

## *Shu-hui and Kamers Van Rhetoriken*

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Chinese literature until nearly a century ago developed in splendid isolation. Of course there was the massive influence of Buddhism, especially in the field of vernacular literature, but most of it was the result of the slow process of the adoption and adaptation of Buddhist words and concepts into Chinese thought and the Chinese language. Despite the enormous amount of Buddhist texts translated into Chinese, Indian literature as such left little mark on traditional Chinese literature, whether classical or vernacular. The literature of China exerted an overwhelming influence on the literatures of its surrounding countries — Vietnam, Korea, Japan — but the influence was almost completely one-sided. For instance, the traditional Japanese novel developed much earlier to a level of high artistic excellence than its Chinese counterpart, but the *Genji monogatari*, which so often quotes Po Chü-i, exerted no influence on the author of the *Hung-lou-meng*.

For this reason one feels sympathetic towards those students of traditional Chinese literature who question the usefulness of the comparative method as applied to the object of their study. Research to establish *rappports de fait* holds out very little promise indeed in view of the self-sufficiency of traditional Chinese literature. Affinity studies always run the risk of superficiality: Every comparison goes lame, even when one compares works on the same theme, in the same form, and from the same period, but by authors writing a different language within the same cultural tradition. However, when we compare individual works, complete oeuvres, or even period styles from languages that belong to different cultural traditions (e.g., Western and Chinese), in order to search for correspondances, our work may be paralyzed from the start, and will too often only proceed in the wheelchair of modish critical jargon. This state of affairs is a result of the philosophical gulf that separates such different cultural traditions. When the notions of literature — what it is, what it is for, what kind of works do constitute it? — are far from

commensurate, a juxtaposition of items from such literatures may be more misleading than enlightening. The most pressing task of East-West studies therefore would appear to be the comparative study of the concept of literature — whether explicitly formulated in writings on literature, or indirectly observable in the actual production, reception, and preservation of literary works — in each of the major pre-modern cultural traditions. This should also involve the comparative study of authors as a social group and their role in society.

However, the comparison of individual works, writers, and period-styles from literatures that belong to different cultural traditions still has its use if the objects of comparison are carefully selected as to their commensurability and if the aim of the inquiry is not only to bring to light the correspondances and differences between the direct objects of comparison, but also to contribute to an insight into the differences between the literatures and the literary histories to which they belong. In this spirit I would like to have a closer look at two literary organizations that in their respective literary histories fulfilled an important function in the development of vernacular literature, especially drama, *viz.* the Chinese *shu-hui* 書會 (writing-clubs) and the Dutch *Kamers van rhetoriken* (chambers of rhetoric). The *shu-hui* were active in the period 1200-1450, information on them is very scarce; the chambers dominated literary life in the Netherlands during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and their activities are amply recorded.

The scattered data on *shu-hui* have been put together a number of times by excellent scholars<sup>1</sup> and I do not intend to reduplicate their work. Their findings allow us to conclude that the *shu-hui* in its heyday were organizations of practitioners of vernacular literature, who also performed themselves the plays they wrote. The most detailed picture of the activities of the *shu-hui* is provided in the prologue of *Chang Hsieh chuang-yuan* 張協狀元, one of the three *hsi-wen* 戲文 contained in one of the stray preserved volumes of the *Yung-lo ta-tien* 永樂大典. The *Chang Hsieh chuang-yuan* is difficult to date, perhaps it is a safe but vague estimate to place it in the period 1250-1350. In its prologue, the *mo* 末 (male role) introduces to the audience the *Chiu-shan shu-hui* 九山書會 (Nine Mountains writing-club) and its members, who are going to perform their own version of *Chang Hsieh chuang-yuan*, evidently in competition with the performance of a play on the same theme by another *shu-hui*.<sup>2</sup>

(The male role speaks:)

[ *Shui-tiao, ke-t'ou* 水調歌頭 ]

Though we may be  
 Scions of noble families,  
 We are well versed in everything:  
 In strumming the strings and playing the flute  
 And also in singing of the moon and jesting with the breeze.  
 We sure can insert mime and place jokes!  
 Why should we grudge to smear on ashes and daub on clay?  
 Song and laughter will fill the hall!  
 Like the thousand-foot billows of the Long River:  
 We have our own peculiar style!

[ *Man-t'ing-fang* 滿庭芳 ]

Stop for a moment your hubbub and noise,  
 Halt for a while your laughing and talking,  
 Just have a look at our distinctive tradition!  
 The norms of the Court Bureau of Entertainment —  
 With the Crimson and Green we may be mentioned in one breath!  
 We offer you a stream of lyrics, larks and jokes,  
 Upon hearing our banter and disquisitions all present will be surprised!  
 We are completely different from  
 Those upstarts and youngsters  
 That in vain boast themselves of unfounded fame.

The Tale of Top-graduate Chang Hsieh  
 Has been performed another time,  
 You have finished enacting it.  
 This time around this writing-club  
 Wants to snatch the name of winner.  
 In order to dominate the festivities in Eastern Ou,  
 We will sing in all keys and modes how it all began.  
 The gong has sounded!  
 Gentlemen, be quiet now  
 And listen carefully to my exposition.

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(The *sheng* 生 sings:)

[*chu-ying yao-hung* 燭影搖紅]

Candle shadows sway their red,  
 Befitting us, who are sophisticated and o, so smart!  
 Curious and strange, the story is worth your while,  
 It has been written into something perfectly beautiful.  
 Truly [our play] is in the official style of the Pear Garden,  
 Come to talk about humour  
 How should anyone, except our teacher, compare to the Nine Mountain  
     writing-club?  
 We have revised a recent title,  
 It has a peculiar flavour all its own!

If one of us smears on ashes and daubs on clay,  
 He'll caper about, exit and enter to everyone's delight.  
 Moreover, those present here are all intelligent gentlemen,  
 Who have already seen the earlier one.  
 Our play is original and different,  
 And the stream of lyrics switches and changes in key and mode.  
 Let everyone be silent now  
 — People's eyes can't be deceived —  
 Decide for us which one is wittier!

The texts call for some comments. The original meaning of *shu-hui* in the twelfth century was a type of school; most likely it referred to a group of advanced students who prepared themselves for taking the state-examinations by practising the various types of required writings under the supervision of a teacher. One can easily imagine that such groups might also have liked to try their hand at the various newly emerging forms of vernacular literature, and so have developed into organizations devoted primarily to the practice of song and drama. The reference to (a) teacher(s) in the translated fragment might be cited to support such a view. At the same time it is very important that the *Chiu-shan shu-hui* compares itself to the *Fei-lü-she* 緋綠社 (Crimson and Green association). This was one of the many societies and fraternities active in Southern Sung Hangchow. Some of these societies specialized in a certain form of entertainment — Crimson and Green performed plays — but most of them were connected with a specific temple and were responsible for the organization of its periodic festivals with its parades and theatrical

entertainments. The Crimson and Green association participated with their plays in the celebration of the birthday of the deity Prince Chang on the eighth day of the second month of each year. Its members are described as "wealthy and rich young playboys."<sup>3</sup> Such societies and fraternities were not only found in Hangchow but all over China, and it is tempting to see in the societies that performed plays and masquerades at temple festivals yet another origin of the *shu-hui*. "The festivities in Eastern Ou" probably refers to a temple festival in Wenchow or its surroundings.

The *shu-hui* clearly were an urban phenomenon. The *Chiu-shan shu-hui* hailed from Wenchow, the place of origin of *hsi-wen* and also the home of the *Yung-chia shu-hui* 永嘉書會. The few indications on the social composition of the membership of *shu-hui* suggest that they drew their membership from literati without an official post, like teachers, and from other literate groups, like merchants and medical men. Probably the majority of the membership was constituted by the younger members of locally notable (and moneyed) lineages, "the scions of noble families."<sup>4</sup> We know nothing about the internal organization of *shu-hui*, but the *Chiu-shan shu-hui*, as we saw, had (a) teacher(s), while another source credits it with a *chieh-chi* 捷譏, which perhaps does not denote a minor role-type in this context but rather some kind of officer of the writing-club.<sup>5</sup>

The original home area of the *shu-hui* would appear to have been the heavily urbanized regions of southern Kiangsu and northern Chekiang. References to *shu-hui* in China north of the Yellow River almost all date from the early Ming dynasty. Possibly the first *tsa-chü* 雜劇 to refer to *shu-hui* is the anonymous *Lan Ts'ai-ho* 藍采和. Though this play might be a Yüan composition, it has also been argued that it is an early Ming work.<sup>6</sup> Both Chia Chung-ming 賈仲明 (1343-after 1422) and Chu Yu-tun 朱有燬 (1379-1439) refer in their writings to *shu-hui* as a contemporary phenomenon, but Chia Chung-ming's references to a *Yü-ching shu-hui* 玉京書會 (Jade Capital writing club) or to a *Yüan-chen shu-hui* 元貞書會 in his discussion of early Yüan authors cannot carry much weight as they may well be projections of contemporary notions on the past.<sup>7</sup> Whether the members of northern *shu-hui* also performed their own compositions is not clear; when professional actors are made to refer in *tsa-chü* to members of *shu-hui* they respectfully speak of "the gentlemen of the writing-club."

The *shu-hui* first of all directed their attention towards drama; in the south they wrote *hsi-wen*, in the north *tsa-chü*. Doubtlessly, their members practiced other forms of vernacular literature too, including riddles, but it is

difficult to decide which forms they cultivated and which not. The discussion at this point has been bédevilled by the facile assumption that because members of *shu-hui* may be referred to as *ts'ai-jen* 才人 (poets, as opposed to *ming-kung* 名公 (famous lords, i.e., high-ranking officials), all persons referred to as *ts'ai-jen* may be considered as members of *shu-hui*.<sup>8</sup> Talents for acting and writing, and for writing the various forms of vernacular literature, will have been unevenly distributed; as a result a play could both be known as the work of a particular playwright and as the composition of an individual author.<sup>9</sup>

As the translated passages from the *Chang Hsieh chuang-yuan* make clear, *shu-hui* were animated by a fiercely competitive spirit. We do not know what kind of organized expression this competitive spirit knew – the translated passages suggest the performance in sequence before the same public of plays on the same theme by members of different *shu-hui* – but it is clear that this competition covered both the text and the performance: the members of the *Chiu-shan shu-hui* boast of their superior acting skills and of their play's novel treatment of its theme. The appeal to the public to decide a winner, suggests that a prize of some kind is in store for the triumphant party.

Whereas the preserved information on *shu-hui* is extremely exiguous, the data on *kamers van rhetoriken* are very voluminous indeed. The chambers and their works have been studied by generations of students of Dutch literature ever since the nineteenth century. Here I can do no more than provide a bare outline of the activities of the chambers, basing myself on some of these secondary materials, and paying special attention to those features of the chambers that lend themselves to comparison with the *shu-hui*.<sup>10</sup> Like the *shu-hui*, the chambers of rhetoric were organizations of practitioners of vernacular literature (*rederijkers*), who also performed themselves the plays they wrote. The first chambers are recorded in the early fifteenth century in the Southern Netherlands (present-day Belgium). Their origin is not quite clear, but it is generally assumed that they evolved from the lay fraternities that performed mystery plays and miracle plays on certain church holidays, and from the entertainment section of bowmen's guilds – the medieval European counterpart of Hangchow's *she-hui* 社會. The Dutch chambers of rhetoric had their predecessors in northern France, the so-called *puys*. Moreover, they found a parallel in some regions of Germany in the *Meistersinger*, who also practised drama but were primarily interested in poetry. From the Southern Netherlands the popularity of the chambers spread toward the north, and in the sixteenth century the chambers were very

active in the Northern Netherlands too, especially in the provinces of Holland and Zeeland. Some towns boasted not one, but two or more chambers. In the seventeenth century, the chambers rapidly lost their prominent position in literary life.

Even though eventually chambers would also be organized in very small places, the *kamers van rhetoriken* were first of all an urban phenomenon. The major chambers were to be found in the main centres of commercial and industrial activity, like Gent, Brugge, Brussels, Antwerp, and later Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leyden, and Dordrecht. The chamber of Gent claimed a preeminent position on account of its age. The members of the chambers were recruited from among the solid burghers of the town, and, as membership often entailed heavy financial responsibilities, most members of the chambers will have belonged to the moneyed class of merchants, industrialists, and land-owners. It comes therefore as no surprise that the chambers often cooperated closely with the city governments in the organization of seasonal and occasional festivities.

The chambers were organized on the model of the medieval guilds. Each chamber was nominally headed by a Prince, usually an important local notable; at times also members of the highest nobility condescended to fulfill this function. The most important officer of the chamber was its *factor*, who usually wrote and directed the plays of the chamber and also instructed its younger members in the art of versification. Every chamber also had its own fool, and a serjeant-at-arms, who in parades carried the chamber's standard with its *blazon and motto*.

The chambers practised a great variety of forms. First of all they wrote and played drama. In the fifteenth century the main genres were the mystery play, the miracle play, and the morality play. The best known example of the latter category is *Elkerlyc*, the prototype of *Everyman*. From these late-medieval dramatic genres developed the *spel van sinne* or allegorical play, which became the major dramatic form of the sixteenth century.<sup>11</sup> The chambers also practised minor dramatic forms like farce and interlude. Apart from drama, the chambers cultivated many forms of vernacular poetry. The most representative genre here was the refrain, a poem usually consisting of three long stanzas, each employing only a limited number of rhymes and ending on an identical stock-line, while it would be concluded by an envoy addressed to the Prince. According to subject matter, the ballads were divided into three categories: religious, amatory, and humorous.

Whereas the individual members often preferred anonymity or at least

did not have their works printed during their lifetime, the chambers were animated by a fiercely competitive spirit, which found its clearest expression in their formally organized contests. A chamber might invite one or more other chambers to come and present a new play on a set theme, with prizes for the winner. Such contests might last for days on end and developed into popular festivities. A series of seven contests for chambers of a specific region, the prizes being increased with each contest, was called a *landjuweel* (national prize); the individual contests which made up the series could also be called so. In the Antwerp *landjuweel* of 1496 no less than twenty-eight chambers participated. The best documented *landjuweel* is that which took place in the duchy of Brabant from 1515 onwards. The final contest in that series took place in Antwerp in 1561. Over 1400 persons took part, who entered the city in their best finery in a sumptuous parade. The set subject of the main plays on this occasion was the question "what will best inspire man to the fine arts?"<sup>12</sup>

In their respective heydays, the writing-clubs and chambers of rhetoric not only showed great comparability in matters of background and activities, but also in the style and purport of their works. Admittedly, the genres they cultivated differ greatly in their formal requirements, so any comparison here is highly impressionistic, but at least one stylistic characteristic is so prominent as to deserve mention. The consistent complaint by later historians of Dutch literature against the writings of the *rederijkers* has been its artificiality. The *rederijkers* were obsessed with matters of technique and *rederijkerij* is still a term of opprobrium, denoting inept artificiality. Many of the forms of literature cultivated by the members of the chambers are remarkable for their complexity. The *rederijkers* often employed only a limited number of rhymes in each stanza, coupling it with ample use of internal rhyme. Such complicated stanzaic forms were also employed in their dramas. Even though this obsession with technique often resulted in works which to a modern reader are extremely tedious, it may also be positively evaluated as a delight in virtuosity: the *rederijkers* came fresh to a new medium and experimented freely with it in order to discover its full potentialities.<sup>13</sup>

The same delight in virtuosity is observable in Chinese drama from the period 1200-1450, especially in *tsa-chü*. In this case too, a new medium, the vernacular dialect of Northern China, was used for literary purposes by authors who were eager to exploit its peculiarities. So we find long suites employing a single rhyme throughout; triple parallelism is pervasively used,

some songs are enumerations of proverbial expressions, other songs contain strings of onomatopoeias, the numbers from one to ten and backwards again are worked into the successive lines of a song or series of songs. There is no end to the *jeux d'esprit* these authors indulged in.<sup>14</sup> How many of these authors belonged to *shu-hui* we do not know, but some of them certainly did. In the case of the *rederijkers*, parallels have been drawn between their eagerness to experiment and the contemporary eagerness to experiment in other arts, e.g., painting. Comparable parallels can probably also be detected in China if one thinks of the flowering of arithmetics and of technology in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The works of both the chambers of rhetoric and of the *shu-hui* gave expression to the ideas and values of the moneyed and literate urban class from which they drew their members. One may therefore search their works for ideas and values that differ from, or conflict with, the ideas and values of the highest political and ideological authorities. Such a search is not simple, as the culture of the burghers was to a large extent modelled on that of their betters. Most of the works of the *rederijkers* stress the values of traditional morality, and while they condemn official and ecclesiastical corruption and abuse of power as inspired by greed or stupidity, they also criticize social ill at large and scarcely question the social structure as they find it. As we have seen, the chambers and city governments often cooperated closely. However, as the sixteenth century progressed and the Reformation made itself felt, the centralizing government grew wary of the vociferous expression of popular opinion by the chambers. Attempts at a government controlled centralized organization of the chambers proved unsuccessful, and in 1539 the publication of the plays performed at a contest at Gent was banned. As the political situation deteriorated during the remainder of this century, the central government increasingly applied draconic measures.

In the Chinese case too, the majority of the works which may be more or less closely connected with *shu-hui* are an expression of traditional morality; while a large range of social ills are criticized, the structure itself of society is taken for granted. We know of the existence of *hsi-wen* and *tsa-chü* that dramatized recent events, commending the fidelity of a courtesan or condemning the greed of a monk,<sup>15</sup> but if the *rederijkers* generalized their subject-matter by clothing it in allegorical form, most *hsi-wen* and *tsa-chü* are safely set in a preceding dynasty. However, it is remarkable that the earliest *hsi-wen* prefer to deal with the theme of the ungrateful student. Both the plays on Ts'ai Po-chieh 蔡伯喈 and on Wang K'uei 王魁 tell the story of a

student who, once he has succeeded in the highest examination, betrays his wife who had enabled him to participate, in order to marry a better party; eventually, both Ts'ai Po-chieh and Wang K'uei are punished for their infidelity. The play *Chang Hsieh chuang-yuan* also deals with the theme; Chang Hsieh is eventually remarried to his wife whom he earlier even had attempted to murder. The prominence of this theme in early *hsi-wen* tempts one to interpret it as an expression of the antagonism between the *shu-hui* members on the one hand, and the members of the imperial bureaucracy on the other hand — perhaps on occasion former members of writing-clubs who now looked down on their humble beginnings. Phrased differently, the obsession with this theme might be viewed as an expression of jealousy towards successful students by the majority of *shu-hui* members, who had failed to reach the aspired status of official. After all, it was the official Kao Ming 高明 who in his *P'i-p'a chi* 琵琶記 (Story of the Lute) rewrote Ts'ai Po-chieh into a paragon of filial piety and loyalty.

The above descriptions, short as it is, will suffice to establish the comparability of the Chinese *shu-hui* of the period 1200-1450 and the Dutch chambers of rhetoric of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In both cases these organizations of practitioners of vernacular literature were a specialized phenomenon which arose in regions which had witnessed rapid urbanization. In these cities there arose a sizable moneyed and literate layer, which did as yet not fully participate in the tradition of classical studies (Latin studies as purveyed by the universities in the European case, Confucian studies preparing for a bureaucratic career in China). These organizations disappeared when the social layer that supported them got access to these traditions. In China this happened in the early Ming dynasty when the set of texts examined in the lowest government examinations was limited to the Four Books and all education became geared to the examination system. As a result, the development of vernacular literature was set back for a long time, only to resume its arrested growth in the sixteenth century. In the Netherlands the full fusion of the classical and the vernacular traditions, already foreshadowed in the second half of the sixteenth century, took place in the seventeenth century with the establishment of universities and the spread of Renaissance ideas. The Renaissance also brought along a heightened respect for the national language. As a result, the development of vernacular literature was not stunted, but stimulated by these social developments. Though much despised by the writers who came after them, the chambers of rhetoric played a very important role in the continuous development of Dutch literature from

its medieval into its modern phase.

Temporarily converging social conditions in this way made for the origin and disappearance of comparable literary organizations on different sides of the globe. In their activities, and even in the style and purport of their works, the *shu-hui* and the *kamers van rhetoriken* show remarkable similarities. Due to the diverging developments in their respective cultural traditions, the impact of these organizations was, however, quite different. And whereas in the Southern Netherlands some chambers, albeit with changed functions, survived into modern times, in China even the notion of *shu-hui* was consigned to oblivion until this century.

## Notes

1. Feng Yüan-chün 馮沅君, "Ku-chü ssu-k'ao" 古劇四考 and "Ku-chü ssu-k'ao pa" 跋 in *Ku-chü shuo-hui* 古劇說彙 (Peking, 1956), pp. 1-120, esp. pp. 15-22, pp. 57-58; Sun K'ai-ti 孫楷第, "Yüan-chü hsin-k'ao" 元曲新考 in *Ts'ang-chou chi* 滄州集 (Peking, 1965), pp. 317-59, esp. pp. 249-55; Ch'en Ju-heng 陳汝衡, *Shuo-shu shih-hua* 說書史話 (Peking, 1958), pp. 89-92; Jaroslav Prusek, *The Origin and the Authors of the hua-pen* (Prague, 1967), pp. 52-63; Ogawa Tamaki 小川環樹, *Chügoku shösetsu shi no kenkyü* 中國小說史の研究 (Tokyo, 1968), pp. 54-56; William Dolby, *A History of Chinese Drama* (London, 1976), pp. 39-40; Ch'ien Nan-yang 錢南揚, *Hsi-wen kai-lun* 戲文概論 (Shanghai, 1981), pp. 217-21. See also Wilt Idema and Stephen H. West, *Chinese Theater 1100-1450, A Source Book* (Wiesbaden, 1982), pp. 130-34.
2. The following translation is based on *Yung-lo ta-tien hsi-wen san-chung chiao-chu* 永樂大典戲文三種校注, ann. by Ch'ien Nan-yang (Peking, 1979), pp. 1-2 and p. 13.
3. Wu Tzu-mu 吳自牧, *Meng-liang-lu* 夢梁錄 in Meng Yüan-lao 孟元老 a.o., *Tung-ching meng-hua lu (wai ssu-chung)* 東京夢華錄(外四種) (Shanghai, 1956), p. 300. For other references to the *Fei-lü-she* in capital diaries, see *op.cit.* p. 98, p. 377.
4. A special case is formed by the six performers listed under the heading of *shu-hui* in the list of *chu-se chi-i-jen* 諸色伎藝人 in ch. VI of Chou Mi's 周密 *Wu-lin chü-shih* 武林舊事, in Meng Yüan-lao a.o., *Tung-ching meng-hua-lu (wai ssu-chung)* (Shanghai, 1956), pp. 453-66, esp. p. 454. However, this catalogue would appear to open on four groups of performers with a special status, before it continues with listing performers grouped according to their specialty. This part of the list may be divided into the following broad groupings: 1. various forms of story-telling: from *yen-shih* 演史 (exposition of history) to *ying-hsi* 影戲 (shadow theater) (pp. 454-56); 2. sung entertainments (including drama): from *ch'ang chuan* 唱賺 (*chuan*-songs) to *ch'ang po-pu-tuan* 唱撥不斷 (*po-pu-tuan*-songs) (pp. 456-60); 3. jokes and witticisms: from *shuo hun-hua* 說諢話 (telling jokes) to *hsieh hsiang-t'an* 學鄉談 (imitation of country-dialects) (p. 460); 4. acrobatics and feats of dexterity:

from *wu-wan pai-shi* 舞絙白戲 (tight-rope walking) to *ch'ing-yüeh* 清樂 (orchestral music) (pp. 460-62); 5. wrestling and other martial skills: from *chiao-ti* 角觝 (wrestling) to *she nu-er* 射弩兒 (crossbow-shooting) (pp. 462-64); 6. miscellaneous: from *san-shua* 散耍 (funny things) to *hsiao-hsi* 消息 (fish drum) (pp. 464-66). Of the preceding four headings, the first three concern poets, painters, and chessmasters who were summoned to perform before the emperor or belonged to an imperial institution. Under the heading of *shu-hui* we find performers with different specializations: Li Shuang-ya 李霜涯 is said to excel in the composition of *chuan* songs while the catalogue later on has a section *ch'ang chuan*; under the name of Li Ta-kuan-jen 李大官人 is noted *t'an-tz'u* 譚詞 which perhaps refers to *t'an-ch'ang yin yuan* 彈唱因緣 (prosimetric tales of cause and effect) mentioned elsewhere in the catalogue. I do not think that the *shu-hui* was an organization of professional performers, but rather that a select few among them were allowed to join the *shu-hui* and thereby increased their status greatly.

5. The term *chieh-chi* was originally used as a designation of non-commissioned officers, elected by the troops themselves. As such it became a designation of lower functionaries in general. Many professional artists of the Southern Sung sported this title too. In Yüan and Ming it was also used as the designation of a role-type in *yüan-pên* 院本. See Sun K'ai-ti, "Yüan-ch'ü hsin-k'ao", in *Ts'ang-chou chi* (Peking, 1965), pp. 341-49; Hu Chi 胡忌. *Sung Chin tsa-chü-k'ao* 宋金雜劇考 (Shanghai, 1957), pp. 132-33; Ch'ien Nan-yang, *Hsi-wen kai-lun* (Shanghai, 1981), p. 219. Also cf. Hu Hsiieh-kang 胡雪岡, "Shih-chiu Chiang-hsien, Chiu-shan shu-hui ho Wen-chou nan-hsi" 史九敬先, 九山書會和溫州南戲, in *Wen-chou shih-fan hsieh-yüan hsieh-pao* 1963 no. 1, pp. 79-82.
6. This anonymous *tsa-chü* is usually considered a Yüan dynasty work, but Yen Tun-i 嚴敦易 in his *Yüan-chü chen-i* 元劇斟疑 (Peking, 1960), pp. 539-56 has argued that it dates from the early Ming. His arguments are discussed in Idema and West, *Chinese Theater 1100-1450* (Wiesbaden, 1982), pp. 308-11.
7. Chung Ssu-ch'eng 鍾嗣成, *Lu-kuei-pu* 錄鬼簿 (in *Chung-kuo ku-tien hsi-chü lun-chu chi-ch'eng*, Peking, 1959, vol. II), p. 97 and p. 204 (note 605).
8. For a neat summary of the hotly debated issue of the participation of *shu-hui* members in the writing of vernacular fiction, see Patrick Hanan, *The Chinese Short Story, Studies in Dating, Authorship and Composition* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), pp. 208-09.
9. One of the three preserved *hsi-wen* in the *Yung-lo ta-tien*, viz. *Hsiao Sun-t'u* 小孫屠 is there said to be composed by the Ku-hang 古杭 *shu-hui* (Hangchow writing-club), but Chung Ssu-ch'eng in his *Lu-kuei-pu* pp. 134-35 ascribes it to Hsiao Te-hsiang 蕭德祥, a medical man from Hangchow, who, according to Chia Chung-ming, "deployed his mighty talents in the Wu-lin 武林 writing-club" (p. 252, not 1206; Wu-lin is another name of Hangchow). Chu Ch'üan 朱權 in his *T'ai-ho cheng yin p'u* 太和正音譜 (in *Chung-kuo ku-tien hsi-chü lun-chu chi-ch'eng* vol. III), p. 41, lists *Yü-ho-chi* 玉盒記 as a *tsa-chü* by the early Ming playwright Yang Wen-k'uei 楊文奎, but Chu Yu-tun has it described in his *tsa-chü Hsiang-nang yüan* 香囊怨 of 1433 (original woodblock ed.), p. 5a as "just recently composed by the old masters of the writing-club".
10. The most recent general monograph on the subject is still J.J. Mak, *De Rederijkers* (Amsterdam, 1944). For a recent English-language summary of the research on the chambers of rhetoric and their works, see Reinder P. Meijer, *Literature of the Low Countries*, rev. ed. (The Hague/Boston, 1978), pp. 49-64; pp. 72-103. The

- rederijkers* understood "rhetoric" to refer primarily to versification.
11. Even the non-allegorical plays that dramatized events from biblical and classical history, usually featured a pair of *sinnekens*, allegorical personifications of those aspects of human nature which seduce man or woman to evil. For an exhaustive study of this role-type, see M.H. Hummelen, *De sinnekens in het rederijkersdrama* (Groningen, 1958).
  12. E. van Autenboer, *Het Brabants Landjuweel der Rederijkers (1515-1561)* (Middelburg, 1981) presents a lucid description of the organization of the contests of the chambers, which were modelled after comparable contests of the bowmen's guilds.
  13. The first *ars poetica* in Dutch, Matthys Castelein's *De Const van Rhetoriken* (The Art of Rhetoric), completed in 1548 and published in 1555, is mainly concerned with poetic form. S.A.P.J.H. Iansen, *Verkenningen in Matthys Casteleins Const van Rhetoriken* (Assen, 1971) is an extremely detailed study of the relation of this work to Jean Molinet's *L'Art de la Rhétorique* and to classical writings on rhetoric and poetry (Cicero, Quintilianus, Horatius).
  14. Eleanor H. Crown, "Jeux d'Esprit in Yüan Dynasty Verse", in CLEAR II-2 (1980), pp. 182-98.
  15. Hsia T'ing-chih 夏庭芝 in his *Ch'ing-lou chi* 青樓集 (in *Chung-kuo ku-tien hsi-ch'u lun-chu chi-ch'eng* vol. II), p. 25, notes that the incident of the courtesan Fan Shih-chen 樊事真 stabbing out her left eye in order to demonstrate her loyalty was written up into a *tsa-chü*. In the twenties and thirties of the fifteenth century Chu Yu-tun wrote a number of *tsa-chü* on recent events, celebrating chaste wives and loyal courtesans. The reference to a *hsi-wen* inspired by the rapacity of the monk Tsu Chieh 祖傑 from Wenchow in the *K'uei-hsin tsa-chih pieh-chi* 癸辛雜誌別集 is discussed by Ch'ien Nan-yang in his *Hsi-wen kai-lun* (Shanghai, 1981), pp. 27-28.

