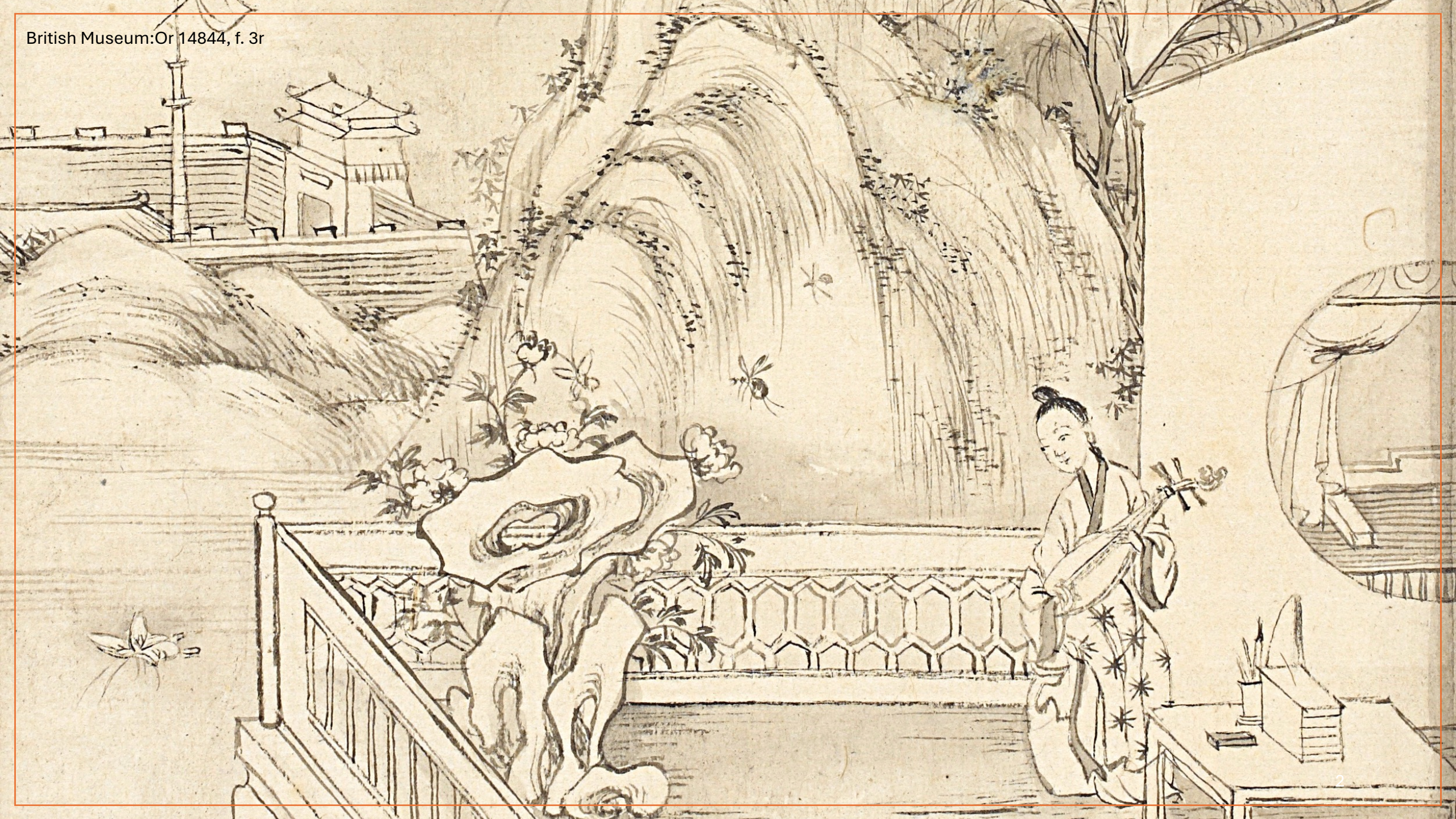


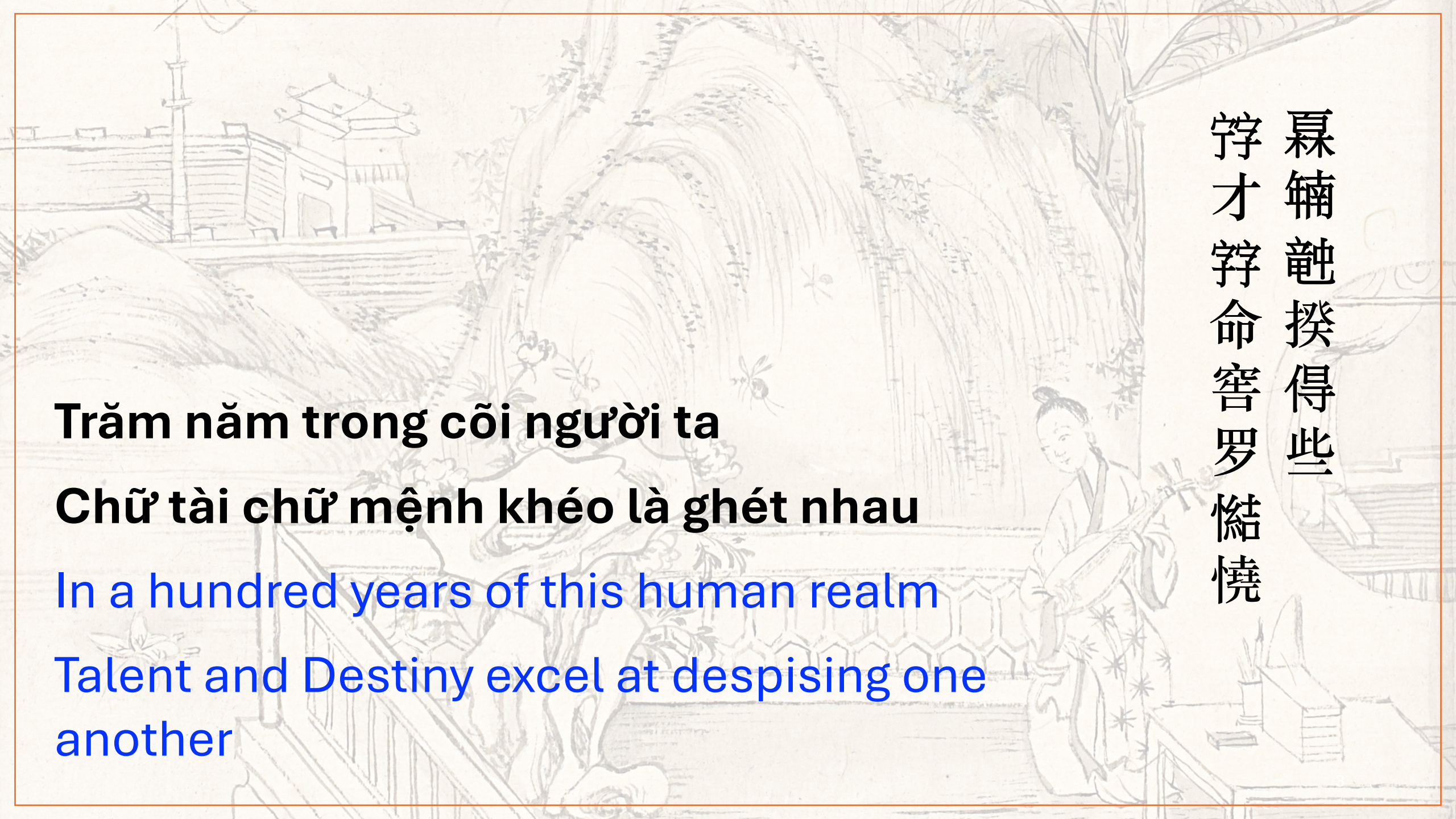
Introducing The Tale of Kiều

Asia for Educators

John D. Phan
Associate Professor of Vietnamese Humanities
Spring 2025
EALAC – Weatherhead
jp3720@columbia.edu







Trăm năm trong cõi người ta
Chữ tài chữ mệnh khéo là ghét nhau
In a hundred years of this human realm
Talent and Destiny excel at despising one
another

算輸
才命
羅
慙
慙

1. IMPACT

of the Tale of Kiều

國文

Quốc văn

“[Among] the people of our country, who does not know the *Tale of Kiều*? Who has not memorized some measure of lines from the *Tale of Kiều*? Who does not know clearly the story of the maiden Kiều, or does not feel for Miss Kiều — a beautiful lady, cursed by fate, full of talent and beauty, but who encountered a destiny of broken hearts, fifteen years of bitterness in life, as though cruelly spurned by Heaven so as to make a shining mirror for all those of shallow disposition?”

Phạm Quỳnh, 1919



“Yet how strange to see that each and every class of people within our country—from men of literature and knowledge to the common worker, from the elites of the arched gates to those who work the fields gathering mulberry—that there are none who do not love the *Tale of Kiều*, none who read the *Tale of Kiều* and are not moved, as though experiencing those desperate situations, suffering that bitter pain, undergoing those catastrophes, and weathering the footsetps of those roads for themselves...”

Phạm Quỳnh, 1919



LẤY CẢM HỨNG TỪ TRUYỆN KIỀU
CỦA ĐẠI THI HẠO NGUYỄN DU



TRÌNH MỸ DUYỄN
CÁO THÁI HÀ
NSND LÊ KHÁNH
LÊ ANH HUY

MỘT BỘ PHIM CỦA
MAI THU HUYỀN

TINCOM MEDIA HÂN HẠNH GIỚI THIỆU KIỀU

TRÌNH MỸ DUYỄN - LÊ ANH HUY - CÁO THÁI HÀ - NSND LÊ KHÁNH - HIỆU HIỀN - PHƯƠNG THANH - LONG ĐỆ TRẠI - LÊ THUẬN - NGUYỄN THANH THIÊN - BUI ĐỨC HÙNG - THAI TRINH
DANG KHOR - PHAN VINH QUÝ - NGUYỄN NGỌC NHÌ - NGUYỄN PHÚ ĐÌNH SƠN - CRYSTAL TRAN DANG - NGANG THANH LOẠI - VỊ NGỌC MẠI - VU GIET HUNG - THUY DESIGN HOUSE
NGUYỄN THỊ KIM NGÂN - NGUYỄN ANH TIẾN - HUY TIẾN - LÊ THANH TÂM - TOP TEAM - TİM CLINIC - WALL SOUND - BAI BUI - ĐẶC CHỈNH

TRẦN BỬU LỘC - MAI THU HUYỀN

TINCOM MEDIA HÂN HẠNH GIỚI THIỆU KIỀU

05.03.2021

PHIM KIỀU TINCOMMEDIA

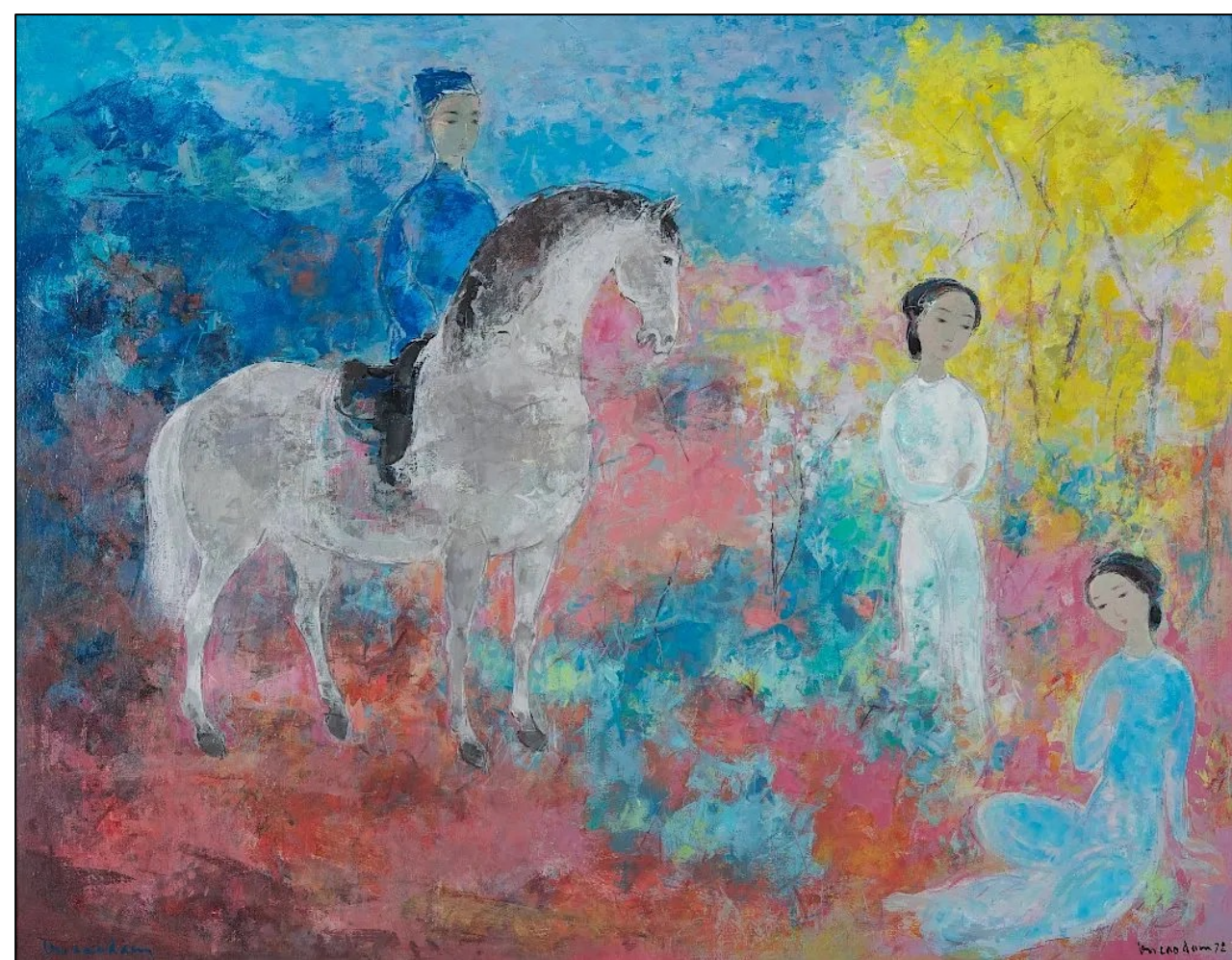
Kiêu

2009 film

Director Mai Thu Huyền

Lacquer painting
Depicting Kiều meeting Kim
Based on Đông Hồ popular depictions





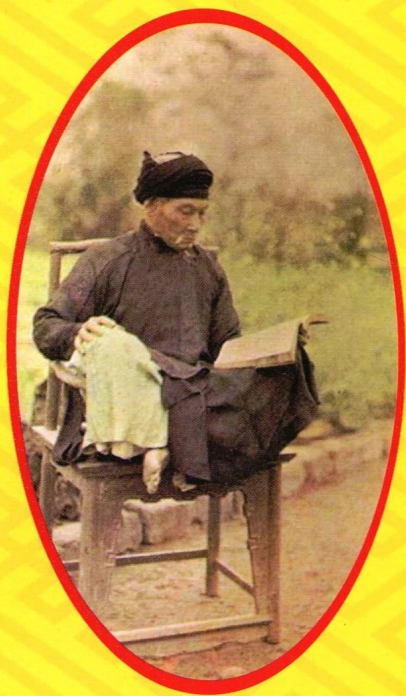
Two paintings by Vũ Cao Đàm
Depicting Kiều & Vân meeting Kim




HOÀI NAM

Bói Kiều

*Một thú chơi tao nhã - Một phong tục đẹp
của người Việt Nam từ xa xưa.*



 Công Ty Sách Panda

 NHÀ XUẤT BẢN
VĂN HÓA THÔNG TIN

Kiêu Fortune-telling!

2. ORIGINS

of the Tale of Kiều

源
裕

Nguyên gốc



Based on a Chinese novel

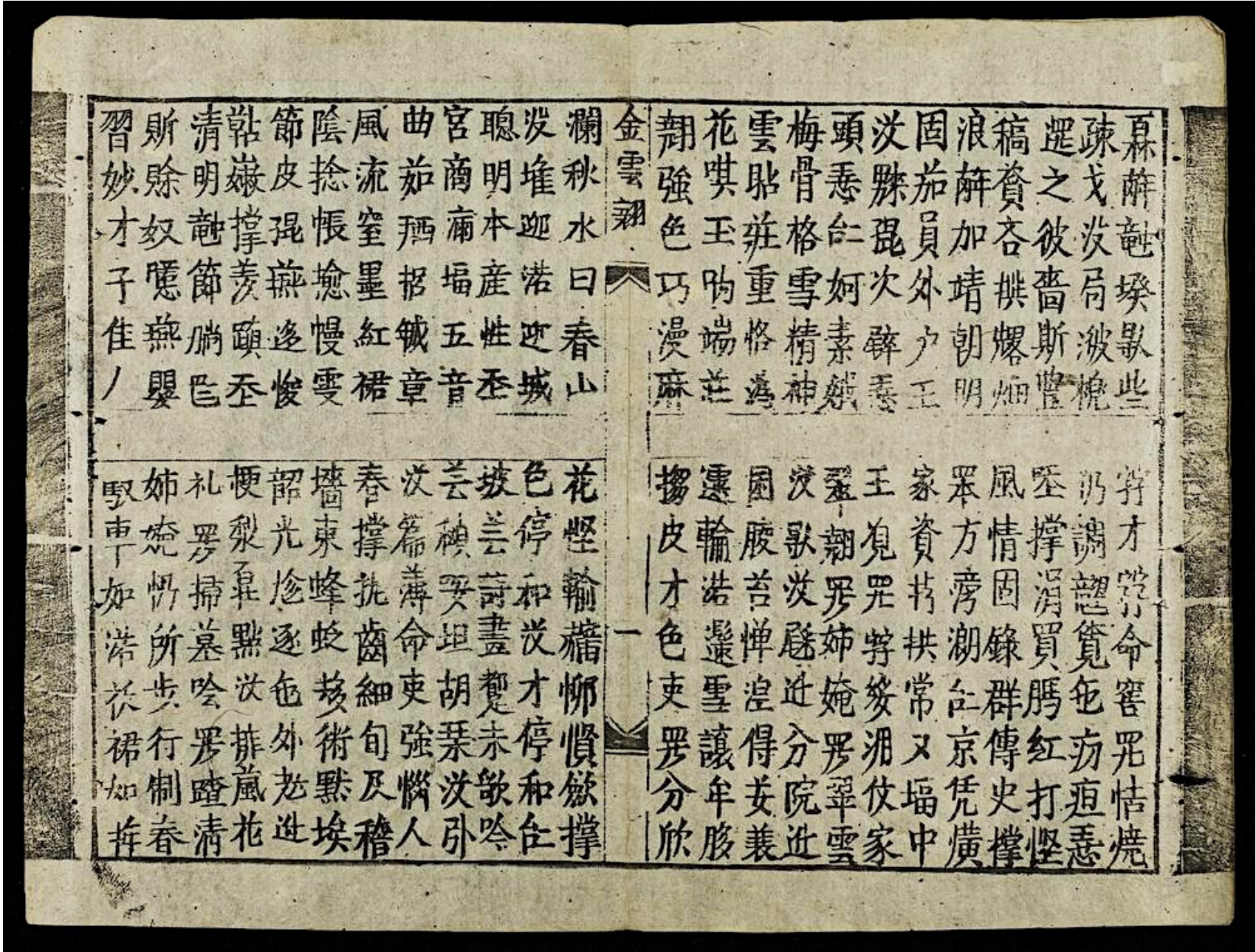
This song, “*Yue’er gao*,”⁴³ makes plain the fragile destiny of a beauty—a rarity among the fairer sex born with matchless talent and allure. She did not encounter the prosperity of a golden house,⁴⁴ but instead met with the bitterness of ravage and ruin. If we look from ancient times to the present, how many of these extraordinary beauties were able to escape a crushing downfall? (my translation)

這一曲《月兒高》，單道佳人命薄，紅粉時乖，生了絕代的才色，不能遇金屋之榮，反遭那摧殘之苦。試看從古及今，不世出的佳人，能有幾個得無破敗？

Transformed
into a Vietnamese
narative poem

Written in
Chữ Nôm:

A character script
representing the
Vietnamese language



3. GENRES

of the Tale of Kiều

體類文學

Thể loại văn học

FOUR STORIES IN ONE?

1. A Neo-Confucian Fairytale

- Talented boy meets beautiful girl

2. A Neo-Confucian Drama

- Neo-Confucian morality under gritty moral conditions

3. A *giang hồ* adventure

- Kung fu shenanigans “between the rivers and lakes”

4. A Buddho-Confucian contemplation

- Life is Suffering. So what do we do?

雜語

Tạp ngữ

(Heteroglossia)

1. A NEO-CONFUCIAN FAIRYTALE

才子佳人

Tài

Tử

Giai

Nhân

TALENT & BEAUTY
stories

1. A NEO-CONFUCIAN FAIRYTALE

Còn non còn nước còn dài

Còn về còn nhớ đến người hôm nay

As long as hills and waters endure

So shall I return, so shall I remember you
today.

群 群
術 嫩
群 群
汝 渚
玆 群
得 曳
戩
尼

2. A NEO-CONFUCIAN DRAMA

Tiểu thay trong giá trắng ngần

Đến phong trần cũng phong trần như ai

How pitiful, that purest frost, silver-white

In dusty winds, is stained and blown like any
other

玊 惜
風 哈
塵 醜
拱 這
風 鼎
塵 銀
如
埃

3. A *GIANG HỒ* ADVENTURE

江

Giang

湖

Hồ

RIVERS & LAKES

or stories from beyond the pale

(KUNG FU STORIES!)

3. A *GIANG HỒ* ADVENTURE

Cho hay muôn sự tại trời

Phụ người chẳng bỏ khi người phụ ta

Know that all matters rest with Heaven

Be not faithless to others, lest they be faithless
to you.

朱台萬事在
負得庄捕欺
負些

4. A BUDDHO-CONFUCIAN CONTEMPLATION

Tấm lòng* đã thấu đến Trời

Bán mình là Hiếu cứu người là Nhân

Your heart has penetrated to Heaven

To sell yourself was Filial, to save others,
Humane

歟 慘
命 憐
罗 缶
孝 透
救 玃
得 歪
罗
仁

4. A BUDDHO-CONFUCIAN CONTEMPLATION

Tấm lòng* đã thấu đến Trời

Bán mình là Hiếu cứu người là Nhân

Your heart has penetrated to Heaven

To sell yourself was Filial, to save others,
Humane

鮮 慘
命 憐
罗 缶
孝 透
救 殫
得 至
罗 至
仁 仁

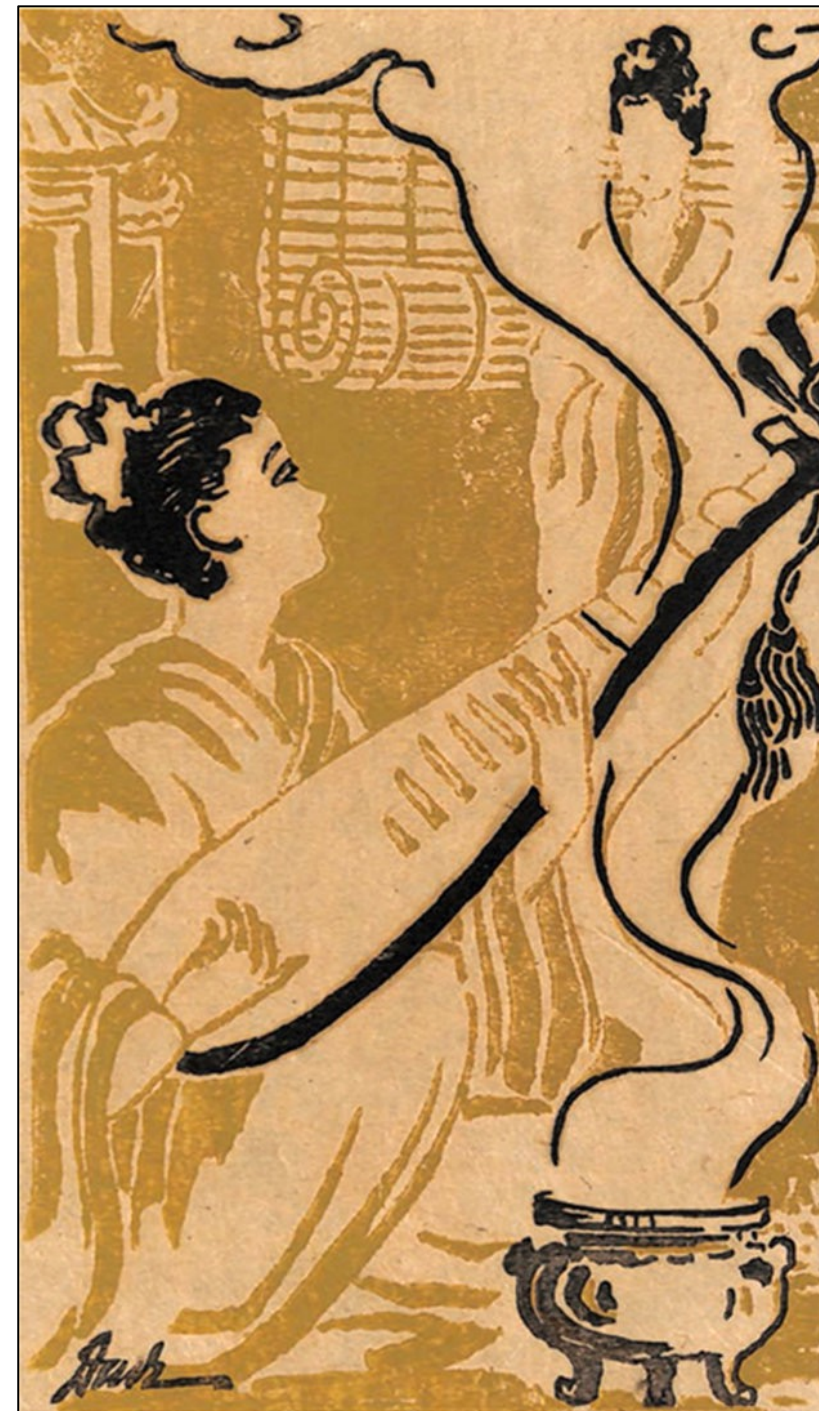
4. THE LADY KIỀU:

desire & suffering

翠翹

Thúy Kiều

LIFE IS SUFFERING...
...AND SUFFERING IS
CAUSED BY DESIRE.



DESIRE & SUFFERING & THE LADY KIỀU

Sự đời đã tắt lửa lòng

Còn chen vào chốn bụi hồng làm chi?

Life has extinguished the fires of my heart

Why then roll in the dusty world once more?

群 事
扞 蔑
包 缶
准 必
培 炤
紅 惹
夕
之

DESIRE & SUFFERING & THE LADY KIỀU

Thiện căn ở tại lòng ta

Chữ tâm kia mới bằng ba chữ tài.

The root of goodness lies inside our hearts.

And so the Heart is worth three times all Talent.

善根於在悉些
淨心箕買朋匹淨才



Art by Tôn Thất Đào