that these boat people had no fixed temples to fulfill their aspirations or seek healing as most farmers could do in villages.

Unchanged Cultural Elements under Distinctive Environmental Conditions

Despite such a different living environment, lifestyle, and livelihood, certain cultural elements of boat people, however, remained unchanged. The resettlement from land houses to boathouses indeed changed certain forms and contents of the boat people's religious culture, but it did not fundamentally transform the core elements. The most important unchanged cultural core is the ancestor worship shared by farmers and boat people alike. Ancestors could not be discarded easily, even though the living environment and lifestyle of the boat people made it very difficult for them to preserve ancestor worship. The land-based tombs and ancestral shrines were not affordable for the majority of the poor boat people. They were informally prevented by landmen from purchasing land or houses, even though some of them were wealthy enough to do so. The boat people nevertheless discovered creative and symbolic ways to preserve ancestor worship and record unbroken patrilineal genealogies, with assistance from the *Duangu* ritualists and scrolls of deities and ancestors. For these boat people, the importance of ancestor worship did not originate from the Confucian ideology or lineage property. The experience of displacement and the rootless mobility of the boat people strengthened the sentiment and need to preserve the unbroken genealogies, so that someday they could trace back to their own origins. The boat people also treated their late ancestors as if they were still around and could affect the fortune or misfortune of the living. Therefore the boat people worshiped their ancestors sincerely and fearfully, praying for good fortune and wishing to ward off misfortune. These practical prayers to ancestors had nothing to do with Confucian values or teachings, even though the territory these boat people frequented was not far away from the hometowns of Confucius and Mencius. Ancestor worship was equally important to farmers and boat people. Today, the boat people are

proud of themselves for preserving the complete rituals of ancestor worship and the unbroken genealogies that many of their neighboring farmers have lost over the past few decades of political and cultural campaigns against ancestor worship and religious activities. The boat people consider themselves to be the orthodox Han Chinese who never lose the “foundation of being Chinese” which refers to ancestor worship and genealogy.¹ On the proclamation of the Observance for the Continuation of Genealogy held by the Shen lineage in November 2009, the idea of lineage or kinship was identified as the foundation of the Chinese peoples.² Ancestor worship has become a foundation of cultural identity for being Chinese, although this idea is culturally constructed and perhaps politically manipulated. That was not the main reason the boat people and their ancestors endeavored to preserve ancestor worship. The boat people simply wanted to show their respect for ancestors, desired their ancestors to bless their offspring and prevent misfortune, and worried about losing the collective memory of family origin and history. This is no different from farmers.

The boat people’s relationships with floating gods and ghosts were also similar to those of farmers. Although the living environment and the fishing livelihood might have changed the forms and contents of the boat people’s pantheon, the way they imagined how spirits interacted with human beings was identical to farmers. Gods and ghosts were considered to coexist with the living and could affect the fate of humans. Boat people believed each body of water had a specific guardian deity who oversaw the territory of that body, which is similar to landsmen’s belief in the Earth God and City God. For instance, Bai *Daiwang* (白大王) was considered the guardian deity of the Weishan Lakes, in charge of fishing production and navigation safety in the lake. The perception of flowing rivers was distinct from that of the fixed territory of land, however. The territory of river gods was fluid. For instance, the guardian deity of the Grand Canal, *Jinlong si Daiwang*, expanded his influence to the basin of the Yellow River, because he was deified at the intersection of the Yellow River and the Grand Canal in southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu in the early Ming period. His influence gradually moved upstream to the middle and upper valley of the Yellow River throughout the Ming-Qing period.

¹ Interview with Shen Jiaru, the head of the Xinjian *Duangu* troupe, on June 21, 2009. It is worth noting that the Dan boat people in South China imitated the ancestor worship and reconstructed their genealogies after they resettled on land, in order to claim their origin of the central plain (Chinese heartland) and to legitimate their “Chineseness.” The freshwater boat people of North China had a very different history and purpose from the Dan peoples.

² “An Open Letter to Lineage Members (*gao zu ren shu* 告族人書),” Xinjian Village, Weishan County, Shandong, November 2009. The original Chinese sentences are: “宗族理念的形...是中華民族源遠綿延的標志，中華民族之所以成為文明古國，在很大程度上是因為以宗族觀念為紐帶，才賴以形成強大的凝聚力和向心力。”

Water gods could appear in people's dreams or rescue victims of drowning in the water. Boat people believed that any offense against the deities' images or statues could cause misfortune, while appropriate worship and offerings could bring good fortune. They interacted with deities and demons as if they all coexisted or cohabitated in the same space. The Dragon King is a good example. In the ritual opera *Beheading the Dragon King*, the deity was in charge of rainfall and accidentally caused a catastrophic flood. Hence the Dragon King was sentenced to death, even though he was a deity. The innocent Dragon King was later judged in front of Yama in Hell, and his fate was also recorded in the Book of Birth and Death as if he was a human being. This was another characteristic that the boat people shared with farmers, although they worshiped different spirits and prayed with disparate purposes.

Ritual Autarky vs Professionalization

The *Duangu* ritual tradition provides a very good example of ritual autarky. These boat-dwellers used to have their own ritual practitioners within their communities. The ritual practitioners had no particular differences separating them from other community members. Outside of ritual activities, these ritual practitioners worked like other common boat people. They might be respected for their ritual knowledge and skills, but boat people also enjoyed a certain degree of liberty to adjust rituals or scroll contents to fulfill their own demands. The authority of the ritual practitioners was not beyond challenge.

However, we are witnessing the transition from ritual autarky to professionalization. As most ritual practitioners, especially the *Duangu* ritualists, ceased passing down their ritual knowledge and skills, whether resulting from political intervention or personal considerations, more and more communities did not have sufficient ritual practitioners to maintain the ritual autarky and had to invite external ritual specialists. As the outreach increased, the ritual specialists became too busy to maintain their regular jobs, but the newly increased ritual services were able to compensate for or even enhance their income. We are witnessing a process of ritual professionalization. Ritual autarky still remains in minor rituals that family headmen and knowledgeable, experienced ritual officiants can preside over without calling upon external ritual professionals. As for larger and more complicated ceremonies, communities are losing the capability to fully manage their rituals and therefore often have to invite outside ritual practitioners. If there were a spectrum representing the degree of ritual autonomy, ranging from amateur ritual practitioners at one end to professional ritualists at the other, the position of the boat people would be moving from ritual autarky to ritual professionalism. This also reflects the general weakening of ritual practices and beliefs in the second half of the twentieth

century. More studies are needed to explore this topic further in the future.

Interplay between Environment and Culture

All human activities and cultures are influenced by environment, and vice versa. It is not easy to attribute certain cultural transformations to specific environmental changes, however, because the factors that affect cultures and human activities are often too many and complicated to relate to a single environmental factor or event. Fortunately, the boat people's isolation from landmen and state control reduced a great number of external influences on cultural transformation, which gives us an opportunity to observe how environment and culture interplay over time. These boat people transformed their religious culture to adapt to the change in living environment—they were forced to leave their land and houses and resettle on boats. The boat-dwelling lifestyle and livelihood reshaped their religious practices and beliefs. The boat people created a number of new water-associated deities and developed innovative ways to maintain their relationships with spirits, but the core cultural elements, such as ancestor worship, did not fundamentally change. The core elements of Chinese popular religion were resilient and resistant to environmental change. They withstood environmental change and resumed as soon as possible.³ In the future, global warming may cause the rise of sea levels and create more boat-dwellers whose land and houses would then be inundated. The result of this, scientists have warned, could be the loss of important cultural heritages. I am more optimistic, however, in light of my research, that cultural elements, especially core ones, can resist environmental change and adapt to create new forms.

³ My future research project will focus on what has happened to the boat people who resettled on land since the 1980s. The boat people have re-embraced the Earth God and have imitated the tombs and *fengshui* of landmen in two decades.

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Abbreviations

Note: Items from the archival collections, multivolume document reprint collections, reference works, and periodicals listed below are cited individually in the footnotes but do not have separate bibliographic entries.

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- BPYC Shandong sheng ren min zheng fu shui chan ju hu qu diao cha xiao zu (山東省人民政府水產局[Shandong Provincial Bureau of Aquatic Products]湖區調查小組[Lake area investigation small group]). “Weishan hu Beipian yu cun diao cha zong jie bao gao (微山湖北片漁村調查總結報告[Final report of the investigation of fisherfolk’s Beipian Village of the Weishan Lakes]).” Shandong Provincial Archives, A122-01-0125-015, May 25 1953.
- DXYYH Shandong sheng ren min zheng fu shui chan ju hu qu diao cha xiao zu (山東省人民政府水產局[Shandong Provincial Bureau of Aquatic Products]湖區調查小組[Lake area investigation small group]). “Weishan hu dian xing yu ye hu de diao cha bao gao (微山湖典型漁業戶的調查報告[Investigation report of typical fishing households in the Weishan Lakes]).” Shandong Provincial Archives, A122-01-0125-014, May 25 1953.
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Translations and Character Sets

I use *hanyu pinyin* for transliterations, except when the organization, individual, or author is already known by another spelling (for example, KMT, Yangtze River) or self-identifies in English publications using another transliteration (for example, Lai Chi Tim).

In footnote references for non-Chinese authors, I use surnames only. For most authors whose surname and given name are Chinese, both names are used, in the Chinese order (surname followed by given name). Authors with a Chinese surname and foreign given names are listed in the Western order (given name followed by surname).

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1. Scrolls of Deities and Genealogy

1.1 Standard Forms of Each Scroll

基本神譜清單 14 或 15 幅 169~190 神+君王畫 5 神

1	主神	11-15	{ 普賢/龍女 }、{ 泰山 }、 南海觀音 、{ 文殊/善財 } 京吉八相公、滿龍四相公、 李河王 、陳祖周相公、康福二相公、{ 壇相公 } 土地公公、利市仙官、 增福財神 、招財童子、司命灶君 〔 武神送別、漕船中坐觀音 (順風大吉)、文神跪迎 〕
2	明堂		〔 祖墳祖林、牌位：X 氏三代宗親，立于公元 XX 年 X 月 〕 先祖母/先夫人、先祖父/老五道 家前族譜 〔 祠堂大門 〕
3	大王	23	黃或郝大王、朱大王、田大王、 金龍四大王 、香山大王、劉大王或劉柳二大王 晏公、蕭公、 耿七公 、魚王三娘娘、壇相公 黨將軍、楊四將軍、 九龍將軍 、張將軍、柳將軍、柴將軍 把水柳爺、浪頭將軍、湖口御史、押糧御史、黑風五道、六甲丁 〔 土地送別、漕船 (張帆)、城隍跪迎 〕
4	唐神	19	〔 左右各有魏九郎騎白馬及文武諸神迎接 〕 趙玄壇、炳靈、 東岳 、真君、朱太尉 收/催兵御史、楊四/守龍將軍、陳九龍將軍、趙玄壇、 朱太尉 、張將軍、大楊將軍、代財五道、領兵/神御史 (上騎) 收/催兵御史、楊四/守龍將軍、陳九龍將軍、趙玄壇、 朱太尉 、張將軍、大楊將軍、代財五道、領兵/神御史 (下坐) 天壇/平安/行山五岳 〔 端鼓戲場景：刀梯、天地三界之神位、唐王遊地府、幡旗、端公做法事、開刀子 〕
5	祖師	27 或 29	〔 正中有太平 〕 達摩、黃龍、大聖、 玄帝 、二郎、長眉、孫臏 還陽、呂祖、管壇、 托塔李靖天王 、藥王、藥聖、華祖 圍山六祖、護山四祖、巡山二祖、開山大祖、收山三祖、保山五祖 坐山祖、定山十祖、望山八祖、看山七祖、打山九祖、回山祖 〔 3 太子 (中踩火輪) 或 1 三太子 (踩火輪) 〕 〔 八力士 (赤搏、旁有兵器) 〕

6	師父	19	莉山母、林山母、 黃仙二師 （女）、〔供奉香火牌位〕、 劉老真師 （男）、振神觀音、清風觀音 壇香御史、平安御史、免難御史、消難御史、進財御史、進寶御史 靈陽小姑、安姑、拷姑、張姑、蠻姑、柴姑、靈陽大姑 〔童子拿藥瓶、藥櫃藥瓶葫蘆、童子磨藥〕
7	菩薩	31-36	{二郎}、無生老母、 佛爺 、玉皇、天佛老爺、關公二爺 普賢、送子觀音、 南海觀音 、魚籃觀音、文殊〔南海觀音左有韋陀〕 {還陽}、送生、送子、 泰山奶奶 、催生、眼光、{孫臍} {土地}、增福財神、九龍將軍、 金龍四大王 、張將軍、華祖、{灶君} 卞城王、輪回王、轉輪王、楚江王、秦廣王、 地藏王 、閻羅王、宋帝王、泰山王、平等王、都市王 〔三曹、牛頭馬面或2馬面、唐王遊地府、{魏徵/童男童女/男女} 跪拜觀音〕
8	八仙	9	金光老母 〔左右各2女侍〕 銀仙母、銀仙祖、金仙祖、金仙母 銀姑、劉二姑、荷仙姑、金姑
9	鵝靈	7-8	鵝靈大仙姑 船仙張姑、船仙老祖、船仙老母 面姑、黃姑、米姑、{月姑}（可被分散到其他畫中） 〔土地跪迎、漕船（順風大吉）、城隍送別〕
10	鍾馗	1	〔月、右上魏九郎騎白馬、日〕 鍾馗吃小鬼：終南山平鬼王猛烈 鍾馗 地獄懲罰受苦圖 〔八力士（赤膊、旁有兵器）〕
11	雲仙	1 或 10	〔鳳凰載轎內外各一女、龍載轎內外各一女〕 雲仙老母 （乘鳳凰） 〔15位女侍（左8右7）持出巡兵器旗燈〕 9女、聚寶盆、9男 或 蘭花姑、天仙姑、大仙姑、上仙姑、芝花姑 秀球姑、响岑姑、九姑、落花姑

Below are optional.

12	巡江 五道	3	金天御史或小五道、 巡江五道 、巡堂五道（乘轎出巡） 金天御史或小五道、 巡江五道 、巡堂五道（坐像） （巡江五道可改置於「唐神」中）
13	增福 財神	1	增福財神 （增福財神多置於「主神」中）
14	姑娘	10	大仙姑娘 10 尊（上 3+4 女侍中 3+4 女侍下 4+4 女侍） （可被分散到其他畫中）
15		7	撞堂姑娘 7 尊（上 1+6 女侍中 3+4 女侍下 3+4 女侍）

Special Scrolls:

275	胡家	如意	1	如意老祖 〔左右各一男侍〕
	胡家獨有	威靈	3	威靈仙師 （左右各 3 男侍） 胡老三仙師、威靈五道（各有 3 男侍） 〔童子磨藥、各式藥瓶、童子調藥〕
	槍幫獨有	君王	5	四君王持關刀、二君王持紅纓槍、 五聖君王持叉 、大君王持長柄瓜錘、三君王持火炮槍（騎馬打獵） 〔獵狗逐鳥、豬、虎、猴、某白獸；兵卒用網圍捕〕 四君王、二君王、 五聖君王 、大君王、三君王（坐像，兵器同上） 〔四君王背虎、野鹿倒地、二君王大君王殺豬進熱鍋、三君王扁擔扛鳥〕、趙大幫坐像 〔漁船內坐有母子與漁夫撒網收鳥、小溜子上槍幫獵鳥〕

1.2 趙法美家神譜清單 13 幅 118 神，劉培志繪，200906 微山

趙法美家神譜清單 13 幅 118 神，劉培志繪，200906 微山【無：祖師、巡江五道】

1	主神	15	〔正中有朝陽洞、右上有魏九郎騎白馬〕 玄帝、 觀音 、佛祖 火神、二郎、百命星君、 關公二爺 、天關、地關、水關 江大王、田大王、 金龍四大王 、黃大王、郝大王
2	大王	17	宴公、肖公、 耿七公 、魚王三娘娘、壇相公 党爺、楊將軍、九龍將軍、張將軍、柳將軍、柴爺 把水劉爺、浪頭將軍、湖口御史、押糧御史、黑風五道、六甲丁 〔土地送別、漕船（收帆）、城隍跪迎〕
3	財神	3	增福財神 、左右童子 武財神、聚寶盆、文財神 〔小卒一對〕
4	唐神	12	〔正中九姑出南天門、左右各有魏九郎騎白馬及文武諸神迎接〕 領兵御史、九龍將軍、趙玄壇、 劉沈四公 、朱太尉、張將軍、代財五道（上騎） 領兵御史、九龍將軍、趙玄壇、 劉沈四公 、朱太尉、張將軍、代財五道（下坐） 天壇五嶽 〔端鼓戲場景：刀梯、天地三界之神位、唐王遊地府、幡旗、端公做法事、開刀子〕
5	鍾馗	1	〔月、右上魏九郎騎白馬、日〕 鍾馗 吃小鬼：終南山平鬼王猛烈鍾馗 地獄懲罰受苦圖 〔八力士（赤搏、旁有兵器）〕

6	普師	18	〔右上有魏九郎騎白馬〕 無生老母、天佛、准提菩薩 普賢、利山、南海觀音、黃山、文殊 送生、送子、泰山奶奶、催生、眼光 三曹、七姑、路仙姑、九姑、韋馱 〔土地跪迎、漕船（順風大吉）、城隍送別〕
7	雲仙	1	雲仙老母（乘鳳凰） 〔15位女侍（左8右7）持出巡兵器旗燈〕 9女、聚寶盆、9男
8	姑娘	10	大仙姑娘 10尊（上3+4女侍中3+4女侍下4+4女侍）
9	姑娘	7	撞堂姑娘 7尊（上1+6女侍中3+4女侍下3+4女侍）
10	師父	19	莉山母、林山母、黃仙二師（女）、劉老真師（男）、振神觀音、清風觀音 壇香御史、平安御史、免難御史、消難御史、進財御史、進寶御史 靈陽小姑、安姑、拷姑、張姑、蠻姑、柴姑、靈陽大姑
11	鵝靈	7	鵝靈大仙姑 船仙張姑、船仙老祖、船仙老母 面姑、黃姑、米姑
12	八仙	8	金光老母 銀仙母、金仙祖、銀仙祖 仙姑、金小姐、靳小姐、仙姑
13	明堂		〔祖墳祖林、牌位：趙氏三代宗親〕 先祖母、先祖父 家前族譜（十三～十八世） 〔祠堂大門〕

1.3 沈氏神譜清單 12 幅 168 神+君王畫 5 神，劉培志繪，200910 微山

沈氏神譜清單 12 幅 168 神+君王畫 5 神，劉培志繪，200910 微山【無：姑娘（併入八仙、雲仙）、增福財神（併入主神）】

1	主神	15	普賢、泰山、南海觀音、文殊 京吉八相公、滿龍四相公、李河王、陳祖周相公、康福二相公、壇相公 土地公公、利市仙官、增福財神、招財童子、司命灶君 〔武神送別、漕船中坐觀音（順風大吉）、文神跪迎〕
2	唐神	21	〔左右各有魏九郎騎白馬及文武諸神迎接〕 趙玄壇、丙靈、東岳、真君、朱太位 催兵御史、開兵五道、楊四將軍、進香御史、隨兵五道、九龍將軍、張將軍、大楊將軍、梁將軍、代財五道、領兵御史（上騎） 催兵御史、開兵五道、楊四將軍、進香御史、隨兵五道、九龍將軍、朱太尉、趙玄壇、張將軍、大楊將軍、梁將軍、代財五道、領兵御史（下坐） 天壇五岳 〔端鼓戲場景：刀梯、天地三界之神位、唐王遊地府、幡旗、端公做法事、開刀子〕
3	明堂		〔祖墳祖林、牌位：沈氏三代宗親，立于公元二千〇九年八月〕 先祖母、先祖父 家前族譜 〔祠堂大門〕
4	普師	32	二郎、無生老母、佛爺、玉皇、天佛老爺、關公二爺 普賢、送子觀音、南海觀音、魚蘭觀音、文珠〔南海觀音左有韋陀〕 送生、送子、泰山奶奶、催生、眼光 增福財神、九龍將軍、金龍四大王、張將軍、華祖 卞城王、輪回王、轉輪王、楚江王、秦廣王、地藏王、閻羅王、宋帝王、泰山王、平等王、都市王 〔三曹、2 馬面、唐王遊地府、魏徵跪拜觀音〕
5	祖師	29	〔正中有太平〕 達摩、黃龍、猴祖、玄帝、二郎、長眉、孫彬 還陽、呂祖、管壇、托塔李敬天王、藥王、藥聖、華祖 圍山六祖、護山四祖、巡山二祖、開山大祖、收山三祖、保山五祖 坐山祖、定山十祖、望山八祖、看山七祖、打山九祖、回山祖 〔3 太子（中踩火輪）〕 〔八力士（赤搏、旁有兵器）〕

6	大王	22	<p>宴公、肖公、金龍四大王、耿七公、魚王三娘娘 黃大王、田大王、朱大王、香山大王、劉大王 党將軍、楊四將軍、九龍將軍、張將軍、柳將軍、柴將軍 把水柳爺、浪頭將軍、湖口御史、押糧御史、黑風五道、六甲丁 〔土地送別、漕船（收帆）、城隍跪迎〕</p>
7	鵝靈	7	<p>鵝靈大仙姑 船仙張姑、船仙老祖、船仙老母 面姑、黃姑、米姑 〔土地跪迎、漕船（順風大吉）、城隍送別〕</p>
8	八仙	9	<p>龍女、南海觀音〔左上有韋陀〕、善財 天仙姑、大仙姑、上仙姑 銀姑、劉二姑、張姑、黃姑、金姑</p>
9	巡江 五道	3	<p>小五道、巡江五道、巡堂五道（乘轎出巡） 小五道、巡江五道、巡堂五道（坐像）</p>
10	鍾馗	1	<p>〔月、右上魏九郎騎白馬、日〕 鍾馗吃小鬼：終南山平鬼王猛烈鍾馗 地獄懲罰受苦圖 〔八力士（赤搏、旁有兵器）〕</p>
11	師父	19	<p>莉山母、林山母、黃仙二師（女）、〔供奉香火牌位〕、劉老真師（男）、振神觀音、清風觀音 壇香御史、平安御史、勉難御史、消難御史、進財御史、進寶御史 靈陽小姑、安姑、拷姑、張姑、蠻姑、柴姑、靈陽大姑 〔童子拿藥瓶、藥櫃藥瓶葫蘆、童子磨藥〕</p>

12	雲仙	10	〔 鳳凰載轎內外各一女、龍載轎內外各一女〕 雲仙老母 （乘鳳凰） 〔 15 位女侍（左 8 右 7）持出巡兵器旗燈〕 蘭花姑、天仙姑、 大仙姑 、上仙姑、芝花姑 秀球姑、响岑姑、九姑、落花姑 或 雲仙老母 （乘鳳凰） 〔 15 位女侍（左 8 右 7）持出巡兵器旗燈〕 9 女、聚寶盆、9 男
	雲仙	1	
槍幫獨有	君王	5	四君王持關刀、二君王持紅纓槍、 五聖君王持叉 、大君王持長柄瓜錘、三君王持火炮槍（騎馬打獵） 〔 獵狗逐鳥、豬、虎、猴、某白獸；兵卒用網圍捕〕 四君王、二君王、 五聖君王 、大君王、三君王（坐像） 〔 四君王背虎、野鹿倒地、二君王大君王殺豬進熱鍋、三君王扁擔扛鳥〕、趙大幫坐像 〔 漁船內坐有母子與漁夫撒網收鳥、小溜子上槍幫獵鳥〕

1.4 沈氏神譜清單 11 幅 166 神，王春庫繪，200910 微山

沈氏神譜清單 11 幅 166 神，王春庫繪，200910 微山【無：鵝靈/船仙、姑娘（併入雲仙）、增福財神（併入主神）】

1	唐神	21	〔左右各有魏九郎騎白馬及文武諸神迎接〕 趙玄壇、丙靈、東岳、真君、朱泰尉 收兵玉史、隨兵玉史、平安祖、手龍將軍、陳九龍、張將軍、楊將軍、代財五道、巡江五道、進財玉史、領神玉史（上騎） 收兵玉史、隨兵玉史、平安祖、手龍將軍、陳九龍、趙玄壇、朱泰尉、張將軍、楊將軍、代財五道、巡江五道、進財玉史、領神玉史（下坐） 平安五岳 〔天壇五岳〕 〔端鼓戲場景：刀梯、天地三界牌位、唐王遊地府、幡旗、端公做法事、開刀子〕
2	師父	19	利仙母、林仙母、黃仙二師（女）、劉老真師（男）、清風觀音、振神觀音 平安玉史、進財玉史、免難玉史、侄難玉史、救難玉史、進寶玉史 靈陽小姑、安姑、侷姑、張姑、蠻姑、柴姑、靈陽大姑
3	普師	45	二郎、無生、玉帝、佛爺、天佛、關公 雲仙、魚蘭、觀音、白衣、王母〔觀音左有韋陀〕 還陽、送子、送生、泰山、崔生、眼光、孫臍 九位仙姑（9 位） 土地、華祖、九龍、金龍四大王、張將軍、財神、灶君 五位閻王（5 位）、地藏王、五位閻王（5 位） 〔三曹、2 馬面、地上有受審男女、秤、唐王遊地府、童子童女跪拜觀音〕
4	大王	22	朱大王、田大王、金龍四大王、香山大王、白大王 晏公、消公、耿七公、魚王三娘娘、壇相公 柴將軍、楊將軍、陳九龍、張將軍、柳將軍、党將軍 六甲丁、浪頭將軍、壓浪玉史、湖口玉史、黑風五道、拔水柳爺 〔土地送別、漕船（張帆）、城隍跪迎〕
5	主神	14	普賢、泰山、觀音、文珠〔觀音左有韋陀〕 八相公、二相公、李河王、周相公、四相公 土地、利市、增福財神、招財、灶君

6	明堂		〔祖墳祖林〕 沈氏三代宗親牌位 先祖母、老五道 家前族譜 〔祠堂大門〕
7	鍾馗	1	〔月、右上魏九郎騎白馬、日〕 東南山平鬼王猛烈中魁〔鍾馗吃小鬼〕 地獄懲罰受苦圖 〔八力士（赤搏、旁有兵器）〕
8	巡江 五道	3	金天玉史、 巡江五道 、巡堂五道（乘轎出巡） 金天玉史、 巡江五道 、巡堂五道（坐像）
9	祖師	22	月光、地光〔中空〕天光、日光 打魔、黃龍、大聖、 玄帝 、二郎、長眉、孫臏 還陽、呂祖、管壇、 李天王 、 藥王 、 藥聖 、 華祖 七祖、五祖、三祖、 大祖 、二祖、四祖、六祖（皆持刀劍） 〔哪叱踩火輪〕 〔八力士（赤搏、旁有兵器）〕
10	雲仙	10	〔鳳凰載轎內外各一女、龍載轎內外各一女〕 雲仙老母 （乘鳳凰） 〔15位女侍（左8右7）持出巡兵器旗燈〕 梅花、三仙、 大仙 、二仙、天仙 秀球、蘭花、九姑、落花
11	八仙	9	金光老母 〔左右各2女侍〕 銀仙母、銀仙祖、金仙祖、金仙母 銀姑、劉二姑、荷仙姑、金姑

1.5 胡氏神譜清單 13 幅 (大王、明堂重複) 150 神, 楊成興繪, 201004 徽山

胡氏神譜清單 13 幅 150 神, 楊成興繪、金磊修整, 201004 【無: 八仙、巡江五道、增福財神 (併入主神)】 【多: 如意、威靈】

1	大王	21	壇相公、宴公、蕭公、 金龍四大王 、七公、魚王三娘娘、? 玉史 (皆騎馬) ?、?、九爺、五路財神、張爺、劉爺、? (皆騎馬) ?、?、?、?、?、?、? (皆騎馬持刀劍)
	大王	22	郝大王、朱大王、田大王、 金龍四大王 、白大王、香山、劉柳二大王 壇相公、燕公、 耿七公 、蕭公、魚王三娘娘 〈類似十祖, 皆持刀劍〉 〔城隍送別、漕船 (張帆)、土地跪迎〕
2	唐神	14	〔正中天門九姐出南天門、左右各有魏九郎騎白馬及文武諸神迎接〕 收兵玉史、楊四將軍、九龍、玄壇、 太位 、張將軍、劉將軍、代財五道、領兵玉史 (上騎) 收兵玉史、楊四將軍、九龍、玄壇、 太位 、張將軍、劉將軍、代財五道、領兵玉史 (下坐) 行山五岳 (5 位) 〔端鼓戲場景: 刀梯、天壇五岳牌位、唐王遊地府、幡旗、端公做法事、開刀子〕
3	姑娘	1	大仙姑娘 〔4 位女侍〕 〔背後為藥櫃、地上是磨藥器〕
4	雲仙	10	雲仙 (乘鳳凰) 〔15 位女侍 (左 8 右 7) 持出巡兵器旗燈〕 秀球、三仙姑、 大仙姑 、二仙姑、蘭花 梅姐、七姑、九姑、花童
5	師父	20	林山母、振神觀音、 黃仙二師 、老天爺之位、 劉老真師 、青風觀音、利山母 馬仙師、陳香玉史、 免難玉史 、 消難玉史 、丁仙師、黃金童子 蘭花仙姑、安姑、苓陽小姐、 黃小姑 、苓陽大姑、垮姑、美翠仙姑
6	鵝靈	8	鵝毛大仙 (左右各 2 位女侍) 面姑、 船仙老母 、 船仙老主 、米姑 黃姑、 船仙張姑 、月姑

7	普師	39	<p>魚蘭、白衣、觀音、天佛、無聲、文殊、菩賢 聖山、送子、送生、太山、吹生、眼光、靈山 九姑（9位） 土地、化主、大王、才神、灶君 五位閻王（5位）、地藏王、五位閻王（5位） 〔三曹、馬面、牛頭、唐王遊地府、男女跪拜觀音〕</p>
8	主神	11	<p>龍女、南海觀音、善財〔韋陀在觀音右上〕 四相公、二相公、陳主周相公、李河王、八相公 土地、利市、增福財神、招財、張灶君 〔城隍送別、漕船（張帆）乘觀音、土地跪迎〕</p>
9	祖師	20	<p>達魔、玉龍、大聖、玄帝、二郎、長眉、孫泯 還陽、呂主、管壇、李天王、藥王、藥聖、化主 四主、三主、大主、二主、五主（持刀劍） 〔哪叱踩火輪〕 〔八力士（赤搏、旁有兵器）〕</p>
10	如意	1	<p>如意老祖 〔左右各一男侍〕</p>
11	明堂		<p>〔祖墳祖林〕 胡氏三代宗親牌位 老夫人、老五道 家前族譜（約6代） 〔祠堂大門（未展開）〕</p>
	明堂		<p>〔祖墳祖林〕 胡氏三代宗親牌位 老夫人、老五道 家前族譜（約9代：學、（單名）、德、興、玉、廣、成、獻、乾） 〔祠堂大門（未展開）〕</p>

12	威靈	3	<p style="text-align: center;">威靈仙師 (左右各 3 男侍) 胡老三仙師、威靈五道 (各有 3 男侍) [童子磨藥、各式藥瓶、童子調藥]</p>
13	鍾馗	1	<p style="text-align: center;">鍾馗吃小鬼：勅封終南山平鬼王猛烈鍾馗位 地獄懲罰受苦圖 [下方未展開]</p>

1.6 丁氏神譜清單 8 幅 83 神，胡厚忠，201004 徽山

丁氏神譜清單 8 幅 83 神，胡厚忠，201004 徽山【無：普師、祖師、八仙、巡江五道、姑娘（併雲仙）、增福財神（併入主神）】

1		明堂		〔祖墳祖林〕 丁氏三代宗親牌位 〔祖先像，女左男右，無註〕 家前族譜 〔祠堂大門〕
2		唐神	14	〔正中南天門有女神（九姑）、左右各有魏九郎騎白馬，及 4 位武神迎接，兩旁另有 1 對騎馬文神〕 崔兵玉史、楊爺、九爺、玄壇、相公、太尉、張爺、代財五道、領神玉史（上騎） 崔兵玉史、楊爺、九爺、玄壇、相公、太尉、張爺、代財五道、領神玉史（下坐） 五岳神（5 位） 〔端鼓戲場景：刀梯、天地三界牌位、唐王遊地府、幡旗、端公做法事、開刀子〕
3		主神	11	龍女、 南海觀音 、善財〔韋陀在觀音右上〕 二相公、丙苓、 東岳 、真君、周相公 土地、利市、 財神 、招財、灶君
4		大王	17	劉龍二大王、 田大王 、 金龍四大王 、郝大王 尚公、晏公、 耿七公 、魚王三娘娘、壇相公 杜將軍、党將軍、楊將軍、九龍將軍、張將軍、柳將軍、柴將軍、知將軍（上騎） 杜將軍、党將軍、楊將軍、九龍將軍、張將軍、柳將軍、柴將軍、知將軍（下坐） 〔左：2 侍從 1 武將軍像、右：1 文臣像 2 侍從〕 〔武神送別、漕船（張帆）、文神跪迎〕
5	南陽十一位傳仙	鵝靈	10	張姑娘、 娥毛大仙 、傳仙姑娘 魏仙母、 傳仙祖 、魏仙祖 魏仙童子、 魏仙老祖 、 魏仙老母 、魏仙哥哥
6		雲仙	10	雲仙老母 （乘鳳凰）〔右上有魏九郎騎馬〕 〔15 位女侍（左 8 右 7）持出巡兵器旗燈〕 上仙、三仙、 大仙 、天仙、苓仙 中仙、面仙、五姑、八姑

7		鍾馗	1	[月、日] 鍾馗吃小鬼：東南山猛烈鍾馗 地獄懲罰受苦圖
8	師佛	師父	20	梨山老母、林山老母、黃仙二師（女）、劉耒老師（男）、救難觀音、清風觀音 孫有玉史、沉香玉史、扮香玉史、侄男玉史、消難玉史、丁老仙師、進寶御史 畚姑、米姑、羚羊小姑、三仙姑娘、羚羊大姑、麵姑、黃金童子

1.7 Incomplete Sets of Scrolls for 唐神會

愛湖唐神會神譜清單 5 幅 59 神，201004 微山愛湖

右 1 15 神	(插畫，似周公鬥桃花女) 7 尊騎馬武將 (似大王) 7 尊騎馬武將 (似大王) 1 主神武將騎白馬 (最大神像)，4 童子，左 1 老臣騎馬 1 女子，右 2 隨從騎馬 〔畫色較暗，似老畫〕
右 2 3 神	白馬先鋒之位，左右童子各 1、各 3 位隨從舉兵器 左：楊老先師；右：楊老 {人+郎} 師
正中 15 神	5 尊神像 (疑似增福財神、趙玄壇、金龍四大王、朱太尉、???) 九龍將軍、張將軍、??將軍、?將軍、??將軍 譚先鋒、趙先鋒、代財五道、白馬先鋒、尤先鋒
左 2 11 神	3 尊神像 ??姑 (女神)、東海老龍王、王靈官 5 尊
左 1 15 神	5 尊武神像 5 尊武神像 5 尊武神像

唐神會神譜，2007Album, photographed by the Bureau of Culture, County Weishan, Shandong，201004 胡厚忠家

	五星旗 熱愛祖國
	和諧社會順民心 永遠跟著共產黨
胡成山繪	楊四將軍、增福財神、金龍四大王、趙玄壇、馬將軍
胡成山繪	柳將軍、張將軍、朱太位、梁將軍、陳九龍
胡成山繪	扞先鋒、由先鋒、代才五道、白馬先鋒、趙先鋒
胡厚忠繪	楊四將軍、增福財神、金龍四大王、趙玄壇、馬將軍
胡厚忠繪	柳將軍、張將軍、朱太位、梁將軍、陳九龍

胡厚忠繪	壇先鋒、由先鋒、代財五道之、白馬先鋒、趙先鋒
王春庫繪	張將軍、趙玄壇、朱太尉、金龍四大王、增福財神
王春庫繪	柳將軍、陳九龍、尹將軍、馬將軍、楊四將軍
王春庫繪	壇先鋒、由先鋒、代財五道、白馬先鋒、趙先鋒
王春庫繪	玉皇大帝（左右各 2 女侍） 上左 4 武神、上右 4 武神 中左 5 武神、中右 5 武神 下左 4 武 1 文、下右 4 武 1 女

1.8 沈氏位神神譜清單，梁錫標、劉培志，201004 微山

1	明堂		〔祖墳祖林〕 沈氏三代宗親牌位 〔祖先像，女男男女，未註名〕 家前族譜：萬、德、學、士、百、(單名)、永、高、興、成、加 〔祠堂大門〕 【背右下註：沈加長、沈成菊、沈加寬 一九九七年农历以月十九日画于南阳 梁画】	外：91.5X206 cm 內：89X198.8 cm
2	東岳	15	炳零、東岳大帝、真君 〔三眼神、玄壇在左；不知名武將、太尉在右，皆未註名〕 二相之位、李何王之位、周相公之位、于龍將軍（皆騎馬，帶眾隨從） 土地、莉氏、〔中有花瓶〕、招財、灶軍	外：92X158 cm 內：89.8X146.2 cm
3		11	趙玄坦、朱太位、陳九龍、張將軍、楊將軍 巡江五道、守龍將軍、代財五道、開兵五道、起山五道 〔正中無名神像，較上二排稍大，左右各有 2 侍從〕	外：91.5X182 cm 內：89X165.5 cm

Note: This set of scrolls is unique, owned by the Shen clan. It is stored in one family for a year and passed to the other in the next year. Before the rota schedule was pre-arranged, clan members fought against each other to occupy the scrolls. The scrolls were renovated for the third time because some bad omens had haunted the clan, e.g. fatal accident. The painter of the new scrolls commented that the forms of deities in current version were wrongly arranged, which caused the misfortune in the clan. Below are new forms.

1	明堂		〔祖墳祖林〕 沈氏三代宗親牌位 〔祖先像，女男，未註名〕 家前族譜：萬、德、學、士、百、(單名)、永、高、興、成、家、運、建 〔祠堂大門〕	unkown
2	主神	15	文殊、觀音、泰山、普賢 八相公、四相公、李河王、周相公、二相公、壇相公 土地、莉氏（仙官）、增福財神、招財（童子）、灶君	外：92X158 cm 內：89.8X146.2 cm
3	東岳	11	炳零、東岳大帝、真君 趙玄坦、陳九龍、朱太位、張將軍、楊將軍 巡江五道、守龍將軍、代財五道、開兵五道、起山五道	外：91.5X182 cm 內：89X165.5 cm

2. 3 Scroll Painters' Manuals

2.1 王春庫手冊，200906 微山

2.1.1 上界神 107 神

一佛	二佛	鵝蘭架佛	東天和佛	南天和佛	西天和佛	北天和佛	中天和佛	吃足佛	斬足佛
木星君	老星君	小星君	本命星君	長命星君	杈花星君	人祖	人母	三青三黃	馬趙溫岳
文朱觀音 【文殊】	普賢觀音	泰山	頂門上娘娘	頂門下娘娘	前半天娘娘	回半天娘娘	道坐娘娘	見坐娘娘	血半天娘娘
振水只因	平楊只巨	天地五道神	坛天上帝 (下寫:玄帝) 【玄天上帝】	無良圣府	周公	桃花女	天光	地光	金光

灯光佛	偉陀佛	大肚佛	二郎佛	三遵大佛	千手千足佛 (準提菩薩)	拉木米特佛	玉皇大帝	五斗星君	二十八宿	財星君
恆(身段)二將 【哼哈二將】	元時天尊 【元始天尊】	三關大帝 【三官大帝】	官天崗遵	福本大帝	漂江觀音	道坐觀音	過海觀音	見坐觀音	白臉觀音	紅臉觀音
霹雷將軍	閃光娘娘	三?哥哥	珍母娘娘	金生老母	透天娘娘	催生老母	送生娘娘	眼光老母	送子娘娘	水佛七娘娘
銀光	日光	月光	天門老祖	大聖老祖 【大聖】	長眉老祖	孫賓老祖 【孫臯】	還阳老祖	打魔老祖	二郎祖	官坛祖 【管壇老祖】

鬼星君	木星君	火星君	金星君	水星君		
撒金觀音	魚蘭觀音【魚籃觀音】	送子觀音	白衣觀音	八難觀音	撒銀觀音	响苓觀音
九条仙女	王母娘娘	火龍台王娘	金童{(上)女刀+力(下)}子	火地真君		
黃龍祖	紅光老祖	王禪老祖	号魔老祖【達摩】	李敬天王【李靖天王】	萬花老祖	

(無名)

王敖老祖	(塗掉)	藥王	藥聖	華祖 【華佗】	薩松老祖 (上以原子筆:禪?)	金吒	木吒	那吒	巡山	收山	五祖	六祖	十大祖史 【祖師】	中魁 【鍾馗】
天佛老母	無生老母	盤天聖母	黃山	利山										

2.1.2 二界神 61 神

	東岳	天帝	左坛真君	右坛丙苓(炳靈)	俄俄一太位	俄俄二太位	鐵腿火太位	馬太位	趙太位	康太位	收金太位	朱太位 【朱太尉】
水佛君	火佛君	邓佛君	土佛君	崔佛君	周相公	二相公	四相公	八相公	河王	化主公	玉時公	劉沈四公
	開路先鋒	領路先鋒	倚馬先鋒	姬先鋒	由先鋒 【游先鋒】	白馬先鋒	趙先鋒	坛先鋒	天兵劉五道	地上{↑重}五道 【代財五道】	西南小五道	出廟五道
	回廟五道	白云五道	攔路五道	河包五道	落河五道	姬五道	馬五道	宋五道	木五道	火五道	金五道	水五道

土五道	東友大郎	南有二郎	西有三郎	北有四郎	中有五郎	五生君王	大太寶	二太寶	銅太寶	鐵太寶	康太寶
馬太寶	五五二十五道將軍	九鷹三犬	四十三人	九還神旗							

2.1.3 下界神 107 神

敬太王												
東平王	西平王	府平王	千市太郎	洒街王	敬街王	丁子王	堅王	風龍王	雨龍王	漢龍王	滂龍王	
火龍王	土龍王	水龍王	老龍王	五閩王	李河王	金龍四大王	香山大王	田大王	黃大王	白大王	陳大王	
劉大王	郝大王	朱大王	金大王	沙大王	張大王	江大王	督大王	宋大王	潘大王	杜大王	蔡大王	
官湖大王	巡湖大王	青水大王	渾水大王	袁大王	耿七公	消公(蕭公)	晏公	壇相公	?包公	老仙公	閩大公	
		大王 43 張						公相 8 張				

	吳將軍				趙?		趙將軍						
張大王	侯二公	前三公	后四公	醜目再蔡公	魚王三娘娘	衣品肖娘	張將軍	陳九龍	楊將軍	柳將軍	梁將軍	馬將軍	劉將軍
枝將軍 (x)	黃將軍 (x)	潘將軍 (x)	杜將軍 (ox)	翁將軍(x)	楊將軍(x)	范將軍	薛將軍 (ox)	棕將軍 (x)	聶將軍	黨將軍	柴將軍	平將軍	
歐將軍	涌將軍	浪頭將軍	黑風五道	趙先鋒	撥水柳翁	垠翁	褚報司	獻報司	大參	二參	湖口玉史		
六甲丁	壓浪玉史	涌大	涌二	棕大	棕二	歐大	歐二	聶大	聶二	五路財神	趕魚童子	櫻魚夫神	田將軍
				將軍 43 張									

(無名)

灶君	陳皇	土地	三代家親	為神玉玉	為神五道		地藏菩薩	玉都遵神	十地閩君	羅王		业風將軍	邓平王爺	魚瓦娘娘
浪大	浪二													

2.1.4 送星君紙

佛爺	三遵大佛	玉皇大帝	觀音星君	奠公	二郎	太子星君	十二人申	角木蛟(文)	奎木狼	斗木獬 (文)	井木犴
牛金牛 (文)	鬼金羊 (文)	亢金龍	婁金狗 (文)	箕水豹	參水猿	壁水{彳兪} (文)	軫水蚓(文)	尾火虎	觜火猴	室火豬 (文)	翼火蛇 (文)
女土蝠	柳土獐 (文)	胃土雉	氏土貉	星日馬 (文)	虛日鼠(文)	昂日雞(文)	房日兔	畢月鳥(文)	心月狐(文)	危月燕 (文)	張月鹿
玄帝	三關	本命星	長命星君	太山	東方木星君	南方火星君	西方金星君	北方水星君	中方土星君	二十八宿	

(次頁)

把關大王	把關童子	關煞娘娘	青孛關	湯火關	金孛關	閻王關	天口關	車夫	橋梁	四柱	關公	担夫
二郎	青魂關	迷魂關	遊魂關	歸魂關	閃娘關	離娘關	斷橋關	四季關	週歲關	打腦關	將軍劍	
落河關	鴛下關	症疾關	痢疾關	腹瀉關	冷熱關	夜啼關	城皇	灶君	家親	眾神	雷打關	
?麻關	病疼關	? ?關	天吊關	雞叫關	宣?關	三十六位關	七十二位神	長命百歲	水火不攔	逢煞即?	逢關急過	

2.1.5 西路神名

下仙	云仙	九姑	范仙	霍仙		送仙	禪仙	飛仙	楊仙
觀音	官仙	道仙							

2.1.6 塔棚神名

東岳	四海龍王	程皇	土地	宅神	河神	路神	橋神
湖神	地						

2.1.7 上八仙、下八仙神譜

上八仙八位神仙

東方朔	長眉李長庚	王禪	王敖
金眼毛遂	白猿	楊二郎	李太白

下八仙八位神仙

羅祖	張賽	魯班	
劉伶	杜康	和合二仙	劉海

2.1.8 主神神譜

		玄壇	觀音	佛爺		
火神	本命	二郎	關公		三官	
	郝大王	劉大王	田大王	金龍四大神(「王」被塗掉)	朱大王	黃大王
			河王	相公	七公	魚王

2.1.9 大王神譜

	黃大王	
一子王		堅王
	白大王	

	金龍四大王	
西平王		東平王
	香山大王	
大寶郎		府平王
	金大王	
敬街王		洒街王

2.1.10 其他

								趙
收兵玉史	陳九龍	趙玄壇	劉沈四公	朱泰尉	張將軍	代財五道		
							忠魁	

華祖 華佗：一四五年至二零八年安徽亳縣人

2.2 楊鎮平手冊，200910 微山

2.2.1 上界神神譜

一佛	財星君	三關大帝	天光
二佛	鬼星君	文珠觀音	地光
娥蘭架佛	木星君	普賢觀音	金光
東天和佛	圍興君	太山	銀光
南天和佛	火星君	頂門上娘	日光
西天和佛	金星君	頂門下娘	月光
北天和佛	水星君	前米天娘	官天剛遵
中天和佛	老星君	回米天娘	福本大帝
叱足佛	小星君	到做娘	漂江觀音
斬足佛	本命星君	見坐娘	到做觀音
灯光佛	長命星君	血半娘	過海觀音
大肚佛	叉花星君	邳雷蔣軍	見做觀音
二郎佛	人祖	閃光娘	紅臉觀音
三遵大佛	人母	斗神哥哥	撒金觀音
千手千足佛	三青	鎮水知因	魚蘭觀音
拉木米特佛	三黃	平楊知巨	送子觀音
玉皇大帝	馬趙濕岳	培天上帝	白衣觀音
五斗星君	恆身段二將	無良聖府	撒銀觀音
二十八宿	元時天遵	珍母娘娘	响苓觀音

2.2.2 下界神神譜

老龍王

東平王	白大王	老劉公	馬將軍
西平王	陳大王	七公	黃將軍
府平王	劉大王	肖公	潘將軍
千手大寶郎	都大王	晏公	杜將軍
并尖王	朱大王	壇相公	{公公公}將軍
敬街王	金大王	老包公	港將軍
風龍王	沙大王	老佷公	薛將軍
雨龍王	張大王	閩大公	棕將軍
漢龍王	江大王	猴二公	聶將軍
澇龍王	宋大王	魚王三娘	黨將軍
火龍王	潘大王	一品肖娘	柴將軍
土龍王	杜大王	張將軍	黑風五道
老龍王	蔡大王	陳九龍	把水柳爺
李河王	官湖大大王	楊四將軍	({才見}水爺)
金龍四大王	巡湖二大王	柳將軍	(褚台司)
香山大王	青水大王	滌將軍	(憲台司)
田大王	渾水大王	前三公	(大參)
黃大王	爰大王	后四公	(二參)
水龍王	老龍王(原：火龍王)		

2.3 胡厚忠手冊，201004 微山

2.3.1 老堂長旗神譜

金龍四大王	西平王	東平王	香山大王	府平王	太保王	田大王	洒街王
敬街王/敬界王	一子王	堅王	白大王	杜大王	潘大王	朱大王	
沙大王	金大王	劉大王	阮大王	老張大王	郝大王	督大王	
江大王	陳大王	蔡大王	宋大王	東海龍王	管湖大王	巡湖大王	
土龍王	混水大王	清水大王	火龍王	五閩王	火龍王		

36 個

陳九龍	張將軍	梁將軍	柳將軍	楊將軍	馬將軍
黃將軍	枝將軍	潘將軍	范將軍	翁將軍	翁將軍
楊四將軍	黨將軍	柴將軍			

	馬前四位先鋒	〔田？〕大神	小先鋒	聶大	聶二	薛將軍	劉將軍	
	李河王	歐大	歐二	垠爺	獻報司			
趙先行	湖口玉史	黑風五道	浪頭將軍	押糧玉史	把水劉爺	六甲丁	由先行	壇先行
	棕大將軍	棕二將軍	棕三將軍	括將軍	趕魚童子	趕魚大神		
	四命灶君		土地		城皇			

28 個

澇龍王	張大王	旱龍王	广大王	七公	魚王三娘	一品小娘	老包公
宴公	小公	壇相公	候大工	閩大王	老仇公		
前三公	后四公	增福才神	蔡公	閩公	代財五道		

2.3.2 胡現好長旗神譜

太寶王	金龍四大王	一子王	洒街王	淨街王	黃大王	白大王	并肩王	水夫三官
管湖大王	巡湖二大王	江大王	張大王	府平王	广大王	郝大王	田大王	
劉柳二大王	沙大王	金大王	宋大王	杜大王	清水大王	渾水大王	陳大王	香山大王

袁大王	(塗掉：肖公)	東平王	西平王	淨龍王	老龍王	土龍王	五閩王	澇龍王
水龍王	火龍王	風龍王	雨龍王	胡現好長其明字				

38 個

肖公	耿七公	宴公	包公	閔蔡公	魚王三娘娘	一品小娘娘	前三公	后四公	侯二公
閔大公	壇相公	五路才神	12 個 (智：應為 13 個)						

柳將軍	九龍	張將軍	潘將軍	梁將軍	(塗掉：代財五道)	范將軍	杜將軍
楊將軍	馬將軍	枝將軍	黃將軍		(塗掉：宗將軍)	柴將軍	宗二將軍
宗三將軍							

宗大將軍	黑風將軍	浪頭將軍	俑將軍	歐將軍	俑三將軍	俑二將軍
歐三將軍	歐二將軍	浪大將軍	劉將軍	浪三將軍	浪二將軍	括將軍
把水柳爺	聶大將軍	小楊四將軍	聶三將軍	聶二將軍	邀魚大仕	趕魚童子

四位仙鋒

趙先鋒	由先鋒	壇先鋒	白馬先鋒
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39 個

2.3.3 胡憲群長旗神譜

六家丁	由將軍	褚報司	縣報司	大鱗	二鱗	
翁將軍	李河王	黨將軍	薛將軍	湖口玉史	押糧御史	司命灶君
吳將軍	土地	城隍	四先鋒	塹爺		

2.3.4 胡成山寫的 36 主

銀光	月光	地光	天光	日光	金光			
打魔祖	黃龍祖	齊天大聖	玄天上帝	二郎	長眉	孫賓祖		
還陽祖	呂祖	管壇祖	李天王	藥王	藥聖	華祖		
護山四祖	巡山二祖	木吒	哪吒	金吒	開山大祖	收山三祖		
望山八祖	禿山五主	偉山六主	看山七主	中魁	回山主	定山十祖	打山九祖	坐山祖

2.3.5 南陽二十祖

天光	地光	玄帝	日光	月光
候祖	五祖	大祖	華祖	如意祖
巡山祖	七祖	看山祖	八祖	收山祖
六祖	十祖	李天王	坐山祖	定山祖

2.3.6 胡成山祖師

天光	地光	日光	月光	金光	銀光	
五主	管壇	候主	玄帝	二郎	長眉	六祖
巡山主	化主	藥王	李天主	打魔	收山主	
七主	八主	看老祖	大主	萬花主	利山老主	四主

2.3.7 南陽八仙

天仙	上仙	
二姑	大仙	四姑
六姑	八姑	五姑

2.3.8 南陽十一位船仙

	傳張	娥毛大仙	傳仙姑娘
魏仙祖	傳仙祖	魏仙老母	
魏仙童子	魏仙母	魏仙老祖	魏仙哥哥

2.3.9 胡成山船仙

	鵝毛大	
黃姑	船仙老母	張姑
麵姑	船仙張姑	米姑

2.3.10 南陽船仙

	張仙母	傳仙主	
打魚翁	魏仙祖	魏仙母	
進才姑	蠻烟姑	平安姑	進寶姑

2.3.11 南陽船仙 2

	船傳老母	船仙老祖	
魏仙祖	傳仙主	魏仙母	
黃姑	張姑娘	米姑	張姑

2.3.12 南陽金中美船仙

		傳仙母	傳仙老主	傳仙主	
九女	七姑	大仙	天仙	六姑	八姑
	少仙姑	中仙姑	中仙	少仙	

2.3.13 胡成山師佛

梨山老母	林山老母	黃仙二師	劉老真師	救難觀音	清風觀音	
孫有玉史	沉香玉史	救難玉史	侄男玉史	扮香玉史	文香玉史	
香姑	羚羊大姑	麵姑	三仙姑娘	米姑	羚羊大姑	黃金童子

2.3.14 南陽師佛王貴合老神

青風觀音	鎮神觀音	黃仙二師	劉老真師	利山老母	黃仙老母	
?命玉史	盤香玉史	沉香玉史	尚災玉史	知難玉史	孫友玉史	
黃金童子	針仙姑娘	林陽二姑	林陽大姑娘	米姑	領神姑娘	畜姑娘

2.3.15 南陽師佛

	馬老仙師	劉老真師	黃仙二師		
知難玉史	尚巡玉史	平安玉史	文香玉史	難寶玉史	
苓仙姑	知難觀音	玉蘭觀音	清風觀音	尚難觀音	勉 { (上)化+大(下) } 觀音
黃姑	劉二姑	四方姑	平閩姑	苓仙姑娘	

2.3.16 雲仙老母十位

		雲仙老母		
芰花	天仙	大仙	二仙	蘭花
(秀球)	(响苓)	(九姑)	(秀花)	三仙姑

2.3.17 南陽老母姑娘

	張姑娘	大仙姑娘	三仙姑娘
响聆姑娘	苓仙姑娘	九姑娘	苓姑娘

2.3.18 南陽老母姑娘大响

孟姑娘	苓仙姑娘	前仙姑娘	周姑娘	王仙姑娘
劉二仙姑娘	商姑娘	河仙姑	朱仙姑	

2.3.19 胡成山普師

普賢	盤天	天佛	無生	文珠		
雲仙	魚蘭	觀音	白衣	王母		
還陽	送子	送生	泰山	催生	眼光	孫賓
土地	華主	九龍	金龍四大王	張爺	才神	灶君
五殿閻羅王			地藏王位			一殿泰廣王

2.3.20 高加神

火神	水佛	照神	佛爺	玄天上帝	三關	二狼神
		高加神	高太寶	高總關		
		平沙玉史	金牌先鋒			
		誇馬先鋒	巡堂先鋒	上殿娘娘		

2.3.21 高加神大王

	肖公	宴公	金龍四大王	七公	魚王三娘		
清水大王	黃大王	劉大王	朱大王	田大王	郝大王	混水大王	
張爺	九爺	壇相公	巡湖大王	管湖大王	香山大王	楊爺	柳爺

3. 4 Lists of Deities of *Duangu* Ceremony Platform and Altar

3.1 愛湖楊氏續家譜，壇頭楊兵，200811 微山

48 神

柳將軍、玄帝、老五道、觀音、城皇【城隍】、人主【人祖】、楊家軍、王母娘娘、李河王、元始天尊、代財伍道【代財五道】、雲仙、地藏王、天佛、金龍四大王、天兵五道、香山大王、三尊大佛、陳九龍、天帝、七公、天公、十殿閻君、玉皇（正中）、佛爺（正中）、玉度尊神、管壇、灶君、九姑、七公、通天教主、田大王、無聲【無生】、十殿閻君、鍾馗、玉度尊神、王母娘娘、周相公、太山【泰山】、東岳、二郎【二郎】、增富財神【增福財神】、人母、趙玄壇、官天剛尊、梁將軍、三官、土地

3.2 新建沈氏續家譜，壇頭王春庫，200910 微山

48 神

東岳天其【東岳天齊】、李河王、三尊大佛、代財五道、元治天尊【元始天尊】、五都尊神、官天剛尊、十位閻君【十殿閻君】、泰山、香山大王、天佛、九龍將軍、三青【三清】、灶君、人祖、增福財神、關公、楊將軍、通天教祖、中魁【鍾馗】、三代家親、官壇【管壇】、趙先壇【趙玄壇】、玉帝（正中）、老五道（正中）、佛爺、柳將軍、天帝、梁將軍、九姑、雲仙、土地、人母、城皇【城隍】、三黃【三皇】、七公、無生、張將軍、玄帝、田大王、觀音、金龍四大王、三官、朱太尉、福本大帝、地藏王、王母娘娘、周相公

3.3 新建胡氏續家譜，壇頭金中玉，201004 微山

24 神

關公、王母娘娘、五斗星君、玄帝、三關、地朝王【地藏王】、十店閻君【十殿閻君】、相公、船仙、八仙、張將軍、九爺【陳九龍】（正中）、太尉【太尉】、佛爺、師傅【師父】、河王、觀音、田大王、七公、金龍四大王、東岳、天門九姐【九姑】、二郎、玉皇

3.4 愛湖唐神會，壇頭楊成興，201004 微山

38 神

東海老龍王、東岳大帝、尤先鋒【游先鋒】、代財五道、張將軍、馬將軍、???、朱泰尉【朱太尉】、?天聖母、紅光老祖、元治天尊【元始天尊】、通天教主、玄天上帝、三官大帝、三青之位【三清】、人主之位【人祖】、王母娘娘、無聲老母【無生老母】、佛爺大帝（正中）、玉皇大帝（正中）、天佛老祖、人母之位、三皇之位、南海觀音、碧霞元君、太上李老君、趙玄壇、增福財神、梁將軍、陳九龍、楊四將軍、劉老將軍、白馬先鋒、趙先鋒、壇先鋒、羅王大帝、化祖先生、十殿閻君

4. The *Duangu* Ritualist's Scripture of Inviting Deities 請神

Stories of 56 deities

4.1 沈家汝手抄本目錄

聶將軍 1	柳將軍 11	把關大王 21	管壇老祖 31	大楊四將軍 41	門神 51
榜財神 2	趕魚童子 12	蕭公 22	宅神 32	單請二郎 42	泗州大神水母娘娘 52
東岳 3	猛烈鍾馗 13	朱太尉 23	代財五道 33	小楊將軍 43	八寶壺神 53
郝大王 4	紅山化祖公 14	李財神 24	楊山二郎"收軍太尉"34	梁將軍 44	大執符 54
金龍四大王 5	佛爺 15	趙玄壇 25	千事太寶 35	馬將軍 45	中界執符 55
劉柳二大王 6	增福財神 16	肩王 26	缺神 36	招財利市 46	三界執符 56
黃大王 7	金膀代翅鳥 17	姬先鋒 27	壇相公 37	陰龍陰鳳 47	
田大王 8	雲仙 18	游先鋒 28	南海觀音 38	王靈官 48	
白大王 9	雙請二郎 19	杜將軍 29	玄帝 39	君王 49	
香山大王 10	土地 20	五祖六祖 30	七公 40	趙先鋒 50	

4.2 王春庫手抄本：把關大王、把關童子

5. 7 Stories of *Duangu* Ritual Opera:

	Story Title	Related Deity	Other Title	Source
5.1	打家前	祖先	請家前、請家親	《中國曲藝志，山東卷》 田野調查
5.2	斬小龍	執符魏九郎 端公起源	魏徵斬小白龍/唐王遊地府/大文書（搬請魏徵）/ 小文書（九郎請神）	《中國曲藝志，山東卷》 《中國曲藝志，安徽卷》 王春庫手抄本 田野調查
5.3	劉文龍趕考	天兵五道（劉文龍） 白雲五道（蕭素貞） 回廟五道（說媒姬公） 落河五道 ¹ （宋延中）	蕭氏女吊孝	《中國曲藝志，山東卷》 田野調查
5.4	張相打嫁妝	河神張將軍	張秀榮打嫁妝/還魂記/河神/張將軍	《中國曲藝志，山東卷》 田野調查
5.5	張郎休丁香	灶君（張郎） 七姑娘 ² （丁香） 井靈王（范郎） 綢絲娘（范媽媽）	張郎休妻/灶君	《中國曲藝志，山東卷》 田野調查
5.6	金龍大王	湖神金龍四大王	湖神、金公子趕考	《中國曲藝志，山東卷》 田野調查
5.7	君王	君王	軍王	《反動會道門紅三教資料 匯編》

¹ 一說「西南五道」。

² 一說是「灶君娘娘」。

6. Domestic Deities

Name	Worshipped Deity	House or Houseboat	Location	Date
端公團長沈家汝	觀音、送子觀音	House	微山縣新建村	200906
端公副團長金中玉	觀音、財神	House	微山縣新建村	201004
端公楊家喜	觀音	House	微山縣愛湖村	200811
端公楊鎮平	送子觀音 財神（畫像）、觀音（畫像） 中間畫像： 三寶佛（第一排） 普賢、觀音、文殊（第二排） 地藏王（第三排） 彌勒佛（第四排）	House	微山縣愛湖村	200911
畫師王春庫	觀音、碧霞元君 （牆上貼：周恩來與毛澤東、送子觀音） 彌勒佛（神櫃裝飾）	House	微山縣新建村	200906
趙法美	財神（畫像）、觀音	House	微山縣新建村	200906
董老太太胡憲美	觀音（畫像） 姜太公之位（牌位） （牆上貼：財神）	House	微山縣新建村	200911
胡憲財	送子觀音、觀音	House	微山縣新建村	201002
胡乾連	無神像	House	微山縣新建村	201004
丁傳金	濟公（後有觀音畫像） 財神（畫像）	House	微山縣新建村	200911
愛湖某戶	財神、觀音、釋迦牟尼	House	微山縣愛湖村	200811
新建某戶	財神、觀音	House	微山縣新建村	200906
唐神會會頭胡憲群	灶君（年畫）	Houseboat	微山縣新建村	200906
端公沈家寬	灶君（年畫）	Houseboat	微山縣新建村	200911
端公丁傳富	灶君（年畫）	Houseboat	微山縣新建村	201004
王貴舉	觀音、財神 （下方夾有毛澤東年輕像） 灶君（年畫）	Houseboat	微山縣新建村	200911

7. Spirit Possession

- 7.1 Bringing Wealth Wudao 代財五道（開財門） (third day night)
 7.2 Zhang Jiangjun 張將軍：頂壇將軍（管水路：漁民水上太平） (fourth day morning)
 7.3 Chen Jiulong Jiangjun 陳九龍（亦管水路，河湖） (fourth day morning)
 7.4 Ancestor 老祖先 (fifth day early morning: the end)

8. Ceremony Pennons

- 8.1 Stove God 灶君 (first day night)
 8.2 Heavenly Soldier Wudao 天兵五道(劉文龍) (second day morning)
 8.3 Zhang Jiangjun 張將軍 (second day morning)
 8.4 Guanyin 觀音（鳳旗） (fourth day morning)
 8.5 Jinlong Si Daiwang 金龍四大王（龍旗） (fourth day morning)