Editions of *Biographies of Women* as Examples of Printed Illustrations from the Ming Dynasty

Michela Bussotti*

Abstract

Three commercial editions of *Lienü zhuan* (Biographies of Women) printed between Huizhou and Nanjing around the year 1600 are illustrated: they offer good examples for understanding the publishing world and the xylographic production of illustrations in Jiangnan at the end of the Ming dynasty. These books are the *Xinjuan zengbu quanxiang pingling gu Lienü zhuan* 新鐫增補全像評林古列女傳 printed by Tang Fuchun 唐富春 in Nanjing, in the late 1580s; the *Gu Lienü zhuan* 古列女傳 published around 1606 also in Nanjing (and/or Huizhou); and an illustrated and enlarged version made at the beginning of the 17th century by the Zhencheng Tang, probably in Huizhou. This article does not attempt an exhaustive bibliographic study of these editions, but concentrates on their printed images and the characteristics of those images, trying to understand what these woodcuts can explain about their conception, production and reception. Moreover, these Ming dynasty works are not isolated examples: they constitute elements of a wider production of images dedicated to the histories of exemplary women in narrative painting and printed illustration, that will continue into the Qing.

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* The author is a research fellow at the French School of Asian Studies.
This article also focuses on two important editions of the last dynasty, which are reproductions of older illustrated versions. They are both included in very important collections: the *Huitu Lienü zhuan* (繪圖列女傳), a reprint included in *Zhibuzu zhai congshu* (知不足齋叢書) by Bao Tingbo (1728-1814) at the end of the 18th century; and the *Xinkan gu Lienü zhuan* (新刊古列女傳) edited by Ruan Fu (1802-?) and included in *Wenxuan lou congshu* (文選樓叢書) (ca. 1825).

**Keywords:** Wood-cut illustrations, publishing, *Lienü zhuan*—Biographies of women, Commercial books, Facsimile editions, Ming dynasty

### 1. Introduction

In the history of the book in China, the end of the Ming dynasty is considered an important moment for both woodcut block printing and illustration. So, it is no surprise that the editions of the *Lienü zhuan* (列女傳—Biographies of women) printed around the year 1600 should be illustrated. It is significant that these editions, made in the same places and sometimes by the same bookshops that published other categories of illustrated works, were produced only in small runs in comparison with other titles printed. This famous anthology of biographies seems to have been a necessary title in booksellers’ catalogs, but it was not a best-seller reprinted every few years by publishers fighting for market, as was the case with some theatrical works, for example, the *Xixiang ji* (西廂記).

In spite of their limited press runs, the three editions of the *Lienü zhuan*

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that will be focused on in this article are representative of the various kinds of woodcut illustrations that readers could also enjoy in other books circulating in Jiangnan 江南 in the Wanli 萬曆 period (especially during the years 1580s-1610). This article will not try to provide an exhaustive bibliographic study of these editions, nor aim to elaborate theoretical argumentation about them. It will concentrate on their illustrations, their similarities and differences, trying to understand what these woodcuts can reveal to us about their conception and production, and eventually about their reception and consumption. Moreover, these illustrations constitute representative examples of a wider production of images dedicated to the stories of exemplary women. In the next pages we shall examine one edition made in Nanjing 南京 in the late 1580s, another published around 1606 between Huizhou 徽州 and Nanjing, and a third publication made in Huizhou, probably a few years later by an unknown publisher, and reprinted during the Qing dynasty. However, let us begin by looking at a fourth xylographic edition of the anthology, made during the Qing dynasty but reproducing an older model, which will allow us to understand better the history and the importance of the Lienü zhuan 連女傳 illustrations through the ages.

2. The Transmission of the Tradition

... Duke Ling of Wei 衛靈公 (r. 534-493 B.C.) is sitting in front of a small screen, the lady in the household of Qi 漁室女 (4th century B.C.)2 is leaning against a wooden pillar; screen and pillar are identical to the Gu painting: no detail is missing.

These are the words of Ruan Yuan (阮元, 1764-1849),3 quoted by his son

2 These two biographies are in chapter three, on the “Benevolent and wise women” (Renzhi tu 仁智圖). For good quality reproductions of these images, see the online copy at http://etext.virginia.edu/chinese/lienu/browse/Lienu.html; on the same website, you can consult the complete text of postfaces commented on in these pages.

3 若衛靈公所坐之矮屏，漁室女所倚之木柱，皆與顧圖中相似，而無所損。See also Ruan Yuan, Yanjing shiji 揚經室集, Sibu congkan 四部叢刊 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1919).
Ruan Fu 阮福 (1802-?) in the postface from the year 1825 (Daoguang 5 道光五年) to the *Xinkan gu Lienü zhuan* 新刊古列女傳 (Ancient biographies of women, newly published), included in the *Wenxuan lou congshu* 文選樓叢書 (Collectanea of the literary anthology tower). The writer is commenting on details of some of the illustrations in the book. These particular words point to the long history of the subject matter and rendition of these and other images and, coming from so prominent an authority, they sound like corroboration of the authentic transmission of an original painted work through the printed medium. As is well documented, images and words were associated from the beginning of the history of biographies of women: the *Lienü zhuan* of Liu Xiang 劉向 (79-6 B.C.E.) is described in the *Hanshu* 漢書 as including eulogies and images. Moreover, as reported in other texts, not only did he and his son Liu Xin 劉歆 (?-23 C.E.) organize and verify the anthology of bibliographies of women into seven categories, but the texts also testify with didactic force to the existence of painted screens depicting those stories. Some woodcuts or painted images have survived down to the present in funerary contexts, confirming the diffusion of this category of edifying representation.

This provides a background to the painting attributed to the famous Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (*zi* 字Changkang 長康, *xiaozhi* 小字Hutou 虎頭, ca. 344-406) or its copies, and consequently a background to the xylographic edition with

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5 Liu Xiang, *Qiluë bielu* 七略別錄, p. 11a, in *Shumu leibian* 書目類編 (Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1978), vol. 1, p. 33: this quotation is reproduced in the Ruan Fu postface.
6 We can recall the famous Wuliang ci 武梁祠 or the screen found in the tomb of Sima Jinlong 司馬金龍 (d. 484).
7 This subject is huge and should be reserved for specialists in paintings. Cf. an early article by Jin Weinuo 金維諾 ("Gu Kaizhi de yishu chengjiu" 顧愷之的藝術成就), *Wenwu* 文物 (1958.6):
illustrations attributed to him.

The question of the truth about the Gu work, of the similarities between the painting that has survived until today and the printed images in the book, has been already discussed in other studies, but three points must be remembered here. The 1825 edition is a work conceived in the era of *kaozheng* (textual criticism school) studies and is included in a “collection” (*congshu* 叢書) typical of the end of the Qing. We can also recognize the *kaozheng* influence in the numerous bibliographic texts concerning the transmission of the ancient book model of this anthology or other associated editions. The way the writers of the prefaces speak about illustrations is also very significant: giving in part the sources of their quotations, they try to retrace step by step the transmission of illustrations to justify their decision to reproduce them. Finally, by looking at the book itself, we can recognize the sincerity of the conclusion of Ruan Fu’s statement concerning its fidelity to the ancient model, even down to the Chinese characters considered to be incorrect by other scholars and emended in other editions. Leafing through the book, it is clear that some of the choices made for the page layout (like the decorative motifs or the black cartouche in the index pages) imitate an ancient publication. Testifying to its being an effort

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8 For example, the article by Miyamoto Masaru 宮本勝, “Retsujoden no kanpon oyobi shōzu ni tsuite” 列女傳の刊本及び頌圖について, *Hokkaidō Daigaku bungakubu kiyō* 北海道大学文学部紀要 32 (1983.1): 6-7.

9 This edition shares the same model as the *Gu Lienü zhuan* 古列女傳 of Gu Guangqi 顧廣圻 (1776-1835) and Gu Zhikui 顧之逵 (1753-1797) from 1796; numerous texts discussing its problematic transmission exist, e.g. by Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1584-1664), Qian Zeng 錢曾 (1629-after 1699), Qian Daxin 錢大昕 (1728-1804), Jiang Gao 蔣杲 (1683-1731), Huang Bilie 黃丕烈 (1763-1825), and are included in the Gu Zhikui and Ruan Fu publications or in other works.

10 See the differences in Huang Luzeng’s 黃魯曾 edition of 1552, or the Gu family facsimile of ca. 1796.
to provide a faithful reproduction of the past, this book includes other elements, namely seals and calligraphic forms, which confirm the tastes and theoretical orientations of its editor.\(^{11}\)

Reading the postfaces by Ruan Fu and Jiang Fan 江藩 (1761-1831), written five years apart (1825 and 1820), it is worth noting that both stress the importance of the illustrations and of their attribution. They are obliged to argue in support of their assertions because they contradict the opinion expressed in one of the older prefaces to the *Lienü zhuan*: Wang Hui 王回 (1023-1065) explains in a preface dated 1063 (Jiayou 8嘉祐八年), also reproduced in Ruan Fu’s edition, that the illustrations were incomplete (only two chapters) and probably made by “non-professional” artists.\(^{12}\) Jiang Fan justifies the attribution of the illustrations on the basis of his direct knowledge of a “copy by Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254-1322)” of the *Renzhi tu* 仁智圖 (Benevolent and wise women) by Gu.\(^{13}\) Ruan Fu writes about Han dynasty screens as a source of inspiration for Gu Kaizhi. Although he admits that the original works by Gu have disappeared, he recalls that at the end of the Song (1225), a Mr. Wang from Xin’an 新安 could still see an incomplete scroll of this painting.\(^{14}\) He also quotes Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1104-1162)\(^{15}\) and a passage from the *Huashi* 畫史 (History of painting) by Mi Fu 米芾 (1051-1107):

\(^{11}\) On this subject and other questions presented in this first section, see my article “La *Nouvelle édition des anciennes biographies des femmes*. Notes de lecture sur une édition illustrée du XIX\(^e\) siècle,” *Journal Asiatique* 292 (2004.1-2): 223-277.

\(^{12}\) Cf. in the Wang Hui introduction to the 1825 edition, “Gu Lienü zhuan xu” 古列女傳序, p. 2b: 直秘閣呂紹叔、集賢校理蘇子容、象山令林次中，皆言嘗見《母儀》、《賢明》四卷於江南人家。其畫為古佩服，而各題其頌像側。然崇文及三君北遊諸藏書家，皆無此本。不知其傳果向之頌圖歟，抑後好事者據其頌取古佩服而圖之於歟，莫得而考已.


\(^{14}\) See also Sun Chengze 孫承澤, *Gengzi xiaoxia ji* 倚子銷夏記, *Xuegu zhai Jinshi congshu* 學古齋金石叢書, 1904, juan 8, p. 26.

“Nowadays members of the literati collect Tang dynasty copies of the Lienü tu by Gu Kaizhi, and this subject is carved [in blocks] to make [decoration for] fans.”¹⁶

Matching these statements to the more recent texts by Qian Zeng 錢曾 and Ruan Yuan,¹⁷ and following the logic of Ruan Fu’s “methodical” argumentation, it seems fairly certain that during the Song dynasty some publishers printed the prototype edition with illustrations above the text (shangtu xiawen 上圖下文) that were similar to those in the Gu Kaizhi scroll. Although Ruan decided to keep these illustrations in his edition, the opposite choice was made by his near contemporaries Gu Zhikui 顧之逵 and Gu Guangqi 顧廣圻 who, for their Gu Lienü zhuan 古列女傳 (1796), decided to suppress these “superfluous images,” unacceptable elements introduced, in their opinion, by the authors of the edition supposed to have been printed during the Song dynasty.¹⁸ On the other hand, on the title page of the Ruan family edition we find the phrase “the Lienü zhuan painted by Gu Hutou” 顧虎頭畫列女傳; at the beginning of the index page we are told that the work was “illustrated by the High Commander Administrator of Jin, Gu Kaizhi” 晉大司馬參軍顧愷之圖畫.

On the same frontispiece page, we read that the original edition was published by the Yu family during the Southern Song Dynasty (南宋余氏本); for this reason, the Ruan Fu book is regarded as a facsimile of a Southern Song edition. From numerous statements and seals reproduced inside the

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¹⁷ For Ruan Yuan, see note 3. See also Qian Zeng, Dushu mingqiu ji 讀書敏求記, juan 2, included in Congshu jicheng chubian, p. 56.

¹⁸ See the Chongke gu Lienü zhuan ba 重刻古列女傳跋, written in 1796 by Gu Zhikui (from an original copy conserved in Beijing, Palace Museum Library) which says: 余氏本上方有圖，首題虎頭將軍畫。然據王回序則呂縉叔等所見圖乃止《母儀》、《賢明》二傳。後並無從更得。今此圖蓋余氏所補繪耳，無容贅為摹刻也。
volumes,¹⁹ we learn that the editor is Yu Jing’an 余靖庵 (Yu Zhi’an 余志安?) from Jian’an 建安 in Fujian, whose bookshop (Qinyou Tang 勤有堂) was active during the Yuan dynasty.²⁰ The fact that this model was ultimately less ancient than people believed in the past is obviously an important subject for bibliographic study,²¹ but it does not matter too much for the present analysis. Clearly illustrations to the Lienü zhuan did exist in manuscript books during the Northern Song, and they survived in xylographic form three centuries after being recorded by Wang Hui. The Yu family model, of the first part of the 14th century, was probably a Jianyang 建陽 publication of good quality, marking a difference from the common idea of “cheap and rough imprints” often associated with this kind of production. More widely, we can guess at a wide diffusion of these images “reproduced and multiplied” on objects like the fans mentioned in Mi Fu’s text.

The transmission of motifs did not proceed exclusively from painting to printing, but also, as often happened in xylographic production all over the world,²² from one printed book to another. For example, the similarity between the portrait of King Wu 武 of Chu 楚 (740-689) in the Lienü zhuan and that in the Kaogu tu 考古圖 (Illustrated catalog of antiquities, 1092) has already been

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¹⁹ I consulted an original copy preserved in Paris, at the Library of the I.H.E.C. (Institut des hautes études chinoises), and the facsimile reproductions included in Congshu jicheng (Shanghai, 1936; Taipei, 1966) and Baibu congshu jicheng 百部叢書集成 (Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1967).

²⁰ This bookshop was active during the first half of the 14th century. For this book, supposedly Yu Zhi’an’s Qingyou Tang, see also L. Chia, Printing for Profit: The Commercial Publishers of Jianyang, Fujian, 11th-17th Centuries (Cambridge: Harvard Asia Center Publications Program, 2002), p. 113 and note 22, p. 351.

²¹ Zhang Tao 張濤, “Liu Xiang Lienü zhuan de banben wenti” 劉向列女傳的版本問題, Wenxian 文獻 41 (1989.3): 249-257. This article is a good bibliographical study especially on the Wenxuan lou congshu 文選樓叢書 edition and the older copies, except on this point: the author does not express any doubt about the Song date for the Ruan Fu model copy.

pointed out. We can also suppose some influence on later imprints, like the *Dijian tushuo* (Illustrated Arguments in the Mirror of the Emperors) of the Ming dynasty. In this work, the compilers of the biography of King Jie of the Xia dynasty illustrate his inclination to luxuries with the image of a “Jiuchi roulin 酒池肉林” (wine pool and meat forest). This Ming imprint seems to associate the “Jiuchi 酒池” (wine pool) and the “Roulin肉林” (meat forest) themes that are also present in the *Lienü zhuan*: they form the first illustrations in the section on depraved women (*niebi* 僭嬖), presenting Moxi 末喜 and Daji 妲己 [figs. 1, 2] whose bad behavior contributed to the fall of the last emperors, Jie and Zhou 紂, of the Xia and the Shang dynasties. We should not forget that all these works have “Palace connections,” which can perhaps explain their mutual influences; they were produced in that context or were preserved in imperial collections at least for some time.

23 This was pointed out a century ago, by Berthold Laufer, in *Jade: A Study in Chinese Archaeology and Religion* (Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History, 1912), pp. 281-285. For a reproduction of the portrait of King Wu in the Yuan print of *Kaogu tu* (ca. 1395), see Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸, *Zhongguo gudai muke huashi lüe* (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2006), p. 30.

24 See Lin Li-chiang 林麗江, “The Creation and Transformation of Ancient Rulership in the Ming Dynasties (1368-1644) – A look at the *Dijian tushuo* (Illustrated Arguments in the Mirror of the Emperors)” in D. Kuhn & H. Stahl, eds., *Perceptions of Antiquities in Chinese Civilization* (Heidelberg: Edition forum, 2008), pp. 321-359 and fig. 4. In the *Dijian tushuo*, the boat floats in the wine pool, as it is also described in the Moxi biography in the *Lienü zhuan*: “there was a pool of wine where a boat could move…” (爲酒池可以運舟); other sentences in the anthology match the depictions in the 1825 illustrations.

25 In the Moxi biography, we read: “at the beat of the drum, three thousand people were drinking as oxen, with their heads in the pool of wine…” (一鼓而牛飲者三千人 [羈] 其頭而飲者于酒池) [fig. 1]; in the Da Ji biography, it is written: “a pool of wine, and a forest of hanging meat” (流酒為池懸肉為林) [fig. 2].

26 Regarding the “model” copy of the 1825 *Lienü zhuan* kept in the imperial palace: see my article ‘*La Nouvelle édition des anciennes biographies des femmes*, pp. 258-264. The *Dijian tushuo* was presented at court by Zhang Juzheng 張居正 (1525-1562); see Lin Li-chiang, “The Creation and Transformation of Ancient Rulership in the Ming Dynasties,” or Julia K. Murray, *Mirror of Morality: Chinese narrative illustration and Confucian ideology* (Honolulu: University of
With regard to the Ruan family publication, we should stress once again that among the people responsible for the reproduction of images was a woman, Ruan Fu’s sister Jilan (福九妹季蘭), along with some anonymous block carvers, and that this book can be seen as a product of “traditional” publishing activity. From the point of view of the history of books, it was edited and printed using woodblocks by a private (non professional) individual at a time when this system was in its final days and would be confronted in a few decades by very different kinds of publication, both in content and medium, like, for example, the *Jingying xiaosheng chuji* (镜影箫声初集, Mirror reflections and flute sounds, first collection) printed from copperplate in 1887. Thus, from some points of view, the 1825 book is also a “memento of the past,” part of a very authoritative tradition, whose paratexts reveal information about ancient representations of women. However, other illustrated editions of the *Lienü zhuan* had already been produced by private (commercial) publishers in the few decades around 1600, when illustrated books increased the choices available to readers in Jiangnan. How did their editors, publishers, and illustrators manage to capture the attention of readers in the commercial society of the Ming dynasty?

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27 See Katherine Carlitz, “The Social Uses of Female Virtue in Late Ming Editions of *Lienü zhuan*,” *Late Imperial China* 12.2 (1991.12): 123-124, note 31; Bussotti, “La Nouvelle édition des anciennes biographies des femmes,” p. 265. Almost at the same time (1837, Daoguang 道光), another edition of the *Lienü zhuan* was produced, in whose production a woman played an important role: the annotated edition by Liang Duan 梁端 (列女傳校注七卷, Lienü zhuan, Seven Volumes). It is interesting to note that a copy of the book, damaged in the Xianfeng 咸豐 period (1851-1861), was emended and completed on the basis of the Wenxuan Lou publication and finally reprinted (in 1874, Tongzhi 同治十三年); see online material from the Institute for Research in Humanities of Kyoto University and the Kanseki database (http://kanji.zinbun.kyoto-u.ac.jp/db-machine/kansekitenkyo/FA019705/0124022_003482.htm).


29 On this subject, see the authoritative works of Craig Clunas: *Superfluous Things* (Cambridge:
3. Between Huizhou and Nanjing: Huang Jiayu’s *Gu Lienü zhuan*[^30]

This edition of “Ancient biographies of women,” including a preface composed in 1606 by the editor Huang Jiayu 黃嘉育 (hao号 Huaiying 懷英 of Xindu 新都, ancient name of Huizhou), was written by Wang Qilan 汪其瀾 (hao Zhongguan 仲觀). It is not the oldest illustrated *Lienü zhuan* from the Wanli period, but is connected to the 1825 publication discussed above in the similarity of their texts. Both present 124 biographies: all chapters have 15 biographies (except the first, which has only 14,[^31] and the final chapter, which adds 20 biographies). This is explained in the introduction by Huang, who points out the changes in the structure of the book since those made by Cao Dagu 曹大家 (or Ban Zhao 班昭, first century C.E.). Huang Jiayu’s introduction is not a formal text, with sources for quotations, as would be the case later in the texts associated with the Qing editions we quoted in the previous section. It includes some dubious characters and numerous allusive comments. This text is in the form of a dialog, beginning with a reference

[^30]: This work has been widely diffused in the facsimile version included in the *Sibu congkan*. In this reprint, the frontispiece page, Ming preface, and name of the block carver are missing. This illustrated version of the *Lienü zhuan* is also well known in Japan through the various local editions made during the second half of the 17th century, after 1653; numerous copies are listed in the Kanseki database, showing (Ming) Hu Wenhuang 胡文煥 as collator and Huang Xizhou 黃希周 as compiler. I could verify a copy dated to 1653 (Jōō 2), including “New supplements” (*Xinxu Lienü zhuan*) from 1654 (Jōō 3) at the Library of Tōyō Bunko (II 10 A 801); Hu is the collator (jiao 校) of the first part, and the name of Huang appears as compiler (ji 輯) in the second part, which has no illustrations and brings together other texts from different sources.

[^31]: The history of the “Mother of Shi from Lu” (*Lu Shishi mu* 魯師氏母) is missing; see Zhang Tao, “Liu Xiang Lienü zhuan de banben wenti”: 252. The history of a mother of the Shi family from Lu (魯師, 春姜者, 魯師氏之母也) is included in chapter 541 of the *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 (Wenyuan ge siku quanshu dianziban 文淵閣四庫全書電子版).
to the Prince of Linchuan (临川王，alias Liu Yiqing 刘義慶，403-444) and the supposed connections between his work and that of Liu Xiang. Huang explains that, even if the last biographies in the collection were not written by Liu Xiang or do not include the eulogies by Liu Xin, these texts still conform to the original pattern of the anthology and so they can be associated with the famous Han author; all in all, these histories of women provide examples for the education of children at different stages of life.

Huang writes that the illustrations are anonymous, and that they present elements conforming to the past as well as to current taste in dresses, hairpins and so on. This contrasts with other comments about the earlier illustrations, which always stress a respect for antiquity. The difference in judgment may be understood as the result either of different interests and values on the part of the authors of these texts, or the fact that in his introduction Huang may have been talking about a different model-book. Huang mentions the “Painting on the Manifestation of Hell” (Diyu bianxiang tu 地獄變相圖) by Wu Daozi 吳道子 (8th century): a work that harsh officials were known to use as a resource in deciding on punishments. In quoting it, he thereby demonstrates his concern with its meaning and utilitarian function, and not with the artistic value of the painting. Neither in this introduction, nor in any other part of the book, is the work of Gu Kaizhi mentioned. On this point, the words of Huang’s statement

32 The Shishuo xinyu (世說新語, New Account of Tales of the World) has been traditionally associated with a lost work of Liu Xiang, the Shishuo (世說, Tales of the World).

33 Cf. Wang Hui, “Gu Lienü zhuan xu,” already quoted at note 12 above. Wang reports the experiences of Lü Xiaqing 呂夏卿, Su Song 蘇頌 (zi Zirong 子容, 1020-1101) and Lin Dan 林旦 (zi Cizhong 次中, jinshi in 1057) who, in Jiangnan, saw the two sections Mary “Exemplary mothers” and Xianming “Wise and enlightened women” (juan 4) “[as characterized] by their respect for antiquity.” Later Qian Qianyi, relating Qian Gongfu’s 錢功甫 words, says “[...] When Su Zirong [Su Song] saw the old copy belonging to the Jiangnan family, [the design] reflected admiration of antiquity.” 蘇子容嘗見舊本于江南人家，其 [畫] 為古佩服。見錢功甫, “Ba Lienü zhuan” 跋列女傳, Muzhai you xueji 牧齋有學集 (in Zhongguo gudian wenxue congshu 中國古代文選叢書, Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1996) p. 1519. The character pei 珀 (for pei 佩?) is in the original calligraphic introduction from the Ming dynasty.
do not go against those of Wang Hui during the Song. Wang Hui’s introductory text is reproduced in the opening pages of this 1606 book along with the other Song dynasty introduction, by Zeng Gong 曾鞏 (1019-1083); both of them are written in cursive calligraphy.34

In the book itself, full-page images alternate with texts (and eulogies). Although there is a lack of discussion on this point, the 1606 illustrations sometimes show revealing analogies with the “facsimile of the Southern Song edition” by Ruan Fu. For example, the poses of the figures in the illustrations to the first chapter presenting the daughters of Yao 堯 married to Shun 舜 (Youyü erfei 有虞二妃) share similarities. On the left, the sisters Nüying 女英 and Ehuang 娥皇 are standing, with Shun’s mother sitting between them; meanwhile, on the right side, Shun is also standing with a tablet in his hands; his father is sitting to his side. The arrangement and positions of the five persons are absolutely the same in the two images printed in 1606 and 1825 [figs. 3, 4]; a small table is also depicted in the center of both the scenes. Even if other elements in the 1606 version (for example, the flowers and the lingzhi 靈芝 in the vases, or the wooden window) reflect current taste, it is difficult to suppose that such close similarities could exist by chance. In the same way, even if the illustrators of the biography of the Mother of Zifa of Chu (Chu Zifa mu 楚子發母) in Huang Jiayu’s edition placed the woman under a sophisticated pavilion with a wooden balustrade, mother and son preserve the same disposition in space as in the Ruan Fu illustrated book, which justifies our thinking that an older illustration could have been copied. Other pictures of groups show the same number of figures in the two editions, unlike other versions of the Lienü zhuan where many fewer figures have been retained in illustrations to the same biographies.35

34 After the three introductions, the book includes “small introductions,” one for each section, and an unsigned note of ca. 1214, that is in fact by Cai Jì 蔡臘.

35 This is the case with the “Three Mothers of Zhou” (Zhoushi sanmu 周室三母), where both illustrations show group images; they contrast with Huang Jiayu’s introduction, where he prefers to talk only of the “prenatal instruction” (taijiao 胎教) of Queen Mother Tairen 太任, for the
However, when we look at the few biographies always quoted in the reconstruction of the ties between the so-called “Southern Song Yu edition” and the Gu Kaizhi painting illustrating chapter three of the “Benevolent and wise women,” we see that between the 1606 and 1825 woodcuts there is no similarity at all, if we exclude the presence of a screen behind Duke Ling of Wei (except that in the Ming illustration, this screen is bigger, and the people are no longer sitting on the floor).

Finally, if we compare the images of the notorious depraved women, we see that in 1606, Moxi is depicted as sitting in a boat [fig. 5]. This most likely represents her last trip to Nanchao 南巢 Island, when, at the moment of the dynastic change from Xia to Shang, she was a fugitive with Jie, and not in a boat in the pool of wine described in the same biography (referred to earlier; see note 25). The deposed sovereign is not represented, however. The original message of the illustrations [figs. 1, 2] discussed in the preceding section is missing. Nothing indicates to an uninformed reader that this is not simply an elegant lady’s ordinary, poetic excursion on a river, but a dramatic event reputed to have changed the course of history. In the biography of Daji, the female protagonist is not even in the picture, which simply shows the moment preceding the death of Zhou 紂 [fig. 6].

future King Wen 文王. For other similar illustrations in these books see L. Raphals, Sharing the Light: Representations of Women and Virtue in Early China (Albany: State University of New York press, 1998), pp. 131, 134.

36 See the beginning of section 2, and the note below.

37 The illustration of this biography of the “Wife of Duke Ling of Wei” (Wei Ling furen, 衛靈夫人) has a very similar composition to that of “Queen Man of King Wu of Chu” (Chu Wu Deng Man 楚武鄧曼), with the typical high walls in zig-zag form separating the street from the private house space. King Wu of Chu is also sitting in front of a screen, but there is no further resemblance to the figures illustrated in previous versions of the Lienü zhuan or Kaogu tu. In the thirteenth illustration of chapter three, “Lady in the Household of Qi in the state of Lu” (Lu Qishi nü 魯漆室女), the pillar supposed to support the woman, shocked at learning the problems of the state, has been suppressed.

38 See above, notes 24 and 25. The last trip to the southern island is presented in the biography of Moxi: when Tang expelled Jie, he and his favorite concubine were in a single boat floating on the
half of the illustrations to this chapter, being replaced by men: it seems that the authors of the *Gu Lienü zhuan* felt that these negative examples of females should not be represented, even if in his introductory text Huang explains the decision to keep them in the volume (perhaps considering that their presence serves to emphasize the good examples by contrast).

In other chapters, the numerous biographies relating violent stories of suicide and self-mutilation clearly suggest what is happening in the illustrations, showing weapons in the hands of the delicate ladies or pennants of fire. However, the actual dramatic moments are not depicted. Thus, we cannot talk of the incompetence of the anonymous illustrators in this special category of representations, but rather of a deliberate decision to avoid pandering to the “voyeurism” of readers, unlike the depictions in other versions of *Lienü zhuan* discussed below or in numerous other pictures from the Wanli period.

On the other hand, the illustrators do prove their skill in representing space and time. They build up a precise distinction between the inner spaces of the residence, where a virtuous woman has to remain, and the external world: the separating wall also permits them to represent quite convincingly two simultaneous actions on the same page.39 Looking at some images in detail, we also see that these walls are white and high, making it impossible to see into the building; doors are most often closed. The walls are also often shown as zigzagged: this element is also present in the Ruan family’s book illustrations. In that case, the walls are low and situated at the back of the scene: they do

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not have the function of structuring the picture and showing different spaces (external – internal, far – near, public – private). Other interesting details connected to architecture in the prints of around 1606 are the high and complex system of superposed wooden carpentry supporting the roofs of palace, and the numerous screens, pavilions, and balustrades. These last elements are often very refined, to the point of becoming “artificial.”

In most cases, they remind the readers that the scene is not going on in a natural open space, but in a garden or in a place defined by human activities, as was often the case in contemporary illustrations.

The choices made by the illustrator are sometimes highly symbolic, as is the case of the “Widow Taoying of Lu” (Lugua Taoying 魯寡陶嬰, the thirteenth biography of chapter four, Zhenshun zhuan 貞順傳, “Chaste and obedient women”), a young widow who took care of her children by herself, refusing to marry again and explaining her choice in a song. In this woodcut [fig. 7], she is alone, with many symbols of a good and educated woman close by: writing utensils, which probably can be used by her sons, are on the table near the screen; the spindle is in her hands, as it is in the “Southern Song edition” facsimile. The background, unlike that in the “older” image, is not a house, but a garden. Leaves are falling – this detail is enough to make us feel the chill of loneliness. Faced with illustrations of this kind, readers really had to know the plot of the stories to understand their meaning. If they did not know the story, they could turn the page and read the biography written on the back of the picture, but no punctuation marks or annotations were given to help them understand the text. From the use of baiwen 白文 and the limits imposed on sensationalist representations, we may deduce that the authors were targeting a fairly educated audience, even if we should not exclude a certain degree of “mimicry” (presenting the publication as one for buyers who would like to be considered “educated”). Nor should we forget the gap that always exists between the readers envisaged by authors and publishers, and the ones who

40 Ibid., pp. 140-141.
actually buy their books.

As we look at the illustrations to the *Gu Lienü zhuan*, the prevailing ideas and impressions are those of harmony and unity, but also of orthodoxy and repetition. These woodcuts are typical of those years (the beginning of the 17th century) and of the “Hui school” (*Huipai* 徽派): highly finished details, relatively small human figures, and, sometimes, an allusive role for nature.

On the other hand, this edition stands alone in that its motifs are repeated so often as to become pictorial clichés. All the images bear strong resemblances to each other, but it is difficult to associate them precisely with any other xylographic works of the time, as is sometimes the case for other illustrations from that period. Is this the result of the absence of a well known painter in the illustrator teams, unlike the case of some near-contemporary publications that have pictures attributed to Ding Yunpeng 丁雲鹏 (1547-1628)? Is it the fact that the depiction of nature, whether landscapes, plants, or rocks, is not so developed as in other illustrated works [fig. 8]? In fact, in this *Gu lienü*

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41 By “Hui school” works I mean those woodcut illustrations produced by people of Huizhou in or outside Huizhou, or other illustrations calqued on Hui works.

42 The best examples of representations of landscape are in some illustrations of the *Pipa ji* 琵琶記, printed by Rongyu Tang 容與堂 in Hangzhou some years later: see Bussotti, *Gravures de l’école de Hui*, pp. 206, 366.


44 Cf. Other anthologies of feminine histories, which are different from each other but that, to my mind, represent an “advanced” step in representing nature. The *Nüfan bian* 女範編 [fig. 8] is a private edition famous for its red and black printing from the first years of the 17th century, presenting human figures of medium size and paying great attention to the representation of natural elements: they can have a central place, as in the illustration of “The mother of Wang Ling” (Wang Ling mu 王陵母), where the rock, holding the signature (possibly of the block carver), is the most important element and draws the attention of the observer more than does the famous lady of the late Han dynasty who is going to commit suicide (see original in Taipei, National Central Library, and below in this article). The history of the publication of the *Guifan* 閩範, including at least one illustrated edition in the Wanli period, is complex. Cf. Carlitz, “The Social Uses of Female Virtue in Late Ming Editions of Lienü zhuan”; see also the text in the facsimile published by Shanghai guji chubanshe (1994). As an example concerning our study, I
the process of reducing the height of the human figures is already under way, but the reproduction of typical features of painting and the representation of a pictorial touch through the xylographic medium is not yet completely developed. This limits the extent of possible allusions to painting and some common reference that could be shared by other xylographic creations [figs. 9, 10].

In comparison with other anthologies of biographies, these Gu Lienü zhuan woodcuts constitute an intermediary item as illustrated imprints and a “closed corpus,” despite their apparent resemblance to other publishing products. They also represent an actual “closed world,” a society of women confined inside the house with high walls, suitable to all the requirements of their status and behavior. Is it this form of seclusion that made the representation of the space used for Gu Lienü zhuan illustrations convenient also for such prints as the “Visitation” scene, included in a publication in Chinese by missionaries probably made in Nanjing around 1624, the Song nianzhu guicheng 誦唸珠規程 (Method for reciting the Rosary)?

Urban will simply point out the importance of trees in the construction of the space in the illustrations to the story of the wife of Bao, born Huan (Bao Huan furen 鮑桓夫人) of the Han dynasty [fig. 9], and of the story of filial piety of a lady of the Tang family giving her breast to feed an old aunt (Tangshi rugu 唐氏乳姑) [fig. 10]. For stories of Tang family ladies in other illustrated anthologies, see Bussotti, “Note su una raccolta illustrata di biografie esemplari,” in Cadonna & Gatti, eds., Cina: miti e realtà (Venice: Cafoscarina, 2000), p. 384, figs. 8, 9.

This is the case for huapu and other related woodcuts in different categories of books; see Bussotti, Gravures de l’école de Hui, pp. 120, 367, 396. See below, the conclusion of this article.

I ask the indulgence of readers for this provocative hypothesis comparing these two books with dissimilar subjects. It is significant, however, that while these works transmit values and beliefs from traditions completely different from each other, in both cases they were restrictive for women. Moreover, both publications had a practical, pedagogic purpose of spreading ancient models and preaching religious beliefs. For the 1624 Song nianzhu guicheng, a copy of which is kept in Paris, at the National Library of France, see Monique Cohen and Nathalie Monnet, Impression de Chine (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1992), p. 110. According to these authors, in the “Visitation” image the house that looks “Chinese” and other details make this illustration similar to those in Chinese illustrated fiction, but I would say that it is even more similar to the
readers in other towns would encounter some images sharing a few similar elements in the illustrated printed fiction of the time, for example in *Shuihu zhuang* 水滸傳, printed in Hangzhou 杭州 in the years 1610 and 1614; but in this case, depictions of houses and gardens become simply the background in images full of action.

A final question to take up in the case of the *Gu lienü zhuan* is the first place of publication. Numerous catalogs say that it is a publication by Wenlin Ge 文林閣 of Tang Jinchi 唐錦池 in Nanjing, with blocks carved by Huang Hao 黃鎬. However, to date I have not seen a copy showing the names of both the carver and the publisher, and I wonder in fact if an earlier edition existed than the one from Nanjing, probably made in Huizhou. On the Wenlin Ge title page [fig. 11], it says that the blocks were originally carved in Xin’an 新安 (ancient name for Huizhou). The Tang workshop is also known for another book with the same origin: a copy of the *Shishang leiyao* 士商類要 (Essentials for Gentry and Merchants) [fig. 12] by Cheng Chunyu 程春宇

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1606 *Gu lienü zhuan*; this impression is caused by the fact that numerous details of the original Western model (see *ibid*. pp. 112, 114) are removed, adding the depiction of a white wall dividing street from garden. This similarity is probably coincidental, arising from the shared geographic place of production of these illustrated works. However, we should not forget that Mary and Elizabeth are, in a totally different context, “exemplary” figures, and a respectable residence was required as the setting of their meeting.

47 Of the 25th generation of Huang from Qiucon 虛村 (Shexian 歙縣); see Liu Shangheng 劉尚恒, *Huizhou keshu yu cangshu* 徽州刻書與藏書 (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2003), p. 228.

48 I was able to consult the following: a copy in the National Library of France, without the Wenlin Ge frontispiece, but including the preface by Huang Jiayu with the name of Huang Hao as the block carver on its first page [fig. 13]; a copy in Beijing, at the National Library, without title page or the introduction by Huang Jiayu and the name of Huang Hao; two copies of the same edition, one in Beijing and the other in Taipei, without the name of the block carver, but including the Wenlin Ge title page. A direct comparison of the first fascicle of the copies in Beijing, shows an important difference in the choices of paper (whiter and of better quality for the copy without the title page); some elements in banxin 版心 make me think that the upper part of frame of the page has been changed in the Wenlin Ge edition kept in Beijing, but not the principal part of the plates. Is it possible that we have two different editions, with re-use of woodblocks by Tang Jinchi?
from Xin’an, with an introduction by Fang Yigui 方一桂 of She 歙 (a district of Huizhou). On the first page of a copy of this work preserved in Japan, we read that the blocks were originally from Xin’an, and the layout of characters on this page exactly matches that of the Gu Lienü zhuan. Tang Jinchi printed and marketed the didactic biographies and the encyclopedic compendium, which, while certainly a book for merchants, is not just a summa of practical advice for them. He also published theatrical works. The surviving titles reveal a situation that raises questions about the hypothesis that certain publishers specialized only in drama texts, sometimes proposed for some of the publication houses in Nanjing at the end of the Ming. Meanwhile, the woodcuts preserved in Wenlin Ge’s books and their titles confirm that the Tang Jinchi workshop was in contact with the milieu of illustrators and block carvers of Huizhou (his patrons employed those people, or bought their blocks, or copied their models).

4. Double-page Illustrated Edition for Market

Two other illustrated editions of Lienü zhuan were produced in the Wanli period. Both are “unorthodox” in the choice of biographies, because


50 As numerous studies have pointed out, it includes notions of history and geography, information for everyday life, and small poems for memorization; see Yang Zhengtai 杨正泰, “Mingdai Huishang bianhui de liangfu luchengtu” 明代徽商編繪的兩幅路程圖, Cao Wanru et al., eds., Zhongguo gudai ditu ji 中國古代地圖集 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1990), pp. 83-85.


52 By virtue of their contents, these editions deserve more detailed study, going beyond the limit of this article. I have chosen to present only their illustrations from a formal point of view, avoiding
they do not correspond to the anthology traditionally attributed to Liu Xiang and its supplement, and both have illustrations in a “double-page” format (shuangmiandu 雙面圖). They are completely independent publishing projects, even if it is possible that some copies of them were perused by the same people who also read the Huang Jiayu publication discussed above, as these books were produced and probably circulated in the Nanjing-Huizhou area.

The publication by Wenlin Ge [fig. 11] was made in Nanjing around twenty years later than the edition by Tang Fuchun 唐富春. In the late 1580s, he published the Xinjuan zengbu quanxiang pingling gu Lienü zhuan 新鐫增補全像評林古列女傳 (New edition of Ancient Biographies of Women, with notes and complements, completely illustrated) in eight chapters. The book covers the six categories of biographies already used by Liu Xiang (the examples of depravity are excluded): each category is repeated twice (first from chapter one to chapter four, again from chapters five to eight). The index includes 103 entries, more than half of them already part of the ancient version of the anthology.

On the first page of chapter one, after the title and the name Liu Xiang, we read the names of Mao Kun (1512-1601) author of supplements (鹿門先生茅坤補), Peng Yang author of notes (肯亭先生彭烊評), Zong Yuan the collator (曉城先生宗原校), and finally the publisher, Tang Fuchun of the Duixi bookshop (對溪書坊唐富春梓). As often in the case of Nanjing

a general discussion of the complete works.

53 A copy is preserved in Beijing, National library of China, without any precise date. This book is reproduced in Zhongguo gudai banhua congkan erbian 中國古代版畫叢刊二編 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1994), vol. 4. It is said that the book was reprinted in 1591 by Wentai Shulin 文台書林 (Yu Xiangdou 余象斗) but I was not to able to find where this edition is kept today. See Miyamoto Masaru, “Retsujoden no kanpon oyobi shōzu ni tsuite,” p. 7.

54 Each chapter contains a different numbers of texts (ch.1: 9; ch. 2: 11; ch.3: 16; ch.4: 9; ch.5: 18; ch.6: 19; ch.7: 12; ch.4: 9), and the categories are represented differently (muyi 母儀: 17 biographies, xianming 賢明: 15, renzhi 仁智: 13, zhenshun 貞順: 20, jieyi 節義: 20, biantong 辯通: 18).

55 For the bookshops of Tang Fuchun, see Zhang Xiumin 張秀民 & Han Qi 韓琦, Zhongguo
publications of that time, Tang Fuchun is “the publisher/printer,” and no names of engravers are given in other pages of the book: he seems to be the person in charge of all the material tasks for this publication, strictly identified with his own workshop; this sets him apart from the other three persons mentioned, who shared the various tasks of the intellectual editorial process. In the previous pages there are two older introductions from the Zhengde 正德 period: one from 1510 (year gengwu 庚午) by Gao Guan 高貫, essentially in praise of the educative content of the book, especially for women (…婦人女子尊是書如六經), and the second from 1521 (year xinsi 辛巳) by Zhang Chongde 張崇德. They testify to the existence of an edition at the beginning of the 16th century, now lost but still mentioned in a catalog from only a century ago, although it is difficult for this author to determine the precise relation between the two editions.

On the back of the title page, the first illustration depicts Nüying 女英 and Ehuang 娥皇 [fig. 14]. It is completely different from the other versions of the same scene [figs. 3, 4], not only by virtue of its bigger format: here the two sisters are in an open space. At the top of each illustration is a four-character title (in this case “The two wise and virtuous wives,” Erfei zhide 二妃智德) and there are longer captions on the two sides. For the first biography, the twenty-eight characters in the border say: “Shun underwent numerous fearful experiences], but he could escape all his troubles; the two wives were often able to give him mutual support. Yao tested [him] in a hundred ways, and Shun together [with the two women] found each solution, and for all he relied on their strong support.” On the following page, the text of the biography is almost the same as that in the 1606 and 1825 editions; the presentation has changed, with punctuation beside the text and commentaries at the top of the columns of characters.

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56 See Fu Zengxiang 傅增湘 (1872-1949), Cangyuan qunshu jingyanlu 藏園群書經眼錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2009), Shibu 史部, p. 282.
are near the tomb of Shun and in the corner there is a river; could this be the Xiang river (Xiangjiang 湘江) where they are going to commit suicide?

In fact, one of the most obvious characteristics of these illustrations is that they provide a more dramatic representation than we see in Huang Jiayu’s edition. Tang’s illustrator(s) sometimes chose to represent the climax of the story, as in the “Principled Woman of the Capital” (Jingshi jienü 京師節女, fig. 16), when the evil man has just beheaded a “filial daughter and faithful wife of Chang’an 長安,” and sometimes the moment just before it. The woodcuts are not as finely cut as they would have been in 1606, but the anonymous Nanjing illustrator (or illustrators) seems to have been asked to represent lively scenes, more narrative and descriptive than “iconic.” These illustrations are typical of Nanjing at the end of the 16th century, featuring large human figures with oval faces, and elements common to other illustrated publications of the Fuchun Tang 富春堂; for example in the Xixiang ji [fig. 18]. Nanjing prints of this kind are sometimes described as products of “inferior quality” compared with the illustrations of a few years later, produced in the same “Hui school” circuit as the 1606 edition: this may explain the abandoning of this particular figurative style during the Wanli period, in favor of a more “refined” design and engraving, which had gained popularity among readers. Clearly a judgment of this kind is somewhat influenced by the idea that

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57 This biography, already present in the section “The Principled and Righteous Women” of the original anthology, is included in chapter seven. An enemy of the husband of the “lady of the capital” has kidnapped her father to oblige her collaboration; at first she seems to accept becoming an accomplice, but in fact she takes the place of her husband during the night and is killed in his place, thus avoiding having to make a choice between her father and her husband.

58 For another example of dramatic action, see the history of “Righteous Nurse of Duke Xiao of Lu,” quoted in note 39.

59 This play includes one page illustrations with captions on the top; fig. 18 reproduces the scene where Zhangsheng 張生 jumps the wall and exchanges Hongniang 紅娘 for Yingying 鶯鶯. We may note the similarity between the horse warriors in the anthology of Lienü zhuan and the image of the brigand Feihu 飛虎 in Xixiang ji; see the facsimile edition of Nan Xixiang ji 南西廂記 in Guben xiqu congkan chuji 古本戲曲叢刊初集 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1954).
a print is “artistically” better when it is finely carved and reproduces painterly elements or qualities.

From this point of view, the illustration of “Wang Ling mu” 王陵母 [fig. 17] in Tang’s publication appears simple, rigid, and somewhat rough when compared with the woodcuts included in Nüfan bian a few years later [fig. 8]. But we may note that in the Tang Fuchun image, where the scene is similar to the illustration included in 1825 edition, no detail is missing: near the man, on the floor, lie an umbrella and a traveler’s bag, signaling that he is the messenger sent by the son to his mother; in her hands, the old lady keeps the sword that she is going to use to kill herself. The action is going on inside a building with a wide open door, and inside the room a pictorial screen is visible in the background; the building has a brick foundation and the upper walls have the same decoration as in the illustration to the “Principled Woman of the Capital” [fig. 16]. This detail is common in older illustrations, but also in contemporary Nanjing and Jianyang imprints. In this case, the wall separates the house visually from the outside, where the villain is running across the grass with his terrible trophy. Exactly as the written story tells, we recognize that the woman went to sleep near the window on the upper floor of the house, taking the place of her husband, and the open bed curtains reveal her inanimate, decapitated body. Moon and stars visible between the leafy branches of a tree confirm that the deed is going on in the dark of the night; readers may wonder if the criminal has already realized the terrible change of victim.

When we consider the complete corpus of the anthology, we see that the Tang Fuchun prints present an unusual number of objects and animals along with the human participants in the action. The illustration to the history of “the Daughter of Shi Wei 史濰 in Liyang” (Liyang Shi nü 滿陽史女), shows this young woman, who refused to be promised in marriage a second time, cutting

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60 For discussion of the importance of the “faithful maiden” in late imperial times and especially during the Ming dynasty, see the recent book by Lu Weijing, True to Her Word: The Faithful Maiden Cult in Late Imperial China (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).
the four characters “heart will not change” (zhongxin bugai 中心不改) into her forehead, as a signal that she is rejecting new marriage proposals. Not only is the image [fig. 20] a scene perfectly “played,” with the daughter sitting to one side, the parents talking on the other side, and a screen depicting a sunny scene in the background, it is also rich in details, including the characters written on her forehead and the objects distributed on the table: a comb, the mirror reflecting the face of the young woman, etc.

Throughout the illustrations, landscapes are present as backgrounds or as the subject of painted screens (in fig. 20, a boat is floating near a rocky bank on the large screen). Some compositions are highly successful in rendering the atmosphere, as in the nocturnal scene in which a lady of the Wang 汪 family, married to Cheng Zi (Cheng Zi zhi qi 程鎡之妻; last biography of chapter seven), is burning incense in a garden for her sick mother-in-law [fig.19]. Some plates do use traditional visual codes, for example in the representation of space and time: there are no houses and zigzag walls to separate various places representing successive moments of the action; stylized clouds, mountains and “lobed” motifs separate spaces in a simpler way – internal and external [fig. 16], near and far [fig. 19] – employing traditional pictorial and filling motifs.

Indeed the fact that the style of Nanjing illustrations came to be neglected for a “finer” one should not engender the implicit judgment that these prints are more sketchy than later ones. Even if it is true that the illustrators and carvers of these blocks did not exploit painterly effects as others did, this does not mean that their illustrations are less “effective” and “legible” than the other ones. The evolution of the preferences of the readership cannot be explained simply by concrete reasons, for example the scarcity of details we feel sometimes when we look at the contemporary simpler shangtu xiawen illustrations. Such preferences follow the volatility of tastes, the requirements of fashion, and the change in style was probably the “invention” of shrewd publishers before it became a demand from spoiled readers. Looking at the woodcuts in Xinjuan zengbu quanxiang pingling gu Lienü zhuan, we should
rather appreciate their graphic nature, the effects obtained by using the contrast of lines, or the association of black and white surfaces, as in the building structures or in the rocks depicted in the night scenes [fig. 19] (see also Xixiang ji [fig. 18]). Such black surfaces would be used a few years later in other illustrated commercial books, such as the Gushi huapu 顧氏畫譜 (Album of paintings by Mr. Gu), with completely different applications.  

Our last example of an illustrated anthology is the Huitu Lienü zhuan 繪圖列女傳 (Illustrated biographies of women), traditionally attributed to a famous painter of the 16th century, Qiu Ying 仇英, and to the Huizhou high official Wang Daokun 汪道昆 (1525-1593), even if there is no evidence to confirm this attribution. The publication dates in fact to the Qing dynasty (1799) but reproduces an older edition (ca. 1600-1610).  

Well known as part of the famous Zhibuzu zhai congshu 知不足齋叢書 and completed in Hangzhou around 1799, the Huitu Lienü zhuan is a “publishing enterprise” that resembles in some respects the Ruan family one we presented at the beginning of this article. Its printing was supported by one of the important bibliophiles of the Empire, Bao Tingbo 鮑廷博 (1728-1814) and his family; once more, this is

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61 Black surfaces, small and large, are employed in pictorial albums printed in Hangzhou to represent particular styles of monochrome paintings, for example landscapes in Mi Fu’s style, or to give the idea of colored surfaces. Some botanical books also include prints with white lines on a dark background. On this point, see Bussotti, “Woodcut Illustration. A General Outline,” pp. 475-476.

62 In Europe, it is possible to consult an original at the British Library. See also the 1991 facsimile edition from the Zhongguo shuidian. The edition from the Qianlong 乾隆 period was already reprinted during the Qing dynasty, for example in 1879 (Guangxu 9 光緒九年). The lapse of time between the two editions is eighty years and the physical form has changed: It is a photolithographic edition of small dimensions in two slim volumes, printed in Shanghai by Dianshi Zhai (光緒五年六月上海點石齋照相石印縮本) and distributed by Shenchang shuhua shi of Shenbao guan (申報館申昌書畫室發兌). The layout is organized in a double register: each page includes two texts and the correlated images are on the opposite page, so a reader can look at two biographies and their illustrations at the same time. The title is also changed in Lidai mingyuan tushuo 歷代名媛圖說 (Illustrated stories of famous ladies of the past dynasties; see the copy in Tōyō Bunko library).
an older book included in a collection to ensure its transmission and diffusion. But the two projects are actually quite different, as this second book was not to be a facsimile edition printed from newly engraved blocks, but a reprint made from old woodblocks that had been in part retouched. It was probably at this time that the attribution of the illustrations to Qiu Ying was introduced, in an inscription carved on the *banxin* (center margin) of the first page of each volume.

The introduction to the *Huitu Lienü zhuan* was written by the scholar Lu Wenchao (1717-1796) of Hangzhou and the calligraphy is by Wang Geng (1717-1796) of Hangzhou and the calligraphy is by Wang Geng. Lu begins his introduction by explaining the importance of the education of women for the family, and consequently for the country, and quoting from the anthology of Liu Xiang and some succeeding works. Elsewhere he says that this anthology, in sixteen chapters with illustrations but without eulogies, was apparently from the Wanli period (1573-1620); it included a number of histories from the Cheng and Wang families of Shexian. It was assembled by Mr. Wang of Xin’an; the name “Wang” introduces the comments at the end of some biographies (in the formula *Wang yue*). In the opinion of the preface writer, this first editor must have been Wang Daokun from Huizhou. Lu also says that finely cut restored woodblocks were made available to his friend Bao Yiwen (1717-1796) of Hangzhou, himself a member of a family originally from Huizhou, and that Bao had bought them at high price;
the original publisher of the Ming dynasty remains unknown.

The more ancient book still exists in an incomplete copy (chapters 3 to 14), mentioning the name Zhencheng Tang 賢誠堂 in each banxin. When we look at the two editions, we can have no doubt that, basically, the wood-blocks used were the same, given their similar details or more obvious analogies. For example, in the Qing reprint, the two halves of the illustration of the women of the Zhang 章 family of She attacked by a tiger [fig. 21] are different (and on no other page in the book does an element stand alone on white background, as is the case here). This discrepancy of representation is even more evident in the Zhencheng Tang book, where the traces of the edges of the wood-block are visible: perhaps it was a reused block. It might be logical to assume that, for the new Qing edition, the publishers could and should have tried to rearrange the two halves of the illustration, but they did not do this. At the beginning of some chapters, the older edition reveals the use of unpolished boards and varying sizes of woodblocks, for example, in the story of the “Wife of Cheng Wenju” (Cheng Wenju qi 程文距妻) at the beginning of chapter six [fig. 22]. This is possibly to be explained by the fact that the first half pages of each chapter were cut separately, unlike the other pages, perhaps to save wood.

Meanwhile, when we compare these Ming and Qing editions, we discover that in the second publication not only are numerous biographies missing (for example the biography just discussed [fig. 22], or the story of a certain Yu Yunxiu 玉韞秀, daughter of Yu Zhongsì 玉忠嗣 of the Tang [fig. 23]), but that commentary texts have been omitted in various places. Other special

64 Preserved at the National Library of China in Beijing. It was part of Zheng Zhenduo’s 鄭振鐸 (1898-1958) collection and bears his stamps (see fig. 22). In his Jiezhong de shuju 劫中得書記 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2006, p. 11), Zheng wrote about three different editions of this book, including a late reprint from Zhibuzu Zhai, and two different incomplete copies from the Ming.

65 I was able to consult the original quoted above, and compared its microfilm with that of a Qing edition preserved in the same library.

66 The result is that most of the chapters of Zhencheng Tang edition are longer than those in the
features of the Ming imprint are the black labels preceding the character yue 曰 at the beginning of each commentary, and the page numbers covered by black ink on some other pages [fig. 24a]. Thus, the Zhencheng Tang book is a very high quality publication as far as paper and fine carving are concerned, but it includes some elements that lead us to judge it a not completely achieved enterprise or a commercial project for which wood-blocks were pre-carved, leaving space for the insertion of an editor’s name [fig. 24b]. Moreover there was probably an intermediary step between the Zhencheng Tang and the Zhibuzu Zhai editions, because the blocks bought by Bao seem to have already included the name of Mr. Wang before the comments.68

In its modern facsimile edition, the Qing version includes a total of 313 biographies (but there were probably more in the first version). As the introduction pointed out, the examples of depraved behavior have been excluded (…删其所為孽嬖…); there is no division in categories; texts are assembled on the basis of periods and family names. In this context, stories already included in Liu Xiang’s anthology become a minority, but the first chapter still opens with the biography of the two wives of Shun, for which the illustrators have chosen to produce a narrative illustration involving quite an insignificant moment [fig. 15]; none of the violence of the story of Shun, who was supported by his wives during the time when members of his own family were trying to kill him, is represented.69 If this was done to conform to

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67 This is at the beginning of chapter 11: the history of the “Mother of Duke Kang of Mi” [Mi Kang gongmu 密康公母], suppressed in the following text of the Qing edition) has also to be pointed out.


69 In the online text from the University of Virginia (cited above, see note 2) we find the translation:
the decision, like that made in the last two imprints, to eliminate all negative examples, it is far from the case in many other illustrations in the volume that represent dramatic and violent moments, one of the salient traits of this anthology.

The violence the reader does not find on the early pages does appear later, and makes this book, with its finely detailed depictions of suffering and sacrifice, a master work of the genre. There are more of this kind of image than in Tang Fuchun’s book, and they show some similarities to the Renjing yangqiu (人鏡陽秋, Historical mirror of the people; around 1600). The illustration to Huitu Lienü zhuan showing Xu Yong’s two concubines (Xu Yong qie 許顒二妾) 70 about to commit suicide [fig. 25] inevitably makes the reader think of the death of the two ancient sisters in the Xiang River in the first biography. Elsewhere there are numerous scenes of violence and self-violence, like the picture showing the cutting off of the arm of Yu Shiyuan’s wife (Yu Shiyuan qi 俞士淵妻) [fig. 26] and other brutal narratives included in chapter 13. 71

The most significant illustration of this type shows the murder of Zhou’s wife (Zhoushifu 周氏婦) [fig. 27]: it is certainly not by chance that the act was perpetrated by Yuan dynasty brigands. 72 It is difficult to be sure whether

“Shun went forth into the fields, wailing and weeping. Daily he cried out to merciful Heaven; he cried out to his father and mother…” (舜往于田號泣，日呼旻天，呼父母).

70 The biography in chapter 16 does not include any details about them apart from the fact that they were born into the Chen 陳 and Niu 牛 families and this happened in Gaoyi 高邑 (Zhending lu 真定路).

71 The scene takes place in Yanzhou 廣州 during the year 13 of the Zhizheng 至正 period (1353). The young woman, born into the Tong 童 family, has both her arms and her nose cut off in protecting the older lady; she would die some days later. Another dramatic event that happened during the same period (year 14 of the zhizheng period, 1354) in Shexian is presented in (Chengshi zhouli 程氏妯娌) [fig. 28].

72 This story is not present in the Zhencheng Tang book I consulted; the homicide happened two years later than the preceding one (year 15 of the zhizheng period, 1355). A beautiful woman, born Mao 毛氏, was married to a Mr. Zhou and escaped into Mayi 麻鷖 mountain with her husband. Brigands wanted to keep her and the chief promised her enormous wealth. Her scornful
images of this kind were attractive to the thrill-seeking readers of the late Ming and might justify the choice made by illustrators and editors, but this prurient element should not be underestimated.\footnote{73} It is also evident, however, that physical sacrifice involving the butchering of the body assumes an important exemplary meaning in this biography.\footnote{74} Meanwhile the historical component of the text prevents the images from being a completely gratuitous representation of cruelty: the protagonists have names and facts are dated, around 1353-1355 [figs. 26, 27].\footnote{75} If the illustration of the death of wife of Zhou [fig. 27] stands out for its violence, comparable stories (and similar images) are shared by different anthologies of exemplary biographies, as with the story of the virtuous daughter Cao E 曹娥 of Han drowned with her father, or the two Dou sisters jumping from the cliffs (Doushi ernu 竇氏二女, 8th century) or, in another refusal made the robber furious, and the woman was killed by disemboweling.

\footnote{73} Even if we are not inclined to a “universalistic” interpretation of images from different cultures, it is not untenable to think that at least those illustrations reproducing pain, death, and sex could be understood by every audience, and be “attractive” at least for some readers, Western as well as Eastern; it is logical that, in the sophisticated market of the Jiangnan region of the end of the Ming, some publishers exploited this taste to get readers.

\footnote{74} In a recent book, T. Brook, J. Bourgon, and G. Blue explain that the more terrible penalties were not evaluated in terms of suffering, but in loss of “somatic integrity”; see Death by a Thousand Cuts (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 2008), p. 11. But it is also evident that the “integrity” of the corpse could be presented as a valuable sacrifice, as in the case of the concubine of Yu Shiyuan [fig. 26] and other biographies of women. See also Bussotti, “Note su una raccolta illustrata...,” pp. 384-385. “Acts of disfiguration” do not always consist of violence inflicted by others; they can be self-inflicted by women to protect their chastity [fig. 20]; see Lu Weijing, True to Her Word, pp. 185-189.

\footnote{75} See on this point the work cited in the previous note, by Brook, Bourgon, and Blue, Death by a Thousand Cuts, p. 240. I believe that multiple meanings coexist in these illustrations: “the violence,” played out in the figurative composition; the historical reality transmitted by texts, probably a deformed reality (the facts are deformed twice: we are confronted with a second-hand literary text and we can not see the anthology in its first complete version); the symbol of sacrifice and its educative function, played out thanks to this kind of illustrated text. Readers could be confronted with this multiple information at different moments in their reception of images and texts.
genre, the story of the Tang family women quoted above [fig. 10].

In the other cases, the similarities between the *Huitu Lienü zhuan* and other illustrated editions from the Wanli period lie not simply in the textual and illustrative content, but in their visual form and secondary motifs. The images often shared special motifs that are repeatedly employed in various illustrated books produced by people originating in Huizhou and by carvers from the Huang family: for example, the image of a street with parallel lines and trees at the back. This same representation is common to the *Lienü zhuan* [fig. 28] and the *Renjing yangqiu* [fig. 29], but also shows up in the texts of theatrical plays such as the *Pipa ji* 琵琶記, in the pseudo-Wanhu Xuan 玩虎軒 and Qifeng Guan 起鳳館 editions [fig. 30]. On a smaller scale, but no less significant, is the depiction of a tree inside a high enclosure with grass at its base that is found in the *Lienü zhuan* [fig. 31, *Huarui furen* 花蕊夫人 (?-976)] and in the *Pipa ji* [fig. 32, Cai Bojie 蔡伯喈], a repetition hard to account for as a coincidence.

So, even if the authors of the Ming model of *Huitu Lienü zhuan* remain anonymous, we can confirm its similarity to the *Renjing yangqiu* and more in general to the Huancui Tang 環翠堂 production. It is interesting to observe that some illustrations show geometrical constructions with a diagonal arrangement on an open space that recall other works of the editor Wang Tingna 汪廷訥 and the painter Wang Geng 汪耕. These illustrations are also similar to those

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76 See note 44 for the last story. See also Bussotti, *Gravures de l’école de Hui*, figs. 58-62.

77 What I call here the “pseudo-Wanhu Xuan” *Pipa ji* is a copy bound in a single volume with an illustrated *Xixiang ji*, kept at the National Library of France.

78 Erotic scenes are rare in educative biographies, but it is significant that both these books show half-dressed women to illustrate the history of *Ming Gong Wang huanghou* 明恭王皇后; on this subject, see Lin Li-chiang, “Wang Tingne Unveiled—through the Study of the Late Ming Woodblock-Printed Book *Renjing Yangqiu*,” *Bulletin de l’Ecole française d’Extrême-Orient* (forthcoming).

79 For example, some sections of *Huancui Tang yuanjing tu* 環翠堂園景圖 (Painting of the Huancui Tang garden); regarding this printed scroll, see Lin Li-chiang, “Huizhou banhua Huancui Tang yuanjing tu zhi yanjiu” 徽州版畫《環翠堂園景圖》之研究, in *Quyu yu wangluo* 區域與網絡 (Taipei: National Taiwan University, 2001), pp. 299-328.
in some plays, sometimes like the highly sophisticated and surcharged prints of Qifeng Guan, but more often the simpler images of Wanhu Xuan. Equally, even if the Huitu Lienü zhuan has certain connections with the Renjing yangqiu in style and composition, it is less charged in its secondary motifs, for example the designs on the floor or around the screens.

As we consider the propensity for producing similar series of dramatic images for an illustrative purpose, regardless of the nature of the literary works they illustrate (in our case a collection of biographies of women), could it be simply that, around 1600, the conventions of theatrical production were influencing printed narratives, as argued in recent studies? Or were the illustrations presented in these last pages the products of collaborative work, the expression of a shared “imagination” and of a common figurative language also shared by a group of people, inspired perhaps in part by theatrical productions, but also by contemporary visual art? The people concerned in producing these printed works were originally limited in number (a painter-illustrator, a few private editors, a family of block carvers who employed some characteristic motifs), but their network had expanded geographically from Huizhou, to Nanjing, and finally Hangzhou, helped by the growing power of commercial printing in reaching ever wider audiences in urban centers.

5. Conclusion: The Biographies of Women in the Illustrated Book Production of Late Imperial China

In these pages, I have tried to explore the world of the private commercial book production of Ming dynasty publishers and the various editorial practices of Qing bibliophile-editors through the example of few editions of the Lienü zhuan. Even if some publishers sought to present a revised book and others simply to transmit an ancient work, they are far from separate in actual

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80 This is the principal theory of the book by Li-ling Hsiao, The Eternal Present of the Past: Illustration, Theatre, and Reading in the Wanli Period, 1573-1619 (Leiden: Brill, 2007).
practice: these various agents work in “continuity” – exchanging, transmitting, reshaping books in content and form. Such practices took place over large areas, but we have concentrated on only a few examples. The versions of the Ming dynasty Lienü zhuan I have focused on can be considered as representative of the production of the Wanli period, from a narrow circle of commercial publishers, between Nanjing and Huizhou. Whether they are seen as more “graphic” or more “painterly,” these illustrated editions are far from the famous artistic tradition of paintings illustrating the lives of exemplary women. They are single cases in a larger production of narrative illustration which seems to share precise motifs with books of other genres, as does the Guifan with the pictorial albums of Gushi huapu or Shiyu huapu (the detail of cliff and trees on the left side of the images is an obvious example of this contamination).

The Lienü zhuan editions of the Wanli period presented here all include “narrative” images, one preceding each biography, and this page layout is widely used in collections of various texts. This editorial choice is often encountered in other books produced by the same publishers or engravers, as demonstrated by the editions of the Xixiang ji [fig. 18] and the Pipa ji [fig. 32] cited earlier. Still, however refined these woodcuts may be [fig. 23], they are very different from the sophisticated prints of few years later, the selected images collected at the beginning of volumes. The Tianzhang Ge

81 See the numerous works of Julia K. Murray, including her book Mirror of Morality.
82 For this book, see note 44 above. On the various illustrated works about women from the late Ming, a Ph.D. dissertation exists, but I could not consult it at the moment of writing this article [announced on the web, the thesis was still not accessible]: Ling Yuan-chuang, “Between the Forbiddance and Recreation: The Study of the Illustration Book of Women’s Education in Late Ming Dynasty China” (Taipei: Zhongyang daxue, 2008).
83 For the first album, see the plate attributed to Wen Jia 文嘉 (1501-1583) in Gu Bing 顧炳 et al., Lidai minggong huapu 歷代名公畫譜 (Guilin: Guangxi shifandaxue chubanshe, 2000), pp. 19-20. For a similar print, described as copying the style of Mo Yunqing 莫雲卿 (?-1587), see Wang, Shiyu huapu 詩餘畫譜, Zhongguo gu huapu jicheng 中國古畫譜集成 (Jinan: Shandong meishu chubanshe, 2000), vol. 2, p.120.
Chapter edition of *Xixiang ji* is an outstanding example of this pattern, including images of women (Yingying 鴛鴦) and images of rocks, vegetables, birds, and so forth. But we should not simply appreciate this latter kind of production to the detriment of the earlier books; in fact some of the illustrations in the Tianzhang Ge *Xixiang ji* are not original to this publication but are rather a probably unauthorized reproduction of plates from the *Book of Painting and Calligraphy from the Ten Bamboo Studio* (*Shizhuzhai shuhua pu* 十竹齋書畫譜). The books with a selected choice of illustrations on the opening pages can be more elaborate in their intellectual conception, but they are ultimately simpler to compose than the illustrated anthologies with woodcuts for each entry. We can better appreciate how much labor was expended in the production of these imprints when we run across a copy like the incomplete *Lienü zhuan* of Zhencheng Tang, that allows modern scholars to retrace or to reconstruct the different steps in its publication.

All the three Ming publications I have discussed share this similar pagination (alternating illustrations and biographies), but their editors and publishers did not avoid strictly business decisions that could seduce audiences and gain markets. After the enlarged selection of texts with notes, associated with highly graphic and dramatic images, published by Tang Fuchun in Nanjing, Huang Jiayu and Tang Jinchí chose an “orthodox” version of the anthology to be distributed in Nanjing and perhaps in Huizhou; its illustrations are also “orthodox,” with pictorial ambitions and measured expressive codes. A few years later, unknown publishers in Huizhou produced a new anthology, where the refinement of designs and motifs contrast sometimes with the unexpected violence of the prints’ subjects. The numerous additional stories

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84 This book has already caused the spilling of much ink. Citing only the most recent studies see: Ma Meng-ching, “Collecting Images for Illustration: A Case Study on the T’ien-chang-ke Edition of *The Story of The Western Wing*,” text for the international conference *Art in China: Collections and Concepts* (Bonn: 2003); Li-ling Hsiao, “Reading the Illustrator’s Reading of the Tianzhang Ge Edition of *Xixiang ji* (1640),” in *Studies of Publishing Culture in East Asia: Kohaku* (Tokyo: Chisen shokan, 2004), pp. 138-149.
meet a kind of “local taste,” because some of them concern historical women of the Huizhou region, a taste possibly due to the wide diffusion of biographies in general in locally compiled works. So, by virtue of their diversity of form and content, the three publications focused on here may be considered as representative of the principal characteristics of illustrated items available on the book market of Jiangnan, especially between Southern Anhui 安徽 and Jiangsu 江蘇, during the flourishing years of the Wanli period.

More generally, these Ming editions and the Qing reprints of the *Lienü zhuan* recapitulate other trends in publishing activities in late imperial China, when the book market evolved from a regional to a trans-regional dimension. The two editions discussed in section 4 of this article have strong regional connections. The first continues the style of illustrations and layout of text typical of other books from Nanjing dating to the end of the 16th century, and easy to identify in a period when these local physical characteristics permitting us to recognize the geographical origin of an imprint began to disappear in other books of the East Central regions of China. The second also has local connections, especially in its expanded contents where Huizhou elements dominate. The place of production is also specified in the preface to the Qing reprint and the location seems to have facilitated the acquisition of the original blocks by Bao Tingbo, given his family’s Huizhou origin (the strong attachment the people of Huizhou to their countryside is well known), even if the insertion of the reprinted anthology into a larger collection enlarged its diffusion and transformed in part its first “signification.” On the other hand, the editions discussed in the previous sections (2 and 3) are more free of local

85 Not only were anthologies of exemplary biographies produced in Huizhou, like the *Lienü zhuan* and the *Renjing yangqiu* discussed here, but biographies are abundantly represented in local histories (difangzhi 地方志). The *Huitu Lienü zhuan* also includes biographies from “national” historical texts; for this reason, plates are selected to illustrate the analysis of texts of *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書 or *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書, etc. as complementary sources of women biographies by S.J. Mou, *Gentlemen’s Prescriptions for Women’s Lives: a Thousand Years of Biographies of Chinese Women* (New York: Armonk, London: M.E. Sharpe, 2004), chapters 3 and 4.
ties. The publication, including Huang Jiayu’s introduction, seems to be an item designed for a trans-regional market, not only because of its connection to Huizhou and Nanjing, but also because it represents “the tradition” in its text and “the norms” in its illustrations. Preserving a certain degree of conservatism, if not necessarily a good technique for attracting new categories of buyers, is at least a gage of security in reaching traditional readers, and this “security” is often chosen by publishers of such relatively high quality editions as this book seems to represent. Finally, the Ruan Fu enterprise was not bound by commercial considerations and his Qing imprint could try to accomplish an ideal fusion with antiquity, by the choice of the text details and the high pictorial model evoked in it, even if, as we should not forget, the book that provided its physical model was probably a purely commercial publishing venture in earlier times.  

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1. Classical Works


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86 See above notes 20, 21. The author thanks Phyllis Brooks Schafer for her revision of the English version, and Lin Li-chiang for her precious advice.


### 2. Modern Works


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Kohaku. Tokyo: Chisen shokan, pp. 138-149.


Fig. 1 Moxi
Ruan Fu edition, ca. 1825, original kept in Paris, library of the Institut des hautes études chinoises, Collège de France.

Fig. 2 Daji
Ruan Fu edition, ca. 1825, original kept in Paris, library of the Institut des hautes études chinoises, Collège de France.
Fig. 3 The Two Wives of Shun

Fig. 4 The Two Wives of Shun
Ruan Fu edition, 1825, original kept in Paris, library of the Institut des hautes études chinoises.
Fig. 5 Moxi

Fig. 6 Daji

Fig. 7 Taoying

Fig. 8 Nufan bian
From an original copy kept in Taipei, National Central Library.
Fig. 9 Guifan
Facsimile published by Shanghai guji chubanshe.

Fig. 10 Guifan
Facsimile published by Shanghai guji chubanshe.

Fig. 11 Title Page of Wenlin Ge Lienü zhuan
Original kept in Taipei, National Central Library.

Fig. 12 Title Page of Wenlin Ge Shishang leiyao

Fig. 13 First Page of the introduction to Gu Lienü zhuan
Ca. 1606, original kept in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.
Fig. 14 The Two Wives of Shun

Tang Fuchun’s edition of *Lienü zhuan* of the late 1580s, facsimile published by Shanghai guji chubanshe.

Fig. 15 The Two Wives of Shun

*Huitu lienü zhuan*, Qing dynasty reprint, facsimile published by Zhongguo shudian.
Fig. 16 The Principled Woman of the Capital
Tang Fuchun’s edition of Lienü zhuan of the late 1580s, facsimile published by Shanghai guji chubanshe.

Fig. 17 The Mother of Wang Ling
Tang Fuchun’s edition of Lienü zhuan of the late 1580s, facsimile published by Shanghai guji chubanshe.
Fig. 18 Zhangsheng Jumps the Wall
Tang Fuchun’s edition of Xixiang ji, contemporary facsimile publication.

Fig. 19 The Wife of Cheng Zi
Tang Fuchun’s edition of Lienü zhuan of the late 1580s, facsimile published by Shanghai guji chubanshe.
**Fig. 20 The Daughter of Shi Wei**

Tang Fuchun’s edition of *Lienü zhuan* of the late 1580s, facsimile published by Shanghai guji chubanshe.

**Fig. 21 The Two Daughters of the Zhang Family**

*Huitu lienü zhuan*, Qing dynasty reprint, facsimile published by Zhongguo shudian.
Fig. 22 The Wife of Cheng Wenju

Zhencheng Tang edition of *Lienü zhuan*, original kept in Beijing, National Library, ch. 8, pp. 53-54.

Fig. 23 Yu Yunxiu

Fig. 24a The Mother of Wu He

Zhencheng Tang edition of *Lienü zhuan*, original kept in Beijing, National Library, ch. 11, p. 1ab.

Fig. 24b The Mother of Wu He

*Huitu lienü zhuan*, Qing dynasty reprint, facsimile published by Zhongguo shudian.
Fig. 25 The Concubines of Xu Yong

*Huitu liēnū zhuan*, Qing dynasty reprint, facsimile published by Zhongguo shudian.

Fig. 26 The Wife of Yu

*Huitu liēnū zhuan*, Qing dynasty reprint (detail), facsimile published by Zhongguo shudian.

Fig. 27 The Wife of Zhou

*Huitu liēnū zhuan*, Qing dynasty reprint (detail), facsimile published by Zhongguo shudian.
Fig. 28 The Sister in Law of the Cheng Family

*Huitu lianü zhuan*, Qing dynasty reprint, facsimile published by Zhongguo shudian.

Fig. 29 Detail of *Renjing yangqiu*
Original kept in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig. 30 Detail of the Qifeng Guan Edition of *Pipa ji*
Contemporary facsimile edition.
Fig. 31 Huarui Furen

*Huitu lienü zhuan*, Qing dynasty reprint, facsimile published by Zhongguo shudian.

Fig. 32 Cai Bojie Thinking of Home

Pseudo Wanhu Xuan edition of *Pipa ji*, original kept in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.
Fig. 33 Princess Hezheng

*Guifan*, facsimile published by the Shanghai guji chubanshe.

Fig. 34 *Shiyu huapu*

Facsimile published by the Shandong meishu chubanshe.
明代坊刻古籍版画
——以《列女傳》版本为例

米蓋拉*

摘要

1600年前後在徽州與金陵間刊刻的《列女傳》三種坊刻本均附有插圖，出於這一原因，它們為理解明末江南刻書世界和版畫生產提供了很好的範例。這些書包括16世紀80年代後期金陵對漢書坊唐富春所刻的《新編增補全像評林古列女傳》、1606年前後有同樣刻於金陵（或者是徽州）的《古列女傳》、17世紀初由貞誠堂刻印的一部插圖版補本，而貞誠堂可能是位於徽州的。本文將不會窮盡心力於這些刊本的目錄學研究，而是將精力集中於刻印圖像及其特點上，試圖理解這些版畫對它們的概念、生產和接受做出了何種解釋。另外，明代的這些作品並非孤立的事例：它們構成了一項出色的、更為宏大的繪圖生產的組成部分，而這些版畫是獻諸於繪像圖說女範編、列女傳的，而得益於家刻的努力，這項工作在清代仍得以繼續。清代有兩種刊本是出類拔萃的，它們重刻了早前的插圖本並且都被收錄在重要的叢書之中：《繪圖列女傳》重印版，收錄於《知不足齋叢書》，18世紀末由鮑廷博（1712-1814）所印；《新刊古列女傳》，由阮福（1802-？）重輯並收錄於《文選樓叢書》（約1825）。

關鍵詞：木刻插圖、出版、列女傳、商業書籍、摹寫本、明代

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* 作者係法國東東學院研究員。