

同紫燕，怕教迎戊己，雕梁難戀。道士庚申，詩 / 人丁卯，并作閒中消遣。年庚漫算，但壬癸平鋪，北窓人倦。玩易研朱，愛涼遲卯餅。壬癸，席名，見湘東備錄。 /

羈栖上巳還端午，玉河盡拋香絮。餞亥迎寅，過申犯卯，總是孤吟愁賦。丁年暗度，咲午陞晨趨， / 短驢纔僱。子夜歸來，姓名底用挂朝簿。竹風漸催織紵，料來無甲帳，閒讐辛鼓。丙午同生， / 庚寅我降。雌子甲辰無數。安心學圃，任六甲靈飛，閉閔勤課。補屋牽蘿，甲申休夜雨。 /³

丙子長夏，寓豫章僧舍。蔣舍人大兄見題丁辛老屋圖，詞極精雅。戲仿其體，賦齊天樂兩闕。是日正七夕 / 良宵，乃作東家傲顰，得毋為織女所咲否？又曾自題並識。

Min Hua 閔華

(4 columns in cursive script)

This retired scholar was once known as Slipshod

As a poet he leisurely names himself Gardner

He worked hard to build a house of three rooms

Even without any precious items

He enjoys his library at midnight

Beautiful birds arrive immediately after the vernal equinox

The lotus flower blossoms soon after the summer solstice

Who could be honorable to drink with him in north?

[Here,] to entertain his true friends

He hires silver nails to play harpsichord

³ Wang Youzeng, *Ding-xin laowu ji*, "Ziti Ding-xin laowu tu" 自題丁辛老屋圖, 20:18a–b. The *pa jiao ying wu ji* 怕教迎戊己 was changed into *ye zhi fang wu ji* 也知防戊己 in the printed edition, *diaoliang nan lian* 雕梁難戀 into *diaoliang ning lian* 雕梁寧戀, *xingming di yong* 姓名底用 into *xingming na yong* 姓名那用, *biguan qinke* 閉閔勤課 into *biguan shui yu* 閉閔誰語. The *cizi* 雌子 was written as *ci le* 雌了 on the painting; corrected following Wang's collection.

In the isolated abode, the short lampstand senses true friends
understanding

Now, under trees a new abode has been built

In which he will cultivate his mind as Vimalakīrti had done

In the early autumn of the *wu yin* year (1758) in my lodge in Yangzhou, I present those poems to Master Guyuan. Shen Dacheng of Yunjian [records].

□□□△[輓紅塵土]撲人來，瓦狗泥車劇可 / □[哀]，□□△[一室獨]饒松石意，午風時欵竹 / □□[扉開]。△[紗]帽煎茶足自娛，癸辛論 / □□□△[著比潛夫]。蕭然掃軌長安市，此種 / 風流不可摹。循陔粲粲稱吟身，回首△[脩]門跡半陳。一片南湖朝莫 / △[好]，△[家]山風物自宜人。皂莢橋頭 / 秋△△[雨深]，短檠孤館感知音。於今因 / △△[樹堪]為屋，好向維摩證宿心。 / 戊寅初秋蕪城客舍為 / 穀原老先生題。雲間沈大成。⁴

Jin Nong 金農 (1687-1764), dated 1758

(6 columns in regular script)

Former secretary in the Ministry of Punishment Master [Wang] Guyuan visited me in my temporary residence in Yangzhou, where he showed me this painting of the *Ding-Xin Rustic House* created in the capital in the *jia xu* year (1754) and asked me to write a colophon on it. Several colophons have been written on it and they all were from celebrated hands. I am old and deaf and feel embarrassed [at this juxtaposition], yet, to meet his request, I will make a song not on any established tune but on one that I created by myself. When they read my song [on

⁴ Shen Dacheng, *Xuefu zhai shiji*, “Wang Guyuan bibu Ding-xin laowu tu” 王穀原比部丁辛老屋圖, 15:1a–b. The *wa gou ni che* 瓦狗泥車 was changed into *zhongri quchi* 終日馳驅, and *suxin* 宿心 into *shuxin* 夙心 in the printed edition.

this painting], wouldn't a few young poets who strictly follow established tunes
laugh at me for scribbling it?

No place for his summer retreat
But he rents a house under tall trees
Where he lives in as in his own permanent residence
The capital is lovely
Especially Mount West outside the city
Features colors that other mounts lack
I can imagine, Master Wang, burning herbs
Changes into his summer clothes after court audience
And hums his poems alone
With pleasant breeze caressing his mat
He is reading various books

In the seventh month of the *wu yin* year (1758), Jin Nong of Hangzhou Prefecture
writes down at the age of seventy-two.

穀原比部先生見訪揚州客舍，出甲戌歲在京師所寫丁辛老屋圖乞題。圖中/
題作，皆屬名彥。予慙衰曠，不復按譜填曲，遂自度新詞一闕，以塞其請。
目/前△[倚]聲三五少年，守縛前規者，能不嗤我漫為長短句乎？/道△[暑]
無方，長林之下僦△[居]，有如結宅。愛帝城，城外西山，不比他山顏色。
想見王/郎△[熏]香，朝罷換生衣，蕭然吟客，涼風滿席，定甲乙丙丁編集。
/戊寅七月，七十二翁杭郡金農筆記。

Zhang Geng 張庚 (1685-1760) [, dated 1759]

(7 columns in semi-cursive script)

He rents three rooms to live in

Where he studies Fuxi's hexagrams
His intention is profound, and who can understand?
Concentrating on [the sages'] injunction
Concentrating on his own cultivation
He lives alone in [green] creepers and ... (textual corruption)
He asks the skilled painter
To draw windows and sceneries
He remains cautious of [any moral errors]
He has his pure pose of that day recorded
And his portrait painted

He intends to live isolated holding volumes
Reading books and singing poems while playing zither
Makes him comfortable with his current life
The spring sunshine is just marvelous
And ... just ... (textual corruption)
We could not say it is not a scenario of delights
Again, the cup is full of wine
.... (textual corruption) Me
Let's drink to our contents
It is worth celebrating
Watching ... (textual corruption)
Yet, everything is in perfect order

Master Guyuan [rented a house] in the capital and named it the Ding-Xin Rustic House. It is hard to know... [After] reading his own colophon and that by the Secretariat Drafter Jiang [Shiquan] of Yangxian, I created for him this song on the tune of the *Yanshan ting* (The Mount Yan Pavilion). His advice and corrections will be appreciated. Zhang Geng, Retired Scholar of Miji, [records].

儻居三椽，勝采羲爻，幽寄誰能省。著意丁寧，著意更新，獨處 / 厶 [綠?] 蘿絲炯(?)。妙手丹青，倩補出、軒窗風景。虛警。記爾日清姿，更 / 圖小影。便擬抱卷深棲，誦讀絃歌，自安時命。春陽正好，方 / 厶厶厶，莫道未為佳境。酒復盈樽，厶厶我，放懷歡飲。堪慶。看 / 厶厶，厶般盡整。 /

厶 [穀] 厶 [原] 厶厶 [先生] 厶厶 勝都下，邸舍曰丁辛老屋，莫測厶厶厶厶讀自題，厶 [陽] 羨蔣舍人詞，以 / 厶厶，為賦燕山亭一闕，請正。厶厶厶 [彌伽居] 士張庚

Qian Chenqun 錢陳群 (1686-1774) [, dated 1759]

(6 columns in cursive script)

Guyuan, former Secretary in the Ministry of Punishment, rented a house of several rooms in Beijing to live in. After court audience, he had nothing to do but to read in his residence. He requested Huang Zheng of Changzhou to create this painting of the Ding-Xin Rustic House. Some of his comrades have created poems on it. With the two characters *ding* and *xin* as rhymes, I created two stanzas. Recently Guyuan returned home [from Beijing] to serve his father. As his old house locates at a damp and low place, he had a new one constructed of several rooms. He was short of money and wrote several poems to record this hardship. From his poems, those talents would understand that the poor scholar, even though enrolled as an official, has difficulties in building his humble

residence. Yet wealthy people, in having their gardens constructed, would have them rebuilt if they are not as satisfying as expected; those men would never been self-satisfied with their properties. If Guyuan's descendants read his poems, they would realize that those of older generation like me could tell the difficulties that Guyuan have had in his early career and could reminder the young generation of the significance of simple food like coarse wheaten meal. His new residence has been completed recently, and I am writing these two poems down to celebrate. Venerable Zhang [Geng] is good at poetry, yet I dare to present one in my own style. Why not?

To live in the capital unsurprisingly is not easy

It is hard to build a humble house as a swallow does

Short of grains and firewood, yet he does not care

Bare-headed, he just fingers his beard

Your new house is really small beside the old rear hall

On its west side, a pavilion is possible with timbers

As funny as a clever woman who can cook a meal without rice

As strong as those five ancient fighters who opened up the way

Qian Chenqun, Retired Scholar under the Aromatic Tree [, records]

穀原比部△[于]□[都]下□[賃]數椽以居，朝回無事，讀書其中。屬長洲黃增為丁辛老屋畷。時同志各為詩題之。予用丁辛二字為韻，/得二絕句。穀□[原]近□□[以養]親里居，所居室苦湫庳，構新居數楹。殊費拮据，次章嘲及，使才彥讀之，知貧士雖通籍，謀△[一]/巢之難。而□[富]室△[營]治園圃，稍不如志，即更為之，不少自足。又使穀原子孫讀之，知老輩如香樹

者，為能道穀原始有 / 之難，無忘滄沓麥飴意也。即日新居成，以是詩落之，張老善頌，後又存一格調，何如？ /

長安居自大非易，燕子營巢極苦辛。少米無柴都不管，科頭且作撚髭人。
子舍如窩傍後聽，西偏架木可為亭。 / 笑他巧婦能炊飯，絕似蠶叢運五丁。⁵
香樹居士錢陳羣

COLOPHON WRITERS' SEALS

Jiang Shiquan 蔣士銓

Tiaosheng 苕/生, square intaglio

Quan 銓, square intaglio

Jin Nong 金農

Jin shi Shoumen 金氏/壽門, square relief

Min Hua 閔華

Lianfeng 廉/風, square intaglio

Yujing 玉/井, square intaglio

Qian Chenqun 錢陳群

Chenquan 陳/群, square intaglio

Ji zhai 集/齋, square relief

Shen Dacheng 沈大成

xuezi 學/子, linked-square relief

Wang Chang 王昶

Zheng xue zhai 鄭學齋, tall rectangular relief

Qinde 琴/德, linked-square relief and intaglio

⁵ Qian Chenqun, *Xiangshu zhai shi xuji*, 12:14a–b. The *dou buguan* 都不管 was changed into *duo buguan* 多不管 in the printed edition.

Wang Youzeng 王又曾

Youzeng 又曾, split oval relief

Wang jushi zuo 王居/士作, square intaglio

Zhang Geng 張庚

[Illegible], square relief

Zhang Sike 張四科

Zhang Sike 張/四科, square intaglio

Yuchuan 漁/川, square relief

COLLECTORS' SEALS

Jiang Zuyi 蔣祖詒 (1902-1973)

Miyun lou 密均/樓, square relief

Li Hongqiu 李鴻球 (1899-1978)

Haitang shuwu 海棠/書屋, square intaglio

Liuyang Li Hongqiu zi Yunqing jiancang 瀏陽/李鴻球/字韻清/鑒藏, square intaglio

Unidentified

yi cun er cun zhi yu san gan liang gan zhi zhu 一寸二寸之/魚三竿/兩竿之竹, square intaglio

Liuchuang miqie zhi yin 柳窗/祕篋/之印, square relief

[Illegible], square intaglio

CATALOGUED

Li Hongqiu, *Jianhua lou shuhua lu* 劍花樓書畫錄, 2.146

NOTE

A PORTRAIT of the poet Wang Youzeng (1706-1762) by skilled painter Huang Zeng that is textually expanded by Huang's friends in their rhythmical colophons on it, this item represents a more realistic world of literati in the eighteenth century. In this world, the symbiotic mutualistic relationship between cultural competence, socio-economic status and political capital that a gentry family was supposed to follow did not function well on the civil service examination market, but merchandized literary skills made minimum physical survival possible in a society of high commercialization.

Native of Xiushui (in today's Jiaxing, Zhejiang Province), Wang Youzeng was born in a common gentry family, whose history prior to his generation was scarcely recorded. He was the only one who earned degrees in his generation. It was not until April 1751 that he was offered a provincial examination title (*juren* degree) thanks to the Qianlong emperor's (r. 1736-1796) appreciation of his literary talent. After his internship of three years in the Grand Secretariat, he succeeded in the metropolitan examination in Beijing in June 1754 and then was appointed a secretary in the Ministry of Punishment.⁶ Obviously he did not enjoy this appointment as he was not interested in legal affairs. In early August, he decided to resign with the excuse of supporting his parents in his hometown. During these two months in Beijing, he had lived in a house that he rented and named as *Ding-xin laowu* (the Ding-Xin Rustic House). Before leaving, he requested artist Huang Zeng (ca. 1706 - ca. 1772) to make a painting of his temporary residence. In May 1755 Huang completed this painting. Wang Youzeng arrived home in the winter of 1754, and in 1755-1759 he managed to construct a new house next to the old. He named

⁶ *Gaozong Chun Huangdi shilu*, 384.50–2; 463.1006–1; Zhao Erxun et al, *Qing shi gao*, 485.13384.

the new one after his temporary residence in Beijing, that is, the *Ding-Xin Rustic House*. It was completed just before his death in 1762.⁷ Serious financial hardship and poverty made impractical his studying home but forced him to make a living by selling his literary skills in the Yangzi delta.⁸

Wang Youzeng brought this painting with him in travelling, as the above colophons were written in different places. He invited friends of literary and artistic reputations to write on it, though not all colophons were transcribed onto this current piece.⁹ The painting, together with the inscription and colophons, represents a typical form of “pictures of activities of pleasure” (*xingle tu* 行樂圖), a traditional genre of Chinese portraiture illustrating the painted figure’s life style and daily activities that became popular in the late fifteenth century.¹⁰ It provides different angles of viewing the painted figure from the painter, the figure himself, and the colophon writers who describe their common friend based on their understandings of him and readings of the painting. Its visual and textual syntaxes make possible to fully reveal the painted figure’s cultural and social identities and his *mentalité*.

The painter Huang Zeng represented Wang Youzeng not as an official focusing on his duties but as a poet dedicated to poetry. In the painting, he is contemplating while fingering his goatee, not in official gown and cap but in common robe and bare-headed. In the fenced front yard, a lad is swiping the trail. The gate is closed and along the fence are flowers and bamboo. Behind Wang is a thatched abode in which only a desk and a stool are visible. The abode is adjacent to two tall trees and a few rocks. The misty forest

⁷ Wang Chang, *Chuntong tang ji*, “Wan Shouming” 挽受銘, 8:15b–16a.

⁸ Wu Tailai, *Yanshan tang ji*, “Ding-xin laowu ji xu” 丁辛老屋集序, ??

⁹ For example, Cheng Jinfang, *Mianxing tang shiji*, “Ti Wang Guyuan Ding-xin shuwu tu” 題王穀原丁辛書屋圖 (1755), 9:14b.

¹⁰ Clunas, *Empire of Great Brightness*, 137–159.

behind the abode and the mountain in distant illuminate how isolated this residence is from the city center. According to Huang Zeng, what he painted was Wang's temporary residence in Beijing where Wang served in the Ministry of Punishment.

Wang's friends evidently noticed those details in the painting, as they mentioned in their colophons even though most of them perhaps did not visit his abode. While his friends stressed his literary life in Beijing, Wang confessed that he was not comfortable with his official duties at all. Because his salary was too low to support him and his family, he had to ask loans quite often. He could not access rich libraries as before (see Zhang Sike's colophon). He was bored of court audience and legal administration, and eventually decided to resign with the excuse of supporting his parents (see Wang Youzeng's colophon). His resignation made his family finance worse and not all his family members were happy with his decision (see Wang Chang's colophon).

His devotion to literary life in spite of poverty, however, is highlighted more than his family life in the colophons, mainly because the tension between the literati ideal and the socio-economic reality lent him and his like an aesthetic device to admire their economic status and to justify their literary presence in a tragic way. Until his political career began in 1754, Wang Youzeng had been devoted to studying and the civil service examinations for decades as the majority of other scholars had done, without realizing that he was not interested in political practice but in poetry. His long-term preparations were intended to earn social and political prestige that requested investments from his family, clan and lineage. His success in the civil service examinations as a return was expected to protect and strengthen his family, clan and lineage with his political resource.

Wang Youzeng obviously failed in such a “social reproduction of gentry elites.”¹¹ As a court official in the rank of 6a, his annual salary totalled about 102.6 taels including regular salary and allowance, without any licit or illicit extra income from his appointment.¹² No record has been found about his landownership and mercantile activities as he actually had never planned for getting a living even when he had opportunities in his official post, but he described in his poems how his wife and sons often suffered lacking of food and clothes.¹³ He was trained in classical literacy and literary skills at the powerful Qian family school in his village, and because of poverty his son Wang Fu 王復 (1747-1797) had to start his scholarly career in Yangzhou with one of Wang Youzeng’s friends’ patronage.¹⁴

His literary community, however, seemed proud of his poetic achievement at the cost of his family life. Most of time he was travelling to make a living with his literary skills and as a result his gentry leadership that he was supposed to assume in his locale after his resignation seemed absent from his writings. Instead he did not hesitate to show his interest in non-Confucian lifestyle. As he admitted in his colophon, he practiced the Daoist method of nourishing life. In another portrait without any setting of landscape, he even pretended to be a lay Buddhist sitting in meditation.¹⁵

Wang Youzeng’s hesitance in making choices between literature, politics, Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism, together with his preference of literary pursuit

¹¹ Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China*, 240–256.

¹² Chang, *The Income of the Chinese Gentry*, 11–42, esp. 35.

¹³ Wang Youzeng, *Ding-xin laowu ji*, “Ji nei si sou” 寄內四篇, 8:11b–12a.

¹⁴ Wu Yi, *Shoutang wenchao*, “Yanshi xian zhixian Wang jun xingshi jilue” 偃師縣知縣王君行實輯略, 8:15a–b.

¹⁵ Zhang Sike, *Baoxian tang ji*, “Wei Wang bibu Youzeng ti Longqiu yanzuo tu” 為王比部又曾題龍湫宴坐圖, with a note saying “only his pose of sitting in meditation [painted], without setting of landscape.” 2:4a; Wang Youzeng, *Ding-xin laowu ji*, “Zi ti Longqiu yanzuo xiao jing” 自題龍湫宴坐小景, 8:15a–b.

over money and family life, was not ideal but typical for late imperial Chinese literati. In Wang's ages, qualified students surviving the civil service examinations had outnumbered the court's limited demand of officials and other government staffs. Many candidates were on the waiting list, while much more had to return to their local communities. In most of his life, Wang Youzeng actually had kept traveling. Even though he successfully maintained his close relationship with powerful gentry families in his locale, his little involvement into local affairs call for further investigations of how individual literati fulfilled their responsibilities in local socio-economic life. In terms of economic status, Wang Youzeng and his family perhaps were among lower gentry. In spite of his deep involvement into his local literary community, Wang tried to politically, economically and intellectually "marginalize" himself out of the reality in his portrait of activities of pleasure.

Huang Zeng was a professional painter excelling at portraiture and landscape. He was summoned in 1768 to the court, where he made a portrait of the Qianlong emperor to celebrate his sixtieth birthday in 1770. He resigned from the court service in 1772.¹⁶ It remains unknown how Wang Youzeng and Huang Zeng got to know each other, yet as early as 1749 Wang Youzeng was invited to write a colophon to Huang Zeng's self-portrait.¹⁷

The collectors of this painting prior to the twentieth century cannot be identified because of limited materials. In the twentieth century, Jiang Zuyi (1902-1973) and Li

¹⁶ Lu Fusheng, *Zhongguo shuhua quanshu, Moxiang ju hua shi* 墨香居畫識, 10:717A–B, and *Guochao yuan hua lu* 國朝院畫錄, 11:757A.

¹⁷ Wang Youzeng, *Ding-xin laowu ji*, "Changzhou Huang Fangchuan shu ti zi hua qiujing xiaozhao er shou" 長洲黃方川屬題自畫秋景小照二首, 8:15b.

Hongqiu (1899-1978) successively held it and one of them brought it to Taiwan from Shanghai. Li described it in the catalog of his collection.

REFERENCE MATTER

Li Hongqiu 李鴻球. *Jianhua Lou Shuhua Lu* 劍花樓書畫錄. Taipei: Dazhong shuju, 1974.

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