



潍坊民间孤本年画

Folk New Year Pictures Extant In Weifang Only

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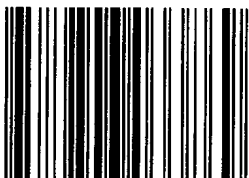
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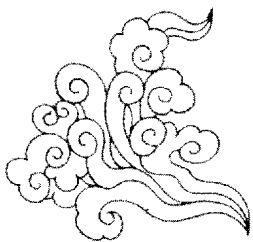
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◎ 徐震时 滕大千

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年画,作为一种适应中国传统年俗习惯的群众性美术出版物,伴随着印刷技术的发展,自宋代开始,已存在了上千年。由于年画一产生就以文化商品的形式出现,明确地把占中国人口绝大多数的农民当做它主要的消费对象,所以出版者和创作者们随时都受农民审美需求的制约,从来不会无所顾忌地“自我表现”。民间画师们一代一代地根据农民群体的审美心理,通过老百姓易于接受的清晰明确的形象画面,去体现民众心目中对美好生活的憧憬,主动去适应他们不断提高的消费需求,不断地丰富和完善年画的艺术题材和表现形式。所以,年画艺术一直能深深地根植于广大人民群众之中,其覆盖面之广,是其它艺术形式所难以比拟的。

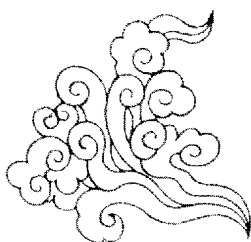
山东潍坊的民间年画,主要产地是寒亭区的杨家埠和高密市的姜庄等地。特别是杨家埠木版年画,历史上曾经与天津杨柳青年画、苏州桃花坞年画、四川绵竹年画并称中国的四大年画。建国以后,无论是在旧年画的改造中,还是60年代初,在全国年画艺术创新的会战中,潍坊年画工作者们都勇敢地迈出了第一步。特别是在中共十一届三中全会之后,潍坊杨家埠年画家们在当地政府和文化领导部门的大力支持下,解放思想,创作出许多思想内容健康,生活气息浓郁,艺术形式新颖,人物形象生动的艺术佳作,曾先后在全国第三、第四、第五届年画评奖以及全国六届美展中得奖,获得很高的荣誉。

寒亭文化部门经过十多年的努力,还征集到一批又一批极为宝贵的、濒于失传的民间木版年画,在当地政府的支持下,不惜巨资陆续编辑出版了《潍坊杨家埠年画全集》、《潍坊杨家埠年画大资料》等大型画册,为国内外的专家、学者提供了丰富的学术研究资料,也为弘扬地方民间文化做出了巨大贡献。《潍坊民间孤本年画》是他们在本世纪末推出的又一部大型画册,作为地方政府的基层文化机构,在当前商品经济的大潮中,能够着力于民间传统文化的发掘和积累,无疑是慧眼独具。

入选的年画,题材丰富,形式多样。题材大致可分为神圣仙佛、人物传说、戏文故事、美人童子与山水花卉等五类。“神圣仙佛”主要是民间供奉祭祀的各种神祇图像。旧时,人们认为福禄安康是神灵的保佑,每逢过年,便将这类画供奉中堂,以祈福迎祥。这类年画主要包括财神、菩萨、八仙、灶王、家堂、圣儒等。“人物传说”包罗的题材比较广泛,有文人趣话,如《羲之爱鹅》、《周子爱莲》、《梅妻鹤子》等;还有圣贤故事,如《子欲居九夷》、《卫灵公问陈于孔子》。至于宣扬道德教化的《二十四孝图》,民间传说的《天河配》、《梁山伯与祝英台》也归于此类。“戏文故事”主要取材于历史小说、公案传奇等。这些年画,场面热闹,故事性强,好看能讲,深受人们欢迎,代表作有《龙凤配》、《回荆州》、《刘公案》、《西厢记》等。“美人童子”在年画中题材非常广泛,但多配以祥花瑞兽组成富贵吉利的称谓,如《麒麟送子》、《连年有余》、《六合同春》等,当然也有单纯表现闲情逸趣的《姑嫂闲话》、《洞箫横吹》。“山水花卉”虽然是取材于自然景物,但因受春节习俗的影响,也附加了不少祥瑞吉利的内容。这本画册还首次收入了“卷画”。“卷画”在天津杨柳青和其它地方年画中,也称“春画”,过去是年画商随年画批发而附带销售,主要行销东北。据说当时女子十二三岁出嫁,年岁小,不懂事,由母亲将此画置于嫁妆箱内带到婆家,以备新婚之用。年画研究者普遍认为这是属于早期性教育的一种形式。总之,这本画集所收的年画与传统木版年画的题材没有多大区别,所不同的是创作形式与绘制年代,不仅有杨家埠的木版套印年画,还有高密扑灰年画,以及半印半绘、工笔手绘等年画;绘制年代全部是清代至民国年间的,而且都是“孤本”。

中国民间年画宝贵的艺术资源,在一百多年前,就直接影响到日本的“浮世绘”,同时,也引起西方英、法、俄、德、意等国的传教士和汉学家的注意,他们来华大量收集年画和木版,并陆续在他们国家发表。遗憾的是,直到80年代,中国传统年画的艺术价值和人文科学的社会内涵,才得到普遍关注。目前,台、港、澳印发了国内专家学者的许多年画专著和画册;还有一些国家的电视台专程来华拍摄了有关年画的专题片。年画,已经被当做中国向世界奉献的一份丰厚的物质和精神的瑰宝,激起了人们对中国文化的热爱。这本画册的出版,无疑在这方面又做出了新的贡献。





Preface

Publications of mass fine arts suited to Chinese traditional Spring Festival customs, the new year pictures or the Spring Festival pictures emerged in the Song Dynasty(1127-1279), have developed with the advances in the printing technology, and existed for about a thousand years. As new year pictures assumed the form of cultural products from the very outset with the Chinese peasantry, the bulk of the Chinese population as the main consumers, new year picture creators and publishers have at all times been restricted by the aesthetic appreciation and taste of the peasantry, and they never regard them as self-expression without scruple. Proceeding from the aesthetic psychology of the peasantry and by means of clearly cut and finely depicted pictures acceptable to the common people, folk new year picture artists have, generation after generation, given expression to peasant longing for a better life as they have conceived, adapting their pictures to their ever-increasing needs and constantly enriching and improving the subject matter and form of expression. Therefore, the art of new year pictures has always deeply rooted among the broad masses of the people and covers a vast area that surpasses other forms of arts.

Shandong's folk new year pictures are chiefly produced at Yangjiabu Village, Hanling District of Weifang, and at Jiangzhuang Village of Gaomi City. In particular, the new year pictures produced at Yangjiabu of Weifang, Shandong, as well as those produced at Yangliuqing of Tianjin, those produced at Taohuawu of Suzhou and those produced at Mianzhu of Sichuan have been reputed as four great varieties of Chinese new year pictures. Whether in the national efforts to transform the old-fashioned new year pictures in the early post-liberation years, or in the nationwide drive to bring forth new ideas in the creation of new year pictures in the early 60s, the folk artists in Weifang always courageously took the first step. Since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in 1978, new year picture artists, supported by the local government and by the officials in the leading organs of the cultural sector, have been emancipating their minds and bringing forth pictures healthy in thought content, rich in true-to-life depiction, unique in artistic form and vivid in characterization. For these achievements they were awarded at the Third, Fourth and Fifth National New Year Picture Appraisements and at the Sixth National Fine Arts Exhibition, winning high honours.

The cultural departments of the Hanling District, Weifang, after working painstakingly for more than ten years, have collected one group after another of treasured folk new year pictures printed based on wood block that are the only ones extant. Enjoying local government support and sparing no huge expense, they have edited and published such large-size pictorials as *Complete Weifang Yangjiabu New Year Pictures* and *Grand Materials on Weifang Yangjiabu New Year Pictures*, thus providing rich source materials for domestic and overseas scholarly research and contributing their share in promoting and developing local folk culture. *Folk New Year Pictures Extant in Weifang Only* is another large-size pictorial they have brought forth by the end of this millennium. This shows the compilers in the grass-roots level cultural circles under the local government have been digging for and gathering traditional cultural products amidst the current consumer-oriented economy, and they have a good eye for folk culture and a high artistic taste and aesthetic appreciation indeed.

Rich in subject matter and diverse in form, the selected pictures fall into the five categories of (1) celestial and terrestrial gods, deities, fairies, sages and Buddhas, (2) legendary figures, (3) theatrical and literary tales, (4) ladies and children, and (5) mountains, rivers, flowers and birds. To the first category belong pictures of celestial and terrestrial gods and deities whom people worshipped and to whom people offered sacrifices. In the old days people used to regard good luck, prosperity, peace and good health they enjoyed as blessed by gods and deities. So, when the traditional Spring Festival approached every year, they enshrined these pictures on the altar in the centre hall to pray for good luck and prosperity. Included in the first category are mainly pictures of God of Wealth, Buddha, the Eight Immortals, Kitchen God, pictures of clan halls, and Confucian scholars. Varied in subject matter, the second category has anecdotes about literati such as *Wang Xizhi Cherished Geese*, *Zhou Dunyi Cherished Lotus*, and *Cherishing Plum Blossom as Wife and Crane as Son*. In addition, there are tales about sages, such as *Confucius Was Planning to Go and Live in the Place of Jiuyi*, and *Duke Ling of Wei Asked Confucius about Battle Array*. As to the ethics-preaching *Illustrated Twenty-four Cases of Filial Piety* and folk tales of *The Cowherd and the Weaving Girl at the Heavenly River*, and *Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai*, they all belong to this category. Theatrical and literary tales are chiefly taken from historical novels and legendary tales about officials trying intricate legal cases. Attractive and thrilling, these pictures represent easy-to-recount tales with interesting plots in scenes of bustle and excitement. So they are quite popular with Chinese people. Representative tales include *Marriage between Dragon(Liu Bei)* and *Phoenix(Sun Quan's younger sister)*, *Returned to Jingzhou*, *Lord Liu Tried Cases*, and *the Western Chamber*. Broad and varied in subject matter, the ladies-and-children pictures have auspicious flowers and animals in them. Their captions based on homonym suggest good luck and prosperity such as *Unicorn Brings Babies*, *Abundance Every Year*, and *A Deer and a Crane Suggest all the Universe Enjoys Spring*. Needless to say, some pictures simply express leisurely and carefree daily life such as *Chatting between Woman and her Brother's Wife* and *Playing the Flute Horizontally*. Although based on natural scenery, pictures of mountains, rivers, flowers and birds have auspicious elements in them, as the occasion of the traditional Spring Festival requires. For the first time, rolled pictures or amorous pictures as termed at Yangliuqing of Tianjin and other places, have been included in the present pictorial. Rolled pictures were usually sold to the Northeastern provinces in China together with the new year pictures wholesaled to picture dealers. It is said that in those years girls got married in early teenage. The girls being young and not knowing what was what, their mothers had those picture as part of their dowry, usually kept at the bottom of the suitcase or trunk to be taken to the husband's home for post-marital reference. Experts and scholars in new year picture research believe them to be a form of sex education that existed in early years in China. In short, the new year pictures included in the present pictorial are not greatly different in subject matter from traditional new year pictures based on wood block. Their difference lies in the form and the year they were produced. Included in the present pictorial are not only wood-block process printed pictures from Yangjiabu of Weifang, but also *puhui* technique new year pictures (based on charcoal powder patted technique) from Gaomi City as well as semi-printed and semi-drawn pictures and finely and delicately brush-painted pictures. They were all painted or printed from the years of the Qing Dynasty(1644-1911) to the years of the Republic of China (1911-1949), and are rare pictures extant in Weifang only.

The treasured art as found in Chinese folk new year pictures exerted an influence on the Japanese Ukiyoe pictures more than a hundred years ago; meanwhile they also attracted the attention of U.K., French, Russian, German and Italian missionaries and Sinologists. They came to China and collected new year pictures and related wood blocks and got them published in their own countries. The pity is that it was not until the 1980's did the artistic values and social implications as part of humanities contained in the new year pictures attract domestic attention. So far, Taiwan, Macau and HK have printed and circulated collections of new year pictures, and quite a few monographs on new year pictures written by mainland Chinese experts and scholars. In addition, TV stations of several countries made special trips to China to make feature videotapes of new year pictures. New year pictures have become a material and spiritual gem that China has contributed to the world and have aroused profound love for Chinese culture. The publication of this pictorial will undoubtedly contribute our new share in this aspect.

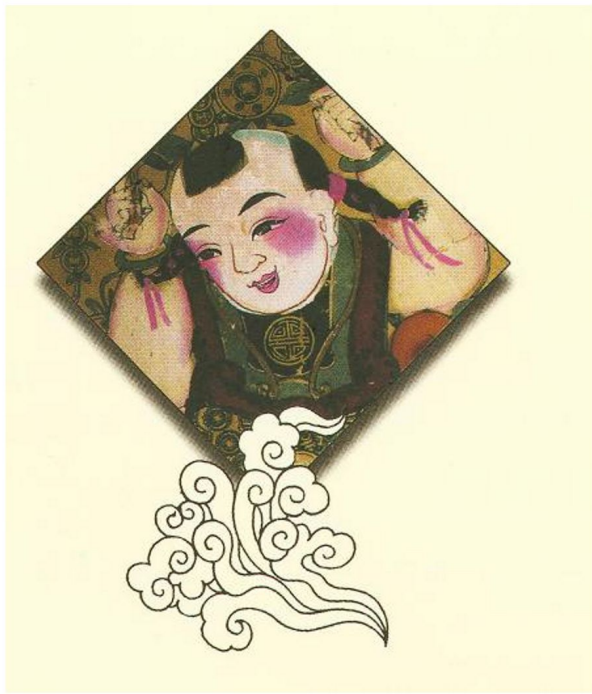
Xu Zhenshi Teng Daqian





濰 坊 民 間 孤 本 年 画

民间年画的收藏与鉴赏



潍坊的民间年画,受到国内外学者的重视与研究,并取得了一定的成就,但关于古代年画的收藏、整理,却很少有人涉足。这并不是说这方面没有引起人们的重视,而是古代年画资料很难留存于世。以前人们贴年画的习俗是,用面糊把年画贴到墙上,第二年把旧的撕下,换上新的,这叫除旧迎新。由于民间年画的特殊张贴形式,很少有人揭画保存。当然还有一个认识问题,认为年画不像卷轴画那么珍贵,即所谓不登大雅之堂。因此,民国以前的旧年画,流传下来的很少。

潍坊民间年画的主要产地是寒亭区的杨家埠村和高密市的姜庄等地。杨家埠的年画,起源于明代,盛行于清代。杨家埠年画主要以木版套印为主,也有半印半绘的。它的色彩鲜艳,构图饱满,具有强烈的地方特色与浓郁的乡土气息。清代同治年间杨家埠及其周围村庄生产的年画数量相当可观。清末时由于社会动荡,民间年画开始走向萧条。建国之后,杨家埠年画虽一度繁荣,但在“文化大革命”中,遭到了毁灭性的破坏,古版、古画稿等被付之一炬,能够流传下来的寥寥无几。

在杨家埠年画史上,神像类年画是印销最多的,几乎每家每户都要张挂,其中财神的样画流传下来的较多。财神多是立轴画,供人奉祭。过完节,卷下保存好,来年再用,而且民间还有一个说法,再破旧的财神画也不宜毁掉,毁掉财神是不吉利的。

杨家埠供奉的财神是文财神比干,武财神关公。构图是文武同堂或单关、单财。文武同堂,上方为武财神关公,下方是文财神比干,即上关下财,取其谐音既要升官又要发财之意。财神构图虽然不外乎以上几种,但造型却各有特色,我们收集到了四五十幅古代财神,没有一幅造型是重复的。由此可以看出民间艺人的勤劳智慧和民间艺术的丰富多彩。

这几年,我们收集到的民间年画,大多是靠民间古董画贩。一天,从一位画贩手中偶然发现了早期杨家埠版印的《二十四孝图》全本,不仅一幅没缺,而且版刻精良,每段还有大片说明文字,字体印制得也十分优美。据杨家埠老艺人讲,此图是杨家埠年画中的细货之类,属版印手绘,至少是在清代同治年间印制的。

清代中后期,杨家埠、高密等地曾流行条屏式、半印半绘年画,年画内容以八仙传说、历史人物或文学故事为主。这些条屏年画的流行,是有其原因的。中国的传统文人卷轴画,多为上层的达官贵人所占有,平民百姓是很难见到的。清代民间年画的兴起,以其价廉、物美,并迎合了平民的欣赏习俗,迅速进入了寻常百姓家。据史料记载,仅杨家埠年画的产量,每年可达上千万份。随着人们欣赏趣味的变化,以及富有人家对这种民间年画的不屑,艺人们发现应该创作出一种近于文人卷轴画的年画来迎合一部分人的欣赏情趣,这是当时条屏画大量出现的原因。

这种条屏画的制作形式是,版印线条,手绘色彩。人物的造型及衣纹线条的组合极富文人画风,色彩由年画的单色平涂转到调色晕染,有些条屏画干脆以水墨为主色调,形成一种兼工带写的艺术特色。创作题材也由原来的“供奉”、“吉祥”等转到了历史人物、文学故事上来,像《羲之爱鹅》、《渊明爱菊》以及《西厢记》、《红楼梦》等都是这些条屏画创作的题材。

以八仙故事为创作题材是历代书画家所喜欢的。在收集到的条屏中,就有数十幅描绘八仙的,而且形神兼备,造型各异,其中几幅,奇奥古拙,色彩艳而不俗,可谓出文人画之右。

条屏画老百姓也叫“挂画”,以扑灰形式制作的高密大挂画,在潍坊民间年画中占有一定的地位。“扑灰画”是





高密的一种古老而独特的手绘年画，制作方法是用木炭研磨成粉并掺以米汤，调成色料，再用毛笔蘸色料起稿于纸，俟干后即成粉本。再把粉本覆到正稿上轻轻按摩粉本背面，粉本上的炭末便扑印到正稿上，然后根据炭灰痕进行粉绘、敷彩、描金、勾线，最后还要在头发等某个色块部位涂上明油。

高密的扑灰年画，最早是艺人为了加快年画的制作速度而产生的，一张粉本可扑五六幅正稿。粉本的用途极像杨家埠年画中的线版。大概到了道光年间，高密扑灰画与杨家埠木版画，相互影响，两地都出现了半印半绘的年画作品。在我们的藏品中，有一幅残片足以印证两者之间的制作关系。画片的上半部是扑灰手绘，下半部则是版印套色，扑灰与版印结合得完美无缺，而且色彩古朴凝重，是一幅不可多得的民间艺术珍品。

潍坊民间年画的销售，在其鼎盛时期，主要销往莱州、登州、青州等地。我们的收集工作，有时也沿着这条线索，到其销售地寻觅。

值得一提的是，在莱州访画时，得到了民间收藏艺人王书红先生的大力支持。王先生收集民间艺术品已有多多年，手头颇有一些珍贵藏品。王先生所居住的村庄家家户户都有收集民间艺术品的爱好，因此，在那里的搜集工作开展得非常顺利，得到了不少艺术珍品。杨家埠著名艺人刘明杰代表作《韩湘子出家》四条屏就是在这里发现的。全画均用木版制作完成，版印套色，构图新颖独特，以上下双层式，很好的解决了条屏画下紧上松的不足。这种双层式人物构图，使画面景物丰富饱满，增强了艺术感染力。

在我们的藏品中，还有一部分是美女童子与山水花鸟的作品。这些作品大多是条屏与横披式，山水花鸟趋向于文人画风，美女的造型以清代民国的大家少妇为主，高领的上衫与“三寸金莲”是人物的典型特征。

清代前后，杨家埠年画中曾有一种画，人们习惯叫做“卷画”。因为这种画不是张挂在墙壁上供人欣赏的，而是看后卷起来放在箱内，故名“卷画”。古时候，由于封建礼教的束缚，女孩子在出嫁前，基本上是过着封闭式的生活，对于生理知识所知甚少。因此，女儿出嫁时，母亲便把这种画放在嫁箱底下，其作用就是一种性的启蒙教育。在收集的“卷画”中，还有一种在卷首刻印着《避火图》。据民间老艺人讲：这是一种行话，当画商在兜售这种画的时候，可以用这种别名毫无避讳的告诉画贩。还有一种说法是，这种画专贴在厨房墙壁的上龛内，避免火灾，是取其男为阳，女为阴，阳为火，阴为水，即水能克火之意。

“年画”一词最早出现在李光庭所著《乡言解颐》一书中，其新年十事一节里说：“扫舍之后，便贴年画，稚子之戏耳。”大概当时的“年画”只包括木版印刷或半印半画的民间艺术品，而现在“年画”一词的涵义就广泛得多了。我们也收集到了一部分年画，极像中国传统的工笔画，题材大多是祭祖与神像类。这些画造型准确，线条流畅有力，用色多是早期的矿石与植物颜料，因此色彩鲜艳而沉稳。这些作品大多是民间高手艺人所为，遗憾的是，他们不像文人画在作品上署名，这大概也是民间艺术品的一个特征。还有的民间年画，画面上有类似于文人画的题跋，但文人画的题跋都与画面内容有关联，而年画上的文字，特别是条屏画，很大一部分是与画面内容没有联系的，只起一个补白作用，这也是民间画与文人画的一个区别。

中国民间年画是民间艺术的一种特殊形式，学术界称之为消极型集体创作。它们的创作者是民间职业画工，他们具有一定的文化修养，但却有限。因此，民间年画中有些不规范的东西，也就不难理解了。正是这些不受官阁院派影响的民间艺人，才毫无顾忌地大胆创作，自由驰骋。正如民间艺人自己讲“画画无正经，好看就成功”，这种没有框框的自由创作，才产生了任何画种都不能代替的中国民间年画。国外的一位学者说：“中国民间年画的伟大，就在于这种无规可循的特殊创作形式”。实际上民间艺人在创作画稿时，态度也是很认真的，艺人先用木炭条描绘图形，反复修改，即所谓“九朽一罢”，定稿后再用毛笔勾线，完成墨线稿，以备刻板印刷。因此，古代的年画底稿是很难保留下来的。在我们的藏品中有几幅待刻版用的朽稿。其中一幅是毛方子底稿，内容是刘海戏金蟾，这幅底稿无论是造型还是勾线用笔，绝不亚于一幅传统工笔画墨稿。艺人所说的“画画无正经”可以理解为创作要有海阔天空的想象，题材确定后，还是要以严谨的态度对待。

过去，印行数量巨大的民间年画被士大夫认为是雕虫小技，不能登大雅之堂。因此，它的艺术价值没有引起人们的重视，反而有些国外的学者到中国搜集了不少年画精品，近年来相继出版了中国年画的专集。从这些专集中我们查阅到他们的藏品，大都是天津杨柳青、苏州桃花坞的年画，至于潍坊生产的年画却寥寥无几。因此，我们收集的这批潍坊民间年画，就更有意义了。

这次结集出版，我们从藏品中精选了各种题材以及印绘方法俱全的精品三百八十余幅，分为神圣仙佛、人物传说、戏文故事、美人童子、山水花卉等五类，谨供读者欣赏与专家研究。如果说这本画集出版后，能为中国的民间文化艺术及社会主义文化事业有一些贡献的话，我们将无比欣慰，并愿将这项艰苦的工作继续下去。

杏林 志强
1998年8月





Collection and Appreciation of Folk New Year Pictures

While attaching great importance to Weifang folk new year pictures, domestic and overseas scholars have been making researches into these pictures and have achieved considerable success. However, few people have dealt with the collecting and collating of old new year pictures. This is not because few people have attached importance to the two aspects of collecting and collating, but because new year pictures of the old days are hardly kept among folk, country or town. In the old days, people used to put up, a few days before the traditional Spring Festival, new year pictures on walls by paste, and a few days before the Spring Festival the following year, they would tear them off and replace them with new ones, which has been termed as ringing out the old year and ushering in the new year. As old new year pictures were torn off this way, few people would keep such torn-off pictures. A second reason arises from awareness. People didn't think new year pictures were as precious as scroll paintings were, i.e. they were not presentable, so few new year pictures produced before 1911 have been handed down.

Produced chiefly at Yangjiabu Village of Hanting and Jiangzhuang Village of Gaomi City, Weifang new year pictures emerged in the Ming Dynasty (1368—1644) and had a great vogue in the Qing Dynasty (1644—1911). These pictures were produced by wood block process printing, some of them were semi-printed and semi-hand-drawn and are characterized by bright colors, full and vigorous composition, and rich in local features and flavor of country life. During the reign of Emperor Tongzhi (1862—1874) of the Qing Dynasty, Yangjiabu Village, together with its surrounding villages produced considerable numbers of new year pictures. New year picture production declined during the last years of the Qing Dynasty due to social unrest. Since the founding of new China in 1949, new year picture production had been prosperous. However, during the ten chaotic years of the Cultural Revolution (1966—1976), new year picture production was ruthlessly destroyed, its ancient wood blocks and sketches of pictures were thrown into the fire and few are extant.

Of the new year pictures produced at Yangjiabu Village over long years in the past, those related to gods and deities were printed and sold in great quantities, for almost each and every household put them up. Of these pictures, numerous samples of God of Wealth have been kept among folk. Produced in the form of scrolls, pictures of God of Wealth were put up on the wall whom people worshipped and to whom people offered sacrifices. When the Spring Festival was over, they rolled up the scrolls and stored them up for use in following years. Moreover, there has been a folk belief that pictures of God of Wealth, however worn out, should never be discarded or destroyed. Destroying pictures of God of Wealth will bring forth bad luck.

In the new year pictures produced at Yangjiabu Village, God of Wealth assumes two images: Bi Guan the Literary God of Wealth, and Lord Guan the Martial God of Wealth. They either go together in a single picture or separately. In the picture where they go together, the upper one is Lord Guan the Martial God of Wealth, and the lower one is Bi Gan the Literary God of Wealth, i.e., upper Guan and lower Cai (wealth), symbolizing by homonym obtaining promotion in office and becoming wealthy. Though structured these ways, each picture has its own features. So far, we have collected about 50 pictures, and no two pictures are identical, which shows ingenuity and industry on the part of the folk artists and rich variety in this genre of folk art.

The pictures we've collected in recent years are purchased from curio and painting dealers mostly. One day we purchased by accident from a painting dealer a complete copy of *Illustrated Twenty-four Cases of Filial Piety*. That was printed by wood blocks at Yangjiabu in early years. The copy is complete, without a single page missing, its wood blocks were finely carved and each picture has a large paragraph of explanatory notes, and the notes were finely printed too. According to veteran folk artists in Yangjiabu Village, that is a superb copy of new year pictures produced in Yangjiabu and belongs to the category of pictures printed by wood blocks and drawn by hand, dating to the reign of Emperor Tongzhi (1862—1874), Qing Dynasty at least.

Prevailing in and around Yangjiabu Village and Gaomi during the mid- and late-Qing Dynasty were vertically hung strip new year pictures; they were semi-printed and semi-hand-drawn pictures printed with legendary tales about the Eight Immortals, historical figures and literary tales. That these strip pictures came to prevail among folk has causes. Chinese traditional scroll paintings used to be in the possession of upper-class VIPs, and the common people could hardly have access to them. The emergence of the cheap and nice new year pictures in the Qing Dynasty came to be appreciated by the common people and found their way into common people's houses. Historical records show Yangjiabu alone turned out as many as ten million copies of new year pictures a year. When the tastes of common people changed or when the wealthy found these pictures beneath them, artists found they must create a new form of pictures, something between scroll-paintings in the possession of upper-class literati and the usual new year pictures, so as to cater to varying tastes. That is how strip new year pictures came into being in great quantities.

Lines in these strip pictures are printed based on wood blocks, and are coloured by hand. Human figure forms and combinations of lines for clothing resemble the painting style by professional painters, and are mixedly coloured by shading method, instead of a single colour applied evenly as in the usual new year pictures. In a few strip pictures, water and ink are the chief hues, forming the artistic feature of combinations of fine delineation and sketches. Presented in such strip pictures are historical figures and literary tales in subject, such as *Wang Xizhi Cherished Geese*, *Tao Yuanming Loved Chrysanthemums*, *The Western Chamber*, and *A Dream of Red Mansions*, instead of the usual subject matter of "worshipping" and "good luck" as is seen in the usual new year pictures.

The Eight Immortals in folk tales have been the object painters would like to depict all through the ages. Of the strip pictures we have collected, scores of them are printed with the Eight Immortals. These Eight Immortals are finely depicted both in appearance and spirit, and each assumes a different posture. Some of them are very simply and unusually represented and their colouring is loud, yet not vulgar, comparable to those by professional painters.

Strip pictures are termed as hanging pictures among folk. The mention of hanging pictures reminds us of the large-size *puhui* technique pictures produced in Gaomi, which occupy a certain position among Weifang folk new year pictures. As time-honoured unique hand-drawn cultural products of Gaomi, *puhui* pictures are produced as follows. First, charcoal is ground into powder, and mixed into colouring matter with water separated from rice having been cooked for a certain time period. The artist dips the brushes into such colouring matter and draws the preliminary sketches. When the colouring matter dries up, the copy becomes the original one. The original copy is then spread over the printing paper, and the artist presses by hand the back of the original copy, gently and evenly, and the charcoal colouring matter will go into the printing paper. The artist then traces over the charcoaled lines, applies colours, traces the sketches in gold colouring matter before he draws the outlines. Finally he applies a bright oil colours for the hair of the characters and/or for other necessary places.





Puhui printing technique was first developed for the purpose of speeding up new year picture production. The original copy works very much the same as Yangjiabu engraved wood block works, and one original copy could produce five to six pictures. Possibly during the reign of Emperor Daoguang(1821—1850) of the Qing Dynasty, Gaomi *puhui* technique and Yangjiabu wood block printing technique penetrated into each other, and semi-printed and semi-hand-drawn pictures came into being in both places. In our collection is an incomplete picture that justifies our viewpoint on penetration. The upper part of the incomplete picture is *puhui* hand-drawn while the lower part is done by wood block process printing. These two techniques are perfectly integrated and the colours are antique, primitively simple and signified, a rare work of folk art indeed.

Weifang folk new year pictures were sold, at their height, to Laizhou, Dengzhou, Qingzhou and other places (all in eastern Shandong), and we sometimes went to those places in search of pictures kept among folk. What merits mention is that while we were in Laizhou searching for ancient and/or old pictures, we had strong support from Mr. Wang Shuhong, a folk art collector. Mr. Wang Shuhong has been collecting for years, and has obtained quite a few precious pictures, old and/or ancient. All the households in the village where Mr. Wang lives are keen on collecting folk art products, so our collecting efforts were smooth and fruitful, and we obtained quite a few treasured works of art. For instance, the four strip pictures captioned *Han Xiangzi Becomes a Monk*, most representative of Liu Mingjie, a noted artist at Yangjiabu, were obtained there. The whole set is completed by wood block process printing, and its composition is original. Each of the four is divided into two parts, which solves the weakness of the lower part being overcrowded and the upper part being sparse. Such two-part composition enables the picture to appear full and rich, thereby enhancing its artistic appeal.

Part of our collection are pictures vertically or horizontally hung mostly, related to ladies and children, and to mountains, rivers, flowers, and birds. The pictures of mountains, rivers, flowers, and birds resemble those by professional painters while the ladies are modelled upon the young married women from rich and influential families in the Qing Dynasty(1644—1911) and/or in the Republic of China (1911—1949). They are characteristically clad in high-collar apparel and shod in three-inch-long shoes or "three-inch golden lotus" shoes for female bound feet in the old days.

Among the Yangjiabu New Year pictures manufactured around the Qing Dynasty (1644—1911) was a category, usually termed as "rolled pictures." They were not hung up on the wall for people to appreciate or enjoy; instead, people rolled the pictures and stored them up at the bottom of the trunk after they looked at them. Hence they are so called. The reason is that girls, restricted by feudal ethics in the old days, lived a secluded life before marriage, and knew little of female or male physiology. So, at marriage, the mother would place at the bottom of the trunk such rolled pictures which serve as sex enlightening education. Among the rolled pictures we've collected is one printed with "fire prevention picture" at its outset. According to veteran folk artists, "fire prevention picture" is a jargon term that picture merchants employed when they told picture dealers what picture the rolled one was. A second version is that such pictures were enshrined at the top of the kitchen wall to prevent fire. For traditionally a male has been regarded as *yang* represented by fire while a female has been regarded as *yin*, represented by water, and water can put out a fire.

The term "new year picture" first appeared in the book *Native Terms and Customs Interpreted* by Li Guangting. Recorded in the chapter dealing with the ten things to be done about the Spring Festival is "After the house has been cleaned, new year pictures are put up, which young children enjoy doing." "New year picture" used to refer to folk art products printed by wood blocks or semi-printed and semi-hand-drawn pictures, while today the term has acquired a wide implication. We have also collected some new year pictures resembling traditional Chinese paintings done in fine delicate strokes, its subject being ancestral sacrifices and pictures of various gods. The pictures are accurately drawn, their lines being smooth and vigorous, and colouring being done by mineral and/or plant pigments. So their colours are glaring, deep and subdued. The new year pictures were painted by master folk artists. But the pity is that they do not bear the names of the artists as paintings by professional painters do, which is probably another feature of folk art products. Like paintings by professional painters, some new year pictures bear short annotations as paintings by professional painters do. While annotations on paintings by professional painters are closely related to what is depicted on the paintings, they are not related to what is depicted, especially on strip pictures. They are complementary in nature, which is a trait that distinguishes them from those by professional painters.

As a special genre of folk arts and regarded as passive collective creations by academic circles, new year pictures are produced by professional folk painters. They were learned but limitedly. So it's understandable that there is something not standardized in them. Precisely because those folk artists had freedom from restrictions by officialism or academism, they emboldened themselves without scruple and gave free reigns to their imagination in creative efforts. One folk artist put it well when he said, "There are no specific laws to follow in painting; splendid and entrancing pictures are always a success". Freedom in creative efforts without restriction in one form or another leads to successful folk new year pictures beyond compare by any other genre artistically. As one foreign scholar put it, "The success of Chinese folk new year pictures lies in this special lawless creativity." As a matter of fact, folk artists assumed a serious attitude in creating their new year pictures. They first drew the drafts by means of charcoal strips and revised these drafts again and again till they felt satisfied. When the drafts were finalized, they employed traditional writing brushes to trace the lines, getting them ready for engraving the wood block. So ancient or old drafts were hardly preserved. In our collection are several drafts drawn by means of charcoal strips. One of them was painted with *Liu Hai Plays With a Gold Striped Toad* on a piece of square paper without being mounted. Either in appearance or in strokes, the drafts is no worse than that for a traditional painting made with fine and delicate strokes. What was mentioned in the previous as "there is no specific laws to follow in painting" might be interpreted as vivid and boundless imagination being necessary in creating works of art. And once the subject to be depicted had been decided on, serious approaches and attitude were required.

Folk new year pictures printed in large quantities used to be regarded as trivial and unrepresentable by literati and officialdom, so their artistic values did not attract general attention. Yet some overseas scholars have come to China, collected many superb new year pictures and got them published in recent years. Leafing through the collections of new year pictures they have published, we find most of the pictures were produced by Yangliuqing of Tianjin and Taohuawu of Suzhou, and few are produced by Weifang. That we've collected Weifang folk new year pictures is of no insignificance.

The 380 odd superb pictures we've selected from our stock for the collection represent all the subject matter, painting approaches and printing methods, and are classified into five categories of 1. celestial and terrestrial gods, deities, fairies, sages and Buddha, 2. legendary figures, 3. theatrical and literary tales, 4. ladies and children, and 5. mountains, rivers, flowers and birds, for general appreciation and for professional scholarly research. If the publication of this pictorial will contribute our share to Chinese folk arts and to the socialist cultural undertaking, we should feel gratified and go on with the job that requires arduous efforts.

Xing Lin Zhi Qiang
August, 1998



《潍坊民间孤本年画》
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目录



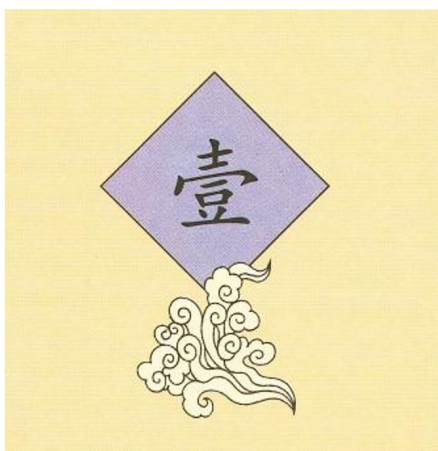
CONTENTS

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◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
图版目录	美人童子	山水花卉	戏文故事	人物传说	神圣仙佛	民间年画的收藏与鉴赏	序
267	223	187	137	69	1	3	1

1	Preface
3	Collection and Appreciation of Folk New Year Pictures
1	Pictures of celestial and terrestrial gods, deities, fairies, sages and Buddhas
69	Legendary Figures
137	Theatrical and Literary Tales
187	Pictures of mountains, rivers, flowers and birds
223	Ladies and Children
267	Index

神圣仙佛



Pictures of celestial and terrestrial gods, deities, fairies, sages and Buddhas

以神圣仙佛为题材的年画，是潍坊地区印销最多的，它与每家每户的关系最为密切。每年春节，老百姓都要祭财神和祭祖，以求富贵平安。代表作品有文财神、武财神、文武财神、观音菩萨、佛祖、八仙、圣人等。至于家堂、祖影，是春节人们祭祖用的。神像年画的制作形式也是多种多样，有木版套印的，半印半绘的，完全手绘的，如家堂、祖影，都是聘请民间的高手艺人手绘的，有很高的艺术水平。

New year pictures related to celestial and terrestrial gods, deities, fairies, sages and Buddhas were printed and sold in great quantities in and around Weifang, for they were closely related to each and every household. As the traditional Spring Festival approached every year, people offered sacrifices to God of Wealth and to their ancestors, praying to them for prosperity and peace. Representative works include Literary God of Wealth, Martial God of Wealth, Literary and Martial Gods of Wealth, Guanyin (a Bodhisattva), founders of Buddhist sects, Eight Immortals, sages, etc. Pictures of clan halls and of ancestors—usually great grandparents—were hung up on the whom people worshipped and to whom people offered sacrifices at Spring Festival. Diverse in form, some pictures of gods, deities, fairies, sages and Buddhas were produced by wood block process printing while others were semi-printed and semi-hand-drawn or completely hand-drawn. Pictures of clan halls and ancestors were hand-drawn by master folk artists and were of high artistic achievements.



1 文武财神 102 × 64cm 清代 半印半绘
Literary and Martial Gods of Wealth
102 × 64 cm, Qing Dynasty, semi-printed and semi-drawn



2 文武财神 103 × 50cm 清代 木版套印
Literary and Martial Gods of Wealth
103 × 50 cm. Qing Dynasty, wood block process printing

