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TENTH-CENTURY CHINA AND BEYOND

Art and Visual Culture in a Multi-centered Age

Edited by Wu Hung

The Center for the Art of East Asia, University of Chicago
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Contents

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FUNERARY ART

Two Royal Tombs from the Early Liao: Architecture, Pictorial Program, Authorship, Subjectivity

Wu Hung

"In the absence of Qidan [Khitan] 契丹 descriptions of themselves," Nancy Steinhardt writes in her path-breaking *Liao Architecture*, "Chinese writers of standard histories and other texts have become *de facto* anthropologists."¹ We have two main Chinese records of Qidan burial customs: a tenth-century reference in the *Old History of the Tang* (*Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書) and an eyewitness account by the Southern Song author Wen Weijian 文惟簡. The former says that unlike the Chinese, who have always buried the dead in tombs and held elaborate mortuary rites, Qidan people escort the corpse to the high mountains and place it in a tree. Sons and grandsons do not mourn for their deceased parents and grandparents; instead, parents and grandparents cry from morning to night for a deceased male descendant.² Wen Weijian's account focuses more closely on the treatment of the corpse, describing in vivid language how Qidan people cut open the corpse of a noble person and stuff it with fragrant ingredients, how they prick the skin to drain bodily fluids, and finally how they adorn the face of the dry mummy with a gold or silver mask.³

Widely cited in modern studies of Liao tombs, these historical accounts do accord with some archaeological finds, such as the frequent use of metal masks in aristocratic Qidan tombs. But these records also reveal the distinct mentality of their authors, who were mainly interested in the *differences* between the Qidan and the Chinese. Absent in this type of literature are *shared* features of Qidan and Chinese tombs, as well as observations of cultural interaction and assimilation. In other words, if these authors performed the role of "*de facto* anthropologists" of Liao tombs, they did so by essentializing the Qidan's alienness.

Modern archaeology allows us to reevaluate these historical references while still using them. Whereas numerous excavations indeed prove the existence of indigenous burial customs in the Liao territory, they also tell us that Qidan funerary culture was by no means pure and exclusive, but was surprisingly dynamic and open to heterogeneous traditions. It is based on this newly acquired notion of cultural complexity that some original studies of Liao tombs have been conducted in recent years.⁴ The present study follows this direction to explore the manner and nature of cultural assimilation in Liao funerary art and architecture. Since I will focus on the two earliest datable tombs from the Liao, my discussion also aims to provide an in-depth reading of these two tombs.

The Tombs

Located at present-day Baoshan 寶山 in Chifeng 赤峰, Inner Mongolia, and designated as Baoshan Tombs 1 and 2, these two tombs were found inside a large graveyard about 30 kilometers northeast of the Supreme Capital of the Liao (Liao Shangjing 遼上京).⁵ Enclosed by walls, the rectangular cemetery was about 187 meters long and 157 meters wide, and contained a dozen or so tombs. The cemetery was first reported in 1958, after local archaeologists surveyed the remaining murals in a robbed tomb.⁶ Baoshan Tombs 1 and 2 were excavated in 1993 and 1996. The report of the excavation, published in 1998, immediately attracted scholars' attention for three reasons: the tombs' early dates, possible imperial status, and extraordinary murals.

First, an inscription in Baoshan Tomb 1, written in handsome Chinese calligraphy, dates this tomb to 923 (the second year of the Tianzan 天贊 era), making it the earliest known Liao aristocratic tomb yet excavated—only seven years after the founding of the Liao and sixteen years after the fall of the Tang.⁷ Tomb 2 yielded an unpolished stone slab with a short inscription written in "small Qidan script" (*Qidan xiaozi* 契丹小字). To my knowledge, this inscription has not been deciphered. But because this type of script was invented around 926, and because this tomb is similar to Tomb 1 in many ways, the excavators have suggested that Tomb 2 was constructed "not long after Tomb 1," probably before 930, making it the second earliest Liao aristocratic tomb we know.⁸

Second, the inscription in Tomb 1 also identifies the tomb occupant as Qinde 勤德, the second son of the "Great Young Master" (Da Shaojun 大少君).⁹ The *Old History of the Five Dynasties* (*Jiu Wudai shi* 舊五代史) records that Abaoji 阿保機, the founder of the Liao, had three sons, the youngest of whom had the

title Young Master (Shaojun 少君).¹⁰ This record has led the excavators to propose that the graveyard belonged to the Liao royal clan Yelü 耶律, possibly even to the branch of Abaoji himself.¹¹ An analysis of the skeletal remains in Tomb 2 identifies the occupant as an adult female. Because this tomb is located closer to the center of the cemetery, the excavators have hypothesized that it must have belonged to an important female member of the royal family, probably the wife of the "Great Young Master."¹²

Third, paintings found in both graves are among the finest tomb murals in Chinese art history, characterized by extremely high artistry as well as unusual subject matter. Since the publication of the excavation report, these paintings have been carefully studied by a number of scholars. Wu Yugui 吳玉貴 and Qi Hong 漆紅 identified the two principal murals in Tomb 2 as depictions of famous Chinese stories.¹³ Other scholars, such as Luo Shiping 羅世平 and Sun Ji 孫機, compared the murals' compositions with transmitted Tang paintings and studied the costumes of the painted figures.¹⁴ Whereas these studies have laid a basis for any discussion of the Baoshan tombs, especially Tomb 2, this essay has a set of different goals. Most importantly, instead of taking the two murals in Tomb 2 as independent works of art, and hence focusing on problems of iconography and style, I will explore the meaning of the paintings' content and style within their funerary context. This approach will lead me to examine the murals within three interrelated analytical frames. The first is to view them as a "pair" designed for an inner stone room in Tomb 2; the second is to discover the meaning of this inner space by comparing its interior murals with those surrounding it; and the third is to discuss the two Baoshan tombs together, extracting historical evidence from their similarities and differences. This contextual approach demands an analysis conducted on shifting levels, from the tombs' architectural structure to their interior decoration and then to the pair of murals in Tomb 2. This analysis will finally lead us to uncover the layered significance of the murals and their multiple subjectivities.

The Architectural Program of the Baoshan Tombs

The two Baoshan tombs share a similar architectural program, each comprised of a paved passageway, a small courtyard at the end of the passageway, a brick gate imitating a timber structure, a short tunnel inside the gate, a chamber with a domed ceiling, and an inner room containing a "coffin bed" at the rear (Fig. 1). While bricks were used to construct each tomb's basic structure, the inner room was built of polished stone slabs. Perhaps because Tomb 1 belonged to a male descendant

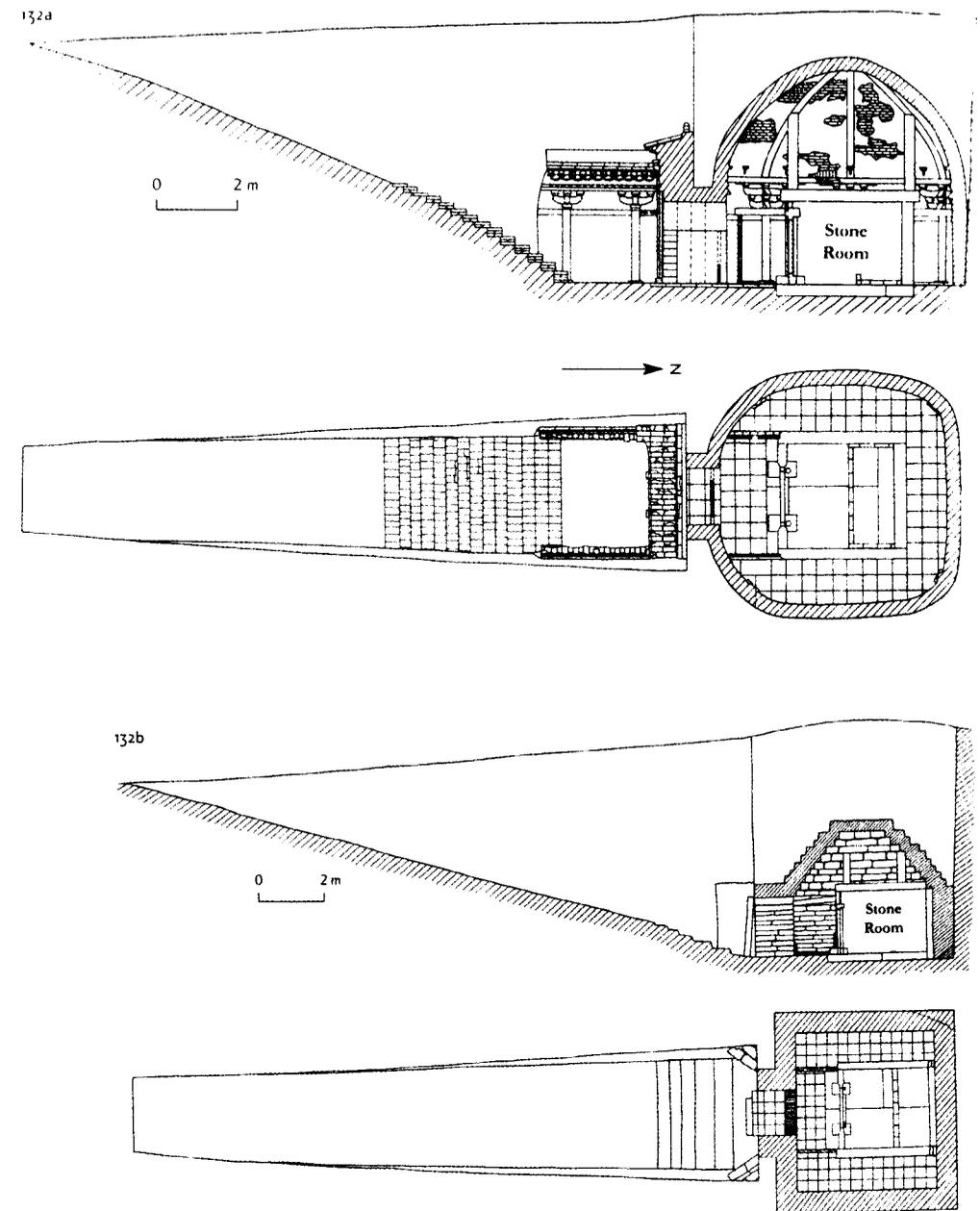


Fig. 1. Plans of the Baoshan tombs. Chifeng, Inner Mongolia, China. Top: Tomb 1, 923 CE; bottom: Tomb 2, after 926 and possibly before 930 CE. From Neimenggu wenwu kaogu yanjusuo and Alukeerqinqi wenwu guanlizuo, "Nei Monggu Chifeng Baoshan Liao bihuamu fajue jianbao," *Wenwu* 1 (1998), figs. 2, 37.

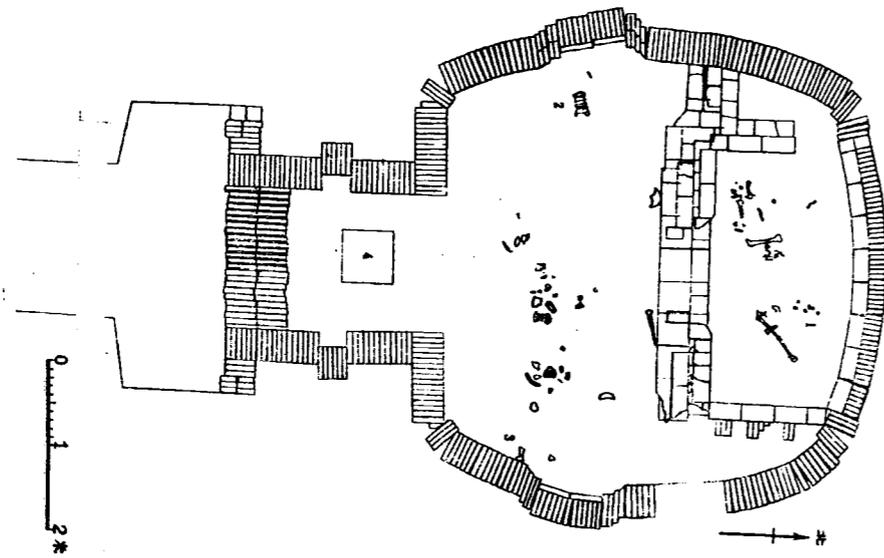
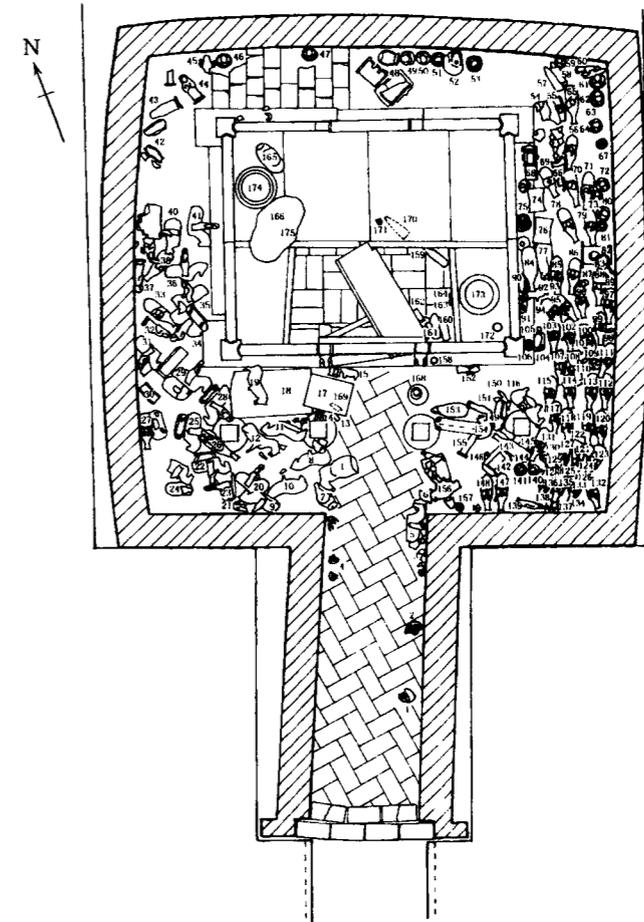


Fig. 2. Plan of Wang Gongshu's tomb. Balizhuang, Beijing. 846 CE. From Beijing shi Haidian qu wenwu guanlisuo, "Beijing shi Haidian qu Bailizhuang Tang mu," *Wenwu* 11 (1995), fig. 2. ((source in note 15))

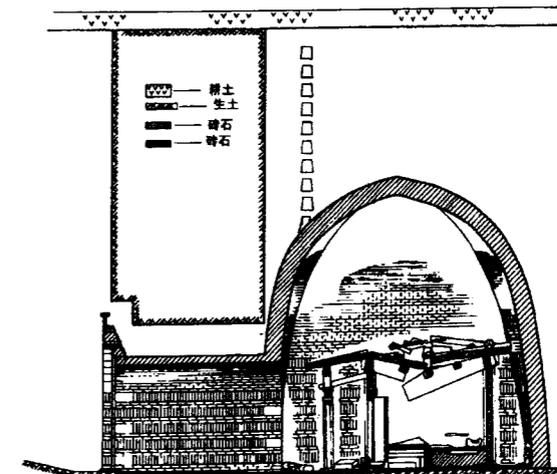
of the royal family, it is larger than Tomb 2 and has a more elaborate door and flanking wings; its inner stone room also stands in the middle of the tomb chamber, instead of being attached to the chamber's back wall as seen in Tomb 2. Regardless of such differences, both tombs resemble a "northern style" of late Tang tombs, which differs considerably from that of contemporary tombs in the metropolitan Guanzhong 關中 area. Comparing Baoshan Tomb 1 and Wang Gongshu's 王公淑 tomb located at Balizhuang 八里莊 in the northwest suburbs of Beijing (Fig. 2),¹⁵ we find similar sloping passageways and connected little courtyards, similar brick gates with extended wings, similar rectangular chambers with round corners, and similar "imitation" timber structures in the tomb chambers. Both tombs likewise place their coffin beds to the north, thus differing from metropolitan tombs in which coffin beds are in most cases attached to the west wall. Wang Gongshu's tomb was built in 846, eighty years prior to Baoshan Tomb 1. There is little doubt that the architectural style exemplified by this late Tang tomb provided the Liao royal burial with an established Chinese prototype.

The Baoshan tombs, however, are unique in their inner stone rooms, which seem a standard feature in the Baoshan cemetery but are nearly absent in Liao tombs built a mere ten to twenty years later.¹⁶ We still cannot securely identify the origin of this design. But it is interesting that a similar stone inner chamber was an

Fig. 3. Plans of Song Shaozu's tomb. Datong, Shanxi. 477 CE. From Shanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo and Datong shi kaogu yanjiusuo, "Datongshi Bei Wei Song Shaozu mu fajue jianbao," *Wenwu* 7 (2001), figs. 5, 6.



(Fig. 3a) Plan of the tomb of Song Shaozu (After Shanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo and Datong Shi Kaogu Yanjiusuo, 2001, p. 22)



(Fig. 3b) Sectional view of the tomb of Song Shaozu (After Shanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo and Datong Shi Kaogu Yanjiusuo, 2001, p. 21)

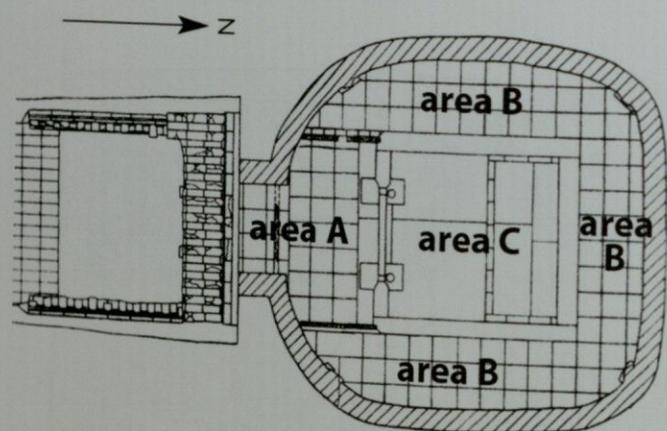


Fig. 4. Internal spaces of the Baoshan tombs. Based on Neimenggu wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo and Alukeerqinqi wenwu guanlizuo, "Nei Monggu Chifeng Baoshan Liao bihuamu fajue jianbao," *Wenwu* 1 (1998), fig. 1.

important feature of some Northern Wei 北魏 tombs constructed four hundred years earlier. Five such early examples are known, and include a miniature stone house in the tomb of Song Shaozu 宋紹祖, a Northern Wei official who died in 477 (Fig. 3); four stone sarcophagi found in close proximity at Zhijiaobao 智家堡 village south of Datong 大同, dating from the 480s; and Ning Mao's 寧懋 house-shaped sarcophagus constructed before 527.¹⁷ It can be hypothesized that the tenth-century Qidan, whose ancestry can be traced back to the Xianbei 鮮卑 who established the Northern Wei, revived this ancient tomb structure. That both the Northern Wei and Liao royal houses used a "stone house" (*shishi* 石室) in ancestral worship may add further support to this contention.¹⁸ But even though such connections remain hypothetical, it is safe to assume that the consistent use of the inner stone room in the Baoshan cemetery must imply specific purposes. Some of these purposes, I believe, can be understood through investigating the murals painted in different parts of the tombs.

The Pictorial Program of Baoshan Tomb 1

As mentioned earlier, the stone room of Tomb 1 stands in the center of the tomb chamber. It is not an isolated miniature building, however, but is integrated into a series of spaces divided by doors. Entering the main gate of the tomb, a visitor would face a wooden door across a short tunnel, which originally marked the beginning of the tomb chamber. Behind this door is a small open space surrounded by doors on all four sides. While the door to the tomb chamber is now behind the visitor, a stone door in front of him opens to the interior of the stone room, where two wooden doors to the left and right lead to an enclosed "outer space" surrounding the stone room. There are therefore three interrelated spaces in the tomb (Fig. 4):



Fig. 5. Attendants, flanking the door of the stone chamber inside Baoshan Tomb 1. Courtesy of the School of Art and the Humanities, Guangdong Academy of Fine Arts.

the space along the central axis from the main gate to the gate of the stone room (Area A); the space around the stone room (Area B); and the space inside the stone room (Area C). Painted images decorating these spaces provide important clues to understanding their significance.

Not coincidentally, the pictorial images in these three spaces constitute three homogeneous groups. Images in Area A consist of pairs of male and female attendants, who stand along the central axis of the tomb and flank the series of doors from outside to inside (Fig. 5). Images in the second group decorate the outer walls of Area B. To the west there is a group of seven servants, either waiting obediently or delivering food or drink to the deceased master (Fig. 6). On the opposite east wall is a groom standing in front of three riderless horses. The saddle and harness of the first horse are especially elaborate, decorated with gold ornaments; clearly this is the prized mount of the tomb occupant (Fig. 7). Images on the north wall depict livestock as well as food and drink displayed on a low table, again identifying Area B as a "living space" for the dead. This significance is confirmed by the figures depicted in this space, which all have distinct Qidan hairstyles, wear contemporary Qidan clothes, and are portrayed in a realistic manner (see Fig. 6).

In sharp contrast, paintings in Area C employ a typical Chinese pictorial style to illustrate traditional Chinese figures and stories. The mural on the east wall bears a label: "A Picture of Descending Immortals" (*Jiangzhen tu* 降真圖). It depicts a legend first told in the *Private Biography of Emperor Wu of the Han* (*Han Wudi neizhuan* 漢武帝內傳), that in 105 BCE, upon the emperor's invitation, the Queen



Above: Fig. 6. Attendants, west wall of Baoshan Tomb 1. Courtesy of the School of Art and the Humanities, Guangdong Academy of Fine Arts.



Fig. 7. Groom and riderless horse, east wall of Baoshan Tomb 1. Courtesy of the School of Art and the Humanities, Guangdong Academy of Fine Arts.



Fig. 8. "A Picture of Descending Immortals," east wall of the stone chamber inside Baoshan Tomb 1. Courtesy of the School of Art and the Humanities, Guangdong Academy of Fine Arts.

Mother of the West (Xiwangmu 西王母) and her celestial companions arrived on clouds at the emperor's Chenghua Palace 承華殿 to meet with him (Fig. 8).¹⁹ The painting on the west wall is severely damaged. The surviving images include two figures sitting on rocks in the foreground and facing inward. Their relaxed manner, as well as two tall, gnarled trees that frame the composition, have convinced the excavators that the painting's theme is *gao yi* 高逸—lofty recluses who have found freedom beyond the mundane world.²⁰

The radical difference between the pictures in Area B and Area C implies a divergent meaning for the two spaces, that is, that the space outside the stone room pertains to the contemporary human world, while the interior space of the stone room is transformed into a fictional, transcendental realm. This difference in symbolism is reinforced by different means, including literary theme and artistic style: references from traditional Chinese literature and art are employed for the inner space, whereas contemporary Qidan images help construct the outer space. This pictorial program is shared by Baoshan Tomb 2, but unfortunately, most images in the outer space in this tomb can no longer be seen. Based on the surviving traces, however, the excavators believe that the original mural beyond the stone room "should have resembled the scenes of daily life depicted in Tomb 1."²¹

The Pair of Murals in Baoshan Tomb 2

The pictorial program of the two tombs provides a necessary context for further investigating the murals inside the stone rooms: instead of being self-contained pictorial compositions, these murals help construct an imaginary space for the dead. I will mainly focus on the two paintings inside the stone room of Tomb 2, because both pictures are well preserved.

The stone room in Tomb 2 is 2.97 meters wide, 3.2 meters deep, and 2.18 meters high. Equipped with door-leaves, it contained a coffin bed against the back wall (see Fig. 1, bottom). Like Tomb 1, the door is flanked by two pairs of attendants, both inside and outside the room. But unlike Tomb 1, in which the pair of attendants flanking the door inside the stone room consists of one male and one female figure, both members of the pair painted inside the stone room in Tomb 2 are female (Fig. 9). This difference is clearly related to the tomb occupant's gender—it would be improper to have a male figure standing inside a royal lady's private chamber. This also explains the dominance of female images in this room.

The excavators first labeled the mural on the north wall *Songjing tu* 誦經圖 (Chanting a Buddhist sutra), based on the last line of a poem inscribed on the painting:

Snow-feathered bird from Mount Long with a red beak,
You have received much coaching from our palace lady.
Never speaking ordinary words in front of people,
All the sounds you make are the chanting of Buddhist sutras.

雪衣丹背隴山禽
每受宮闈指教深
不向人前出凡語
聲聲皆是念經音

This poem has enabled scholars to scrutinize the painting's subject matter more closely. The consensus is that the painting and the poem both tell a specific story. But scholars have different opinions about the precise content of the story. According to Wu Yugui, the poem summarizes a well-known Tang tale in the *Miscellaneous Records of Emperor Minghuang* (*Minghuang zalu* 明皇雜錄): Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 of the Tang (i.e., Minghuang) and his favorite consort Yang Guifei 楊貴妃 (also known as Yang Yuhuan 楊玉環 or Yang Taizhen 楊太真) loved an unusual

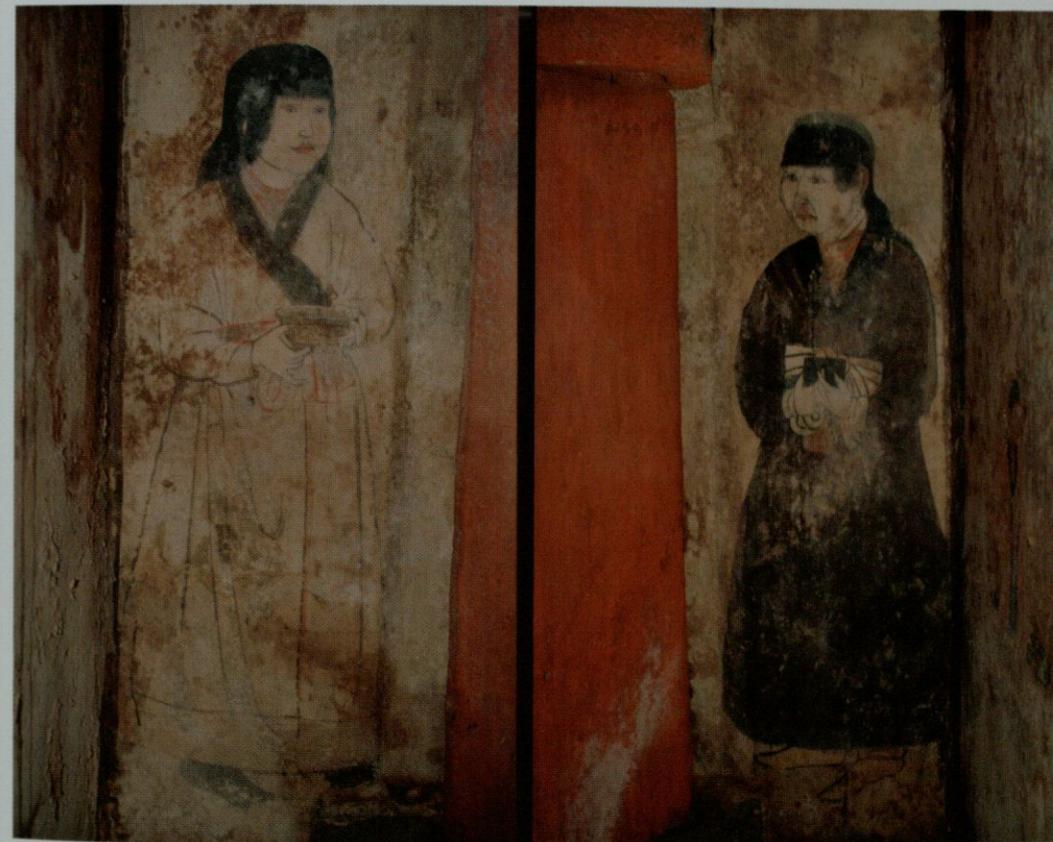


Fig. 9. Attendants, next to the door of the stone chamber inside Baoshan Tomb 2. Courtesy of the School of Art and the Humanities, Guangdong Academy of Fine Arts.

white parrot from Longshan 隴山, whom they nicknamed White-Robed Girl (Xueyi Nü 雪衣女 or Xueyi Niang 雪衣娘). One day the parrot flew over to Guifei, and told her in a human voice that she had dreamed the previous night of being caught and crushed by a vicious eagle. To prevent the calamity prophesied by the dream, the emperor asked Guifei to teach the parrot *The Heart Sutra* (*Xin jing* 心經) until she could recite it fluently. But when the royal couple later took the parrot to a palace resort, an eagle suddenly came and killed the parrot. Sadly, the emperor and Guifei had her buried in the imperial garden, and named the burial Yingwu Zhong 鸚鵡塚 (Tomb of the Parrot).²²

Wu Yugui's iconographical identification has been challenged by Qi Hong, who argues that, rather than portraying Yang Guifei, the central figure in the painting must be Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (624–705) of the Tang. Like Wu Yugui, Qi Hong derives his evidence from a collection of historical anecdotes, this time the *Informal Writings by Elder Jiean* (*Jiean Laoren manbi* 戒庵老人漫筆) compiled by the Ming author Li Xu 李詒 (1506–1593):

The Tang empress Wu [Zetian] had a pet parrot called White-Robed [Girl]. Smart and astute in nature, the bird could chant the entire volume of *The Heart Sutra*. The empress kept it in a gold cage and never let it out of her sight. One day Wu Zetian joked to the parrot: "If you can make a verse begging to be freed, I will release you from the cage." The bird seemed excited, and after a short while chanted a poem: "Wearing worn autumn feathers like beat-up clothes, I left Longshan's forest long ago. If you open the cage to release White-Robed Girl, I'll forever praise the name of the bodhisattva Guanshiyin 觀世音." The empress was delighted and opened the cage for the parrot. After several days, while perched on the [cage's] ball-shaped jade knob, the bird died. Heartbroken, Wu Zetian ordered a sandalwood coffin made for the bird and buried it in the palace garden.²³

Although both stories concern the relationship between a royal lady and a parrot named White-Robed Girl, and seem therefore equally plausible sources of the tomb mural, Qi Hong argues that the principal lady in the painting cannot be Yang Guifei because the painted figure has a slender body, whereas Yang was famous for her corpulent physique. Moreover, he finds common features between the parrot's verse in the Wu Zetian story and the poem inscribed on the painting: the two poems have the same rhymes, use identical phrases and key characters, and have similar sentence structures. To him, these shared features imply a direct relationship between the story and the painting.

Qi's argument is compelling. But in my view it still falls short of refuting Wu Yugui's identification for two reasons—one pictorial, one textual. In the mural, the principal lady is shown seated behind a narrow table under a leafy willow tree; in front of her on the table is an open scroll (Fig. 10). An exotic palm tree and an ornate Taihu rock identify the setting as a royal garden. Two female attendants stand behind the lady, one holding a fan, the other, a cup. Two more attendants stand in front of the lady, looking at her attentively. Meanwhile, the lady is fully occupied in reading the scroll, using a long stick to point at the characters. Her listener is a white parrot standing next to the scroll. Alert and directly facing the royal lady, it seems to be remembering every word the lady is uttering.

This episode is absent in the story from *Informal Writings by Elder Jiean*, in which the bird, not Wu Zetian, chants *The Heart Sutra*. But in the tale from the *Miscellaneous Records of Minghuang*, it is Yang Guifei who teaches the parrot to

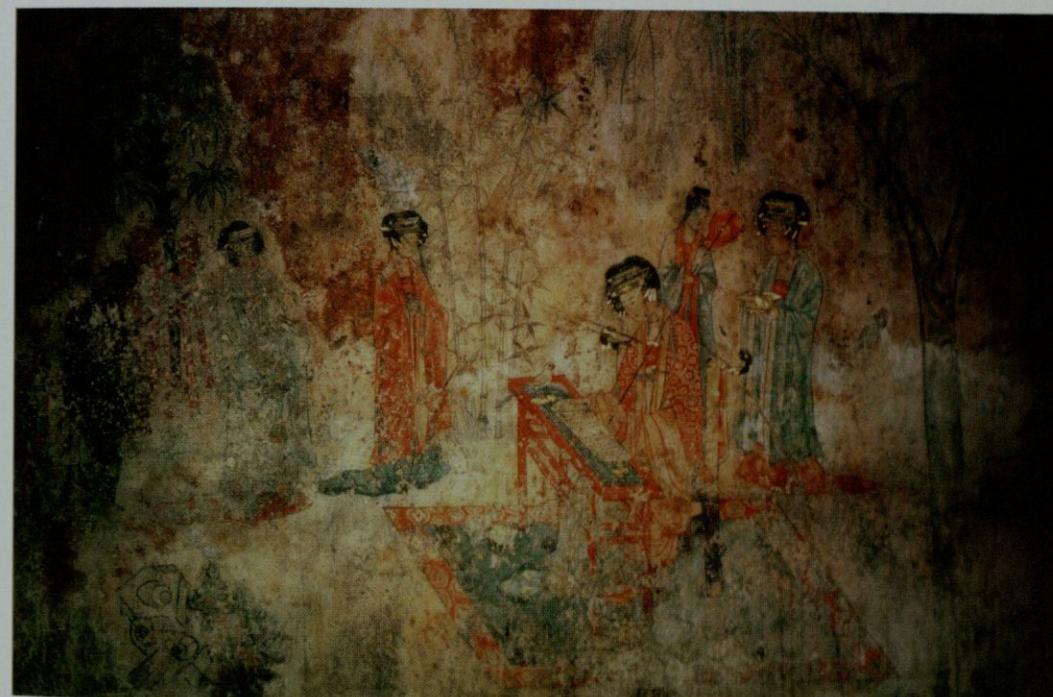


Fig. 10. "Yang Guifei Teaching a Parrot to Chant *The Heart Sutra*," north wall of the stone chamber inside Baoshan Tomb 2. Courtesy of the School of Art and the Humanities, Guangdong Academy of Fine Arts.

read *The Heart Sutra*, which fits the scene shown in the painting perfectly. Moreover, checking textual sources, we find that Zhang Xuan 張萱 (713–755) and Zhou Fang 周昉 (ca. 730–800), two Tang masters of female images, both did paintings based on this second story. Their related works, now lost, still existed in the Northern Song royal collection and were listed in the *Painting Catalogue of the Xuanhe Era* (*Xuanhe huapu* 宣和畫譜). Zhang Xuan's painting was entitled *Painting Taizhen* [i.e., *Yang Guifei*] *Teaching a Parrot* (*Xie Taizhen jiao yingwu tu* 寫太真教鸚鵡圖); Zhou Fang's work was called *A Royal Concubine Teaching a Parrot* (*Feizi jiao yingwu tu* 妃子教鸚鵡圖).²⁴ Clearly referring to the Yang Guifei story in the *Miscellaneous Records of Minghuang*, these titles offer apt descriptions of the Baoshan mural. Finally, the tale about Wu Zetian and the White-Robed Girl first appeared in a sixteenth-century text, more than six hundred years after the Baoshan mural. The story about Yang Guifei and the parrot was already quite popular in the eighth or ninth century, one to two hundred years before the Baoshan mural was painted.²⁵

The painting on the southern wall presents no problem in its subject matter, because it bears a poem that contains the name Suniang 蘇娘 and identifies her as the maker of a famous palindrome:

[Her husband] still campaigning against the Liao late in the year,
Madame Su is worn out with worry.

"I am sending him a palindrome woven of repeated careful
instructions
to express my lifelong love and solicitude."

□□征遼歲月深
蘇娘憔悴□難任
丁寧織寄迴[文][錦]
表妾平生繾綣心

Here Suniang, or Madame Su, is the fourth-century female poet Su Hui 蘇蕙 or Su Ruolan 蘇若蘭. Several versions of Su Hui's story exist. According to the one in the *History of Jin* (*Jin shu* 晉書), she was from Shiping 始平 and good at writing. Her husband Dou Tao 竇濤 was sent by Fu Jian 苻堅 (r. 357–384), the founding emperor of the Former Qin 前秦, into exile on the frontier. To express her longing, Su invented a kind of palindrome (*huiwen shi* 回文詩) that could be read forward or backward and in many other ways. She wove the poem with five-colored thread into a piece of brocade and sent it to Dou Tao.²⁶ Another version, said to have been composed by Wu Zetian in 692—two years after she ascended the throne to become the first female emperor of China—contains more biographical details, including a bitter fight between Su Hui and Dou Tao over the latter's infatuation with a beautiful concubine. As a result she refused to accompany Dou Tao to his post, but later regretted her decision and created the palindrome to win back her husband's favor.²⁷ In my view this second version is unlikely to be the source of the Baoshan mural, not only because its authorship by Wu Zetian is rejected by textual scholars,²⁸ but also because it describes Su Hui as an intellectual woman flawed with "a quick temperament and jealousy" (*xing jinyu ji, poshang jidu* 性近於急, 頗傷嫉妒). It is difficult to imagine that the patron of the Baoshan mural would associate the deceased royal lady with such an unflattering image.

The mural depicts the moment when Su Hui is dispatching an emissary to her husband (Fig. 11). Surrounded by five female companions or attendants, she has a wistful expression on her face. Holding the brocade in her left hand, she is pointing to a young man with her right hand, as though in the middle of telling him the importance of the object. In response, the emissary slightly bends his upper body and holds both hands in front of his chest—a gesture of loyalty. A female companion is handing him a little scroll, perhaps a letter. Interestingly, like the painting on the



Fig. 11. "Su Hui Sending the Palindrome to Her Exiled Husband," south wall of the stone chamber inside Baoshan Tomb 2. Courtesy of the School of Art and the Humanities, Guangdong Academy of Fine Arts.

north wall, which depicts Yang Guifei teaching the white parrot to chant *The Heart Sutra* (see Fig. 10), this mural portraying Su Hui sending the palindrome to her husband can also be traced to Zhang Xuan and Zhou Fang. The *Painting Catalogue of the Xuanhe Era* lists six works entitled either *Zhijin huiwen tu* 織錦迴文圖 or *Zhijin xuanji tu* 織錦璇璣圖, both meaning "image of an embroidered palindrome." The first four were painted by these two Tang masters.²⁹ Luo Shiping has compared the Baoshan mural with extant works attributed to Zhang Xuan and Zhou Fang, and has found many similarities in their overall compositions and arrangements of figures. He concludes that the Baoshan mural must have been based on a lost Tang painting.³⁰

Luo's conclusion seems convincing, but it does not explain the intriguing relationship between the two murals. Judging from the similar size, composition, color scheme, and inscriptions of the two murals, there is little doubt that they were conceptualized and designed as a pair. However, internal visual evidence also indicates that they have divergent origins, for the figures' body types, costumes, and hairstyles all show striking differences. On the south wall, Su Hui and her female companions have oval-shaped faces, round shoulders, and a kind of stout appearance

often seen in Tang paintings. In contrast, Yang Guifei and her companions on the north wall have a quite different body type, slender and more angular. Many of them stand straight and still, without the kind of gestures that characterize the figures in the other composition. Most obviously, the women in the two pictures have different hairstyles and wear different dresses. Generally speaking, the clothes of Su Hui and her companions (see Fig. 11) follow the Tang style as seen in paintings such as *Court Ladies Preparing the Newly Woven Silk* (*Daolian tu* 搗練圖, a Song copy of Zhang Xuan's original) and *Court Ladies Wearing Flowers in Their Hair* (*Zanhua shinü tu* 簪花仕女圖, attributed to Zhou Fang), whereas those of Yang Guifei and her companion (see Fig. 10) are closer to female images from the late Tang to Song. The former is characterized by tight sleeves, long skirts, and abundant streamers and scarves; while the most distinct feature of the latter is the long, straight jacket over the inner garments.³¹

However, the artist made an unmistakable effort to unify these two compositions of different origins into a tightly integrated pictorial program. In both paintings, the figures appear on mid-level, facing left amidst tall trees. The painter employed a standard compositional method, placing the figures along parallel diagonal lines on a tilted ground. He also used the same palette, with red and blue as the two main colors, and occasional gold to highlight the ladies' ornaments. The trees and plants in both murals are again similar, depicted in blue and green in isolated clusters. Both paintings have poems inscribed in an identical manner. Because the two poems use the same set of rhymes, they were likely added to the pictures by the painter.³² Placed at the upper left corner on the south wall and at the upper right corner on the north wall, these two poems create a kind of mirror effect for the paintings.

The two murals also differ markedly in terms of subject matter: Su Hui's story is about a woman's love and loyalty toward her husband, whereas the tale of the White-Robed Girl falls into the literary genre of "records of the strange" (*zhi gui* 志怪). A question emerges: Why were these two unrelated Chinese stories paired together to decorate a Qidan lady's tomb? And why is Su Hui, who has a much lower social status than Yang Guifei, portrayed as a grand royal lady? These two paintings pose other questions as well. For example, who is the painter? Can we find traces of his identity and intention in his work? These and other questions lead us to think about the meaning of these two paintings more deeply, not only exploring their content and style but also connecting them with their patron and creators.

Human Connections

The connection between the two murals in Baoshan Tomb 2 and the tomb's occupant seems obvious: as mentioned earlier, this tomb belonged to a lady in the early Liao court, possibly the daughter-in-law of Emperor Abaoji. It is thus fitting that the central figures of the murals are both represented as aristocratic women of the highest rank. This connection explains why Su Hui is portrayed as a grand royal lady despite her relatively low origin. In other words, represented in this way, the central characters of the two murals became compatible with the occupant of Tomb 2 in social status. The paintings thus provided her with two prominent historical counterparts.

To determine why these two specific stories were chosen for this tomb is more complex. A number of assumptions can be made. For example, we can assume that the two stories were chosen because they conveyed some general symbolism favored by the patron—a standard practice in illustrating historical tales in earlier Chinese tombs.³³ It is possible that the image of Yang Guifei reading a Buddhist sutra inspired the idea of religious devotion and was therefore selected to allude to the deceased lady; the story was suitable for a tomb also because of the apotropaic (*bixie* 辟邪) function of *The Heart Sutra* to protect the dead.³⁴ Similarly, the story of Su Hui, which emphasizes a woman's devotion to her husband, may have been used for this reason to glorify the Qidan woman interred next to the image. Such connections gain additional evidence from a comparison with Baoshan Tomb 1: the two murals painted in the same positions inside its stone room are both centered on men and provided the tomb occupant with idealized historical counterparts.

As mentioned above, one of the two murals in Tomb 1 portrays Emperor Wu of the Han, who is greeting the Queen Mother of the West and other celestial beings. This picture is connected with the tomb occupant in three ways: the male gender and royal status of the protagonist, and the theme of immortality. The other mural, probably depicting a group of hermits, is likewise centered on male figures and expresses the desire to seek freedom beyond the mundane human world. We find here a clear pattern shared by the two groups of murals in the two tombs: in both cases, paintings in the stone room are closely related to the gender and status of the deceased, and allude to the virtue and spiritual aspirations of the tomb occupant. In fact, the two groups of paintings may have been created by the same workshop: a comparison of the image of the Queen Mother of the West and that of Su Hui reveals similarities in figurative type, costume, hairstyle, and gesture, although the depiction of the Queen Mother reveals a more skilled hand.

Thus far, this section has mainly explored the murals' human connections based on the paintings' literary content. But a narrative painting is never a mechanical translation of a story, and a pictorial narrative always enriches or reinvents a given literary theme. It is therefore necessary to examine the paintings' pictorial representations more carefully, and to uncover evidence of historical taste and desire from the images themselves.

Comparing the two murals—not the two stories—in Tomb 2, we find that they both seem to emphasize women's intimate relationship with texts: Yang Guifei is absorbed in reading a scroll (see Fig. 10), and Su Hui is holding the palindrome she has just created (see Fig. 11). But since neither painting copies the words of the texts, what attracted the patron or painter of the murals was not the *content* of the texts, but texts as objects or “props.” Historians of Chinese painting are familiar with the many “reading women” images in later figure painting, especially during the Ming-Qing period, which portray refined female figures contemplating unidentifiable books. The Baoshan murals allow us to trace this tradition to the early tenth century, and to identify an early Liao notion of refined femininity related to contemporaneous taste.

Moreover, both paintings represent a fantasy world populated by fashionable women and exotic plants. Rarely do we find female images in tomb art so exquisitely and seductively portrayed. The ladies in the murals are themselves works of art: they have painted blue eyebrows and tiny red lips, and their coiffures are complex sculptural forms embellished with flowers and gold jewelry. No two ladies wear the same clothes; each displays a different combination of colors and patterns. In both paintings, these court ladies are accompanied by rare plants, shown prominently between the figures. Significantly, these plants—palm, banana, and bamboo—all grow in the south. The Qidan patron of the murals had probably never seen them in real life. But this was exactly why they were painted in the tomb in such an exaggerated iconic and exotic way. Based on all these observations, we can conclude that in addition to their moralistic implications, these two murals helped construct a particular kind of feminine space. Subject to a contemporary court taste, this space incorporated fashion, luxury, literacy, and romantic fantasy as its main components. This fantastic space, along with the traditional virtues of filial piety and chastity, shaped the eternal home of the woman buried in the tomb.

But what about the painter—did the murals also convey his ideas and desires? My answer is unambiguous: the content and style of the murals must have been just as meaningful to the painter as to the patron, but in an entirely different way. This is because the painter (or a group of painters working in a royal workshop) was almost

certainly Chinese. We know this from multiple factors, including the subject and style of his work, the typical Chinese images that continue a Tang tradition of figure painting, and especially the Chinese poems inscribed on both walls. Moreover, Hu Qiao's 胡嶠 *Records by a Captive* (*Xianlu ji* 陷虜記) documents many Chinese craftsmen working in the Liao capital in the early tenth century, around the time the Baoshan murals were created. Hu was the county magistrate of Heyang 郟陽 before he was captured by the Qidan army in 946 and taken to the Supreme Capital. After spending seven years in the north, he was able to return to China in 953 (the third year of the Guangshun 廣順 era of the Latter Zhou 後周). In *Records by a Captive*, he states that “[In the Supreme Capital] there are various kinds of workmen making silk products and other artifacts, as well as eunuchs, acrobats, singers, wrestlers, scholars, Buddhist monks and nuns, Daoists, and others. These are all Chinese, many of them coming from prefectures such as Bing 并, Fen 汾, You 幽, and Ji 薊.”³⁵ This record should be reliable because it is an eyewitness account from someone who spent a prolonged period in the area. Most important for this essay, the place and period that Hu Qiao documented fit the Baoshan tombs perfectly. We can actually imagine that the painter(s) of the tombs were some Chinese craftsmen whom Hu might have met in the area.

Once the painter's identity is confirmed—an identity that is not only ethnic but also cultural and artistic—we begin to see the paintings in a different light. We realize that in making these beautiful murals for an aristocratic Qidan woman, the painter was also recreating an imaginary “home” in an alien place. Working for the Liao court far beyond the Great Wall, he must have invested a particular sentiment in his work. The historical tales he was illustrating, the beautiful Chinese ladies he was portraying, and the southern landscape he was fantasizing about must have all stirred his memory of as well as his imagination about Chinese culture. Accordingly, we must take such sentiment, memory, and imagination as important stimuli to the paintings' creation. To this end, I have been puzzling over one question: Why were the paintings inside this tiny burial chamber—merely 3 meters on each side—so exquisitely executed? It would have been impossible for these images to have been properly viewed in a low-ceilinged, windowless room. Indeed, I believe that these paintings might *not* have been intended to be viewed by their patrons. This possibility is partly based on the poem inscribed on the Su Hui mural.

As mentioned earlier, the first two lines of the poem read: “[Her husband] still campaigning against the Liao late in the year, / Madame Su is worn out with worry.” Recall that in the original story, Dou Tao was sent to the northwest frontier at Dunhuang, and that no existing version of the story connects him to the Liao in

the north and northeast. Clearly, this story was borrowed and modified to refer to a contemporary event. But what event? We cannot immediately take the character “Liao” 遼 in the poem as the Great Liao (Da Liao 大遼), because the Qidan royal house adopted this dynastic title only in 938 or 947, later than the 926–929 date that archaeologists have assigned to Baoshan Tomb 2.³⁶ There are four possibilities in thinking about the meaning of “zheng Liao” 征遼 (campaigning against Liao). First, the character “Liao” here may refer to the Liao River region, in which case the phrase pertains to a Qidan military expedition to the area. Second, the phrase may indeed refer to a Chinese military campaign against the Liao dynasty; but to make this assumption we need to re-date Baoshan Tomb 2 to 938 or later. Third, because the Qidan originated from the Liao River valley and consistently identified themselves with the place, the character “Liao” may be used in the poem in a nonspecific way to refer to the Qidan in general. In other words, “zheng Liao” does not refer to a particular military action but pertains to the routine clashes between China and its sworn enemy in the north. Finally, as Wu Yugui has noticed, “zheng Liao” is a conventional expression in Tang poetry, frequently employed in describing a woman’s longing for her absent husband or lover, a soldier who has been gone at the frontier for a long time. It is therefore logical to connect this expression with the Su Hui story.³⁷

Among these four possibilities, the first is unlikely because Liao history does not record a specific campaign to the Liao River region in the early tenth century. The only eastward military action was against the Bohai Kingdom 渤海國 located east of the river. Available evidence seems also to refute the second assumption: because of the many similarities between Baoshan Tombs 1 and 2, it is difficult to argue that their construction was separated by at least fifteen years (923 to 938). In my view, the third and fourth possibilities can together offer a satisfactory explanation for the poem: namely, that in this case, the conventional poetic expression “zheng Liao” was used to express the painter/poet’s personal resentment against the Qidan.

In other words, the Chinese painter working near the Liao capital deliberately replaced the place name Dunhuang in the original story with that of Liao, in order to inject his own life experience into an old painting subject. This experience was his painful separation from home. Thus, when he assumed Su Hui’s voice in the poem, thinking about her absent husband, he was actually referring to himself, from his wife or lover’s point of view. This is again a typical trope in traditional Chinese poetry, now given real emotion and purpose. Recall, too, that the painter inscribed the poem at the upper left corner on the south wall. In this position, the poem was hidden from view from the entrance of the stone room, and could only be read by a person inside the room with a lit candle.

Interestingly, we know from two distinguished Song art historians, Liu Daochun 劉道醇 (active mid-eleventh century) and Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛 (eleventh century), that during the tenth century, some established Chinese artists, including Wang Ai 王霽, Wang Renshou 王仁壽, and Jiao Zhuo 焦著, were taken by the Liao to the north, where they were entrusted with various art projects. Among them, Wang Ai and Wang Renshou were especially skilled at making religious murals and portraits.³⁸ Although according to Liu Daochun, the Liao seized the three painters in 947, some twenty years after the making of the Baoshan murals, the discovery of these “Chinese” paintings in Liao royal tombs proves that something similar had happened in the earlier days of the Liao dynasty, and that there was a group of Chinese mural painters working for the Liao court in the early tenth century.

Historical texts also record that around this time, there emerged a group of distinguished Qidan painters, the two most important being Yelü Bei 耶律倍 (899–937) and Hu Gui 胡瓌 (ninth–tenth century).³⁹ Better known by his Chinese name Li Zanhua 李贊華, Yelü Bei was the elder son of the Liao emperor Abaoji (and therefore possibly the elder paternal uncle of the occupant of Baoshan Tomb 1). Little is known about Hu Gui’s life, but most historians agree that he was a native Qidan active in the early tenth century. Significantly, both painters were famous for their portrayals of Qidan people and “barbarian horses” (*fan ma* 番馬). In Guo Ruoxu’s words, Yelü Bei “was good at portraying his native countrymen and horses, and made portraits for many Qidan noblemen and chieftains. The non-Chinese dresses and saddles and harnesses [in these paintings] are all preciously and elaborately executed.”⁴⁰ Surviving paintings by both painters are consistent with such descriptions.⁴¹ We find close parallels between these extant Qidan paintings and the images depicted in the area outside the stone room in Baoshan Tomb 1. As mentioned earlier, lively realistic images portray servants and attendants in Qidan dress and hairstyle, and there is also a Qidan groom attending three horses (see Figs. 5, 6, 7, and 9). These images closely resemble works by Yelü Bei and Hu Gui, as well as murals in later Liao tombs. We can safely assume that this type of image in the Baoshan tombs was created by Qidan painters.

We thus return to the architectural structure and pictorial program of the Baoshan tombs discussed at the beginning of this essay, but with a renewed understanding: the spaces inside and outside the stone room not only represent the living environment and transcendent realm, but also pertain to different cultural and artistic traditions. Inside the stone room, Chinese themes and painting styles are used to construct a fictional, imaginary world, whereas the outer section bears realistic portrayals of scenes of daily life created by Qidan painters. Moreover, a

mural can imply different subjectivities: if to the Liao patrons the “Chinese” images were connected to history and fantasy, to the Chinese painters they were imbued with memory and homesickness.

Endnotes:

1. Nancy S. Steinhardt, *Liao Architecture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 242.
2. Liu Xu 劉昉 et al., comps., *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 (Old history of the Tang dynasty), (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 5350.
3. “其富貴之家人有亡者，以刃破腹，取其腸胃滌之，實以香藥鹽矾，五彩縫之，又以尖葦筒刺於皮膚，瀝瀝其膏血，且盡，用金銀為面具，銅絲絡其手足。” Wen Weijian 文惟簡, *Luting shishi* 虜廷事實 (A factual record in the barbarian court), in Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀, ed., *Shou fu* 說郛 (A miscellany of writings), *juan* 8 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1927), folio 49a. For an English translation of the passage, see Jan Fontein and Tung Wu, *Unearthing China's Past* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1973), 192.
4. This trend is exemplified by Hsüeh-man Shen, “Body Matters: Manikin Burials in the Liao Tombs of Xuanhua, Hebei Province,” *Artibus Asiae* 65, no. 1 (2005): 99–141; and Li Qingquan 李清泉, *Xuanhua Liao mu yanjiu* 宣化遼墓研究 (A study of Liao tombs at Xuanhua), (Beijing: Wenwu, 2007).
5. Qi Xiaoguang 齊曉光 et al., “Nei Menggu Chifeng Baoshan Liao bihuamu fajue jianbao” 內蒙古赤峰寶山遼壁畫墓發掘簡報 (A brief report on the excavation of Liao dynasty painted tombs at Baoshan, Chifeng, Inner Mongolia), *Wenwu* 文物 1 (1998): 73–95.
6. Li Yiyu 李逸友, “Alukeerqin qi Shuiquangou de Liaodai bihua” 阿魯科爾沁旗水泉溝的遼代壁畫 (Liao-dynasty murals at Shuiquangou in Alukeerqin Banner), *Wenwu cankao ziliao* 文物參考資料 4 (1958): 72.
7. This inscription reads: “The second year of the Tianzan era, the year of *gui[wei]*. The second son of Great Young Master, Qinde, died at the age of fourteen, on the twentieth day of the fifth month. He was buried here on the eleventh day of the eighth month in the same year. It is thus recorded here.” 天贊二年癸未歲。大少君次子勤德年十四，五月廿日亡，當年八月十一日於此殯。故記。
8. See Qi Xiaoguang et al., “Nei Menggu Chifeng Baoshan Liao bihuamu fajue jianbao,” 94.
9. See note 7 above.
10. Xue Juzheng 薛居正, *Jiu Wudai shi* 舊五代史 (Old history of the Five Dynasties), *Liao shi* 遼史 (History of Liao), *juan* 137 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), folio 9a.
11. See Qi Xiaoguang et al., “Nei Menggu Chifeng Baoshan Liao bihuamu fajue jianbao,” 94.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Wu Yugui 吳玉貴, “Neimenggu Chifeng Baoshan Liaodai bihuamu ‘songjing tu’ luekao” 內蒙古赤峰寶山遼代壁畫墓誦經圖略考 (A preliminary study of the “chanting sutra” picture in a painted Liao tomb at Baoshan, Chifeng, Inner Mongolia), *Wenwu* 文物 2 (1999): 81–83; *idem*, “Neimenggu Chifeng Baoshan Liao mu bihua ‘jijin tu’ kao” 內蒙古赤峰寶山遼代壁畫墓寄錦圖考 (A study of the “sending embroidery” mural in a Liao tomb at Baoshan, Chifeng, Inner Mongolia), *Wenwu* 文物 3 (2001): 92–96; Qi Hong 漆紅, “‘Arinishiki kaibun zu’—Hōsan nigō Ryōbo hekiga no gadai, so no kaigashiteki igi ni tsuite” 「織錦回文圖」—宝山二号遼墓壁畫の画題，その絵画史的意義について (*Image of an Embroidered Palindrome: Concerning*

the subject matter of the murals in Baoshan Liao Tomb No. 2 and its art-historical significance), *Bijutsushi ronsō* 美術史論叢 17 (2001): 111–132.

14. Luo Shiping 羅世平, “Zhijin huiwen: Baoshan Liao mu bihua yu Tang hua de duidu” 織錦迴文: 寶山遼墓壁畫與唐畫的對讀 (An embroidered palindrome: Comparing murals from Baoshan tombs and Tang-dynasty paintings), *Shuhua yishu xuekan* 書畫藝術學刊 1 (2006): 15–23; Sun Ji 孫機, “Liao dai bihua” 遼代壁畫 (Liao-dynasty murals), in Zhongguo lishi bowuguan 中國歷史博物館 and Neimenggu wenhua ting 內蒙古文化廳, eds., *Qidan wangchao: Neimenggu Liaodai wenwu jinghua* 契丹王朝: 內蒙古遼代文物精華 (The Qidan dynasty: Cream of Liao-dynasty cultural relics from Inner Mongolia), (Beijing: Zhongguo Zangxue chubanshe, 2002), 15–17.

15. Beijing shi Haidian qu wenwu guanlisuo 北京市海淀區文物管理所, “Beijing shi Haidian qu Balizhuang Tang mu” 北京市海淀區八里莊唐墓 (A Tang-dynasty tomb at Bailizhuang, Haidian district in Beijing), *Wenwu* 文物 11 (1995): 45–53.

16. We know this because such stone rooms exist not only in Baoshan Tombs 1 and 2, but also in another tomb in the cemetery investigated in 1957. See Li Yiyu 李逸友, “Alukeerqin qi Shuiquangou de Liaodai bihua.” So far, only one stone structure has been found in a later Liao tomb. But this tomb of a couple was constructed to replace the tomb of the husband, who died twenty-two years earlier, and possibly preserved features of the husband’s tomb. Chaoyang bowuguan and Chaoyang shi chengqu bowuguan 朝陽博物館, 朝陽市城區博物館, “Liaoning Chaoyang shi Guyingzi Liao dai Gengshi jiazou 3, 4 hao mu fajue jianbao” 遼寧朝陽市姑營子遼代耿氏家族3、4號墓發掘簡報 (A brief report of the excavation of Tombs 3 and 4 of the Geng family of the Liao dynasty at Guyingzi, Chaoyang, Liaoning), *Wenwu* 文物 8 (2011): 31–45.

17. For a discussion of these Northern Wei tombs, see Wu Hung, “A Case of Cultural Interaction: House-shaped Sarcophagi of the Northern Dynasties,” *Orientalism* 34, no. 5 (May 2002): 34–41.

18. For a discussion of this issue, see Steinhardt, *Liao Architecture*, 247–250.

19. Ban Gu 班固, *Han Wudi neizhuan* 漢武帝內傳 (Private biography of Emperor Wu of the Han), (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1937), 1–2.

20. One of these two figures is labeled as Liu Chu 劉楚. But scholars, including this author, have failed to find this name in traditional Chinese texts.

21. See Qi Xiaoguang et al., “Nei Menggu Chifeng Baoshan Liao bihuamu fajue jianbao,” 86.

22. Wu Yugui, “Neimenggu Chifeng Baoshan Liaodai bihuamu ‘songjing tu’ luekao.” For the original story, see Zheng Chuhui 鄭處誨, *Minghuang zalu* 明皇雜錄 (Miscellaneous records of Emperor Minghuang), (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994), 58. This story became very popular after the Tang and has been cited in many books.

23. “唐武后畜一白鸚鵡，名雪衣，性靈慧，能誦心經一卷。后愛之，貯以金絲籠，不離左右。一日戲曰：「能作偈求解脫，當放出籠。雪衣若喜躍狀，須與朗吟曰：「憔悴秋翎似禿衿，別來隴樹歲時深。開籠若放雪衣女，常念南無觀世音。」」后喜，即為啟籠，居數日，立化於玉球紐上。后悲慟，以紫檀作棺，葬於後苑。” Li Xu 李翹, *Jiean Laoren manbi* 戒庵老人漫筆 (Informal writings by Elder Jiean), (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982), 270.

24. Yu Jianhua 俞劍華, ed., *Xuanhe huapu* 宣和畫譜 (Painting catalogue of the Xuanhe era, preface dated 1120), (Nanjing: Jiangsu meishu chubanshe, 2007), 140, 149.

25. This dating is based on the record in the *Xuanhe huapu* about Zhang Xuan’s painting on the subject. But even if we do not accept this evidence, the story had definitely come into being by the mid-ninth century because Zheng Chuhui, the author of the *Minghuang zalu*, obtained the *jinshe* degree in 834.

26. “寶滔妻蘇氏，始平人也。名蕙，字若蘭。善屬文。滔，符堅時為秦州刺史，被徙流

- 沙。蘇氏思之，織錦為回文旋圖詩以贈滔，宛轉迴圈以讀之，詞甚凄惋，凡八百四十字。” Fang Xuanling 房玄齡, *Jin shu* 晉書 (History of Jin), *juan* 96, (Beijing: Zhonghua shujue, 1974), 2523. This short biography of Su Hui was likely based on a record in an earlier version of the *Jin shu* by Wang Yin 王隱 (early fourth century), now only surviving in fragments. See Li Fang 李昉, *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 (Imperial readings of the *Taiping* era), *juan* 520 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1935), folio 10a. A different early version of the Su Hui story can be found in *Shiliuguo chungqiu* (History of the Sixteen Kingdoms) by Cui Hong 崔鴻 (470s–520s). Instead of presenting the palindrome to her husband as a token of love, however, in this version Su Hui gave the palindrome to Fu Jian in exchange for Dou Tou's life. See Tang Qiu 湯球, *Shiliuguo chungqiu jibu* 十六國春秋輯補 (A correlated and supplemented version of the *History of the Sixteen Kingdoms*), (Shanghai: Shangwu chubanshe, 1937), 328.
27. Wu Zetian 武則天, “Zhijin huiwen ji” 織錦迴文記 (On an embroidered palindrome), in Dong Hao 董誥 et al., comps., *Quan Tang wen* 全唐文 (A complete collection of Tang writings), (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), 440.
28. See Yong Rong 永瑤, Ji Yun 紀昀 et al., *Siku quanshu zongmu* 四庫全書總目 (Catalogue of the complete imperial library), *juan* 148 (Shanghai: Dadong shuju, 1927), folio 8b.
29. Three were by Zhang Xuan and one by Zhao Fang. The other two were by Guo Zhongshu 郭忠恕 (?–977) and Li Gonglin 李公麟 (1049–1106). Yu Jianhua, ed., *Xuanhe huapu*, *juan* 5, 6, 7, and 8 (Nanjing: Jiangsu meishu chubanshe, 2007), 140, 148, 176, 193.
30. Luo Shiping, “Zhijin huiwen,” 21–22.
31. Women in similar dress can be seen in the murals of Baisha Tomb 1 at Yuxian, Henan. An inscription dates this tomb to 1099. Su Bai 宿白, *Baisha Song mu* 白沙宋墓 (Song tombs at Baisha), (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1957), pls. 5, 8.2. But this style of dress may have been invented in the late Tang. As Sun Ji has pointed out, female attendants in Cave 9 at Dunhuang already wear this kind of clothes. Sun Ji, “Liao dai bihua,” 15.
32. I want to thank Adam Schwartz for this insight. After I presented an early version of this essay in a workshop at the University of Chicago, he pointed out this possibility and told me later that he had checked the rhyme scheme of the two poems and confirmed his initial impression: the rhymes in the two poems are, for poem 1: 禽 (g'iem), 深 (siem), 語 (ngiwo), 音 (iem); and for poem 2: 深 (siem), 任 (nz'iem), 錦 ('kiem), 心 (siem). The phonetic reconstructions are based on Bernhard Karlgren, *Analytic Dictionary of Chinese and Sino-Japanese* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1923).
33. Numerous traditional Chinese tombs were decorated with homogeneous figures such as filial sons or Taoist hermits. A set of images often implies a special intention in selecting decorative motifs. One early case is recorded in the *Hou Han shu*: Zhao Qi was a second-century scholar-official who designed his own grave when he was still living. Inside the tomb he painted four historical figures, including three wise ministers (Zichan, Yan Ying, and Shuxiang) and Jizha, a gentleman famous for his devotion toward a dead friend, “as guests flanking his portrait in the position of the host.” He also inscribed a eulogy alongside each image. See Fan Ye 范曄, *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 (History of the Later Han), (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965), 2124. Li Daoyuan 酈道元 (?–527) later commented in his *Shuijing zhu* 水經注 (Annotated canon of waterways): “He [Zhao Qi] painted a host with his guests to preserve his good feelings toward his friends and to express the values he had always admired.” See Shi Zhecun 施蟄存, *Shuijing zhu beilu* 水經注碑錄 (Stone tablets recorded in the *Annotated Canon of Waterways*), (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 1987), 405.
34. For example, the text of *The Heart Sutra* was inscribed on the coffin in several Liao tombs at

Xuanhua, Hebei. For their religious symbolism, see Hsüeh-man Shen, “Body Matters,” 106; Wu Hung, *The Art of the Yellow Springs: Understanding Chinese Tombs* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 146–148.

35. “又行三日，遂至上京，所謂西樓也。西樓有邑屋市肆，交易無錢而用布。有綾、錦諸工作，宦者、翰林、伎術、教坊、角觝、秀才、僧尼、道士等，皆中國人，而并、汾、幽、薊之人尤多。” Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, *Wudai shi ji* 五代史記 (Compilation of the history of Five Dynasties), *juan* 73 (China: s.n., 1828), 四夷附錄第二 (The Four Barbarians, Addendum no. 2), folio 11b.

36. As mentioned earlier, the excavators have dated the tomb to the period after 926 and possibly before 930. For different opinions about the date of the Liao, see Liu Pujiang 劉浦江, “Liaochao guohao kaoshi” 遼朝國號考釋 (A study of the dynastic title of the Liao), *Lishi yanjiu* 歷史研究 (Studies of history) 6 (2001): 33.

37. Wu Yugui, “Neimenggu Chifeng Baoshan Liaodai bihuamu ‘songjing tu’ luekao,” 94.

38. Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛, *Tuhua jianwen zhi* 圖畫見聞誌 (Experiences in painting), *juan* 3 (Jiulong: Nantong tushu gongsi, 1973), 64, 79; Liu Daochun 劉道醇, *Wudai minghua buyi* 五代名畫補遺 (Famous paintings of the Five Dynasties, with supplements), (Taipei: Guoli zhongyang tushuguan, 1974), folio 4b–5a; Liu Daochun, *Shengchao minghua ping* 聖朝名畫評 (Famous painting of this dynasty), *juan* 1 (Taipei: Guoli zhongyang tushuguan, 1974), folio 1b–2a.

39. On Yelü Bei (Li Zanhua), see François Louis's chapter in this volume. For historical records of Li Zanhua and Hu Gui, see Chen Gaohua 陳高華, *Song Liao Jin huajia shiliao* 宋遼金畫家史料 (Historical data concerning Song, Liao, and Jin painters), (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1984), 784–793.

40. “善畫本國人物鞍馬，多寫貴人酋長，胡服鞍勒，率皆珍華。” Guo Ruoxu, *Tuhua jianwen zhi*, 43.

41. For a critical analysis of this and other records of Li Zanhua and his art, see François Louis's chapter in this volume.