

PART E
ZIDANKU SILK MANUSCRIPTS, PLATES

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EXPLANATIONS

Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1 and the Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments are kept at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, which, together with the Freer Gallery of Art, belongs to the National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1 is owned by the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation and is on loan to the Sackler Gallery, loan no. MLS2028. It is stored separately from the Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments in one Solander box. The Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments and related materials donated by John Cox to the Sackler Gallery in 1992 are in five Solander boxes, Sackler Gallery accession no. S1992.84.1–5. One other fragment from the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts survives. The fragment belonged to Shang Chengzuo and in 1997 was donated to the Hunan Provincial Museum, Changsha, by his son, Shang Zhitan, along with an old photograph of thirteen now lost fragments that had been in Shang Chengzuo's possession.

The condition of the Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments and related materials when acquired by the Sackler Gallery in 1992 is documented in the photograph taken at the time (see Part I, fig. 1). The Silk-Manuscript Fragments were embedded in several fused masses of carbonized silk fabric. Some loose bits of fabric were in the lid of the plaited-bamboo basket, in which all the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts had been placed when buried in the Zidanku Chu tomb. More bits of fabric were inside the cardboard box containing the fused masses and basket. Conservation began in 1993 under Mary Ballard, conservator at the Smithsonian Institution, who kept me informed of progress between the years 1993–1996. In 1997, work stopped for several years until 2000, when conservation continued under Christine Giuntini, conservator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and was completed in 2007.

As pieces of fabric were removed from the fused masses, they were assigned numerical codes and a record was made of the position of each fragment relative to adjacent fragments. In the final stage of conservation, the fragments were placed between plexiglass sheets so that both sides are visible, surrounded by cutouts of conservation-quality paper. The pieces of sandwiched plexiglass holding fragments vary in size depending on the size of the fragment or fragments encased in each piece, sometimes one fragment and sometimes a grouping of adjacent fragments. Each plexiglass piece is labeled with the numerical codes of the fragments and occasionally a descriptive statement (there is only one unlabeled piece, containing fragments without numerical code or descriptive statement). Some fragments are a single layer of silk fabric; some still have several layers of fused fabric. When the layers are not completely separated, text on the outer surface of the outermost layers can be seen, but text on the inner layers cannot, and the relationship of the text on the front or “recto” to the text on the back or “verso” is uncertain.¹

The plexiglass pieces are stored in three of the five Solander boxes. Box 1 and Box 2 contain small-size plexiglass pieces, thirty in Box 1 and fifty-one in Box 2. The nine plexiglass pieces in Box 3 are larger, including two fragments that belong to the manuscript

1 The Chinese graphs on some fragments as conserved on the plexiglass pieces appear upside-down relative to the placement of the labels with numerical codes.

I reconstruct as Zidanku Silk Manuscript 3. Box 4 is divided into open compartments containing two large, fused masses from which no further fragments could be removed, the plaited-bamboo basket, and eight leather fragments removed from the basket. Box 5 has scraps and crumbled bits of silk fabric and bamboo from the basket, placed in thirty-five plexiglass-covered compartments.

The sequence of plates follows the presentation of the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts in transcription and translation in Part F:

1. Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1, on one piece of silk and mounted. The content of Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1 treats the four seasons and related *shiling* 時令 “seasonal ordinances,” providing information about favorable and unfavorable activities during the twelve months of the year. A title is not written on the manuscript. I assign the title *Sishi ling* 四時令 (Ordinances of the four seasons) based on the content. Inside the tomb, the basket containing the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts was saturated with water. Some layers of manuscript fabric show signs of ink that had seeped from layers above or below and left an imprint. On Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1, traces in red ink of graphs and designs from a different manuscript are imprinted in direct image on the surface of the fabric at the bottom of text B, extending across to text C, section 9. This occurred when red ink on the manuscript positioned beneath Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1 in the basket penetrated through the back of the fabric, leaving the direct-image imprint on the front (when the writing on one layer of manuscript fabric pressed against the layer facing it, transferring the ink onto the surface of the opposite layer, the imprinted graphs appear in reverse image). Noel Barnard referred to these red-ink traces as the Second Manuscript. Now that I have reconstructed Zidanku Silk Manuscript 2 and Zidanku Silk Manuscript 3 based on the Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments, Barnard’s reference to a Second Manuscript should be treated as obsolete. While the red-ink imprints on Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1 cannot be associated with the conserved Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments, they were the result of its position inside the basket relative to other manuscripts. The color plate of Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1 is provided courtesy of the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation. The black and white plate is courtesy of the National Museum of Asian Art.

2. Zidanku Silk Manuscript 2. The reconstruction is based on my forensic examination of all Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments at the Sackler Gallery in October 2007, as conserved in the plexiglass pieces, and on the digitized images produced by the Department of Conservation and Scientific Research of the Freer and Sackler Galleries. Plates are arranged in the sequence of my reconstruction. The content of Zidanku Silk Manuscript 2 treats the *wuxing* 五行 “five agents” and related *shiling* 時令 “seasonal ordinances,” providing information about favorable and unfavorable activities during the twelve months of the year. There is no evidence of a title. I assign the title *Wuxing ling* 五行令 (Ordinances of the five agents) based on content. Plates are provided courtesy of the National Museum of Asian Art.

3. Zidanku Silk Manuscript 3. Like Zidanku Silk Manuscript 2, this is a reconstruction based on the Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments. Plates are arranged in the sequence of my reconstruction. The content of Zidanku Silk Manuscript 3 treats the four directions, providing information about favorable and unfavorable circumstances for both attacking and defending city walls. There is no evidence of a title. I assign the title *Gongshou zhan* 攻守占 (Divination for attack and defense) based on content. Plates are provided courtesy of the National Museum of Asian Art.

4. Other Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments. Zidanku Silk-Manuscript Fragments that are not assigned to Zidanku Silk Manuscript 2 and Zidanku Silk Manuscript 3 are arranged here. Some fragments may belong to Zidanku Silk Manuscript 2 or Zidanku Silk Manuscript 3, but I have not attempted to place them in the reconstruction of either manuscript. Some fragments undoubtedly belong to a manuscript or manuscripts that I have not been able to identify as manuscript units. Included are four fused masses of fabric from which no further fragments could be removed, two of them mounted in plexiglass in Box 3 and two in open compartments in Box 4. Plates are provided courtesy of the National Museum of Asian Art.

5. Fourteen fragments of the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts that belonged to Shang Chengzuo. The relatively large surviving fragment is now in the collection of the Hunan Provincial Museum. It is reproduced in a color photograph, an infrared photograph, and a hand-drawn facsimile. The photograph of the thirteen lost fragments is also at the Hunan Provincial Museum. Plates are provided courtesy of the Hunan Provincial Museum.

PLATES

(1) Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1: *Sishi ling* 四時令



Fig. 1

Color plate of Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1, photograph provided courtesy of the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation in 2012.

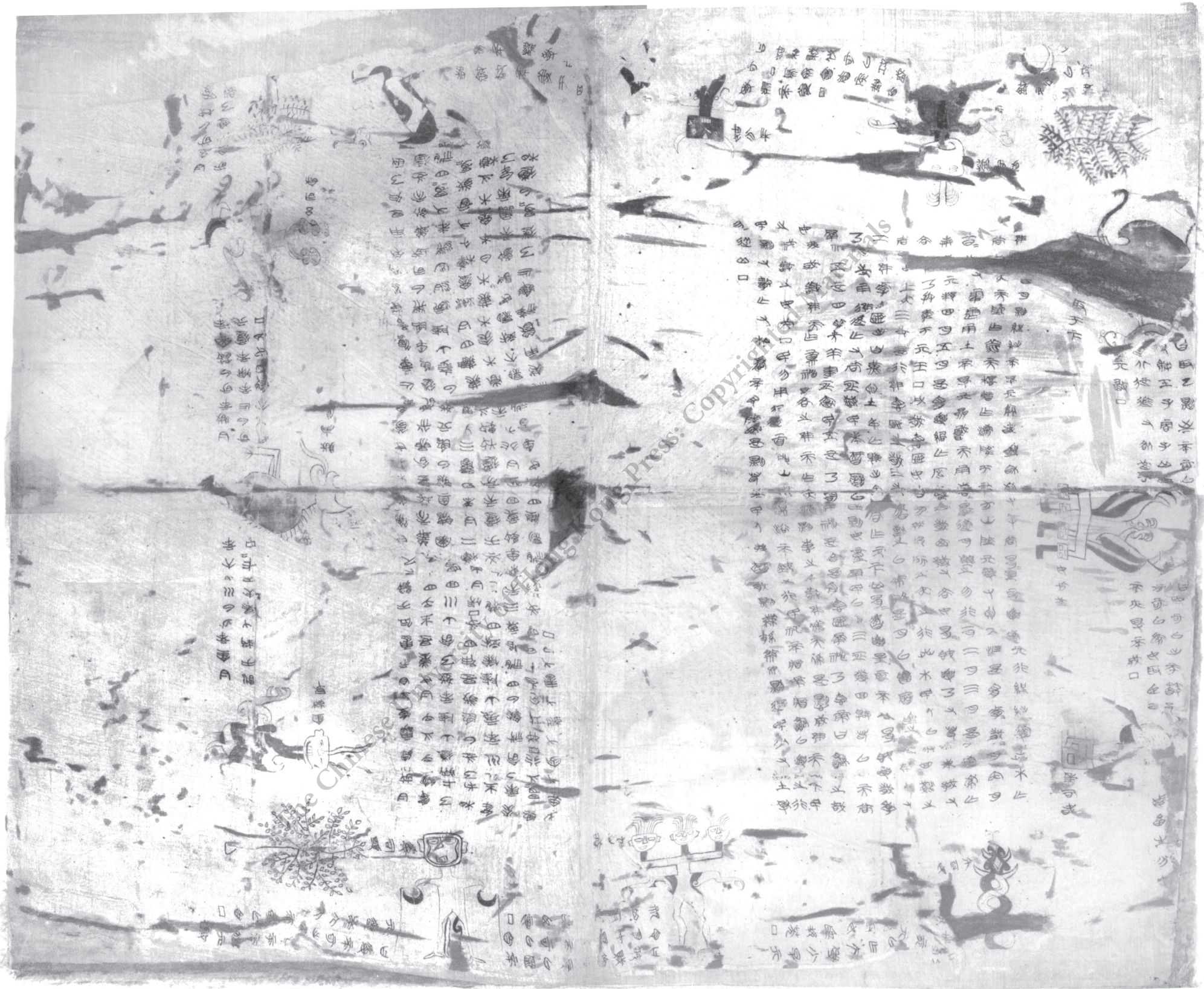


Fig. 2
Black and white plate of Zidanku Silk Manuscript 1, photograph provided courtesy of the National Museum of Asian Art in 2012 (enhanced by Wang Yueqian).

(2) Zidanku Silk Manuscript 2: *Wuxing ling* 五行令



W1.1 (191+67, 71+68, 72, no#, 70, 66a, 34, 66+69+65, 60+58+57+190)