

說唱文學，鼓詞，大鼓書，景陽剛武松打虎

14 Performance Literature, Drumtale, Big Drum Story, Wu Song Fights the Tiger on Jingyang Ridge

Yu Jing translated, VB revised 15 February 06

<Title page>

Wu Song Fights the Tiger
on Jingyang Ridge

East Wing of the Printing House Baowentang.

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Let me tell in this session about when the Emperor had his seat in Bianliang
All under Heaven was in a constant state of war

Inside the borders there were four factions, outside there were four bandits
The four factions were stronger than the four bandits

Inside the borders the four factions' leaders were Gao Qiu and Tong Que,
Cai Jing and Yang Jian, who brought chaos to the imperial order.

In Huaiqing prefecture a pampered son, Wang Qing, revolted
At Mount Liang Third Brother Song had his base

At Mount Liang one hundred and eight chiefs had their base
Whether man or woman - they all burned incense

Seventy-two Terrestrial Powers entered the mortal world
and thirty-six Celestial Powers were also born.

Meanwhile let's wait performing the story of Mount Liang,
let's rather perform the story of the good fellow, Second Celestial Power.

His home was in Qinghe District of Guang¹ Prefecture,
ten *li* from the town, in Kongsheng Village.

In Kongsheng Village there was a man called Wu Zishun²
The same mother gave birth to two boys

¹ Guangping Prefecture (*Guangping fu*) is found in some of the other versions.

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The same mother gave birth to two persons

One was weak and one was strong

Wu the Elder was the eldest son of them

Second Brother was the Second Celestial Power

Wu Lin³ liked to study and took to book learning

Wu Song loved the martial arts and practiced sword and spear

He could perform the art of the staff and the cudgel,
and mastered the use of whip, sword and hammer

Eighteen years old he stirred up trouble at Dong Family Temple,
and beat up those ‘five tigers’

With his fist he killed those ‘tigers blocking the road’
He kicked to death those ‘kings of empty streets’⁴

He caught Li Gui,⁵ famous for his money,
and opened that guy’s chest

At Dong Family Temple the people who died were not few
Afraid of a trial, he fled to another district

You may ask where he fled
He went off to Cangzhou to seek refuge with King of Liang

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“King of Liang thinks I have a good heart

² This seems to be a variant form (based on sound?) of one of the names of Wu the Elder, namely Wu Zhisheng, cf. text 17 and 54. See also *Jin Ping Mei cihua*, Chapter One: Wu Zhi.

³ Wu Lin seems to be the name of Wu the Elder. In other texts he is called Wu Zhi or Wu Zhisheng, if his name is mentioned. Wu Lin is only found in the present text.

⁴ ‘Road-blocking tigers’ and ‘kings of empty streets’ both seem to point to the same local rascals.

⁵ *Gui* is the character for ‘rich’.

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I think King of Liang has a big heart, too”

They got on well and became sworn brothers,
lighting incense in the incense burner

*Meanwhile let's wait performing what happened to Second Master,
let's rather perform what happened to master Kong's soldiers in the hometown*

They could not catch that good fellow, Wu the Second
They caught The Elder and let him take the blame instead

The Elder was taken to the *yamen*
He was bound and cuffed and thrown in jail

Then he was sentenced to - in August, after the mid-autumn festival –
have his head cut off at the marketplace

Men who are not destined to die will survive
A happy imperial announcement was spread throughout the world

The Empress had given birth to an heir
All the soldiers were sent on a mission, and [Wu the elder] escaped the penalty

Kongsheng Village experienced a draught
Two persons – a husband and wife – fled from the disaster

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You may ask where they fled from the disaster
They set up house in the west wing at Ximen Qing's

The Elder was selling flatcakes along the main street,
when he bumped into the horsemonger Little Liu Tang

Starting to talk, he called Big Brother,
shouting: “Big Brother, *listen to my simple words!*⁶”

⁶ This is perhaps ‘shorthand’ for ‘listen to my sincere words’ (聽衷腸 *ting zhongchang*) which is frequent in Beijing drumsinging, cf. Stevens 1973.

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Today I will start off to Mount Liang,
I will go to Cangzhou to see the little King of Liang

If you would like to write a family letter, then please do so,
I can bring it over to that place for you!”

When The Elder heard him say this, he did not hesitate,
but wrote a nice letter in a hurry and a haste

After finishing the letter he handed it over,
and Liu Tang received it in his hand

He took farewell with The Elder and set out
Then he rushed along the highway

He travelled at high speed,
and soon he arrived at the King of Medicine⁷

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Liu Tang entered the village and had a look around,
when he caught sight of the good fellow, Second Heavenly King

Starting to talk, he called Second Brother,
shouting: “Second Brother, listen to my simple words!”

Today I do not have any other purpose
than to deliver a family letter to this place

He immediately handed over the family letter,
and Wu Song received it in his hand

Wu Song opened the family letter and read it
Afterwards he only longed to go home to see his elder brother

When King of Liang heard about this,
he asked: “Second Brother, listen to my simple words!”

⁷ Yao Wang, King of Medicine? Name of Apothecary?

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Before you leave I will give you a quarterstaff⁸

Prepared with this you can defend yourself on your journey

Here is fifty taels of silver to cover your expenses on the trip

Thus you have the means to buy wine on your way”

Wu Song accepted the silver and took it in his hand

Then he put his pack over the shoulder

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He took farewell with King of Liang and walked away

Then he marched forward along the highway

After three *li* he passed by the Peach Blossom Tavern

After another five *li* he passed by Apricot Flower Village

The Peach Blossom Tavern was famous for their exquisite wine

Apricot Flower Village was famous for their beautiful women

He did not care where the exquisite wine came from

He did not care where the beautiful women were

Wu Song walked forward in big strides

To the north of the road a tavern appeared

A building in several storeys and two staff’s height

The winebanner of the tavern was blowing in the wind

On the winebanner of the tavern big characters were written

Every character, every line was written very nicely

If Liu Ling would ask: “Which place should one chose?”

Du Kang would answer: “This place is the best!”

On the horizontal hanging there were four characters:

Turtledoves drinking our wine become a pair of phoenixes!

⁸ *qimeigun*, ‘quarterstaff’ for fending

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Wu Song then climbed the tavern building
His quarterstaff he put aside

The waiter looked up at him
and sized up the good fellow, Second Celestial Power:

‘His height is more than one staff’s length
His two shoulders are full of power

His head is the size of a bushel
His two eyes stare like the moon

His arms look like two ridgepoles
His body matches a roof beam

His palms are as big as dustpans
His fingers are as long as wooden sticks

When he stands up he looks like a tower
When he sits down he is like an archway!

After he had finished looking he hurried to ask: “What wine would you like?
Then I can tell them to heat the wine!”

When Wu Song had heard what the waiter said,
he shouted: “Waiter, *listen to my explanation!*”

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I ask you, what kind of wine do you have?
Please, *tell me*, Second Master, *in detail*

The waiter said: “I have ‘Champion Red’ and ‘Buddha Hand Dew’,
old vintages, Shaoxing wine and strong liquor.”

Wu Song said: “I want the liquor!
Please, hurry and heat it for Second Master!”

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When the waiter heard this he did not hesitate,
but hurried to bring the wine and vegetables

Hush-sh-sh! he poured four measures of wine
and placed on the square table

Wu Song drank one cup of wine
This wine was in fact better than that of other places

Wu Song said: "Good, good, good!"
The waiter turned around and replied:

"In the front room of the tavern we sell only ordinary wine
The good wine is in the rear of the tavern.

If you wish to drink good wine, then come with me
When we come to the back room you can taste this wine

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When Wu Song heard this he became very pleased
He shouted: "Waiter, *listen carefully!*

If you have good wine to serve Second Master,
I will pay you a little extra, when I leave, do you agree?"

The waiter then went first,
and Wu Song followed closely beside him

They walked rather quickly ahead
Then the two men arrived in the back room of the tavern

The waiter opened the lid of a liquor jar
Wu Song took a big bowl in his hands

One jar was finished in three bowls
He drank eighteen jars in one go

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When he had drunk fifty-four bowls
he started feeling a little tipsy

Wu Song walked out in big strides
The waiter came forward and pulled his clothes

Starting to talk, he called Master,
shouting: “Master, *listen to my good advice!*”

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This wine has been stored for eight and a half years
I am afraid exposure to wind could hurt you!”

Wu Song said: “It does not matter,
The wine has only made me a little tipsy!”
Second Master walked out in big strides
He walked forward and arrived in the front room of the tavern

With his hands he opened his pack
and took ten taels of silver in his hand

“I give you ten taels of silver.
Dealing with people I do not take advantage.”

When the waiter received the silver he became very pleased
“Dear Master, you are really generous!

May I ask you: where are you headed now?
To which village are you going now?”

“Today I am not going anywhere else
My mind is set to cross the Jingyang Ridge!”

The waiter said: “There has appeared a fierce tiger on Jingyang Ridge,
harming people in the middle of the day!”

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One or two people do not dare to set out on the trip alone

Even groups of eight or ten must carry swords and spears

He has eaten the beancurd-seller Pockmarked Wang

He has eaten master Classroom Zhang

He has eaten Zhao, Qian, Sun and Li

He has eaten Zhou, Wu, Zheng and Wang

I propose that you, Good Master, stay here for the night

Tomorrow you can join a group to cross Jingyang Ridge!”

When Wu Song heard this, he felt annoyed

He shouted: “Waiter, this is too bad!

Is this tavern of your’s operated by brigands,

harming people in the middle of the day?”

The more Wu Song scolded, the angrier he was

He gave the waiter a slap in the face with his palm

He hit the waiter so that he fell to the ground

Blood started running from his nose and mouth

Wu Song walked out in big strides

The waiter slammed the door shut

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<31, 33, 34 “Leave, leave, please, just leave! 31, 33, 34>

Why should I care if you feed the tiger or the wolf?”

Second Master pretended not to hear it

and marched forward along the highway

So strong was the hero and good fellow Wu Song

He subdued the tiger at Jingyang Ridge

He dodged the tiger’s head and grabbed its tail

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With his two hands he sent it up in the air

He hurried along at high speed,
seeing in front of him the Jingyang Ridge

He lifted his eyes, raised his head and looked around
To the north there was a wooden gateway

On that gate a tablet was inscribed with words
saying the same as the waiter had told

When Wu Song read this, he was furious
A burning fire rose in him and he pounded his chest

He pointed with his finger and started to curse
He cursed: “You, King of Beasts high in the mountain!”

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In stead of staying high up in the mountain in royal dignity,
you dare come down from the mountain and do people harm!”

The more Wu Song scolded the angrier he was
His only wish was to challenge the King of Beasts

In a hurry he put down his pack
and placed his big quarterstaff on the other side

Wu Song, the Second, quickly sat down there
As soon as he closed his eyes he started dreaming of his hometown

He dreamed about his sister-in-law, that woman née Pan
He dreamed about his elder brother, Wu the Elder

*Meanwhile let's wait performing what happened to Wu Song,
let's rather perform what happened to the King of Beasts high up in in the mountain*

For three days it had not eaten fresh human flesh

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It had grown so thin that its chest almost touched its back

Today it was not going anywhere else

Its mind was set to go for Jingyang Ridge!

It hurried along at high speed,

seeing in front of it the Jingyang Ridge

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It lifted its eyes, raised its head and looked carefully

There was a big fellow lying there

It bellowed “b-r-r-r-r...” and fell over him at one jump

At one jump it grabbed him by his left arm

Wu Song was dreaming about a family union

‘Who is grabbing me by the palm?’

Second Master opened his eyes in haste,

and saw a fierce tiger beside him there

Its height was more than one staff’s length

Its tail was truly like a spear

One hundred and eight stripes covered its body

After a black one came a yellow

On its forehead a character stood out:

three lines and one stroke reads as ‘King’!

Its gaping mouth—a pail of blood—was big as a dustpan,

its two eyes staring at you like tea mugs.

Wu Song said: “You are not staying high up in the mountain in royal dignity,

Instead you dare come down from the mountain and do people harm!”

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The more Second Master scolded, the angrier he was

He grabbed his quarterstaff in his hand

He aimed straight for the fierce tiger

But as the tiger dodged, his cudgel was broken

With a weapon in hand one may kill a tiger

Without a weapon in one's hand it's hard to defeat a tiger

He remembered a forefather of an ancient dynasty

This Cun Xiao once killed a tiger on a mountain ridge

He dodged the tiger's head and grabbed its tail

With one hand he grabbed the tiger's neck

Moving his two arms, the power of each a thousand pound

He easily lifted it up in the air

Then he threw it down towards the rocks

The tiger made a whistling sound and went to see the King of Hell

Just as Wu Song killed the tiger,

high in the mountain another pair of tigers appeared

When Wu Song saw them, he had some secret thoughts

His mind kept turning back and forth:

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'It is difficult enough for one person to kill one tiger,
but how can one person defeat two tigers?'

He bent down and picked up a rock

Then he aimed at those bastard tigers

When Dong Hu saw this he said: "Damned!"

and shouted: "Second Brother, listen to my simple words!"

Don't move your hand! Please, slow down!

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My words are meant to give you good advice!

The two of us received orders from the court

We had to dress up like tigers

Please, follow us, follow us!

Among the three of us you are the chief!”

The three men went down the high mountain together

Together they went to the court to report

This was the first part about killing the tiger

In the next session the story continues about Wu Song's exile

Translation by Yu Jing and Vibeke Børdahl