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EAST ASIAN WOMEN:

MATERIALS AND LIBRARY RESEARCH

SPECIAL ISSUE

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## From the Editor

Nineteen ninety-two marks the ninetieth anniversary of Peking University Library. Dr. Sören Edgren contributed the following article in celebration of this event.

### *Peking University Library's Ninetieth Anniversary*

The Peking University Library was founded in 1902 as the Ts'ang-shu lou of the revived Metropolitan University (Ching-shih Ta-hsüeh-t'ang), which was the ancestor of Peking University. The university had been created in 1898 as part of the late-Ch'ing reform movement's progressive educational policies. From the start it was hindered by the disapproval of the conservatives in power, and two years later was destroyed during the Boxer Uprising. At the beginning of 1902 the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi ordered the university re-established with the addition of a library. In 1912, after the Republican revolution, it was renamed Pei-ching Ta-hsüeh-hsiao, and the library was called T'u-shu-pu. Shortly thereafter it received the official designation of National Peking University (Kuo-li Pei-ching Ta-hsüeh), and finally in 1931 the library assumed its present name, Peking University Library (Pei-ching Ta-hsüeh T'u-shu-kuan).

The library began with a collection of 78,000 volumes in Chinese and foreign languages; by 1948 it had increased nearly tenfold to 725,000 volumes. By the end of 1950 it had absorbed the former holdings of the Yenching University Library (403,000 volumes), resulting in holdings of well over 1 million volumes. Since then the holdings have increased even more rapidly, and the library is reckoned among the largest in China.

Numerous celebrities have been associated with the library as well as with the university. In 1918, on the eve of the famous May

Fourth Movement, the head of the library was Li Ta-chao (1889–1927), and in the same year Mao Tse-tung (1893–1976) arrived from Changsha to take up a clerk's position there. In 1948, shortly before he fled China, Hu Shih (1891–1962) was chancellor of the university, and he actively contributed to the catalogue and exhibition of rare books in the Peking University Library held that year to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the university. From 1950 to 1952, Hu Shih served as curator of the Gest Oriental Library.

From the very beginning the library has possessed a large number of rare books and manuscripts. As early as 1904 the Ch'ing-dynasty collector Fang Ta-teng donated his Pi-lin-lang-kuan collection, containing many rare books from the former Saeki Bunko Japanese library, to the newly founded library of the Metropolitan University. In 1937 Peking University bought the collection of its former professor Ma Yü-ch'ing, containing more than five thousand volumes of works of vernacular literature, especially Ming and Ch'ing editions of fiction and drama. A few years later the university was able to purchase from his family the extraordinary collection of Li Sheng-to (1858–1937). The collection of nearly ten thousand titles in over fifty-eight thousand volumes contained a large number of Sung and Yüan imprints, as well as numerous Ming and Ch'ing rare editions, important holographs, collated manuscripts, and handwritten copies, plus old Japanese and Korean editions of Chinese works acquired during a diplomatic sojourn in Japan during the Meiji period. In 1956 the university published a catalogue of the collection produced under the direction of Chao Wan-li; in 1985 Li's own colophons together with his extensive bibliographical notes were edited and published by the university press. Other aspects of the library's holdings are equally renowned.

It is worth noting that the Peking University Library, together with the Gest Library and nine other libraries, currently participates in the RLG International Union Catalog of Chinese Rare Books Project, which is located in the Gest Library.

## VISITORS TO THE LIBRARY

A number of eminent scholars have signed the guest register within the past year, recording the fact that they visited the library and, in many cases, came in order to carry out some item of research. Among those whose names we have noted are the following: Barend J. ter Haar (Leiden University), Ellen Widmer (Wesleyan University), Li Bozhong (Chekiang Institute of Social Sciences), Kawata Teiichi (Kansai Daigaku), Evgenij Lubo-Lesnitchenko (Heritage Museum, St. Petersburg), Willy vande Walle (Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven).

Early in April 1992, Professor Samten G. Karmay, director of research at the Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris), delivered a talk on invitation from the East Asian Studies Department. Born in the Eastern Tibet region Amdo, educated in a Bonpo monastery and at Drepung, a monastic university in central Tibet, Dr. Karmay is the author of several books, including *The Great Perfection: A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching of Tibetan Buddhism* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988), and *Secret Visions of the Fifth Dalai Lama* (London: Serindia Publications, 1988). In the course of his visit to Princeton, Dr. Karmay also examined the Tibetan holdings of the Gest Library. He gave us helpful advice concerning the identities and the historical background of several Tibetan Buddhist texts, about which our information was incomplete. We are much indebted to this gracious and learned visitor.

Also during the month of April the Gest Library entertained a delegation representing the European Association of Sinological Librarians who had attended the annual meeting of the Committee on East Asian Libraries, held in conjunction with this year's annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies in Washington, D.C. Some two dozen members of this delegation followed up their visit to Washington with visits to the East Asian libraries at Princeton, Columbia, Yale, and Harvard universities. At Princeton, they looked in on the International Union Catalog of Chinese Rare Books Project of the Research Libraries Group, Inc., based here, and also were conducted through our rare books holdings by Mr. Martin Heijdra, the Gest Collection's Chinese bibliographer. The delegation was headed by Dr. Thomas H. Hahn of the library of the Sinologisches Seminar, Heidelberg University, and included East Asian library specialists from other institutions in Germany as well as from Austria, the Netherlands,

Norway, Sweden, France, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. We look forward to future scholarly contact with this association and with its European counterpart association of Japanese librarians.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

Morris Rossabi's latest book is *Voyager from Xanadu: Rabban Sauma and the First Journey from China to the West* (New York: Kodansha America, 1992). It is the stunning tale of a Turkic historian born near Peking who traveled to Persia, thence on to Rome and France in the thirteenth century, a wholly improbable and revealing encounter between East and West at about the time when the Polos were traversing those regions from the other direction. Professor Rossabi himself has an unusual personal history. Born in Alexandria, Egypt, he received his doctorate in Chinese and Inner Asian history at Columbia University in 1970, having submitted a dissertation entitled "Ming China's Relations with Inner and Central Asia, 1404–1513; A Re-examination of Traditional China's Foreign Policy." He has since published *China and Inner Asia: From 1368 to the Present Day* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975) and *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). He also edited the symposium volume *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and Its Neighbors* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983). Among his many scholarly articles, of greatest relevance for his essay in the present issue is, no doubt, "Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family," in *Sino-Mongolica: Festschrift für Herbert Franke*, edited by W. Bauer (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1979).

JaHyun Kim Haboush is associate professor of Korean culture and history at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Born and raised in Seoul, Korea, she came to the United States for graduate work and received a doctorate in East Asian languages and cultures from Columbia University in 1978. She is the author of *A Heritage of Kings: One Man's Monarchy in the Confucian World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), and coeditor of *The Rise of Neo-Confucianism in Korea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985). Her research interests cover such diverse topics as national consciousness in late Chosŏn Korea, and the relationship between literati and popular culture as seen in literary Chinese and vernacular Ko-

rean texts. Professor Haboush is now working on a study and translation of the *Memoirs of Lady Hyegyōng*.

Gary P. Leupp is assistant professor of history at Tufts University and coordinator of Tufts's Asian Studies Program. After receiving a B.A. and an M.A. in history from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, he went to the University of Michigan for a doctoral degree. He also pursued research for his dissertation at the University of Osaka, Japan. A Japan specialist, Professor Leupp is interested in urban labor, domestic service, vagrancy, urban gangs, untouchability, gender and sexuality, criminality, and popular culture in Tokugawa Japan. His research interests also extend to Japanese Marxism, the history of the Japanese left, and contemporary Japanese historiography. Among his numerous publications is a book entitled *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers in the Cities of Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992). Another book-length study on issues of class, sexuality, and urban violence in early modern Japan will be published under the title "*Nanshoku: Homosexuality, Gender, and the Social Order in Tokugawa Japan (1603–1868)*" by the University of California Press. In his article in the *Gest Journal* entitled "Population Registers and Household Records as Sources for the Study of Urban Women in Tokugawa Japan," Professor Leupp discusses the location and content of these sources, the household structure, and female employment in several wards in Kyoto and Osaka.

Janice B. Bardsley is assistant professor of Japanese language and literature at Wake Forest University. In 1989, she received her doctorate from the University of California, Los Angeles, by defending the thesis "Writing for the New Woman of Taishō Japan: Hiratsuka Raichō and the *Seitō* Journal, 1911–1916." Professor Bardsley is no stranger to Princeton. At the invitation of the Department of East Asian Studies, she visited Princeton in April 1991, during which time she presented "Approaching the Study of *Seitō*: The Men's Story." Professor Bardsley has written extensively on Japanese women. In her article in the *Gest Journal*, she introduces to us an early twentieth-century women's literary magazine, *Bluestockings Journal* (*Seitō*), and evaluates this magazine as a source for research on Japanese feminism and Japanese woman writers.

Huang Lin is director, Branch of History of Chinese Literary Criticism, Institute of Chinese Language and Literature, Fudan University, China. Professor Huang graduated from Fudan University in 1964. Since then his research has concentrated on traditional Chinese novels. His numerous works include *Chung-kuo li-tai hsiao-shuo lun-chu hsüan* in two volumes (Nanchang: Kiangsi jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1982, 1985), *Ku hsiao-shuo lun kai-kuan* (Shanghai: Shanghai wen-i ch'u-pan-she, 1986), and *Chung-kuo wen-hsüeh p'i-p'ing shih* in three volumes (Shanghai: Shanghai ku-chi ch'u-pan-she, 1985). He has also published a series of essays on *Romance of Three Kingdoms* (*San-kuo yen-i*), *Outlaws of the Marsh* (*Shui-hu chuan*), and *The Scholars* (*Ju-lin wai-shih*). In recent years, his research on *Golden Lotus* (*Chin p'ing mei*) resulted in the publication of several important works, including *Chin p'ing mei man-hua* (Shanghai: Hsüeh-lin ch'u-pan-she, 1986), *Chin p'ing mei lun-k'ao* (Shenyang: Liao-ning jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1989), *Chin p'ing mei tzu-liao hui-pien* (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1987), *Chin p'ing mei ta tz'u-tien* (Chengtu: Pa-shu shu-she, 1991), and the annotated and punctuated version of *Hsin-k'o hsiu-hsiang p'i-p'ing Chin p'ing mei* (Hangchow: Chekiang ku-chi ch'u-pan-she, 1991).

Kang-i Sun Chang is professor of Chinese literature and chair of the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures at Yale University. After receiving her doctorate from Princeton University in 1978, Professor Chang worked for a year as curator of Gest Library, and we are thus particularly delighted that she once again extends her support to the library by contributing an article to its journal. A specialist on classical Chinese poetry, Professor Chang is author of three books: *The Late-Ming Poet Ch'en Tzu-lung: Crises of Love and Loyalism in a Dynastic Transition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), *Six Dynasty Poetry* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), and *The Evolution of Chinese Tz'u Poetry: From Late T'ang to Northern Sung* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980). She also has to her credit more than thirty articles in English and Chinese. Currently, Professor Chang is working on two books about Chinese women poets, "Chinese Women Poets from 1600 to 1900" (forthcoming, Yale University Press) and "An Anthology of Chinese Women Poets from Ancient Times to 1911" (forthcoming, Yale University Press). A member of many associations in America concerned with Chinese culture,

#### FROM THE EDITOR

Professor Chang is a member and enthusiastic supporter of the Friends of the Gest Library.

Sören Edgren is editorial director of the Research Libraries Group Chinese Rare Books Project which is located in the Gest Library, Princeton University. A Ph.D. in sinology from the University of Stockholm, Dr. Edgren is a specialist on East Asian books. In 1972 and 1974, he helped organize two exhibitions on printing in China, Korea, and Japan at the Royal Library, Stockholm. Two years later, he was consultant to an exhibition on Japanese handmade paper (washi) held at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm. In 1984 he was involved in another exhibition, "Chinese Rare Books in American Collections," which was organized by the China Institute in America, New York. From 1971 to 1978, Dr. Edgren was Far Eastern cataloguer and bibliographer at the Royal Library (National Library of Sweden) and at the same time taught bibliography and research methodology in the Department of Chinese at the University of Stockholm. In 1978, he became a self-employed Far Eastern bookseller in Los Angeles. He stayed in business for almost ten years before becoming a research associate at the American Museum of Natural History. Dr. Edgren's research on East Asian books has led to the publication of a dozen articles. Currently, he is working on two monographs: "Catalogue of the Berthold Laufer Collection of Chinese Books in the American Museum of Natural History" and "An Illustrated History of Korean Printing."

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Upon the publication of this special enlarged issue on East Asian women, the editor wishes to extend his hearty thanks to several people who helped inform and create this issue. Professor F. W. Mote, chairman of the journal's advisory board, conceived the idea of organizing articles concerning problems that scholars may encounter when conducting library research on East Asian women, and organizing these articles into a special issue. During the process of talking to prospective contributors, the editor benefited greatly from the help and information provided by Professor Earl Miner, Department of Comparative Literature, Princeton University; Professor Martin Collcutt, Department of East Asian Studies, Princeton University;

FROM THE EDITOR

Professor Janet Walker, Program in Comparative Literature, Rutgers University; and Dr. De-min Tao, Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University. The editor is grateful to Ikeda On, professor and director of the Institute of Oriental Culture, Tokyo University, Japan, who kindly granted permission to use a photograph of the *I-p'ien ch'ing* preserved in his institute as an illustration for Professor Huang Lin's article. Last, but of course not least, is Mr. John B. Elliott, a longtime friend, who generously extends his sustaining support to the editor, and whose energy and thoughts provide a driving force for the journal.

Special Issue

East Asian Women:

Materials and Library Research



# Foreword

The genesis of this special issue of the *Gest Library Journal* is worth recounting. The impact of women's studies in many fields of research has grown significantly within the past decade; that is as true of East Asian studies as of other fields. Innovations in research and significant new findings bear full witness. The editors of the journal are not unaware of that, but despite their awareness of the force and relevance of these developments, this issue of the journal did not spring from an attempt to enter a popular arena and take upon ourselves an aura of high-minded modernity.

The impulse to produce this special issue is in fact quite different in its origins. Over the past year or two we have received several unsolicited manuscripts of considerable intrinsic interest that have spurred us to relate them to each other by invoking their relevance to the subject of women's studies. That is to say, we have had our attention drawn repeatedly to the way the researcher-author has coped with the special research problems that arise when one focuses on any topic involving the place of women in East Asian societies. That subject was seldom if ever central to the concerns of the persons who created and preserved the documentation of their civilizations, so that when modern scholars decide to make that their focus, they must in most cases use materials that had other purposes; they must learn to use them in ways contrary to the nature of the materials. In some degree, that is often the case when we ask any modern questions of traditional resources. But it is particularly true when the subject of our inquiry is women in any roles other than those that could be handled summarily and in formulaic manner by the makers of the documents. Even though the actual status of women varied considerably in the different Asian societies, in none of them were there practical needs to record women as fully as men. And, in all of them, although it could be argued that what women normally did from day to day was essential to the survival of their societies, the need to describe and record even the most notable among them was seldom granted high importance, by women or by men. Semipopular fiction some-

times escaped that limitation, and there are a few biographical writings that rise above the depersonalization of women that characterizes most of the documentation. And, as Kang-i Sun Chang's article in this issue shows, in China at least there is a surprisingly large quantity of women's poetry. And, to be sure, there are other belletristic writings, such as the early women's fiction in Japan. Yet, taken all together, such materials are insufficient to overturn our larger generalization.

When a modern scholar, therefore, is able in some degree to transcend that problem, it immediately draws attention to his or her methods: to the special uses of special kinds of documentation, and to the disciplined imagination that can be applied to the task.

All of that is too well known to merit further comment. But, as we have said, it was not a decision to devise some strategic attack on that set of problems that led to the emergence of this special issue. Instead, its genesis goes back to the day when Huang Lin's article on the early Ch'ing work *A Tangle of Emotions* (*I-p'ien ch'ing*) arrived. For in his essay, Huang Lin, a research scholar at Fudan University in Shanghai, critically examines what traditionally had been classified as a collection of erotic fluff, and shows that it bears a weighty message. Each of these stories of "tangled emotions" turns on an unsatisfactory marriage, or on distorted relations between men and women. When those led to criminal actions they might get brief notice in records of judicial proceedings. That is how Jonathan Spence's attention initially was drawn to the challenge of creating the story of "The Woman Wang" (Jonathan Spence, *The Death of Woman Wang*, New York: Viking, 1978). Yet, although Spence, working in the historian's usual manner, was able to offer telling information on the grim poverty of the region in Shantung where the case unfolded, and able to inform us about the political and judicial systems through which it was handled, the success of his story lies in his brilliantly imaginative creation (i. e., *not* reconstruction) of hypothetical personal circumstances. For the materials in our libraries simply do not include detailed descriptions of society at the level on which *Woman Wang's* short and tragic life was lived. To tell that story, Spence had no other means.

We thought about that fundamental limitation as we read Huang Lin's fascinating exploration of the dozen or so cases treated as fiction in the collection *A Tangle of Emotions*. Were we to try to reconstruct the lives of men and women of no particular note in society, especially those of the women

who inhabit these curious stories, which, we believe, were credible to the seventeenth-century reader precisely because they reflect real life, where would we start? Because these stories are about emotions not fulfilled within the marriage patterns of seventeenth-century Chinese society, or fulfilled only by ingeniously defying its stringent conventions, they fall beyond the scope of serious discourse at that time. We can study the social norms, at least in idealized presentation, and we can read a few writers who were able to make highly generalized comment on human imperfections and social problems. But can we come to a satisfactory understanding of how an ordinary person, especially an ordinary woman, fit into the real society of her family's and her community's actual men and women and children, to understand the range of pressures and frustrations she may have felt, and the range of satisfactions she could achieve and the options she could exercise? Are we to accept the rather depressing conclusion offered by the book Huang Lin has analyzed for us here, that is, that marriages often were unhappy and that emotions mostly lacked satisfactory outlets? How would we go about investigating such issues in order to know whether this assessment is valid?

Pondering Huang Lin's essay and the further research challenge it offers, we decided that it could be useful to draw together a group of essays each bearing in some way on the issues in research involving women in East Asia. We assembled two or three from among manuscripts on hand, then wrote to a few scholars known to us to have worked on related matters, and asked if they had something more or less ready to present. In that way we have tried to achieve a more balanced coverage that includes different times and places in East Asia. Having done so, we can say that this issue of the journal joins a growing body of research demonstrating that the problems, although formidable, are not insurmountable.

Moreover, the resulting collection presented here is far more revealing than we might have expected. First of all, we have an article by Morris Rossabi which takes us into Mongolia for the first time in these pages. Publication of Professor Rossabi's recent biography of Khubilai Khan (*Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) was preceded by his article "Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family" (in *Sino-Mongolica: Festschrift für Herbert Franke*, ed. W. Bauer, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1979, pp. 153–180), justly famous as one of the most intriguing essays ever written about East Asian society. We asked him to recount

for us some of the problems he encountered while doing his research for that essay and the biography of Khubilai Khan. And, we have from the hand of Professor JaHyun Kim Haboush an account of the diaries written by the Lady Hyegyŏng, certainly one of the strangest stories in all of Korean history. Present-day Koreans are now learning about the life of this wife and mother of late eighteenth-, early nineteenth-century Korean kings, a courageous woman whose remarkable personal diaries are only now becoming well known thanks to the researches of Professor Haboush and others. From the field of Japanese studies we offer two essays, one on an early twentieth-century feminist magazine, *Bluestockings*. Written by Professor Janice B. Bardsley, and including a translation of an important appeal to the people of Japan by a feminist writer of eighty years ago, the study brings very directly to us the genuine voice of an earlier generation of Japanese women. The other is quite different in character; it is Professor Gary Leupp's revealing introduction to the nature of population registers from the Tokugawa era, from which sound sociological data can be gleaned about women, particularly women as productive workers in many social roles. From China we again have articles of quite different character. First is Huang Lin's essay on the erotic book *A Tangle of Emotions* referred to above. Following that we have a truly ground-breaking study by Professor Kang-i Sun Chang of Yale University about collections of women poets, dating from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. The number of women poets and the extent to which their poetry was published and has been preserved are startling; Professor Chang has opened up a large field for further exploration. Finally, we have an intriguing essay by Dr. Sören Edgren, editorial director of the Research Library Group's Chinese Rare Books Project, based at Princeton. Dr. Edgren's subject is a small and extremely rare book purchased at the beginning of this century in China by the late Berthold Laufer, for the anthropological collections of the New York Museum of Natural History. In this book we get a rare glimpse into the lives of a certain category of young women in Shanghai at the end of the last century, and we also see a book that possesses many unusual qualities of style and production.

These articles show that there are interesting and important things the ingenious and determined scholar can say about even so recalcitrant a topic as the study of women in East Asia. They explore the nature of the less frequently exploited materials, and they offer findings of value in the incre-

## FOREWORD

mental growth of the field. The articles are not written to a shared formula, in the manner of conference papers; they vary widely in topic and approach. They reveal tantalizing aspects, if often fragmentary, of the larger issues. Taken together, however, we feel they do support each other in showing many dimensions of the library research problems involving women in four East Asian societies, from early times to the present century. We cannot yet offer solutions to the remaining questions they raise, but we believe that many such questions may ultimately come within the grasp of scholars. In the meantime, we have enjoyed the tasks of bringing this issue of the journal to you, and we hope that you, our readers, will find the effort has produced something worth your reading time.

F. W. Mote



# The Study of the Women of Inner Asia and China in the Mongol Era

MORRIS ROSSABI

During my scholarly career, I have written three essays exclusively devoted to the roles of women in China and Mongolia, and in other articles and books that focused on different political, economic, or social concerns I have also dealt with the status and activities of women in these same areas.<sup>1</sup> One of the three essays concerned Chinese women in the twentieth century; the other two related to my principal fields of research, the Yüan dynasty and the primarily nomadic peoples of Inner Asia.<sup>2</sup> The last two were parts of larger studies, but an understanding of the status of women was, in my view, integral to the more general concerns of these research topics. Simultaneously, other scholars were conducting research on women among the nomads and the influence of the so-called barbarian dynasties on the rights and position of Chinese women.<sup>3</sup> Yet they and I encountered serious hurdles.

One severe problem that has more to do with our own times and society than with Chinese or Inner Asian societies is the increasing and sometimes mindless politicization of research on gender. Let me cite one example. When I submitted an article on the Yüan artist Kuan Tao-sheng (1262–1319) to the *Bulletin of Sung Yuan Studies* some years ago, one of the referees accused me of sexism because I referred to this great woman painter-calligrapher by her personal name.<sup>4</sup> Leaving aside the ethics of such name calling and of such a rush to judgment with almost no supporting evidence, this assertion revealed either astonishing ignorance or willful and deliberate discounting of the conventions of biographies. Has anyone objected to Gerald Clarke's use of "Truman" in his biography of Capote or to Jacques Bar-

zun's use of the familiar "Hector" in his study of the life and times of Berlioz or to Justin Kaplan's reference to "Sam" in his biography of Mark Twain? Yet such trivial and absurd and occasionally politically generated critiques have no doubt deterred some scholars from pursuing research in this field.

To return to scholarly concerns, however, the problem of sources poses almost insurmountable obstacles. Indigenous traditional writings deriving from the peoples of Inner Asia barely exist, circumscribing efforts to portray events and attitudes from their own perspectives. The paucity of sources impinges particularly on knowledge of the activities and status of women because the meager available writings generally focus on military campaigns and on the male participants in intertribal politics. The *Secret History of the Mongols*, a typical and again a rare such source, alludes to women, but without doubt the principal protagonists remain members of the Mongol male nobility.<sup>5</sup> Women appear primarily as resourceful and determined mothers (e.g., Chinggis's wife Börte) or available sexual partners of defeated enemies. Since stereotypes prevail, it is difficult to distinguish between the reality and the ideal. Nonetheless, analysis of the traits of ideal women, as depicted in this unique text, yields insights into the values, limitations, and expectations imposed on women in this society. I have written something about this in my article on Khubilai Khan's female relatives, but a more systematic collection and study of the references to women in the work would be valuable.

The Chinese sources on Mongol and Chinese women of the Yüan are similarly fragmentary. As I noted in an earlier article, "they [women] are rarely the focus of the accounts in the histories; in part, by omission, such works accommodated the traditional views of women."<sup>6</sup> Only two *chüan* of the *Yüan shih* (Dynastic history of the Yüan), for example, are devoted to the empresses,<sup>7</sup> and the rest of the work contains only the scantiest of references to women. The biographies of the empresses are generally brief, individual ones, amounting at most to five hundred characters, and the majority contain considerably fewer. Yet the vignettes in these sketches are, on occasion, telling. For example, the biography of Nambi, who was Khubilai Khan's principal wife in the later phases of his reign, reveals that visitors rarely saw the khan and that Nambi often conducted affairs in his name.<sup>8</sup> Similar insights may be gleaned from an examination of the biographies of the later Yüan empresses. A perusal of these biographies, to-

gether with a close analysis of political developments in the late Yüan, could provide valuable information on the political roles and influence of these empresses.

Nonofficial writings offer another source for insights into the position of women during the Yüan, as well as possible changes in this position from earlier dynasties, changes fostered by foreign rule. Jennifer Jay has used funerary inscriptions, random writings, family histories, and personal essays to broaden the range of knowledge about women in the Yüan. As she demonstrates, these sources yield colorful, seemingly more authentic anecdotes than the limited and stereotypical depictions of virtuous, responsible, and filial women found in the official histories and documents. One source describes "an administrator who raped a maid and found that she had both male and female genitalia."<sup>9</sup> Others narrate instances of prostitution, "rental" concubines (women leased for a set period by men who could not afford to purchase them outright) who remained loyal to their elderly sexual partners, incest, adultery between father-in-law and daughter-in-law, and bisexuality. These anecdotes provide vivid vignettes in contrast to the often pallid portraits in the official accounts.

Yet such data surely need to be used with care. Two problems limit attempts to generalize from these sources. First, it is unclear how representative these fragmentary glimpses of individual women are of the expectations, prospects, and problems confronting women in general. The paucity of references thus far uncovered and studied necessitates caution in claiming wider applicability for these fascinating but ultimately limited vignettes. Second, it is unlikely that additional references to women, which would facilitate attempts to generalize and to develop composite portraits, will be readily brought to light. It is unreasonable to expect that a single scholar would scan dozens and perhaps hundreds of texts to discover isolated bits of evidence. More likely, scholars engaged in economic, political, social, or biographical studies of the Yüan will, in the course of their research, come across such references to women. Thus the accretion of evidence will necessarily be gradual. Only with such additional references will it become possible to confirm Professor Jay's conclusions that

the Confucian tradition of formulaic gender roles of women is thus essentially characterized by the overwhelming concern to construct and preserve an outward manifestation of chastity, wid-

owhood, motherhood, sometimes at the risk of sacrificing the victims of rape and incest. The hierarchical relationship between men and women, or more specifically, the subordination of women to men, is the perceived basis of harmony at home, in the society and throughout the Chinese empire.<sup>10</sup>

Still another source lies in the legal codes and other legal texts produced during the Yüan. Herbert Franke has started to study these sources in order to delineate the position of women and to determine the influence of non-Chinese patterns and practices on Yüan statutes concerning women. His preliminary research appears to indicate that Yüan law deviated, though not dramatically, from T'ang law and that greater flexibility and leniency characterized the Mongol codes. Innovations in Chinese law included approval of the levirate, a Mongol practice that started to take hold in North China. The Chinese had traditionally prohibited marriage of a widow to her husband's brother; the Mongols not only encouraged but in some cases mandated the custom.<sup>11</sup> However, the Mongols were sufficiently flexible to waive the levirate in specific instances when its use would have been anomalous and perhaps ludicrous. For example, they did not compel an adult widow to marry her dead husband's nine-year-old brother. Like Chinese law, the Mongol code forbade the sale of women and female infanticide, but the Mongols seem to have been more determined to enforce these prohibitions. Finally, the Mongols had a "more lenient attitude towards illicit intercourse."<sup>12</sup> Franke's evidence differs from Jay's conclusions in showing that Yüan legal codes and practices deviated somewhat from the Confucian attitudes and usages.

Yet Franke is cautious about claiming too much for his limited evidence. He writes that "it is still too early to draw general conclusions from the data."<sup>13</sup> For one thing, the legal codes may not entirely reflect reality, since the provisions may not have been implemented as decreed in the statutes. Moreover, an insufficient number of cases has been studied. A more comprehensive analysis of cases involving women is required before judgments about the enforcement of the Mongol-inspired law codes can be evaluated.

A close study of Yüan imaginative literature would complement such an analysis. For example, female characters abound in Yüan drama, though almost all are Chinese, not Mongol. Some of the women in these plays are more dynamic and assertive than the stereotypical Chinese women of the

Sung or earlier dynasties. In *Rain on the Hsiao Hsiang* (*Lin-chiang i hsiao-hsiang yeh-yü*), a young woman betrayed, imprisoned, and sent into exile by her duplicitous husband-official survives and determinedly returns to exact revenge on him. In the *Mo-ho-lo Doll* (*Chang Ting chih k'an Mo-ho-lo*), a woman accused of poisoning her husband by the actual culprit, her brother-in-law, perseveres and finally is cleared of the crime.<sup>14</sup> The prominence of these determined and unbowed women challenges the depiction of passive and pliant females found in traditional Chinese texts. Yet the question remains, How representative are these plays? Are the Chinese women portrayed in Yüan theater generally assertive and dynamic? Does this portrait reflect the influence of the Khitans and the Jurchens, who controlled part or all of North China from the tenth to the thirteenth century, and the Mongols? Since Mongol women barely appear in these plays, Yüan theater will not contribute much to an understanding of their status and role during the Yüan dynasty.

The nature of the available sources has, in part, stymied my own attempt to depict the position of and possibilities for Mongol women. The references focus on Mongol noblewomen and scarcely, if ever, mention ordinary women. The sources generally omit consideration of women who were not part of the Chinggisid line. The personality and the roles of these noblewomen, several of whom played significant political roles, often emerge with great clarity from the sources. One even served as a regent for the khan of the Mongol empire. Khubilai Khan's mother, Sorghaghtani Beki, used her political savvy to ensure that her sons replaced their cousins as great khans of the Mongol domains. His wife Chabi shaped policy by persuading Khubilai to foster agriculture in North China rather than seeking to convert Chinese farmland into pasture for the Mongol animals. Her devotion to Buddhism led Khubilai to be responsive to the religion, to support and patronize Buddhist monasteries and temples, and to recruit Buddhist advisers for prominent positions at his court. Other Mongol noblewomen "arranged their own marriages, administered appanages, and owned property."<sup>15</sup> After Khubilai's reign, however, women in the elite appear no longer to be involved in political decision making. It seems likely that growing sinicization at the court reduced political opportunities for Mongol women. The women of the later Yüan dynasty did not match their remarkable and influential counterparts of the thirteenth century.

One principal exception is Khubilai's great-granddaughter Sengge Ragi,

granddaughter of Chen-chin, the most sinicized of Khubilai's sons. Though she did not assume the political roles adopted by her thirteenth-century female ancestors, she was an ardent patron of painting. She amassed a sizable collection of Chinese paintings, favoring traditional Chinese themes but showing specific predilections of her own. As Fu Shen has shown, her collection resembled those of Chinese connoisseurs in themes and subject matter, though the large number of bird and flower paintings and of subjects imbued with Buddhist themes reveals her own taste. Consulting colophons on paintings she owned, contemporary poetry, and scraps of biographical information found in the *Yüan shih* and other historical texts, Fu Shen describes a woman passionately engaged in and supportive of Chinese painting.<sup>16</sup> His articles serve as an admirable model of the type of research that will widen knowledge of the contributions and status of Mongol elite women during this era.

Yet these isolated biographies of prominent women scarcely provide even a glimpse of the lives of women deriving from nonelite backgrounds. Marriage patterns, female ownership of property, and the laws regarding adultery by either marital partner are only vaguely described in the available sources. Did the severe punishments inflicted on both female and male adulterers apply to the elite alone or to ordinary Mongols as well? Could women own or manage flocks of sheep independently? Could they as widows or unmarried women obtain grazing rights in specific lands? Mongol elite women often undertook the responsibility of socializing and educating their children, but did nonelite women turn the task of training their sons over to their husbands? It would seem logical that sons would be apprenticed to their fathers to learn the pastoral and martial skills they would need as adults, but then what influence did their mothers have? These questions may never be answered, as the written sources simply fail to yield sufficient data. Study of nineteenth- and twentieth-century accounts of the roles of women among the Mongols has been suggested as a means of understanding the status and activities of Mongol women in pre-Yüan and Yüan times. This assumes that the position of nonelite women among the Mongols has remained unchanged, an assumption I find untenable. The differing Mongol societies were transformed over the six to seven centuries from the 1200s to modern times, and Mongol women were affected by these developments. More frequent and extended contacts with both China and Russia influenced the Mongols and had an impact on the status and roles of

Mongol women. Thus generalizations about nonelite women based on studies of nineteenth- and twentieth-century social circumstances may be misleading, if not grossly inaccurate. The chances of increasing our knowledge of nonelite women and, for that matter, nonelite men appear to be slim. Despite the recent spate of articles and books on the social history and popular culture of traditional China,<sup>17</sup> many subjects concerning the pre-Ch'ing era remain shadowy to modern scholars, and the status of nonelite women in both China and Mongolia is one of the most elusive subjects of inquiry.

The accounts of non-East Asians who traveled in the Mongol world in the thirteenth century offer useful data that I and other researchers have employed to write about Mongol and Chinese women in pre-Yüan and Yüan times. The travel reports of the Franciscan missionaries John of Plano Carpini and William of Rubruck provide brief but valuable comments on both elite and nonelite women. Though both accounts are hostile to the Mongols, they offer first-hand, colorful descriptions of Mongol society at its height — that is, after Mongol armies had occupied North China, Central Asia, and much of Russia and Persia and had reached Poland and Hungary. Discounting the derogatory remarks, readers can glean some facts and inferences about the status of Mongol women. John of Plano Carpini confirms the existence of the levirate and the Mongol prohibition on adultery, describes in some detail the differing clothing, including the unique headdress known as the *boghtagh*, worn by unmarried and married women, and writes with amazement of the active lives led by Mongol women. He appears startled that women “ride and gallop on horseback with agility like the men,” that they “are able to endure long stretches of riding,” and that they carry bows and arrows. Praising the women, he writes that they “make everything, leather garments, tunics, shoes, leggings, and everything made of leather; they also drive the carts and repair them, they load the camels, and in all their tasks they are very swift and energetic.”<sup>18</sup> Like numerous other sources, John was also impressed by Khubilai's mother, Sorghaghtani Beki, whom he described as the “most renowned” woman among the Mongols and the second “most powerful” figure in the Mongol domains. These observations coincide with those in contemporary Mongol and Chinese sources, but a few of his jottings contradict other primary sources and must be evaluated with caution. For example, his remark that “each man has as many wives as he can keep, one a hundred, another fifty,



1. Yüan-dynasty Mongol noblewoman (left) and two Mongol noblemen (right) depicted as donors at Buddhist shrines. Redrawn from wall paintings in the Yü-lin caves at An-hsi (left) and cave 332 at Tun-huang (right), from Shen Ts'ung-wen, *Chung-kuo ku-tai fu-shih yen-chiu* (Researches on the history of Chinese costume; Hong Kong: Shang-wu yin-shu-kuan, 1981), p. 394.

another ten — one more, another less”<sup>19</sup> refers doubtlessly to the elite and perhaps (at least for those with ten or more wives) to the Chinggisid royal family. The ordinary Mongol pastoralist could not afford polygamy. John of Plano Carpini here describes the atypical because it caught his attention as it differed so much from the European practices to which he was accustomed.

William of Rubruck confirms but also supplements John’s observations. Like John, he devotes space to the physical appearance and the clothing worn particularly by elite women, but he adds that “the women are astonishingly fat” and “the less nose one has, the more beautiful she is considered.” Yet William goes beyond the surface by describing in detail the tasks and responsibilities of Mongol women. His listing of the work entrusted to women is more comprehensive than that found in John’s narrative. His report has been described as containing “a good deal of factual information which represents a significant advance on the knowledge currently available to the West.”<sup>20</sup> His precise delineation of the division of labor between the sexes and his account of marital rituals (e.g., payment for the bride, the simulated kidnapping of the intended bride by the prospective groom) contribute additional detail to John’s observations. However, since William cites many traits and practices (e.g., polygamy) that characterize the social status and activities of elite women, caution is critical in using his insights to make generalizations about the vast majority of Mongol women. In addition, since neither John nor William reached China, they provide no information about Chinese women during the period of Mongol rule in North China.<sup>21</sup>

Surprisingly, Marco Polo, another major European source on the Mongols and on Yüan China, turns out to yield scant new information on women. He virtually omits mention of Chinese women and, remarkably enough, fails to describe the practice of bound feet, which at this time was surely pervasive among the elite Chinese women. Instead Marco focuses on the exotic, not the typical. He briefly describes the condition of prostitutes and the process of selection of wives and concubines for the Mongol great khan.<sup>22</sup> These accounts provide colorful vignettes, which are fun to read but which are not particularly illuminating about Mongol women in general.

Persian and Korean accounts offer other potentially valuable sources on Mongol and Chinese women during the Yüan. Since the Persian records

were written at a distance from China and the Persian historians tended to focus on the Mongols, most of the references deal with Mongol women and particularly those in the royal family or the elite. Yet not all the Persian sources have been carefully scrutinized, and a more deliberate scanning and analysis of these accounts may lead to the discovery of data on Mongol women of nonelite backgrounds. The Koreans had greater access to China during the Mongol era, and the Korean kings frequently received Mongol princesses in marriage. Thus the *Koryŏ-sa* definitely contains information about Mongol elite women, and a close reading of this text as well as other accounts (e.g., travel diaries) may yield informative data about Mongol and perhaps Chinese women.<sup>23</sup>

In sum, prospects for increasing knowledge about Mongol and Chinese elite women in the Yüan appear to be good. The possibility of uncovering data about the nonelite women of both peoples during the same era is more remote. One of the most interesting directions for research is the possible influence of Mongol attitudes and policies toward elite women on possible changes in status and roles of Chinese women.<sup>24</sup>

## NOTES

1. I have taken advantage of the kind invitation to contribute to the *Gest Library Journal* to write an informal, anecdotal essay. This style affords me the opportunity to raise questions rather than to provide ready answers to problems I have been pondering for the past few years.
2. These are "Chinese Communists and the Peasant Women, 1949-1962," master's thesis, Columbia University, 1964; "Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family," in *Studia Sino-Mongolica: Festschrift für Herbert Franke*, ed. Wolfgang Bauer (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1979), pp. 153-180; "Kuan Tao-Sheng: Woman Artist in Yüan China," *Bulletin of Sung Yuan Studies* 21 (1989), pp. 67-84.
3. See, for example, Jennifer Holmgren, "Empress-Dowager Ling of the Northern Wei and the T'o-pa Sinicization Question," *Papers on Far Eastern History* 18 (1978), pp. 123-170; "Lineage Falsification in the Northern Dynasties: Wei Shou's Ancestry," *Papers on Far Eastern History* 21 (1980), pp. 1-16; and "Women and Political Power in the Traditional T'o-pa Elite: A Preliminary Study of the Biographies of Empresses in the *Wei-Shu*," *Monumenta Serica* 35 (1981-1983), pp. 33-74; Beatrice Spade, "The Education of Women in China during the Southern Dynasties," *Journal of Asian History* 13.1 (1979), pp. 15-41; Herbert Franke, "Women under the Dynasties of Conquest," in *La Donna*

- Nella Cina Imperiale e Nella Cina Repubblicana*, ed. Lionello Lanciotti (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1980), pp. 23–43; Jennifer W. Jay, “Prefaces, Jottings and Legal Proceedings on Women in Thirteenth-Century South China,” *Chinese Culture* 32.4 (December 1991), pp. 41–56; Francis W. Cleaves, “The Biography of the Empress Cäbi in the *Yüan Shih*,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3–4 (1979–1980), pp. 138–150; Fu Shen, *Yüan-tai huang-shih shu-hua shou-ts’ang shih-lüeh* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1980). This is not to mention research on women under the indigenous Chinese dynasties.
4. As it happens, I am a political liberal, yet I have tried to resist efforts to intrude my own political views on scholarship or the curriculum.
  5. For a nonspecialized but useful guide to the various translations of this text, see Paul Kahn, *The Secret History of the Mongols* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984), pp. xi–xvii.
  6. Rossabi, “Kuan Tao-sheng,” p. 67.
  7. *Yüan shih* (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1976) 114, pp. 2869–2884; 116, pp. 2897–2903.
  8. *Ibid.*, 114, p. 2873.
  9. Jay, “Prefaces, Jottings and Legal Proceedings,” p. 45.
  10. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
  11. Franke, “Women under the Dynasties of Conquest,” pp. 38–39.
  12. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
  13. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
  14. Both of these plays are translated in James I. Crump, *Chinese Theater in the Days of Kublai Khan* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1980).
  15. Rossabi, “Khubilai Khan,” p. 174.
  16. See Fu Shen, *Yüan-tai huang-shih shu-hua shou-ts’ang shih-lüeh*.
  17. Many of these studies are nonetheless illuminating. See, for example, Patricia Ebrey, trans., *Family and Property in Sung China: Yüan Ts’ai’s Precepts for Social Life* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984); and Patricia Ebrey and James Watson, eds., *Kinship Organization in Late Imperial China 1000–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).
  18. Christopher Dawson, ed., *Mission to Asia* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 18.
  19. *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 7.
  20. Peter Jackson and David Morgan, *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1990), p. 49.
  21. Another serious effort to consider the status of Mongol elite women during this time is Paul Ratchnevsky, “La condition de la femme mongole au 12<sup>e</sup>–13<sup>e</sup> siècle,” in *Tractata Altaica Denis Sinor sexagenario . . . dedicata*, ed. W. Heissig et al. (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1976), pp. 510–523.
  22. A. C. Moule and Paul Pelliot, *Marco Polo: The Description of the World* (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1938), vol. 1, p. 205.
  23. For information on women in Persian sources, see, for example, John A. Boyle, *The Successors of Genghis Khan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), pp. 168–171; and for examples of evidence in Korean sources, see Chöng In-ji, *Koryö-sa* (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankö-kai sōsho, 1909); and Louis Hambis, “Notes sur l’histoire de Corée à l’époque mongole,” *T’oung Pao* 45 (1957), pp. 151–218.

24. For a general description of the roles and tasks of women in modern Mongolia, see Sechin Jagchid and Paul Hyer, *Mongolia's Culture and Society* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1979), pp. 111-115.

GLOSSARY

*Chang Ting chih k'an Mo-ho-lo*

張鼎智勘魔合羅

Chen-chin 真金

chüan 卷

Fu Shen 傅申

*Koryō-sa* 高麗史

Kuan Tao-sheng 管道昇

*Lin-chiang i hsiao-hsiang yeh-yü*

臨江驛瀟湘夜雨

*Yüan shih* 元史

The Texts of the  
*Memoirs of Lady Hyegyŏng*:  
The Problem of Authenticity

JAHYUN KIM HABOUSH

The *Memoirs of Lady Hyegyŏng* consists of four autobiographical narratives left by Lady Hyegyŏng (1735–1815), an eighteenth-century Korean noblewoman. She was the wife of Crown Prince Sado (1735–1762) who was ordered by his father, King Yŏngjo (r. 1724–1776), to enter a rice chest in which he was confined to die of suffocation and starvation eight days later. Lady Hyegyŏng wrote the memoirs over a span of ten years, the first in 1795, the second in 1801, the third in 1802, and the last in 1805. These memoirs are extremely unusual examples of autobiographical writing. That they are written in the Korean script, *han'gŭl*, that they are of feminine authorship, and that they are first-person narratives of self and the events of the author's life make them unique in traditional Korean literature.

True, once the Korean script was devised in the mid-fifteenth century, women, that is a certain class of women, including court ladies, aristocratic *yangban* women, and some courtesans, became active participants in written culture. Unlike men who, aside from certain genres of poetry and letters to women, continued to write in literary Chinese, women wrote exclusively in Korean. Their writings included poetry, occasional essays, and manuals on manners and housekeeping for other women. The most common kind of writing seems to have been letters, usually social obligations to kin such as letters of greeting and condolence. Sometimes these letters were quite revealing of emotional life.<sup>1</sup> These epistolary habits, which pre-

vailed in upper-class society in late Chosŏn Korea (1392–1910), definitely contributed to certain literary works. The *Memoirs of Lady Hyegyŏng*, after all, starts out as a letter addressed to her nephew. Nonetheless, unlike Heian Japanese ladies, Korean women seldom wrote about their lives, and left their lives to be told by men, if at all.<sup>2</sup>

The uniqueness of this work goes beyond the language it is written in or the gender of its author. The first memoir begins as a self-narration. In subsequent memoirs, the narration gradually moves to events of a public nature until the fourth memoir describes the act of filicide by the reigning king. The depiction of the conflict between father and son, which culminates in filicide by a most gruesome method, is at once fascinating and terrifying. That it is a woman who narrates this most public of incidents, an event that can be described as belonging exclusively to the domain of male power, makes these memoirs truly unique. Scholars working on women's autobiographies in the West have pointed out that the majority of them tend to focus on the private and domestic sphere of life.<sup>3</sup> In this context, it is all the more striking that Lady Hyegyŏng, breaking centuries of Korean feminine silence, ventures where few have tread.

In contemporary Korea, the memoirs are deservedly regarded as a literary classic and an invaluable historical document. Prince Sado, known as the king of the Rice Chest, has long since entered into the realm of popular legend. The incident continues to be a subject for both popular entertainment and serious drama. The *Memoirs* seems to serve both as an inspiration and as an authoritative source for these endeavors. There are competing accounts of the event, including those in official historiographies, various “*yasa*” (wild history) — anonymous accounts consisting of “rumors” — and short biographies and remembrances of Prince Sado written by officials or family. Not only are these accounts written in literary Chinese and therefore not as accessible, but none offers such a compelling and coherent picture as the *Memoirs*. The popularity or, more appropriately, the wide dissemination of the *Memoirs* is a relatively recent phenomenon, however. For a long time, the memoirs seem to have circulated within the narrow confines of the royal family and its close relatives. The first time any portion of the memoirs was introduced to the public was in 1939 when portions of the first and fourth memoirs were serialized in the short-lived monthly magazine *Munjang* (Literary style). The excerpts ran from the first issue, in February 1939, until the issue of January 1940.<sup>4</sup> During the eigh-

teenth and nineteenth centuries, most works that circulated seem to have been printed in woodblock editions. That there was no woodblock edition of any of the memoirs suggests that they must have remained inaccessible. This is not surprising given their exclusive nature. The first memoir was addressed to and even given to the heir of her natal family, and the remaining three were addressed to her grandson, King Sunjo (r. 1800–1834), and were probably given to some other members of the royal family.

The exclusivity, however, does not mean that the original remained intact or that the textual history is known or easily traceable. With the possible exception of the first memoir, the original manuscript is lost. There are altogether fourteen handwritten manuscript copies (*p'ilsabon*) of different varieties; they fall into several categories. The first consists of the manuscripts of all four memoirs collected into a complete series. There are eight of these, six in Korean, two in a mixture of Korean and Chinese. The second category consists of manuscripts of the first memoir. There are three in Korean and one in a mixture of Korean and Chinese. Then there is a manuscript of the first half of the first memoir in Korean. All manuscripts of the first memoir, however, came to the notice of scholars after 1979. The third category consists of Chinese translations of the second and third memoirs. This version, or for that matter, those in a mixture of Korean and Chinese are believed to have been made for the benefit of male readers. Because literary Chinese was the main medium of communication for educated Korean men until the late nineteenth century, it was not uncommon for works written in Korean to be translated into Chinese. That various individual memoirs by Lady Hyegyöng were translated not only into literary Chinese but also into Korean with much Chinese has interesting cultural significations. Textually, however, these versions are of less import.

For a long time, it was thought that the important manuscripts were those in the complete series of the memoirs. Of these, three in particular deserve our attention. One is known as the Karam manuscript, after the nom de plume of the late Professor Yi Pyönggi, who discovered it. It is believed to date from 1919. The second is the Ilsa manuscript, named after the late Professor Pang Chonghyön. This manuscript is believed to date from around the turn of this century. They are both housed at the Kyujanggak Library at the Seoul National University. These two manuscripts have been the basis for the dissemination of the memoirs. What was serialized in *Munjang* is based on the Karam manuscript. The Minjung Sögwän

edition of 1961 edited by Kim Tonguk, which is still regarded as the standard modern edition, is based on the Ilsa manuscript. The other extant manuscripts of a complete series of the memoirs are also traced to one or the other of these two manuscripts. The one at Korea University is the same as the Karam manuscript, and the Nason manuscript is believed to be a later copy from the same source. The Maenghyŏn manuscript is related to the Ilsa manuscript.<sup>5</sup>

The third, and as it turns out, the most important, is the one at the Asami Collection at the University of California, Berkeley. For the purpose of identification, I call this the Asami comp-A (complete A) manuscript. The first time I encountered this manuscript was in 1972 when I spent a week at the Berkeley library. I was impressed by the neat and regular calligraphic hand of the manuscript. In the same year, I also had opportunities to examine the Ilsa, the Karam, and the Korea University manuscripts in Seoul. I also discussed various editions with the late Professors Kim Tonguk and Chŏng Pyŏnguk. I obtained a copy of the Ilsa manuscript and used it as source material for my dissertation. It was not until 1978 when I decided to do a study and to translate the memoirs and acquired a photocopy of the Karam and the Asami comp-A manuscripts that I was able to make a systematic comparison of these texts.

The first thing one notices about all three of these manuscripts is that they do not follow the sequence in which Lady Hyegyŏng wrote them. Lady Hyegyŏng did not write them as a planned series, and thus the progression from one memoir to the next is psychological rather than temporally sequential. The first memoir is a narration of her life and, to a lesser extent, of the lives of members of her natal family. It is also an apologia for herself and her father, defending their decision to live on after Prince Sado's death as the only possible moral and political course available to them. The second memoir is a defense of her younger brother, Hong Nagim (1741–1801), and her paternal uncle, Hong Inhan (1722–1776), both of whom were executed. The third memoir covers the same ground as the second, but it also recounts the unrequited obsession of her son, King Chŏngjo (r. 1776–1800), to restore honor to his father. The fourth memoir describes the conflict between King Yŏngjo and Prince Sado, the deteriorating father-son relationship, the son's mental illness, and the final filicide.

It is also readily noticeable that the way in which these manuscripts are rearranged is similar. In fact, structurally the Karam and the Asami comp-





A manuscripts are identical. Each consists of six volumes. The first volume contains the first half of the first memoir, the second contains the first half of the fourth memoir, the third contains the second half of the fourth memoir, the fourth the second half of the first memoir, the fifth consists of the second memoir, and the sixth consists of the third memoir. In both texts, the six volumes are numbered as *ye* (rites), *ak* (music), *sa* (archery), *ō* (chariot driving), *sō* (learning), and *su* (mathematics). Somehow, these manuscripts acquired titles, and in this, the Karam and the Asami comp-A differ. The Karam has the title *Hanjungnok* (Records in bitterness), whereas the Asami has the title *Hanjung mallok* (Records in leisure). The Ilsa manuscript, which also has the title *Hanjung mallok*, is structurally the same but with a twist. Instead of six volumes, it has three. The first consists of the first half of the first memoir which is followed without interruption by the first half of the fourth memoir. The second volume begins with the second half of the fourth memoir, and then, under a separate heading *Hanjung mallok, sa* (the fourth), moves to the second half of the first memoir. The third begins with the second memoir and continues to the third memoir with no break. The three volumes are numbered more prosaically as one, two, three. One may puzzle over how to interpret the break before continuing with the second half of the first memoir in the second volume, but the sequence still remains the same as in the other two manuscripts.

Appearances are of course deceptive. A closer and more thorough examination of wording and internal consistencies led me to conclude that the Asami comp-A manuscript has the same wording and logic as the Ilsa manuscript, but is in a more pristine state, having suffered far less corruption than the Ilsa manuscript, which has some badly corrupted parts. One of the most obvious is the opening of the third volume: "Because a number of pages have been destroyed, I will roughly render the gist of the story." The text then cuts into the middle of a sentence that ordinarily appears on the third page of the second memoir. The previous two pages are not there. All evidence indicates that the Asami comp-A and the Ilsa manuscripts derived from the same source but that the Asami was copied much earlier and probably from an earlier copy as well. I took the Asami comp-A manuscript as the basis for my translation. On one occasion, I spent a few days comparing the Asami comp-A to another complete manuscript, one rendered in a mixture of Korean and Chinese, which I call the Asami comp-B. I concluded that the Asami comp-B was a rendering based on the Asami comp-A, and thus felt no need to investigate that version much further.





In examining these manuscripts, I often wondered about the relationship between individual memoirs and the complete series. How were these different memoirs collected into a series? What was the principle behind the reordering of the memoirs and its implications? Identifying the principle was easy; it was chronological by event. This is why the last memoir, which describes the filicide in 1762, is put between the first half and the last half of the first memoir. In Lady Hyegyöng's sequence, in the first three memoirs, this event is referred to only cryptically while she dwells at length on the emotional turmoil or political repercussions caused by it. Thus, coming at the end as it does, this description of her husband's death is like a solution to a puzzle posed by the many questions that arise in the course of reading the three memoirs. It is analogous to a detective story in which tension builds until a clue is supplied in the end. Rearrangement also eliminates the psychological force that impels the author to write each memoir, especially her reluctance and final resolve to write about the filicide.

Why did the editor(s) rearrange the memoirs chronologically?<sup>6</sup> It is probably because, either in terms of genre or in terms of narratorial method, there was no precedent for such narratives as the memoirs. The only non-fiction narratives of any length were historical narratives and biographies. Both historical narratives and biographies respect chronology, except for occasional brief and explanatory parenthetical insertions. Confusion concerning the genre can be seen in the fact that, until very recently, *Hanjungnok* has been classified as a "court novel" along with *Kyech'uk ilgi* (Diary of the year 1613) and *Inhyön wanghu chön* (The true history of Queen Inhyön), both *romans à clef*. If modern scholars have had problems in classifying the memoirs, it is easy to imagine how confusing they must have been for nineteenth-century editors.

The second question naturally arising was whether and to what extent the contents of each memoir had been rearranged and edited. There was, however, no clue. The three complete manuscripts were, though different in small, mostly linguistic details, remarkably similar in internal organization and narrative line. There were no substantial additions or deletions or rearrangements in any of the manuscripts. One could not conjecture that the texts have been substantially altered. This, however, was to change in 1989.

My project of translating the memoirs took much longer than I had anticipated. It was quite laborious and time consuming to compare the hand-

written manuscripts in old court-style Korean, especially when two of them are in a rather free cursive hand, although in time I did become used to them. The texts also required many historical notes, and there were many interruptions and distractions. I finally finished the translation and completed the notes late in the spring of 1989. I decided that, before I sent my manuscript off to a press, I should do two things. The first was to check all the known manuscript versions. I was able to satisfy myself about the manuscripts in Korea, and I knew the complete manuscripts from the Asami intimately. But there were several partial manuscripts at the Asami that I had not examined. I had taken a brief and cursory look at them in 1972, but they did not seem to be very significant. At one point, I had inquired about getting a copy of them from Berkeley, but I was told that I had to pay for the cost of microfilm, and so I did not pursue the matter. The truth of the matter was that, because they were listed as “abridged” manuscripts in the catalogue,<sup>7</sup> I somehow assumed they were corrupt copies and did not pay much attention to them. Moreover, none of the Korean scholars to whom I spoke mentioned anything about partial or abridged manuscripts. But, now that I had to discuss the textual history of the memoirs for my book, I wanted to know exactly what kind of partial manuscripts they were and how “abridged” these copies were, and so I ordered the microfilm of these manuscripts. I did this for the sake of thoroughness, but I assumed that several lines would be enough to describe them.

The other task was to survey secondary scholarship on the subject. In 1978, I took a thorough inventory of the secondary scholarship. I was rather unimpressed by what I found. During the 1980s, because I felt that I had all the manuscripts I needed and because I did not wish to be distracted, I did not pay much attention to secondary scholarship on the memoirs. In the early spring of 1989 I took a research trip to Seoul, and systematically acquired whatever I could find of the secondary scholarship on the memoirs. I also acquired a lot of material on the new project I was launching into. I had no time to read any of it, and mailed home several tens of boxes. One of the things I retrieved from this pile was Kim Yongsuk’s *Hanjungnok yŏn’gu* (A study of *Hanjungnok*).

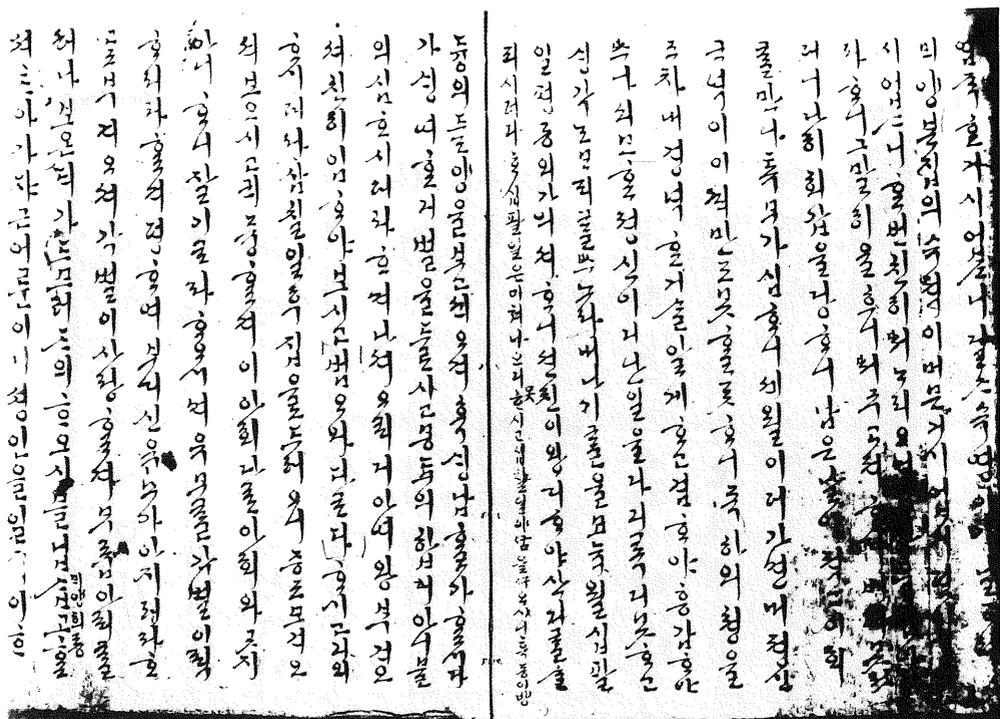
The first thing I read was her discussion of the Asami comp-A manuscript. It turned out that she had independently acquired a copy of the Asami comp-A manuscript in 1979, and in this book, which was published in 1983, she comes to the same conclusion I had. She even dates the Asami

comp-A manuscript at about 1880. She bases this dating on the fact that the calligraphic hand closely resembles that of Lady Yi, a lady-in-waiting who served the Queen Dowager Cho in the last decades of the nineteenth century. It was good to have this confirmation.<sup>8</sup>

What came next, however, was a shock. In the same chapter, she talks about a manuscript she believes to be the original of the first memoir. This was one of the “abridged” manuscripts at the Asami collection that I had just ordered on microfilm. After a month, the microfilm arrived. It contained two very interesting manuscripts. One was the manuscript of the first memoir in Korean which I call the Asami M 1 (Memoir One)-A; the second was the rendering of this into a mixture of Korean and Chinese, which I call the Asami M 1-B. I could see why when I took a cursory look at the Asami M 1-A in 1972, it appeared to be just an insignificant partial manuscript. It begins in more or less the same way as the first memoir in the complete manuscript. The memoir, however, is followed by a Korean rendition of the memorial that the author’s younger brother submitted to King Sunjo in 1809. This memorial, Hong Nagyun’s impassioned defense of his father and older brother,<sup>9</sup> discusses some of the same events that Lady Hyegyŏng does in her first, second, and third memoirs. Probably because of the inclusion of this memorial and its similarity to Lady Hyegyŏng’s memoirs, this manuscript is listed as an “abridged” manuscript of the entire series rather than as the manuscript of the first memoir. At least this was why it appeared to me as such in 1972 when I had no intimate knowledge of the contents of these manuscripts. The Asami M 1-B does not have Hong Nagyun’s memorial.

At this point I realized that the Asami M 1-A and M 1-B manuscripts deserved careful investigation and had them printed. Close examination led me to question seriously the claim that the Asami M 1-A manuscript was the original. First of all, the memoir and the memorial were in the same calligraphic hand,<sup>10</sup> and they were both punctuated by corrections, ranging from a line to several pages, in another calligraphic hand. What does all this mean? Lady Hyegyŏng wrote the first memoir in 1795 and presumably gave the original to her nephew, and Hong Nagyun wrote the memorial in Chinese in 1809. Who translated this memorial into Korean and when was this done? For the Asami M 1-A to be original, the following must have occurred: Lady Hyegyŏng kept a copy of her first memoir, someone translated her brother’s memorial into Korean for her, she then copied this trans-





6. Second and third pages from first memoir of Hyegyönggung Hong Ssi (1735–1815), written in 1795. Referred to as the Asami M 1-A in the article. Some consider this the original. In Korean. Shows corrections in small letters. Eleven and 12 cols. of 18–19 syllables; block 20 x 27.8 cm. Asami Library, University of California, Berkeley.

lation and appended it to her copy of the first memoir — all of this fourteen years after she wrote the first memoir. Unfortunately, there is no known example of Lady Hyegyöng’s calligraphy. She died in 1815, and so it was not impossible that she copied her brother’s memorial at some point after 1809. According to the *Sillok* (Veritable records), however, she is reported to have been in very poor health by this time.

Then what can we learn from the corrected portion? The corrected portion contains a description of Lady Hyegyöng’s parents’ virtues and, in one section, a description of her exemplary conduct. These portions offer a glimpse of the memoir in the process of becoming more formal and laudatory of Lady Hyegyöng and her family. Professor Kim takes primarily a textual approach. She notes that after she found the Asami manuscripts, two more manuscripts of the first memoir came to her notice, one in 1981 and the second in 1983. One was housed at the National Library, the other

寶藏一

幼時以入水書札往覆以朝夕以有之  
多日當於家以手蹟以多在互引入閣後  
先君警戒之此外間書辭之不當入於  
宮中而流布之門候之外以多辭緣是  
當如何於茶敬之道乎以朝夕以封書是  
為之者其是知家酒息之意互背書于其  
紙而送之其以者其告其其以朝夕  
承候之書簡以每書於紙頭而送之其  
也先親書簡互未如是書之其皆也同生

7. First page from first memoir of Hyegyönggung Hong Ssi (1735–1815), rendered into a mixture of Chinese and Korean. Date of compilation unknown. Referred to as the Asami M 1-B in the article. Nine cols.; block 15 x 10.8 cm. Asami Library, University of California, Berkeley.

privately owned. She believes that these two manuscripts are virtually the same and that, although there is more verbiage and longer descriptions than in the Asami M 1-A, they are later copies.<sup>11</sup> She concludes that, because of the presence of uncorrupted old court language and the absence of any taboo in speaking of the royal family (there is a taboo unless the speaker is a member of the royal family), the Asami M 1-A is either an original or at least a copy of the original.<sup>12</sup> Asami M 1-A is clearly the least edited version among all the known manuscripts of the first memoir, but it is not unedited. I remain unconvinced that it is the original. It appears to me that it is most likely a manuscript at least once removed from the one Lady Hyegyŏng wrote.

But having concluded that the Asami M 1-A is a more authentic version of the first memoir than the one included in the Asami comp-A, I had no choice but to translate this one for my book. The comparison between the Asami M 1-A and the first memoir in the Asami comp-A proved quite revealing. The difference between them is considerable. Professor Kim takes a thorough inventory of what is included and what is deleted from Asami M 1-A.<sup>13</sup> I feel that more significant differences lie in the narrative voice and the author's sense of public and private than in the contents and that this is primarily expressed by the different arrangements of material. The Asami M 1-A begins with Lady Hyegyŏng's birth, a description of her parents and grandparents, and the memory of her childhood at home. Once she leaves her family and enters the palace as the crown princess, however, the narration clearly distinguishes between her life at court and her natal family. Her account of her life at court sometimes includes her family, but only in those activities that are directly related to her court life. Otherwise, she reserves a separate space for her family at the end. She discusses each member of her family in a certain order, beginning with her generation, men first then women, and moving to one generation earlier keeping the same order along the gender line, and includes a special discussion of the family of her oldest brother and the servants whom she brought with her to the palace.<sup>14</sup>

The first memoir in the Asami comp-A contains more or less the same descriptions, but they are interspersed throughout the memoir. Typically, when a member of her family is mentioned in connection with her court life, then those portions of this person's life that have nothing to do with Lady Hyegyŏng follow. Thus, the separation between her court life and her

family, which clearly marks the narration in the Asami M 1-A, is replaced by a parallel or mixed representation of her court life and her family in the Asami comp-A.

The narrative voice also changes from a more personal one in Asami M 1-A to a more formal and neutral one in Asami comp-A. In Asami M 1-A, Lady Hyegyŏng's anguished interjections, repeated almost like a refrain, that she wishes to end her life mark the structure. The first time she says this is after her mother dies. The reader, however, knows that this is an expression of grief at the loss of a parent, and also an expression of anxiety over her husband's condition. She renounces this desire to die only when her son, King Chŏngjo, acquires a son, the heir to the throne. This cycle, her expression and renunciation of her desire to die, clearly represents the intensity of conflict between her private and public roles and its resolution. In Asami M 1-A, the perspective of the narrative is consistently that of the author, and there is a coincidence between the voice of the narrator and that of the protagonist.

The Asami comp-A, on the other hand, introduces a neutral perspective through an almost third-person voice. It contains much longer laudatory descriptions of the Hong family and, to a lesser extent, the Yi family, Lady Hyegyŏng's maternal family, than does the Asami M 1-A. This is narrated from a completely neutral perspective, similar to a biography in an official historiography. The neutrality is also achieved through deletion. In Asami comp-A, portions thought to be less than perfect representations of any member of the Hong family are excised. For example, a prolonged quarrel between Lady Hyegyŏng's parents is omitted. It also deletes Lady Hyegyŏng's occasional references to Prince Sado's illness and the heartaches it causes her and her parents. The most conspicuous attempt at a neutral perspective is the way the narrative is ended in this version. It ends with a long description of a feast for Lady Hyegyŏng's sixtieth-birthday celebration to which all of her relatives were invited. The use of a banquet to bring all the characters together is a common device in Chinese and Korean fiction. *Shui-hu chuan* (Water margin) is a famous example of this.<sup>15</sup> The Korean novel *Kuunmong* (A nine-cloud dream) also has a scene in which all nine protagonists come together and resolve to seek the path of enlightenment.<sup>16</sup> Lady Hyegyŏng's birthday feast enables the narrator to speak of female relatives who were absent as well as those who were present. The voice that introduces the scene speaks in the first person, but with a third-person per-

spective. “I read in history of that celebrated event in which the Emperor Ming-ti of the Han dynasty visited the tomb of Kuang-wu-ti with Queen Dowager Yin and subsequently held a banquet at Queen Dowager Yin’s family home. This birthday feast was very similar to that which the Emperor Ming-ti held, and I would like to transmit it as an exemplary anecdote to later generations.” This voice is that of an omniscient or at least impersonal narrator. No longer is there an identification between the voice of the protagonist and that of the narrator.

Although the editorial changes in the first memoir between the Asami M 1-A and the Asami comp-A are in themselves of great interest, they are equally important in terms of what they imply for the remaining memoirs. If the first memoir went through such changes, it is not unreasonable to conjecture that the rest were changed considerably as well. At the moment, however, this remains conjecture. We know of no manuscripts of the individual second, third, and fourth memoirs. At least this was still the case in the summer of 1990 when I visited Seoul and spoke to Professor Kim Yongsuk who, though retired by then, nevertheless maintained a keen interest in the subject. One takes comfort, however, in the fact that, despite probable changes, Lady Hyegyŏng’s voice remains vivid.

## NOTES

1. Kim Ilgŭn, *Ŏn'gan ūi yŏn'gŭ* (Seoul: Kŏn'guk taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1986).
2. Official historiographies reserved space for biographies of women of exceptional social virtue. Female ancestors were also commemorated by male members of the family who wrote various necrologies that were included in collected works of individual scholars.
3. Estelle C. Jelinek, *The Tradition of Women's Autobiography: From Antiquity to the Present* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1986). For discussions of women autobiographers' difficulty in self-assertion, see Patricia Meyers Spacks, “Selves in Hiding”; and Elizabeth Winston, “The Autobiographer and Her Readers: From Apology to Affirmation”; in *Women's Autobiography*, ed. Estelle C. Jelinek (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), pp. 112–132 and 93–111.
4. See *Munjang* 1.1, pp. 102–114; 1.2, pp. 177–186; 1.3, pp. 180–186; 1.4, pp. 182–187; 1.5, pp. 189–198; 1.6, pp. 197–201; 1.7, pp. 189–195; 1.8, pp. 195–202; 1.9, pp. 266–277; 1.10, pp. 203–213; 1.11, pp. 179–188; 2.1, pp. 208–219.
5. See Kim Yongsuk, *Hanjungnok yŏn'gu*

- (Seoul: Han'guk yŏn'guwŏn, 1983), pp. 26–30.
6. For discussions of the relationship between temporality and narrative structure, see David Carr, *Time, Narrative and History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); and Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. K. McLaughlin and D. Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), vol. 1.
  7. Chaoying Fang, *The Asami Library: A Descriptive Catalogue* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 193–195.
  8. Kim Yongsuk, *Hanjungnok*, pp. 30–41.
  9. *Sunjo sillok*, in *Chosŏn wangjo sillok* (Seoul: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏonhoe, 1955–1963), vol. 12, pp. 3a–9a.
  10. Toward the end of the memoir, the calligraphic hand changes, and Kim notes this too. Kim Yongsuk, *Hanjungnok*, p. 108.
  11. *Ibid.*, pp. 69–96.
  12. *Ibid.*, pp. 96–130.
  13. *Ibid.*, pp. 41–69.
  14. See “The Memoirs of Lady Hye-gyŏng,” forthcoming.
  15. H. C. Chang, *Chinese Literature: Popular Fiction and Drama* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1974), p. 19. Also Shuen-fu Lin, “Ritual and Narrative Structure in *Ju-lin wai-shih*,” in *Chinese Narrative*, ed. Andrew Plaks (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 261.
  16. See Kim Manjung, *A Nine Cloud Dream*, in *Virtuous Women*, trans. Richard Rutt and Kim Chong-un (Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, 1974), pp. 172–176.

## GLOSSARY

(Queen Dowager) Cho 趙 (大妃)	Kim Tonguk 金東旭
Chŏng Pyŏnguk 鄭秉旭	Kim Yongsuk 金用淑
Chŏngjo 正祖	Kuang-wu-ti 光武帝
han'gŭl 한글	<i>Kuunmong</i> 九雲夢
<i>Hanjung mallok</i> 閑中漫錄	<i>Kyech'uk ilgi</i> 癸丑日記
<i>Hanjungnok</i> 閑中錄 / 恨中錄	Kyujanggak 奎章閣
<i>Hanjungnok yŏn'gu</i> 閑中錄研究	Maenghyŏn 孟峴
Hong Inhan 洪麟漢	Ming-ti 明帝
Hong Nagim 洪樂任	Minjung Sŏgwan 民衆書館
Hong Nagyun 洪樂倫	<i>Munjang</i> 文章
Hye-gyŏng 惠慶 (宮)	nak 樂
Ilsa 일사	Nason 나손
<i>Inhyŏn wanghu chŏn</i> 仁顯王后傳	ŏ 御
Karam 가람	Pang Chonghyŏn 方鍾鉉

p'ilsabon 筆寫本

sa 射

Sado 思悼

*Shui-hu chuan* 水滸傳

*Sillok* 實錄

sŏ 書

su 數

Sunjo 純祖

yangban 兩班

yasa 野史

ye 禮

(Lady) Yi 李 (內人)

Yi Pyŏnggi 李秉岐

(Queen Dowager) Yin 陰 (皇后)

Yŏngjo 英祖

# Population Registers and Household Records as Sources for the Study of Urban Women in Tokugawa Japan

GARY P. LEUPP

The Tokugawa period (1603–1868) brought many changes to the lives of Japanese women. The officially mandated separation of warriors from peasants (*heino bunri*) resulted in the formation of large urban centers, in which women assumed roles significantly different from those of their sisters in the villages of pre-Tokugawa Japan. The growth of an urban-driven national market, meanwhile, produced new opportunities for some rural women, who succeeded as entrepreneurs or benefited as kin of wealthy peasants.<sup>1</sup> But the penetration of a money economy into the villages also promoted stratification among the peasantry, reducing many women to the status of landless laborers, prostitutes, or beggars.<sup>2</sup> Licensed “pleasure quarters” — an innovation of the late sixteenth century — grew dramatically during the period. These and their unofficial counterparts in post towns and elsewhere ensured that many impoverished peasants’ daughters would leave home on long-term contracts to brothel keepers and similar predators.

As such changes were taking place, the Tokugawa shogunate officially embraced, with greater fervor than any prior administration, the doctrines of Sung neo-Confucianism. These were arguably no more misogynistic than the tenets of most Mahayana Buddhist sects that had long flourished in Japan,<sup>3</sup> but supported by the full weight of the state apparatus, they were

more widely disseminated.<sup>4</sup> Such works as Kaibara Ekken's *Onna daigaku* (The great learning for women, 1672), *Hime kagami* (Mirror for young ladies, 1709), and *Onna kakun* (Precepts for women, 1720) emphasized women's putatively low and evil character: women were by nature disobedient, prone to anger, slanderous, jealous, stupid.<sup>5</sup> Their roles were to be restricted to child bearing (and even here their contribution was denigrated, as indicated by the contemporary expression *Hara wa karimono*: "The womb is a borrowed thing")<sup>6</sup> and household management. "Women's job," according to the *Hime kagami*, "is to work in the kitchen."

Having accepted this view of women's role in society, the regime acted to ensure that women remained subject to the "Three Obediences" (*Sanjū*) specified in the Chinese classic *Lieh Tzu*: "A woman has no way of independence through life. When she is young, she obeys the father; when she is married, she obeys her husband; when she is widowed, she obeys her son."<sup>7</sup> It granted male family heads the right to abuse or kill female dependents, or to sell them into prostitution. It allowed men the right to divorce their wives for virtually any reason.<sup>8</sup> It restricted female inheritance rights and banned women from numerous occupations.<sup>9</sup>

But the legal and literary evidence concerning women's status can only give us an incomplete picture. The history of sumptuary legislation, and efforts to control popular culture during this period, indicate that there was often a broad gap between ruling-class prescriptions for behavior, and the actual habits of the masses.<sup>10</sup> In particular, urban sophisticates had the tendency blithely to disregard much of the content of hortatory edicts and officially sponsored moral literature. To investigate the actual conditions of women's existence — as daughters, wives, spinsters, mothers, workers, dependents, managers, religious believers — we must turn to quantitative records, and the data that can be culled therefrom.

This paper discusses two categories of such records: population registers (*ninbetsuchō*) and household records, and their uses for scholars interested in the lives of Tokugawa women. I limit my attention to urban documents, since these have been exploited by historians less than the more abundant village records, and depict a more dynamic and complex society. They may also better reveal the divergence between officially and popularly approved constructions of gender. Since the documents deal only with urban commoners (*machikata*), my discussion largely omits reference to samurai

women, even though in some towns and cities they made up a substantial portion of the female population.

### THE FEMALE URBAN POPULATION

Since samurai populations were not recorded in the *ninbetsuchō*, it is difficult to calculate the number of urban women during this period. Even where the numbers of samurai can be roughly approximated, we usually can only guess about the sex ratio among them. But below are some figures on the *machikata* population in the five greatest cities of Tokugawa Japan — Edo, Osaka, Kyoto, Kanazawa, and Nagoya — during the first half of the period (see table 1).

Obviously the number of women in these cities was significantly lower than the number of men. More boys are born than girls, but these sex ratios are all well above the 105 figure considered normal by demographers.<sup>11</sup> They are not, however, necessarily higher than in agricultural villages: Susan Hanley's research on three villages in Okayama shows that sex ratios of 110 to 118 were common during the latter half of the Tokugawa period,<sup>12</sup>

Table 1  
SEX RATIOS OF COMMONERS IN MAJOR CITIES

CITY	YEAR	SEX RATIO (MEN PER 100 WOMEN)	RECORDED FEMALE POPULATION	RECORDED MALE POPULATION
Edo	1733	354	96,103	340,277
Osaka	1689	118	174,930	207,070
Kyoto	1715	116	139,872	162,883
Kanazawa	1697	109	65,644	71,628
Nagoya	1684	109	25,879	28,239

SOURCES: Edo: Nishiyama Matsunosuke et al., eds., *Edo gaku jiten* (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1984), p. 698; Osaka: Saitō Osamu, *Shōka no sekai, uramise no sekai: Edo to Osaka no hikaku toshi-shi* (Tokyo: Riburotopotto, 1987), p. 130; Kyoto: Takahashi Bonsen, *Nihon jinkōshi no kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1941), vol. 1, p. 239; Kanazawa: Hioki Ken, ed., *Kaga han shiryō* (Ishiguro Bunkichi, 1929–1933), vol. 5, pp. 386–388; Nagoya: Hayashi Tōichi, *Owari han manpitsu* (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku, 1989), p. 166.

and Thomas Smith has shown that a village on the Nobi plain had a sex ratio of 114 during the period 1717–1830.<sup>13</sup> (National census figures show the sex ratio at 115 in 1732, steadily falling thereafter but still over 110 at the beginning of the nineteenth century.)<sup>14</sup> So these figures are not particularly exceptional except in the case of Edo, where the commoner population consisted largely of male construction and transport workers.<sup>15</sup>

Were the samurai population to be included, no doubt the figure would be even higher. By 1855, however, the sex ratio among Edo commoners was 105:100, and in Osaka, where the samurai were always few, the ratio was nearly down to 100:100.<sup>16</sup> However males may have preponderated in Tokugawa cities during most of the period, we can assume that, in the five largest cities during any point in the period, the number of nonsamurai women alone normally exceeded half a million. This suggests that roughly one in twenty-five Japanese women lived in a city of over one hundred thousand. Thus the construction of the female role in Tokugawa society was greatly affected by urban habits and institutions.

#### SURVIVING *NINBETSUCHŌ* OF URBAN WARDS

The most extensive series of urban *ninbetsuchō* provides us with our clearest, broadest window into the lives of urban women. Many scholars have used the extant population registers to address various historical problems, although few have focused specifically on the history of women in these cities.<sup>17</sup> Among others, Akiyama Kunizō, Hayami Akira, Imai Shūhei, Inui Hiromi, Masaoka Kanji, Matsumoto Shirō, Miyamoto Mataji, Saitō Osamu, Sasaki Yōichirō, Sugimori Tetsuya, and Tsuchida Ryōichi have all published work based on ward registers.<sup>18</sup> So have Western scholars such as William Hauser and Robert Smith.<sup>19</sup> I have used them in connection with research on urban labor.<sup>20</sup> But much remains to be done.

The amount of known, extant urban *ninbetsuchō* is small compared to the massive quantity of village registers. This fact does not result from any laxity on the part of urban record keepers, but reflects the devastation caused by the conflagrations that routinely leveled urban landscapes. Various scattered registers from individual urban wards survive, but only a handful of substantial data series, covering a decade or more, are known to have survived. Below is a partial listing of such series, with their locations.

*Osaka*

Dōshōmachi San-chōme (1659–1868), Osaka Nakanoshima Prefectural Library (Osaka) [Ōsaka furitsu Nakanoshima toshokan]

Kikuyachō (1639–1868), Osaka Nakanoshima Prefectural Library

Miikedōri Go-chōme (1700–1868), Osaka Nakanoshima Prefectural Library

Kobikichō Minami no chō (1780–1868), Osaka Nakanoshima Prefectural Library

Hiranomachi Ni-chōme (1779–1868), Osaka Nakanoshima Prefectural Library

Sadoyachō (1832–1842), photocopies in the possession of Department of Japanese History, University of Osaka (Toyonaka-shi, Ōsaka) [Ōsaka daigaku kokushi kenkyūshitsu]

*Tennōji-mura*

Hirokoshimachi (1757–1858), Education Ministry Archive (Tokyo) [Monbushō shiryōkan]

Kubomachi (1757–1858), Education Ministry Archive

*Kyoto*

Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō (1685–1863), in private hands; microfilm in possession of Hayami Akira (Keiō University, Tokyo)

Hanagurumachō (1819–1868), Kyoto Municipal Historical Archive (Kyoto) [Kyōto-shi shiritsu rekishi shiryōkan]

Koromonotana Kitamachi (1786–1867), Center for Research on Urban Edicts (Kyoto University) [Kyōto daigaku machifure kenkyū kaisho]

Koromonotana Minami-machi (1786–1867), Center for Research on Urban Edicts

Shisuichō (1783–1857), Kyoto Municipal Historical Archive (Kyoto)

Taishiyamachō (1813–1864), Center for Research on Urban Edicts

*Takayama*

Ichi no machi (1819–1871), Takayama Local Archive (Takayama)  
[Takayama kyōdōkan]

Ni no machi (1773–1871), Takayama Local Archive

*Nagasaki*

Hiradomachi (1633–1659), Kyushu University Kyushu Cultural History  
Research Center (Fukuoka) [Kyūshū daigaku Kyūshū bunkashi  
kenkyūjo]

Okeyamachi (1742–1863), Nagasaki Prefectural Library (Nagasaki)  
[Nagasaki kenritsu toshokan]

*Kōfu*

Mikkamachi (1672–1870), Yamanashi Prefectural Library (Kōfu)  
[Yamanashi kenritsu toshokan]

*Kōriyama*

Kamimachi (1729–1868), Kōriyama City Library (Kōriyama)<sup>21</sup>  
[Kōriyama-shi toshokan]

Most of the series contain substantial gaps.

Note that only five of these series contain data for the seventeenth century. But for urban historians researching the late eighteenth century or nineteenth century, the surviving records are invaluable. They provide us with a wealth of information concerning women of various social strata. Osaka's Dōshōmachi San-chōme was a ward in the prosperous Senba district near the city's massive castle, well known for its medicine shops. Kikuyachō was a less affluent, mixed commercial ward bordering the Dōtonbori theater quarter. Neighboring Kobikichō Minami no chō ("Sawyers' Ward, South") was, despite its name, another ward of this type. Wholesalers and brokers (*nakagai*) resided in Hiranomachi Ni-chōme; Miiokedōri Gochōme, an affluent ward near the Shinmachi brothel district, was also known as a haunt of unlicensed prostitutes; Sadoyachō was a cheap brothel quarter.

In Kyoto, Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō constituted a bustling market street near the west bank of the Kamo River. It was an area well trafficked by pilgrims bound for the temples of the east bank as well as pleasure seekers headed for Gion and Shinbashi.<sup>22</sup> Here lived physicians, Confucian scholars, and artists such as Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795). Hanagurumachō was a less thriving ward, at least during the period covered by surviving *ninbetsuchō*. Located in the heart of the Nishijin silk-weaving district, it suffered from the general decline of Kyoto's textile industry in the early and mid-nineteenth century. In this ward, alongside a few fairly large-scale workshop households, lived small families of weavers, spinners, reelers, and dyers, often on the verge of destitution. Thus the registers log wealthy matrons as well as scullery maids; grocers' daughters alongside wet nurses; poor widows along with unlicensed prostitutes.

#### CONTENTS OF THE *NINBETSUCHŌ*

But what precisely were these documents? Since their origins and structure have been described in detail elsewhere,<sup>23</sup> I only briefly explain their nature here, then focus on the specificities of the urban registers.

In 1612 the Tokugawa shogunate renewed the ban on Christianity, which had been allowed to lapse since its initial imposition in 1587. The prohibition was thereafter enforced with increasing effectiveness, and pursuant to it, the regime established the practice of requiring virtually all members of society publicly to repudiate Christianity and affiliate with some Buddhist sect. The point was not so much to inculcate Buddhist piety; indeed, many among the intelligentsia regarded the Indian faith with condescension or contempt. Rather, the shogunate operated on the assumption that no true *Kirishitan* would conceal his or her allegiance and thus forfeit the imagined rewards awaiting martyrs in the Christian paradise.

In 1638 the shogunate began to compile *shū aratame chō* (records verifying religious sect affiliation), and in 1664, all daimyo (lords possessing lands with an assessed yield of 10,000 or more *koku*) were obliged to do the same in their domains. In 1671 it was ordered that such registers be compiled annually.

In some cases, registration was accompanied by the ritual of *fumie* (image trampling): each registered person would be obliged to tread on a picture of Jesus or the Virgin Mary to indicate contempt for the foreign Christian



1. Title page of *shūmon aratame ninbetsuchō* (religious population register) of Hanagurumachō, Kyoto, 1855. Religious sects represented in the ward are listed at the top. Kyoto Municipal Historical Archive.

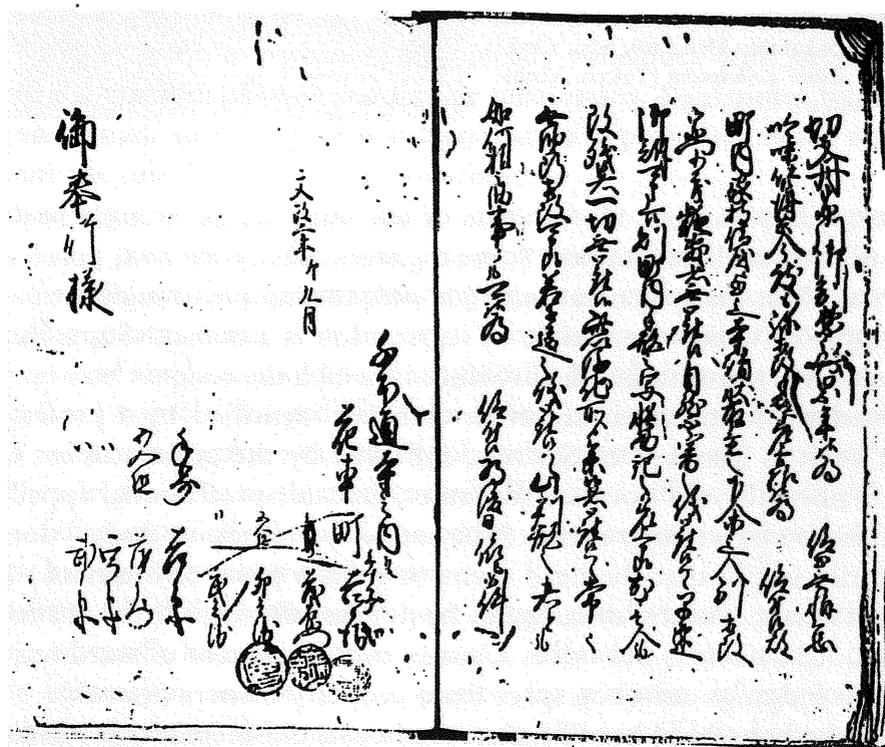
faith. Virtually all such records contain a statement such as the following, which appears at the end of the register for Kyoto's Hanagurumachō, dated 1819:

Since the Christian religion has been under a special official ban for many years, it is now again declared that [religious affiliation] will be invested with untiring diligence. To that end, this report has been prepared. As ordered, everyone in the ward, from householders and tenants to servants, possesses a temple surety certificate indicating religious affiliation. We will immediately report any dubious persons or anything suspicious to the authorities.

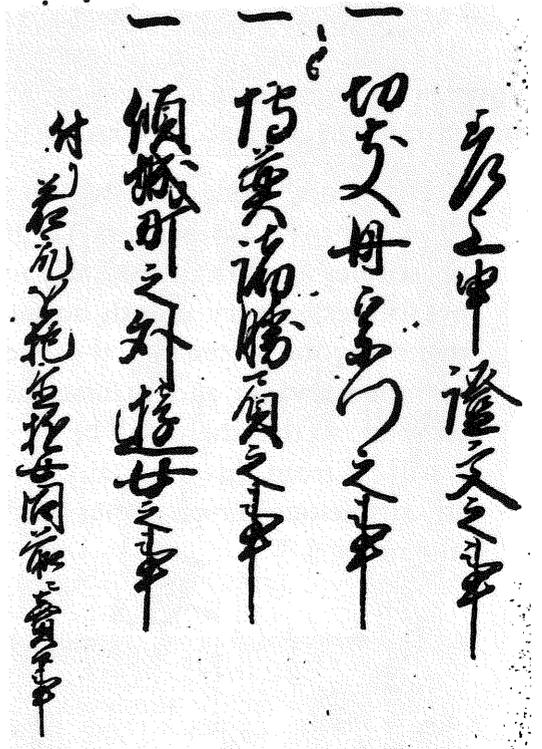
The document is signed by the elders of the ward, who pledge, "Should there be any deviation, those whose seals are affixed here will share responsibility for the misdeed."<sup>24</sup>

Like the village registers, the urban *ninbetsuchō* constitute bound volumes of durable mulberry paper. The dated title page is sometimes followed by a preface restating longstanding prohibitions. The Kikyūchō documents, for example, begin with this statement:

We hereby pledge to observe the firm laws issued heretofore concerning: (1) Christianity, (2) gambling games, (3) unregistered prostitutes (specifically, the sale and hire of young men and female prostitutes). Every month house owners (*iemochi*) will ascertain that everyone — tenants, those renting shops, and others including menservants and maidservants — possess certificates from temples, so that there will be no suspicious persons [living in the ward]. If from this point any member of the proscribed sect, or any suspicious person comes [to this ward], we will hastily report [the matter].<sup>25</sup>



2. Concluding page of Hanagurumachō register for 1819, affirming the ward's compliance with anti-Christian edicts. Kyoto Municipal Historical Archive.



3. Prefatory statement in *ninbetsuchō* for Kikuyachō, Osaka, 1764, indicating residents' adherence to laws against Christianity, gambling, and prostitution. In Miyamoto Mataji and Sakamoto Heiichirō, eds., *Ōsaka Kikuyachō shūshi ninbetsuchō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1972), vol. 2, p. 563.

After such preamble, all residents of the ward are listed underneath the name of their affiliate temples. Some registers specify the sect, preceded by the phrase “for many generations” (*dai-dai*); the temple of registration; and the temple of which the temple of registration is a branch. Some indicate alongside this information the province in which the resident was born.

Household heads are more often than not identified by a professional name, such as Tanbaya or Sakaiya, followed by the given names. Commoners normally did not bear surnames, and this professional appellation served in lieu of a family name. (The suffix “*ya*” [shop or dealer] does not necessarily imply that the head owns or rents a place of business.) If the head is a tenant (*shakuya* or *tanagari*), he (it is usually *he*) is listed as such and his landlord’s name is provided. Usually over 80 percent of ward residents rent their lodgings and shop space from property owners (*iemochi*).

After the household head’s name, the household members are listed; female names are almost always rendered phonetically in *kana* rather than in Chinese characters, and so stand out conspicuously. Family members are

followed by live-in employees. In some registers all of these members are conscientiously recorded as adherents of specific Buddhist sects, with affiliations to specific temples; in others, ditto marks indicate that all members of the household have routinely been registered as members of the master's sect and temple. In the latter case, temple registration appears to be a purely administrative affair, and has little to do with heartfelt religious convictions.

Some registers, such as the later records from Hanagurumachō, record ages alongside the entries for each member. Some provide notes (penned in or appended on strips of paper) concerning changes during the twelve months between compilations. Births, deaths, name changes, the hiring and dismissal of employees, instances of absconding, departures to other wards might be entered into the record in this fashion. There are normally only four or five persons listed per page, so ample space remains for such notations.

The *ninbetsuchō* for some wards are divided into sections according to status (house owners listed separately from tenants) or by religious affiliation. In such records, each section typically concludes with subtotals reflecting the number of male and female inhabitants. Sometimes figures for male and female servants (*genan* and *gejo*) are also provided. Some registers also indicate subtotals after each household.

Urban registers differ from the village *ninbetsuchō* in several significant ways. They document a far more complex occupational structure and degree of mobility. Compiled under more direct ruling-class supervision, they offer greater detail than the rural records. In the latter, for example, the spouse of the household head is typically listed simply as *tsuma* (wife); no personal name is logged. But the urban registers usually indicate the wife's name, and some note in detail such matters as the woman's new residence in the aftermath of divorce.<sup>26</sup> Whereas village *ninbetsuchō* often omit infants, especially females, the better urban registers not only list such babies, but also give their birth dates.

Students of village *ninbetsuchō* have investigated various problems relevant to women's history, such as fertility, nuptiality, incidence of divorce, female succession, and female migration for purposes of employment.<sup>27</sup> They have also used data on sex ratios, on the sex of last-born registered children, and on the spacing of births to demonstrate the likelihood of sex-specific infanticide, and its probable attenuation over time.<sup>28</sup> But let us turn

to the insights these sources provide into the lives of urban women during the Tokugawa period.

### THE UNBALANCED SEX RATIO

First of all, urban *ninbetsuchō* can shed light on the skewed sex ratio apparent in the cumulative figures cited above. Scholars who have studied village *ninbetsuchō* have attributed high sex ratios to the practice of sex-selective infanticide.<sup>29</sup> Was this also a major factor in producing the urban imbalance? Was abortion a factor? Peasant women often sought abortions to limit family growth, but this population-control technique is believed to have been more widely practiced in cities.<sup>30</sup> It was not, of course, sex selective in this society, which lacked amniocentesis and ultrasound machines, but it was more frequently employed by families that had already produced a son or two. So this practice might also result in high sex ratios.

The abandonment of children (*sutego*) was a significant problem for urban administrations. Was this a sex-selective phenomenon, and did the fate of the forsaken girls affect urban sex ratios?<sup>31</sup> Or did the larger male numbers result from a greater penchant on the part of male peasants to migrate to the cities for employment purposes (*dekasegi*)?

Figures derived from the Kikuyachō and Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō registers illuminate the cases of Osaka and Kyoto. The first Kikuyachō register, dated 1659, lists 189 ward residents. Only 84 of these are male, so the sex ratio is a low 80.0. Thereafter the population grows dramatically, peaking at 698 in 1716 before declining below 600 before the 1760s. After the first, all the registers show a sex ratio of over 114. The figure peaks at 146 in 1730, subsequently falling but remaining well above the national figure, which hovered between 110 and 106 during the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup>

The sex ratio of Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō, a small ward with between 235 and 280 inhabitants during most of the period, was similarly unbalanced, at least during the first half of the Tokugawa era. But females seem to have outnumbered males, sometimes by a significant margin, during the last several decades of the period.

Some scholars have asserted that urbanization and the development of nonagricultural employment created more job opportunities for women, disinclined peasant families toward sex-selective population control, and

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consequently produced the declining nationwide sex ratio shown in the third column of table 2.<sup>33</sup> Might urban households have similarly overcome a bias against girl babies?

The *ninbetsuchō* suggest that this was indeed the case. One finds a fairly consistent feminization of family composition in both Kikuyachō and Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō. If we break down the figures given above into servant and nonservant categories, we realize that in Kikuyachō the sex ratio among the latter drops even more markedly than the national figures (table 3). The same applies to Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō (table 4).

Thus we find high sex ratios among family members up until the mid-

Table 2

SEX RATIOS AMONG KIKUYACHŌ AND SHIJŌ TACHIURI NAKA NO CHŌ RESIDENTS,  
COMPARED WITH THE NATIONAL SEX RATIO

YEAR	KIKUYACHŌ	SHIJŌ TACHIURI NAKA NO CHŌ	NATIONAL SEX RATIO	YEAR	KIKUYACHŌ	SHIJŌ TACHIURI NAKA NO CHŌ	NATIONAL SEX RATIO
1659	80.0	—	—	1790	105.9	—	—
1682	123.2	—	—	1800	112.3	—	—
1697	—	128.6	—	1804	110.1	—	—
1715	—	127.3	—	1808	91.1	—	—
1720	139.1	—	—	1810	134.9	—	—
1730	127.0	—	—	1820	139.2	—	—
1732	—	—	115.1	1822	109.3	—	—
1739	—	129.1	—	1828	—	—	108.6
1740	134.3	—	—	1830	114.6	—	—
1750	146.0	—	114.2	1840	121.1	—	—
1751	—	126.8	—	1845	—	89.0	—
1761	125.6	—	—	1846	—	—	106.1
1762	—	—	113.6	1850	119.1	—	—
1770	121.2	—	—	1860	115.5	—	—
1781	115.0	—	—	1861	—	100.8	—
1786	—	—	111.6				

SOURCES: Miyamoto Mataji and Sakamoto Heichirō, eds., *Ōsaka Kikuyachō shūmon ninbetsu aratamechō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1972); Hayami Akira, "Kyōto machikata no shūmon aratamechō: Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō," Tokugawa rinseishi kenkyūjo, *Kenkyū kiyō* (1981), pp. 512–517.

*Table 3*  
SEX RATIOS AMONG KIKUYACHŌ RESIDENTS

YEAR	FAMILY MEMBERS	SERVANTS
1659	76.8	110.0
1682	109.2	196.6
1720	121.0	232.6
1730	112.6	263.0
1740	113.9	294.3
1750	119.4	261.9
1761	107.7	221.3
1770	101.6	188.1
1781	95.7	165.8
1790	91.2	189.7
1801	101.3	158.2
1810	106.1	218.6
1820	103.4	206.8
1830	100.0	158.3
1840	99.5	184.4
1850	97.8	183.0
1860	85.7	196.0

SOURCES: Miyamoto and Sakamoto, eds., *Ōsaka Kikuyachō shūmon ninbetsu aratamechō*; Hayami, "Kyōto machikata no shūmon aratamechō," pp. 512-517.

*Table 4*  
SEX RATIOS AMONG SHIJŌ TACHIURI NAKA NO  
CHŌ RESIDENTS

YEAR	FAMILY MEMBERS	SERVANTS
1697	119.1	145.9
1702	109.2	114.3
1703	106.2	172.7
1710	113.9	145.1
1711	122.1	132.0
1715	125.5	129.5
1737	123.9	148.7
1739	111.7	169.7
1743	114.7	139.5
1751	115.5	148.6
1808	88.0	104.3
1845	88.7	90.0
1861	87.8	200.0
1863	87.6	178.9

SOURCE: Hayami, "Kyōto machikata no shūmon aratamechō," pp. 512-517.

eighteenth century; these may have resulted from such practices as female infanticide, abandonment or inferior treatment of girls, or a hesitation to retain them in the household. But thereafter the ratio declines quite dramatically. The ratio of those listed as "sons" to those recorded as "daughters" remains high; in Kikuyachō in 1826, for example, it was 111.9. But this imbalance can be attributed to the departure of daughters as brides. The high figures shown in table 3 for Kikuyachō even during the latter half of the period reflect the preponderance of male servants and employees in the ward rather than male-biased family-planning practices.

But this raises another question. If peasants were raising more girls because of increasing employment opportunities, we would also expect to find an increase in the ratio of female to male employment, as Thomas Smith suggests (see servant sex ratio in table 3). One sees no obvious feminization, however, in the servant population, until one breaks employers down into two categories: house owners and tenants. Although the ratio of menservants (*genin*) to maidservants (*gejo*) remains high among both categories, it gradually falls in tenants' households (table 5).<sup>34</sup>

One finds a similar drop in the sex ratios of tenants' employees in the Dōshōmachi San-chōme, Hiranomachi Ni-chōme, and Kobikichō Minami no chō registers.<sup>35</sup> Tenants, if not house owners, were becoming increas-

Table 5  
SEX RATIOS OF SERVANTS, KIKUYACHŌ

YEAR	TENANTS' HOUSEHOLDS		HOUSE OWNERS' HOUSEHOLDS	
	NUMBER OF <i>GEJO</i>	SEX RATIO	NUMBER OF <i>GEJO</i>	SEX RATIO
1751	29	300.0	10	190.0
1766	17	211.8	27	200.0
1781	16	218.7	23	117.4
1800	34	197.0	19	142.1
1810	33	230.3	29	158.6
1841	41	182.9	23	169.6
1860	27	107.4	27	277.8

SOURCE: Inui Hiroimi, "Ōsaka chōnin shakai no kōzō: jinkō dōtai ni okeru," in Tsuda Hideo, *Kinsei kokka no kaitei to kindai* (Tokyo: Kōshobō, 1979), pp. 32-33.

ingly likely to employ women. In Kikuyachō the house owners were often merchants who maintained large staffs of clerks, who were usually male, whereas tenants were more apt to hire one or two people as household servants and attendants. I have argued elsewhere that such figures suggest that domestic chores were more and more being regarded as female chores, and that women were replacing men as domestic servants in Osaka.<sup>36</sup>

Such an analysis has yet to be done on Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō, but I have culled the data shown in table 6 from the Hanagurumachō *ninbetsuchō*. Although the sample from this small Nishijin ward cannot be considered statistically significant, it clearly suggests that females made up a larger proportion of tenants' servants than of house owners' employees. Tenants became increasingly apt to employ servants during the latter part of the period, so it is possible that an awareness of job opportunities in urban tenant households may have boosted the status of daughters and discouraged the practice of female-specific infanticide. Much more work needs to be done on this topic.

#### INHERITANCE AND HEADSHIP

Another topic relevant to women's status is inheritance. From a study of Tokugawa village *ninbetsuchō*, one scholar has found that around 9 percent

Table 6  
SEX RATIOS OF SERVANTS, HANAGURUMACHŌ

YEAR	TENANTS' HOUSEHOLDS		HOUSE OWNERS' HOUSEHOLDS	
	NUMBER OF <i>GEJO</i>	SEX RATIO	NUMBER OF <i>GEJO</i>	SEX RATIO
1819	8	87.5	3	233.3
1829	4	325.0	4	250.0
1839	8	37.5	8	200.0
1848	13	115.4	5	380.0
1858	4	25.0	20	120.0
1867	2	100.0	8	125.0

SOURCE: *Hanagurumachō shūmon ninbetsu aratamechō* (Kyōto-shi shiritsu rekishi shiryōkan).

of all successors to household headship were women.<sup>37</sup> But Nakano Yoshio has found only 37 cases of female succession out of 1,507 cases of succession in Osaka wards between 1707 and 1872.<sup>38</sup> These represent only 2.5 percent of all the cases examined. But the practice varied noticeably among urban commoner strata. Hauser has pointed out that 22 of the cases occurred in house-owner households, and that these represent 10.9 percent of all cases of house-owner succession. In contrast, only 1.1 percent of all tenants passed the household headship on to females.

Even so, as Hauser notes, female succession was not uncommon in Osaka even among tenants prior to 1730, when urban authorities discouraged it for reasons that remain unclear.<sup>39</sup> Hauser suggests that the practice was challenged to reduce competition among tradespeople, but his evidence is not persuasive. Now we need to look at data on succession from other cities to acquire greater insight into this problem.

The data from nearby Kyoto stand in sharp contrast to the Osaka figures. In Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō in 1808, six of sixty-four household heads (9.4%) were women. All of them rented their lodgings, and they constituted 9.5 percent of all tenants. In 1863, six out of sixty-nine household heads (8.7%) and 9.4 percent of all tenant household heads were women. In Hanagurumachō in 1819, six out of eighty household heads (7.5%) were women. Again, all rented their lodgings; they constituted 5.6 percent of all tenants. In none of these registers are females recorded as succeeding to the headship of house-owner households. So clearly inheritance practices varied from city to city, and perhaps even from ward to ward. We must examine more ward registers to clarify the constraints on female inheritance.

#### INDIRECT FEMALE HEADSHIP

Figures on female succession are in any case likely to be deceptive as measures of female control over households and property. Many men acquired their status as household head through their connections with women. This could happen in various ways:

1. The male could be adopted by a household head as a son-in-law (*muko yōshi*);
2. he could be appointed by a retiring household head from among the spouses or sons of female relatives;

3. he could marry the female heir of the former household head;
4. he could be adopted as son of the female heir; or
5. he could be appointed as successor (but not married or adopted) by the female heir.

In such cases, the man might be acutely aware of his debt to the woman through whom he had attained his position. The Osaka shop clerk Tokubei, in Chikamatsu Monzaemon's play *Sonezaki shinjū* (Love suicide at Sonezaki, 1703), refuses to marry his employer's niece precisely to avoid incurring such a debt. "If I took as my wife this young lady whom I've always treated with the utmost deference and accepted her dowry into the bargain, I'd spend my whole life dancing attendance on my wife. How could I ever assert myself?" he fumes.<sup>40</sup>

All men were not so reluctant. Of the 516 cases of succession recorded in the Kikuyachō registers between 1754 and 1865, 64 (12%) are of the types listed above. Thirteen (20%) of the 64 inheritors achieved their position via a connection with the former head's wife or widow. In 1 case the wife's younger brother is adopted while the husband is alive, but in the other 12 cases a male head is appointed after a husband's death. In 2 cases the wife remarries, and her new husband assumes the headship; in 4 cases, a male relative of the widow assumes the headship; and in 8 cases the woman adopts a son who becomes formal head of the household.

In nine cases (14%) the inheritor is the husband or adopted son of the predecessor's sister. Usually the inheritor succeeds while his predecessor is still alive; in only one case does he marry the sister of a deceased household head. In eight cases (13%) the inheritor acquires his position through a connection with his predecessor's daughter. In five cases he is adopted by his predecessor as son-in-law (*muko yoshi*), and in one he marries the daughter after her father's death. Another is adopted as a son by the late household head's daughter, and another is the nephew of the daughter.

In ten cases (16%) husbands or relations of the former head's aunt succeed him; in two (3%) a male with connections to the former head's grandmother succeeds him; and in one case, a cousin's husband takes over.

The most surprising thing about the Kikuyachō records of succession is the large number of men who acquire household headship through connections to the predecessor's mother. Fully twenty-one (33%) of all the cases fall into this category. Of these, fourteen are adopted sons of the mother, all but three of whom are adopted while the former head is still alive (gen-

erally listed as in retirement). Another is the nephew of the mother. In six cases the mother marries after her son's death or retirement, and her new husband becomes the household head.

The most representative form of female-mediated male succession, then, involved a man in the prime of life who surrendered his headship to an adopted brother selected by his mother. There are also cases of succession by "brothers" adopted by the male household heads themselves, but in the fourteen cases mentioned above the mother seems to make the choice. Perhaps these cases represent situations in which mothers, dissatisfied with the business performance of their sons, and out of concern for the survival of the household, shunted their natural sons aside in favor of men they considered more competent.

The following example of female-mediated succession is not atypical. In 1818 one Kawachiya Jirōkichi is listed in the Kikuyachō register along with his mother Mitsu and maidservant Tsuyu; they coresided with someone named Akashiya Sasuke, his wife, and four children. A note in the record dated "eleventh month" indicates that "Jirōkichi gave up his name and established a separate household as a tenant of Maruya Yohei in Mitsudera-chō. Moreover Risuke, of the household of Sanukiya Kihachi, a tenant of Hamamuraya Saijirō of Mitsuderachō, moved in [to Kikuyachō], becoming Mitsu's adopted son and assuming the name [Kawachiya]."<sup>41</sup> Another note mentions that Sasuke and family have moved with Jirōkichi to his new home. In the following year's register, Kawachiya Risuke is listed as the head, followed by "Mother: Mitsu" and the maid Tsuyu.

In only five of the twenty-one cases in which the former head is succeeded by a male having some connection to his mother has the former head died. In five cases the former head moves to a specified new address; one of these men is an adopted son whose relationship to his mother is dissolved (*rien*). In one case, the household head absconds; in another, he is listed as having been disowned as an adopted son. But in nine of the sixteen cases where the former head lives on after the appointment of a successor, he continues to coreside with his mother, a dependent of her chosen household head.

All of this, of course, conflicts with Confucian notions of female dependence on males, and specifically with the idea of mothers' submission to their sons on the death of their husbands. In Osaka society, widowed mothers seem to have exercised nearly as much control over succession and the future of the household as their adult sons.

## FAMILY COMPOSITION

Everyone, except for those who headed households themselves, is registered in these documents according to his or her relationship to the household head (table 7). The largest single category of women is wives, but the proportion of wives among female residents varies markedly from ward to ward. Two hundred and twenty-one females are listed as family members (as opposed to household heads or servants) in the Kikuyachō register of 1826. Of these, 77 (35%) are listed as wives of household heads. In the Hanagurumachō register for 1819, however, 50 of the 112 female family members (45%) are listed as the wives of household heads. In that ward, household heads apparently could not afford to support daughters, sisters, mothers, and additional female relations as well as their counterparts in the Osaka ward. Shiba Yakushichō, another Kyoto ward for which only the 1856 register survives, appears to have been somewhat better off than Hanagurumachō, judging from its greater ability to support female relations of the household head.

One striking thing about the composition of families in these wards is the low incidence of wives coresiding with their mothers-in-law. Of the 77 women listed as wives (of household heads) in the Kikuyachō register of 1826, only 12 (16%) live in the same household with their husband's mother. In addition, several other types of female in-law appear. A certain Iyoya Zenbei lives with his wife, mother-in-law, three daughters, and a

*Table 7*  
FEMALE FAMILY MEMBERS, IN RELATION TO HOUSEHOLD  
HEADS (IN PERCENT)

CITY	YEAR	WIFE	DAUGHTER	MOTHER	OTHER
Kikuyachō	1826	35	27	17	21
Shiba Yakushichō	1856	41	31	16	12
Hanagurumachō	1819	45	39	11	5

SOURCES: Miyamoto and Sakamoto, eds., *Ōsaka Kikuyachō shūmon ninbetsu aratamechō*, vol. 6, p. 121; *Shiba Yakushichō shūmon ninbetsu aratamechō* (Kyōto-shi shiritsu rekishi shiryōkan); *Hanagurumachō shūmon ninbetsu aratamechō* (Kyōto-shi shiritsu rekishi shiryōkan).

male listed simply as “of the same household.” Curiously, Hinaya Kumakichi heads a household consisting of his elder brother, his sister-in-law, and their three children, as well as a younger brother, younger sister, mother, and maidservant. Another woman listed as a daughter-in-law (*yome*) resides with her husband and father-in-law, who heads the household.

In the 1819 Hanagurumachō register, only two of the fifty wives listed live with their mothers-in-law. Perhaps the coresidence of mothers-in-law with daughters occurred more frequently in the more affluent wards. In any event, coresidential mother-in-law–daughter-in-law relationships, which were so often described as oppressive in popular literature, seem to have been rather rare in the cities.

#### WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

The occupational structure of cities was naturally far more complex than the occupational structure of villages. Unfortunately most urban *ninbetsuchō* do not specify the profession or employment of the household head. Commoners were generally forbidden to adopt surnames, but unlike most peasants, virtually all urban residents possessed designations, in lieu of such surnames, ending with the suffix *ya*. In some cases this shop name indicates a trade; Kamiya Chōbei, for example, would be Paper Shop Chōbei. But it is usually impossible to determine whether such a person was a paper maker or a paper dealer.

In any case, most households sport names that tell us nothing of their work. Names like Himejiya, Sakaiya, or Tanbaya refer to geographical locations. Usually they do not indicate the household head's birthplace; more often they refer to the origin of goods in which the household deals. Sometimes we can infer the household's occupation from its location, although we cannot assume that a household in Osaka's Kobikichō (“Sawyers' Ward”) consists of a sawyer's family, or that everyone in a Daikumachi (“Carpenters' Ward”) practices this calling.

Of course, this makes it impossible to ascertain the employment of many female household heads recorded in *ninbetsuchō*. The six listed in the Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō *ninbetsuchō* for 1808, mentioned above, have the names Hinoya Chiyo, Ōmiya Tome, Yamazakiya Saki, Daikokuya Kō, Fukushima Fushi, and Yamadaya Michi. All but Kō, whose shop name

refers to one of the gods of luck, bear names referring to geographical locations.<sup>42</sup> The Hanagurumachō list for 1819 includes female household heads Fushimiya Yae, Tanbaya Ishi, Izumiya Mie, Sakaiya Shige, Kashiwaya Yae, and Tsurugaya Tomi. All these names include geographical locations, and give no clue about the women's occupations.

The Hanagurumachō register for 1836 records a number of female household heads whose occupations we discover from a separate contemporary document.<sup>43</sup> The document lists recipients of official assistance during the Tenpō Famine. Seven of the nine women — Tanbaya Riki, thread maker; Jūniya Chika, thread shop worker; Funaya Taki, thread reeler for thread maker; Owariya Maki, thread reeler; Hishiya Yuki, thread reeler; Hishiya Kuma, thread reeler; and Kiya Sato, thread reeler — are involved in the production of silk thread. Another — Kashiwaya Mitsu — works as a laundress, and the last — Kawaguchiya Naka — is described as a day laborer (*hiyatoi*). In Naka's case, the suffix *ya* clearly means neither "shop" or "dealer." Sato's full name is Wood Shop Sato, but she apparently does not, in fact, deal in lumber.

Only a few scattered registers indicate occupations with clarity. A record of the inhabitants of Kasama, a small castle town on the Kantō plain, from the year 1705 has survived. Entitled *Kasama machikata kenbetsu kakiage* (Record of building frontage of Kasama residents), it is not a *ninbetsuchō* and contains no information about religious affiliation.<sup>44</sup> But it provides data on 1,841 people, including samurai, in 483 households. Thirty-seven (7.7%) of the households are headed by women, although in 22 cases the woman seems to have served in this capacity only because her husband was a samurai away on official duties. These women probably did not practice any trades. But in seven other cases, the woman's trade is specified: one sold *udon* noodles, and six worked as day laborers. All these working women apparently were the widows of commoners, their ages ranging from forty to sixty.

As noted above, the Kawaguchiya Naka who appears in the Hanagurumachō records was also a day laborer. She was forty-five years old when, listed as in that occupational category in the register, she received famine relief from the authorities. It seems to have been common for older, widowed women to earn their living through manual labor, but the urban *ninbetsuchō* alone do not provide evidence for this.

Women listed as household heads were usually single and apparently ei-

ther widowed or abandoned. This may indicate a near-absence of spinsters, as Laurel Cornell has noted in Tokugawa villages.<sup>45</sup> But to my knowledge no work has been done on this subject in connection with cities. Occasionally we find that these widowed women supported a child or two, but rarely could they afford to employ a servant. Hanagurumachō's Tanbaya Ishi headed a household of three daughters, a manservant, and a maidservant in 1819, but her case is an exception.

Just as it is usually impossible to determine the profession of the household heads, so the specific nature of the live-in female employees is also problematic. The term *gejo* ("low woman," "maidservant") could cover a variety of employee types. Even among domestic servants, there was a hierarchy among chambermaids (*koshimoto*), parlormmaids (*nakai*), and scullery maids (*meshitaki*), but all of these would be recorded simply as *gejo*. So would wet nurses (*uba*), nannies (*daki-uba*), and baby sitters (*komori*). In "pleasure wards," the prostitutes were recorded as *gejo*, whereas in Nishijin, hired weavers, thread reelers, and seamstresses were sometimes entered into the record under this all-embracing designation.

Many registers use other, equally vague designations. Nagasaki's Okeyamachi records often list certain male and female household members as *kanai*. In modern Japanese this is a term for wife, but here it seems to indicate a household servant of either sex, perhaps one of the lifetime or long-term variety of servants elsewhere called *fudai* or *hikan*. The Kasama register of 1705 lists female servants as *fudai* (lifetime, hereditary), *nenki* (long-term), or *ikki* (one-year) employees. This tells us nothing about what they did, but it at least indicates how long they were expected to do it. Seventy-two of the maidservants (69%) fall into the *nenki* category.

Some registers do not bother to define the position of some members at all. The register for Hiradomachi, 1633, lists many men and women without defining their status. One can speculate on their roles on the basis of the order in which they were recorded in each household entry, but many points remain unclear. There were 35 *gejo* and 4 wet nurses in this small community of 331 people, but there were also 27 women of unclear status.<sup>46</sup> Such problems naturally reduce the record's usefulness.

The Kikuyachō records also contain irritating ambiguities. Six females (as well as a number of males) in the 1826 register are recorded simply as "So-and-so of the same household (*dōka*)," one girl is described as "Toku, daughter of Riki of the same household," and there also appears one "Asa,



4. Nishijin weavers, from a sixteenth-century print. Kyoto General Historical Archive.

mother of Uno of the same household.” Perhaps these were *fudai*-type servants. Some Kyoto registers provide more detailed information about live-in employees. The Shiba Yakushichō record, for example, lists not only *gejo*, but *genan* (menservants), *genin* (servants), *tedai* (clerks), *deshi* (apprentices), and *komono* (shopboys). (The term *genin*, although gender neutral, in this register always describes men. The additional use of the term *genan* may indicate that *genan* were involved with household, rather than shop, duties.) Of the twenty-three female employees registered, ten are apprentices. Such women were eligible on completion of their training to join some textile guilds on an equal footing with males.<sup>47</sup> Unfortunately, the comparatively lengthy Hanagurumachō data series does not contain such

specific designations. The Koromonotana ward series does not list such categories as clerks and apprentices, but I have not found women listed in such roles. Further investigation of the latter series may produce insights into women's roles in Kyoto. Another category of female employee often specified in the registers is the *uba* or wet nurse. The Kikuyachō register for 1826 contains the names of three such women. It is apparent that the term could be applied to women whose charges had long since been weaned, but who were retained by the household as nannies. For example, Nurse Tami resides with one Sakaiya Onkichi, a boy of seven, while his guardian (*daihan*) Sakaiya Shūemon, resides in another ward. The nurse and Onkichi are the only two members of the household, and the boy is listed as its head.

The order in which the household members appear in these documents is quite standard. If the household head is married, his wife's name will surely be recorded next to his, but then come the children (sons in order of age, then daughters); siblings (brothers, then sisters); then parents and other relations. Finally, servants are recorded; first the males, then the females. Wet nurses, if present, end the household register. No doubt this reflects their low status; Tokugawa literature heaps scorn on the figure of the nurse. Both Ihara Saikaku and Chikamatsu quote the saying that "the three greatest scoundrels are packhorse drivers, ship's captains, and wet nurses."<sup>48</sup>

#### HOUSEHOLD RECORDS

With all their difficulties, the extant *ninbetsuchō* from urban wards of the Tokugawa period provide invaluable information concerning women's lives. Further research based on these documents should clarify our understanding of such matters as female employees' service tenures, the incidence of divorce and remarriage, postnatal maternal mortality, and the like. Particularly since the records are relatively easy for non-Japanese scholars to decipher and exploit, U.S. libraries with extensive Japan collections should make acquisition of microfilm copies of such documents a priority.

Insights gleaned from the *ninbetsuchō* can be enhanced by the use of household documents. These include *kakun* (household precepts), which specify appropriate behavior for men and women; women's diaries; and records of household management kept by women. Like the *ninbetsuchō*, these materials are scattered around Japan at public and private archives.



Such conglomerates as Sumitomo, Mitsui, and Kōnoike, the roots of which extend to the Tokugawa period, maintain corporate archives with records concerning male and female employees over several centuries. Hayashi Reiko has perhaps made the best use of such materials in connection with women's history.<sup>49</sup>

Space will permit discussion of only one text that I find especially illuminating. This is a notebook kept by the wife of a Numano Rokubei, who lived in Hashichō in the castle town of Wakayama during the early to mid-nineteenth century. Rokubei operated the Moriya Pawnshop, as had his ancestors from at least the 1590s, and served as a ward elder (*toshiyori*). From 1838 to 1858 his wife maintained the record on the employment of maidservants by this prosperous and prestigious household.

The contents of the book, which is in the possession of Mr. Numano Kiyoshi, have been published in volume five of the *Wakayama shi shi* (Wakayama city history).<sup>50</sup> The cover, bearing the title *Gejo kyūgin kashi hikae* (Maidservants' wage-advance notebook), is dated "seventh month, Tenpō 9" (1838). On the next page appears a series of figures indicating typical yearly wage levels (90, 80, 70 *monme* in silver). Next to each is a figure indicating a daily wage obviously calculated by dividing the yearly wage by 360. The daily wage for a servant contracted to work for 70 *monme*, for example, is given as 1 *mon* 9 *rin* 444. Clearly the woman maintaining this record was not only numerate; she aimed for precision in remunerating her employees.

A total of eighty-four female employees are listed in this record covering two decades. They are divided into four categories: *shinmyō* (apparently chambermaids who served as personal attendants to the record keeper), *na-kai* (parlormaids), *meshitaki* (scullery maids), and *mori* (nursemaids). Servants in the first category were hired at annual wages of from 110 to 130 *monme*; those in the second, from 100 to 120; those in the third, from 90 to 110 (with the exception of one young girl hired at 70 *monme*); and those in the fourth, from 75 to 110. Thus there was a clear hierarchy among the Numano household servants, with child-care providers at the bottom.

Alongside her careful account of wage payments, the Numano employer also listed occasional gifts, special tips, and seasonal bonuses for her maidservants. Sometimes the value of the gift is noted. In all, such nonwage forms of compensation seem to have been insignificant in comparison to the contracted wage.<sup>51</sup> The maidservants, although not wage laborers in the strict sense (i.e., workers whose labor power is productive and capital pos-

[17]	[16]	[15]	[14]	[13]	[12]	[11]	[10]
一 源	一 源	一 源	一 源	一 源	一 源	一 源	一 源
右 寺 旦 那	右 寺 旦 那	右 安 樂 院 旦 那	右 寺 旦 那	右 寺 旦 那	右 寺 旦 那	右 寺 旦 那	右 寺 旦 那
封 元	志 所	嘉 吉	源 次 郎	惣 吉	庄 吉	德 松	伊 之 助
一 同 宗 断	一 同 宗 断	一 同 宗 断	一 同 宗 断	一 同 宗 断	一 同 宗 断	一 同 宗 断	一 同 宗 断
右 同 寺 旦 那	右 同 寺 旦 那	右 安 樂 院 旦 那	右 同 寺 旦 那	右 同 寺 旦 那	右 同 寺 旦 那	右 同 寺 旦 那	右 同 寺 旦 那
同 す て 未 十 一 才	下 女 志 け 未 廿 才	同 嘉 吉 未 十 二 才	同 源 次 郎 未 一 五 才	同 惣 吉 未 十 八 才	同 庄 吉 未 十 六 才	同 德 松 未 十 九 才	同 伊 之 助 未 廿 才

7. Sample entry from the Hanagurumachō register for 1856, with text printed in modern characters below (see the English translation on pages 78–79). The household of Daikokuya Risuke. Kyoto Municipal Historical Archive.

[1] 右宗  
右宗  
右宗  
右宗  
大黒屋利助  
未六十一才

一代々真言宗  
生国山城  
上品蓮台寺中  
安楽院旦那  
大黒屋利助  
未六十一才

[2] 右宗  
右宗  
右宗  
右宗

一同断  
右同寺旦那  
妻  
ミト  
未五十一才

[3] 右宗  
右宗  
右宗  
利八

一同断  
右同寺旦那  
粹  
利八  
未廿六才

[4] 右宗  
右宗  
右宗  
右宗

一同断  
右同寺旦那  
娘  
むめ  
未廿二才

[5] 右宗  
右宗  
右宗  
伊助

一同断  
右同寺旦那  
孫  
伊之助  
未二才

[6] 右宗  
右宗  
右宗  
伊助

一同断  
右同寺旦那  
弟  
伊助  
未廿八才

[7] 右宗  
右宗  
右宗  
伊助

一同断  
右安楽院旦那  
伊助  
妻  
さく  
未廿七才

[8] 右宗  
右宗  
右宗  
伊助

一同断  
右同寺旦那  
同人  
鉄之助  
未四才

[9] 右宗  
右宗  
右宗  
善吉

一同断  
右同寺旦那  
下人  
善吉  
未廿六才

*English Translation of Ninbetsuchō Entry for Daikokuya Risuke Household*

- [1] Hereditary member of the Shingon sect  
Place of birth: Yamashiro  
Temple of registration: Anrakuin, Jōbon Rendaiji  
Daikokuya Risuke (seal), 61 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [2] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
Wife Mito, 51 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [3] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
Son Rihachi, 26 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [4] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
Daughter Mume, 22 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [5] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
Grandson Inosuke, 2 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [6] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
[Adopted] son [-in-law] Isuke, 28 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [7] Hereditary member of the Shingon sect  
Place of birth: Yamashiro  
Temple of registration: Anrakuin, Jōbon Rendaiji  
Wife of Isuke [Risuke's daughter] Saku, 27 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [8] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
Son of same [Isuke], 4 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep

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- [9] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
[Man]servant Zenkichi, 26 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [10] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
[Man]servant Inosuke, 20 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [11] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
[Man]servant Tokumatsu, 19 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [12] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
[Man]servant Shōkichi, 16 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [13] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
[Man]servant Sōkichi, 18 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [14] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
[Man]servant Genjirō, 15 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [15] Same faith and place of birth  
Temple of registration: Anrakuin, same as above  
[Man]servant Kakichi, 12 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [16] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
Maid-servant Shige, 20 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
- [17] Same faith and place of birth  
Same temple of registration  
Maid-servant Sute, 11 years old [in this Year of the] Sheep
-

iting), were clearly functioning in an environment in which labor power had been substantially “commodified.”

Accordingly, the relationship between the employing household and these eighty-four women appears to have been more businesslike than intimate or affectionate. Occasionally the notebook records how a favored chambermaid was showered with gifts or married off to a promising male employee. More often, the document contains acerbic comments on the women’s actions or personalities. One chambermaid named Sawa was “extremely serviceable, but spiteful.” She was greedy and tormented the other servants; “everybody hated her.” Another maid cooked poorly and had an ill temper. Another had been misbehaving with a clerk of the household and found herself pregnant. A high proportion of dismissals were made on such grounds, and the average tenure of service was less than one year. In some cases, the women absconded before completion of their contracts.<sup>52</sup>

The Numano notebook thus offers invaluable glimpses into a world of household tension, petty rivalries, competition for favors, illicit liaisons, small crimes, and occasionally, genuine mistress-maidservant affinity. It also illuminates the role of the astute *ménagère* in upper-crust urban society in Tokugawa Japan. Further work with such sources will undoubtedly fertilize the already rich new field of Japanese women’s history.

## NOTES

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1. Joyce Chapman Lebra, “Women in an All-Male Industry: The Case of Sake Brewer Tatsu’uma Kiyō,” in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945*, ed.

Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 136–138.

2. Higuchi Kiyoyuki, *Nihon josei no seikatsushi* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1977), pp. 149–150.
3. On the vilification of women found in Mahayana texts, see Diana Y. Paul, *Women in Buddhism: Images of the Feminine in the Mahayana Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), esp. pp. 3–50, and John Stevens, *Lust for Enlightenment: Buddhism and Sex* (Boston: Shambhala, 1990), pp. 48–49, 104–105.

4. "The most significant feature of the final period of the feudal age, the Edo period . . . , is the literature of moral instruction for women." Joyce Ackroyd, "Women in Feudal Japan," *Transactions, Asiatic Society of Japan* (1959), pp. 52–53.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 56–57; the *Lieh Tzu*, not a Confucian work, apparently takes this sentence from its *locus classicus* in the Confucian work on ritual, the *I-li*.
8. Hayashi Yoshikazu, *Jidai fūzoku kōshō jiten* (Tokyo: Kawade shobō, 1977), p. 645.
9. William Hauser, "Why So Few? Women Household Heads in Osaka Chōnin Families," *Journal of Family History* 11.4 (1986), pp. 34–51.
10. Donald H. Shively, "Sumptuary Regulation and Status in Early Tokugawa Japan," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 25 (1964–1965), pp. 33–35.
11. Irene Sege, "The Grim Mystery of the World's Missing Women," *Boston Globe*, February 3, 1992.
12. Susan B. Hanley and Kozo Yamamura, *Economic and Demographic Change in Preindustrial Japan, 1600–1868* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 210.
13. Thomas C. Smith, *Nakahara, Family Farming and Population in a Japanese Village, 1717–1830* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1977), p. 151.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 149.
15. Saitō Osamu discusses the nature of this population and compares it with that of Ōsaka; *Shōka no sekai, uramise no sekai: Edo to Ōsaka no hikaku toshi-shi* (Tokyo: Riburopotto, 1987), pp. 91–116.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
17. Among scholars using village *ninbetsuchō* to explore various aspects of peasant women's lives, one should mention Hayami Akira, Mori Yasuhiko, and Itō Yoshikazu.
18. Among key works based largely on urban *ninbetsuchō*, see Akiyama Kunizō and Nakamura Ken, *Kyōto "chō" no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku, 1975); Hayami Akira, "Kyōto machikata no shūmon aratamechō: Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō," *Tokugawa rinseishi kenkyūjo, Kenkyū kiyō* (1981), pp. 514–515; Inui Hiromi, *Naniwa Ōsaka Kikuyachō* (Tokyo: Yanagiwara Shoten, 1977); Matsu-moto Shirō, *Nihon kinsei toshi ron* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku, 1983); Sasaki Yōichirō, "Edo jidai toshi jinkō iji nōryoku ni tsuite — Hida Takayama no keikenchi ni motozuku ichi jikken no kekka," in *Atarashii Edo jidai shizō o motomete*, ed. Shakai Keizai Shigakkai (Tokyo: Tōyō keizai shinpōsha, 1977), "Urban Migration and Fertility in Tokugawa Japan: The City of Takayama, 1773–1871," in *Family and Population in East Asian History*, ed. Susan B. Hanley and Arthur P. Wolf (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), pp. 133–153; Saitō, *Shōka no sekai*; Tsuchida Ryōichi, "Kinsei Kōfu Mikkamachi no jinkō dōtai," *Jinbun chiri*, no. 422 (June 1985).
19. Hauser, "Why So Few?"; Robert Smith, "The Domestic Cycle in Selected Commoner Families in Urban Japan, 1757–1858," *Journal of Family History* 3.3 (Fall 1978), pp. 219–235; and "Small Families, Small Households and Preindustrial Instability: Town and City in 'Pre-modern' Ja-

- pan," in *Household and Family in Past Time*, ed. Peter Laslett and Richard Wall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972). L. L. Cornell, Susan S. Hanley, Thomas C. Smith, and others have made great use of village registers.
20. Gary P. Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers in the Cities of Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).
  21. Apparently. See Saitō Osamu, "Shōka hōkōnin to zatsugyōsha," *Keizai kenkyū* 36.3 (July 1985), p. 252.
  22. Although most such pleasure seekers were male, it was not unheard of for women to patronize male or female prostitutes in such areas. Examples occur in the fiction of Ihara Saikaku (1642–1693), Ejima Kiseki (1667–1736), and many others.
  23. L. L. Cornell and Hayami Akira, "The Shūmon Aratame chō: Japan's Population Registers," *Journal of Family History* 11.4 (1986), pp. 311–328; Hanley and Yamamura, *Economic and Demographic Change*, pp. 40–43; T. Smith, *Nakahara*, pp. 15–17.
  24. *Hanagurumachō monjo*, J-I, 1 (Kyōto shi rekishi shiryōkan, Kyoto).
  25. Miyamoto Mataji and Sakamoto Heichirō, eds., *Ōsaka Kikuyachō shūmon ninbetsu aratamechō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1972), vol. 2, p. 121.
  26. *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 620.
  27. A short list of such works might include Hanley and Yamamura, *Economic and Demographic Change*; Hanley, "Migration and Economic Change in Okayama during the Tokugawa Period," *Keiō Economic Studies* 10.2 (1973), pp. 19–36; T. Smith, *Nakahara*; and Hayami Akira, "Class Differences in Marriage and Fertility among Tokugawa Villagers in Mino Province," *Keiō Economic Studies* 17 (1980), pp. 1–16; "Labor Migration in a Pre-Industrial Society: A Study Tracing the Life Histories of the Inhabitants of a Village," *Keiō Economic Studies* 10.2 (1973), pp. 1–18; and "Thank You Francisco Xavier: An Essay in the Use of Micro-data for Historical Demography of Tokugawa Japan," *Keiō Economic Studies* 16.1–2 (1979), pp. 65–81.
  28. Hanley and Yamamura, *Economic and Demographic Change*, pp. 233ff.; T. Smith, *Nakahara*, pp. 59–85.
  29. T. Smith, *Nakahara*, p. 63; Hanley and Yamamura, *Economic and Demographic Change*, p. 234.
  30. T. Smith, *Nakahara*, p. 63.
  31. Research by Sugawara Ken'ichi suggests that this was *not* a factor. Among 106 cases of child abandonment he has studied in Kyoto between 1687 and 1744, he found 52 girls, 53 boys, and 1 whose sex was unrecorded. See "Kinsei Kyōto no chō to sutego," *Rekishi hyōron* no. 422 (June 1985), p. 47.
  32. Sekiyama Naotarō, cited in T. Smith, *Nakahara*, p. 149.
  33. T. Smith, *Nakahara*, p. 156.
  34. Inui Hiromi, "Ōsaka chōnin shakai no kōzō: jinkō dōtai ni okeru," in Tsuda Hideo, *Kinsei kokka no kaitei to kindai* (Tokyo: Kōshobo, 1979), pp. 32–33.
  35. *Ibid.*
  36. Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers*, pp. 62–64.
  37. L. L. Cornell, "Peasant Family and Inheritance in a Japanese Community,

- 1671–1980: An Anthropological Analysis of Population Registers” (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1981), pp. 80, 176. Cited in Hauser, “Why So Few?”
38. Hauser, “Why So Few?” pp. 344–345.
39. Ibid., p. 346.
40. Donald Keene, trans., *Major Plays of Chikamatsu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 42.
41. Miyamoto and Sakamoto, *Ōsaka Kikuyachō shūmon ninbetsu aratemechō*, vol. 5, p. 428.
42. Hayami, “Kyōto machikata no shūmon aratemechō,” pp. 514–515.
43. *Nanjūnin shibun hikae* (Kyōto-shi rekishi shiryōkan).
44. See Hayashi Reiko et al., eds., *Ibaraki-ken shiryō, Kinsei shakai keizai ken* (Tokyo: Ibaraki-ken, 1971), vol. 1, pp. 133–173. I am grateful to Professor Hayashi for drawing this document to my attention.
45. Laurel L. Cornell, “Why Are There No Spinsters in Japan?” *Journal of Family History* 9.4 (1984), pp. 326–329.
46. Kyūshū shiryō sōsho, *Nagasaki Hiradomachi ninbetsuchō* (Nagasaki: Kyūshū shiryō kankō kai, 1955).
47. Yasukuni Ryōichi, “Kinsei Kyōto no shomin josei,” in *Nihon josei seikatsushi*, ed. Joseishi sōgō kenkyūkai, vol. 3: Kinsei (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku, 1990), p. 95.
48. Ihara Saikaku, *Ihara Saikaku shū*, ed. Fujimura Tsukuru and Higashi Akimasa (Tokyo: Asahi shinbunsha, 1977), vol. 3, p. 410; Chikamatsu Monzaemon, *Chikamatsu jōruri shū*, vol. 1, ed. Shigetomo Ki (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1976), p. 96.
49. Hayashi Reiko, “Chōka josei no sonzai katei,” in *Nihon josei shi*, vol. 3, pp. 95–126; *Edodana bonka chō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1982), many others.
50. Wakayama shi shi hensan iinkai, eds., *Wakayama shi shi*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Wakayama-shi, 1975), pp. 173–198.
51. Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers*, p. 103.
52. Ibid., pp. 87–88.

GLOSSARY

Akashiya Sasuke 明石屋佐助	dekasegi 出稼
Akiyama Kunizo 秋山国三	deshi 弟子
Asa あさ	dōka 同家
Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衛門	Dōshōmachi San-chōme 道修町三丁目
dai-dai 代代	Dōtonbori 道頓堀
daihan 代判	fudai 譜代
Daikokuya Kō 大黒屋かう	Fukushimaya Fushi 福島屋ふし
Daikumachi 大工町	fumie 踏絵
daki-uba 抱乳母	Funaya Taki 船屋たき

Fushimiya Yae 伏見屋やゑ	kana 仮名
gejo 下女	kanai 家内
<i>Gejo kyūgin kashi hikae</i> 下女給銀かし扣	Kantō 関東
genan 下男	Kasama 笠間
genin 下人	<i>Kasama machikata kenbetsu kakiage</i>
Gion 祇園	笠間町方軒別書上
Hamamuraya Seijirō 濱村屋清次郎	Kashiwaya Mitsu 柏屋みつ
Hanagurumachō 花車町	Kashiwaya Yae 柏屋やゑ
hara wa karimono 腹は借り物	Kawachiya Jirōkichi 河内屋次郎吉
Hashichō 橋丁	Kawaguchiya Naka 川口屋なか
Hayami Akira 速水融	Kikuyachō 菊屋町
Hayashi Reiko 林玲子	Kirishitan 切支丹
heinō bunri 兵農分離	Kiya Sato 木屋さと
hikan 被官	Kobikichō Minami no chō 木挽町南之丁
<i>Hime kagami</i> 姫鑑	komono 小者
Himejiya 姫路屋	komori 子守
Hinaya Kumakichi 雛屋熊吉	Kōnoike 鴻池
Hinoya Chiyo 日野屋ちよ	Koromonotana 衣棚
Hiranomachi Ni-chōme 平野町二丁目	koshimoto 腰元
Hishiya Kuma 菱屋くま	<i>Lieh tzu</i> 列子
Hishiya Yuki 菱屋ゆき	machikata 町方
hiyatōi 日雇	Maruya Yohei 丸屋与兵衛
iemochi 家持	Maruyama Ōkyō 丸山応挙
Ihara Saikaku 井原西鶴	Masaoka Kanji 正岡寛司
ikki 一季	Matsumoto Shirō 松本四郎
Imai Shūhei 今井修平	meshitaki 飯炊
Inui Hiromi 乾宏巳	Miikedōri Go-chōme 御池道五丁目
Iyoya Zenbei 伊予屋善兵衛	Mitsu みつ
Izumiya Mie 和泉屋みゑ	Mitsuderachō 三寺町
Jūniya Chika 十二屋ちか	Mitsui 三井
Kaibara Ekken 貝原益軒	Miyamoto Mataji 宮本又次
kakun 家訓	mon 文
Kamiya Chōbei 紙屋長兵衛	monme 匄
Kamo 加茂	mori 守

POPULATION REGISTERS IN JAPAN

Moriya 森屋  
 muko yōshi 婿養子  
 nakagai 仲買  
 nakai 仲居  
 Nakano Yoshio 中埜善雄  
 nenki 年季  
 ninbetsuchō 人別帳  
 Nishijin 西陣  
 Nobi 濃尾  
 Numano Kiyoshi 沼野清志  
 Numano Rokubei 沼野六兵衛  
 Okeyamachi 桶屋町  
 Ōmiya Tome 近江屋とめ  
 Onna Daigaku 女大学  
 Onna Kakun 女家訓  
 Owariya Maki 尾張屋まき  
 rien 離縁  
 Riki りき  
 rin 厘  
 Risuke 利助  
 Sadoyachō 佐渡屋町  
 Saitō Osamu 齋藤修  
 Sakaiya 界屋  
 Sakaiya Onkichi 界屋音吉  
 Sakaiya Shige 界屋しげ  
 Sakaiya Shūemon 界屋宗右衛門  
 Sanjū 三従  
 Sanukiya Kihachi 讃岐屋喜八  
 Sasaki Yōichirō 佐佐木陽一郎  
 Sawa さわ  
 Senba 船場  
 shakuya 借屋  
 Shiba Yakushichō 芝薬師町

Shijō Tachiuri Naka no chō  
 四条立売中之町  
 Shinbashi 新橋  
 Shinmachi 新町  
 shinmyō 針妙  
 shū aratame chō 宗改帳  
 Sonezaki shinjū 曾根崎心中  
 Sugimori Tetsuya 杉森哲也  
 Sumitomo 住友  
 sutego 捨子  
 Tami たみ  
 tanagari 店借  
 Tanbaya 丹波屋  
 Tanbaya Ishi 丹波屋いし  
 Tanbaya Riki 丹波屋りき  
 tedai 手代  
 Tenpō 天保  
 Toku とく  
 Tokubei とくべい  
 toshiyori 年寄  
 Tsuchida Ryōichi 土田良一  
 tsuma 妻  
 Tsurugaya Tomi 敦賀屋とみ  
 Tsuyu つゆ  
 uba 乳母  
 udon 饅飩  
 Uno うの  
 Wakayama 和歌山  
 Wakayama shi shi 和歌山市史  
 ya 屋  
 Yamadaya Michi 山田屋みち  
 Yamazakiya Saki 山崎屋さき  
 yome 嫁



# Feminism's Literary Legacy in Japan:

## *Seitō*, 1911–1916

JANICE B. BARDSLEY

Scholars interested in feminist movements and women's literature in East Asia will find *Seitō* (Bluestockings) a valuable source of information on Japan. Published monthly in Tokyo from 1911 to 1916 by the women's group *Seitō-sha* (Bluestockings Society), *Seitō* displays a rich variety of women's essays, fiction, and poetry from the late Meiji–early Taishō eras.<sup>1</sup> Although considerable research into the life of this literary magazine and its editors already exists, we have by no means exhausted its usefulness. Cross-cultural comparisons with other feminist groups, literary analyses, and further biographical work on the *Seitō* writers remain fruitful areas for future research, as I hope this brief description of the journal and review of secondary sources will show.

As the first Japanese magazine written and edited almost entirely by women, and dedicated to nurturing female artistic genius, *Seitō* quickly attracted public attention. The frank and confessional style of many of its authors as well as their disdain for the life prescribed for middle-class women struck a chord with many Japanese women, bringing a flood of requests for advice and subscriptions to the *Seitō* office soon after its initial publication. Many readers responded particularly to the stirring poem contributed by Yōsano Akiko (1878–1942), a professional poet who had already won notoriety with her 1901 collection of passionate verse titled *Midaregami* (Tangled hair).<sup>2</sup> Her poem compared women to sleeping mountains who, though quiet now, would soon erupt into a volcanic blaze. A lyrical, Zen-inspired essay by Hiratsuka Raichō (1886–1971), a young graduate of Japan Women's College who had recently created a scandal by

threatening to commit suicide with a married man, also impressed readers. She wrote about *Seitō*'s mission in bravely optimistic terms, beginning her essay with the now famous words:

In the beginning, woman was truly the sun.  
 An authentic person.  
 Now, woman is the moon.  
 Living dependent on others,  
 Reflecting their brilliance,  
 She has the moon's face,  
 And its unhealthy pallor.  
 And now, *Seitō* cries, newly born.  
 Created by the brains and hands  
 Of today's Japanese women,  
*Seitō* cries, newly born.<sup>3</sup>

Such powerful writing by such spirited women did not escape the eyes of the press who created fanciful reports of the lifestyles of these rebellious "New Women," as it called them. Nor did it slip past government censors who banned certain issues of *Seitō* as "injurious to public morals." Reporters took to searching out scandal in the group, combing the "Editors' Notes" in each journal for news of the society's activities. Girls' schools soon forbade their students to become members or to read the journal, police would get in touch with parents in the provinces after discovering a daughter studying in Tokyo had become involved with *Seitō*, and educators and bureaucrats alike publicly denounced the magazine as both frivolous and immoral.

Although such notoriety forced many of the original members to leave the magazine, it encouraged a few others to join, especially those who particularly wanted to explore questions of women's liberation. Among these, Itō Noe (1895–1923), a teenager who dared to abandon her arranged marriage illegally, stands out as one who became both influential and controversial in the society. Responding to the pressures of public disapproval and the society's changing membership, *Seitō* gradually developed from a journal that focused primarily on art to one that also pursued such controversial topics as marriage laws, abortion, and prostitution. Translations of European fiction gave way to those of Western women's ideas on liberation, particularly the works of Swedish feminist Ellen Key and American anar-

chist Emma Goldman. But whether they were debating social issues or writing poetry, the *Seitō* writers remained most interested in achieving and preserving a sense of their own identity — as women and as writers.

Recognizing the scholarly value of *Seitō*, Fuji Shuppan reprinted the entire fifty-two-volume journal, and provided an index to accompany it, in 1983.<sup>4</sup> Readers will find *Seitō* in the Gest Library as well as in the Asian libraries of Cornell University, Harvard University, Indiana University, the University of California at both Berkeley and Los Angeles, and the University of Chicago. Fuji Shuppan has also compiled a twenty-volume set titled *The Women of Seitō* (*Seitō no onna-tachi*), a series of reprinted versions of longer pieces or collected works by individual authors associated with the journal.<sup>5</sup> Although this series will undoubtedly enhance research on *Seitō* and Japanese feminism, it is not yet readily available at libraries in the United States. The Gest Library does have the complete set and will lend volumes through interlibrary loan.

Fortunately, scholars can look to excellent secondary sources regarding



1. The journal *Seitō*. Courtesy of Fuji Shuppan, Japan.

this magazine in Japanese, English, and German.<sup>6</sup> The autobiography of one of the magazine's most famous editors, Hiratsuka Raichō, serves as the most detailed source of information about *Seitō's* history.<sup>7</sup> Here, for example, Raichō recounts how male writer and literary critic Ikuta Chōkō (1882–1936) persuaded her to create a women's literary journal and even suggested the name *Seitō*, as a Japanese translation of the name of the famous English women's literary group Bluestockings. She further describes how he encouraged her to keep the magazine focused on art even when she, like many of the other women, wanted to broaden its goal to encouraging each woman to find her own mission in life. Most interesting, Raichō describes the dynamics of the *Seitō-sha* itself. She writes about how and why the group's membership changed from young graduates of the new Japan Women's College who wanted to discuss literature to a more radical group of women who dared to speak out in favor of expanding opportunities for women. She also movingly portrays the tensions her involvement with *Seitō* created in her relations with her parents as well as the way in which being a public figure affected her personal life. Finally, Raichō explains how the combination of public antagonism to the magazine, financial troubles, the pressures of motherhood, and disagreements within the group led to *Seitō's* demise in 1916.

*Seitō* scholarship in Japanese relies heavily on Hiratsuka Raichō's account. Ide Fumiko (1920–) and Kobayashi Tomie (1916–), two women who had the opportunity to spend a good deal of time interviewing Raichō near the end of her life, have each written books for a popular audience about Raichō and *Seitō*.<sup>8</sup> Kobayashi, who also collaborated with Raichō on her autobiography, provides an interesting footnote to early research on *Seitō* when she describes her initial evaluation of the magazine's accomplishments. Kobayashi first met Raichō in 1948, at a roundtable discussion on the topic "Women Then and Now," when Raichō was in her sixties, and Kobayashi in her thirties. Although Kobayashi felt awed to be in the presence of someone "you would read about in history books," she argued that the *Seitō-sha* should have gone much further in breaking away from literary interests to pursue politics:

*Seitō* wasn't a political movement for women's liberation but rather a movement to awaken women through literature. Why was that? Granted that since the *Seitō* movement began from a

concern for inner freedom, for women's self-affirmation and self-liberation, it has significance as a new women's movement never seen in Japan before that time. But why did it fail to become a politically oriented movement for women's liberation? Although Seitō gives the strong impression of having been a sensational social phenomenon, why didn't the group connect more with the lives of women in general and develop as a social and political movement?<sup>9</sup>

According to Kobayashi, Raichō responded to this attack in a calm manner, and even much later, three months before her death in 1971, still stood by what she saw as Seitō's achievements:

Thinking about Seitō now, I am pleased that it began as a movement inspired by the desires of the individual. Because Seitō had such an explosive effect on women who were almost suffocating under centuries of oppression, it was an intellectual women's movement, a movement fueled by the sudden outpouring of women's awareness that Seitō itself had unleashed. In an era when feudalistic thoughts, feelings, and institutions still prevailed, a cry for women's awakening and the other things that arose from that cry, had, I believe, an undeniable significance. In those days, women were not intellectually prepared to organize a political or social movement. Before we could have a social reform movement, we needed to have a movement for intellectual reform to liberate the self. Even in those days there were those who insisted that if we were a women's movement, we first had to concern ourselves with getting the right to vote. But I believed reforming women's personal lives came before that kind of activity. On that point, my thinking still has not changed.<sup>10</sup>

Most Japanese historians appear to agree with Raichō's assessment of the Seitō-sha's strengths. Although most, like the young Kobayashi, tend to criticize the members as politically naive and especially unaware of the plight of poor working women in Japan, all recognize the significance of their place in women's history as writers who gave voice to middle-class women's aspirations for greater personal and public freedom. Hence, recent surveys of Japanese women's history, whether designed for children

or adults, never fail to include a chapter on *Seitō*.<sup>11</sup> The well-known novelist Setouchi Harumi (1922–) has even written a novel about Hiratsuka Raichō and *Seitō*, and two about Itō Noe.<sup>12</sup> Although viewed as outrageous rebels in their own day, the *Seitō* writers have achieved a kind of heroic status in contemporary Japan, often romanticized as women willing to risk everything to protect their independence.

Although Japanese scholars have paid critical attention to *Seitō* in the postwar era, they have confined most of this research to chronologies of the activities of the *Seitō*-sha and placed these within the context of Japanese women's history. With the exception of a few of the *Seitō* essays censored by the government, little of the magazine's content has received analysis. Furthermore, despite the numerous stories and poems in this magazine, discussions of late Meiji–early Taishō literary activity typically do not include any mention of *Seitō*. Clearly, *Seitō* has earned respectability as an important chapter in women's history in Japan, but has yet to win a place in serious discussions of Japanese intellectual or literary history.

One cannot help but note the irony in this story of *Seitō*'s reception in Japan. During its lifetime, educators and government officials denigrated the magazine's writers for condoning such things as divorce, love affairs, and abortion, and for showing a lack of obedience to parents and other authorities. Postwar critics, on the other hand, fault the *Seitō*-sha for not being political or radical enough! So much attention to *Seitō* only as a sociological or political phenomenon ignores the literary value of much of it, and pulls our attention away from what was so important to the writers themselves — their attempts to create authentic voices, to realize personal identities.

Building on this research in Japanese, *Seitō* scholarship in the United States has integrated some analysis of *Seitō*'s contents with information from Raichō's autobiography and other Japanese secondary sources. As in Japan, these studies, too, tend to consider *Seitō* in the context of women's history, a history that has only recently begun receiving significant critical attention in the United States. Most notably, Sharon L. Sievers's *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* (1983), includes a very informative chapter entitled "The Bluestockings," in which she credits them with making significant contributions to Meiji feminism:

They discussed sexuality openly and related it to the politics of

women's condition. They added to the Meiji feminists' demand for economic independence a call for psychological and emotional independence — from men and from the family system. For all of this, they paid a heavy price. But their willingness to accept responsibility for themselves and other women, even though it was often grudging, pushed the feminist movement in Japan to a new level.<sup>13</sup>

A recent essay by Laurel Rasplica Rodd, "Yōsano Akiko and the Taishō Debate over the 'New Woman,'" in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945*, also helps us understand Seitō's place in women's history. She, too, remarks that from its inception, "Seitō was treated less as a literary than a news event."<sup>14</sup> Noriko Lippit's introduction to her *Stories by Contemporary Japanese Women Writers* (1982) takes a somewhat unusual turn by considering Seitō as a contribution to Japanese women's *literary* history.<sup>15</sup> My dissertation on Seitō (1989) relies greatly on the scholarship in both Japanese and English.<sup>16</sup> It offers a detailed history of the group and its journal as well as an analysis of portraits of independence, work, romance, and motherhood evident in Seitō fiction and essays. The dissertation also includes translations of the journal's original by-laws and the five pieces censored by the government.

Perhaps because this research on Seitō is still relatively new in the United States, as in Japan, Seitō has yet to figure in general discussions of Japanese literature or history. Donald Keene's *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era* (1984) mentions Seitō only in the context of "The Revival of Women's Writing,"<sup>17</sup> and Carol Gluck's *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (1985) makes no mention of Seitō at all.<sup>18</sup> Although we certainly need to consider Seitō in terms of women's history, it would also be useful to bring this group, and the experiences and works of many other Japanese women, into the larger picture of Japanese history and literature. Such studies would show how women borrowed, adapted, resisted, and influenced strategies from the intellectual and artistic currents of their day.

The need for cross-cultural comparisons of early twentieth-century women's groups and feminist writing offers another possibility for research on Seitō. The essays of Hiratsuka Raichō and Itō Noe, for example, show how two Japanese women used Western women's ideas in forming their

own theories of liberation. How does this Japanese work compare with the struggles of the “New Women” in other non-Western nations? How have these early adaptations of Western ideas influenced the course of feminist thought in these countries, and how might they have complicated, or facilitated, international feminist understanding? In light of the recent examination of colonialism, this area seems particularly ripe for research.

Studies of the individual *Seitō* writers and their complete works provide another avenue of necessary research. Such critical and in-depth attention will take us past our first stage of general histories of *Seitō* to a more complex picture of the variety of thought represented in the group. Such research will also bring us closer to understanding the literary and intellectual value of the *Seitō* movement.

I would like to conclude by appending my translation of one of Hiratsuka Raichō's more famous *Seitō* essays, “To the Women of Today” (“Yō no fujin-tachi ni,” from *Seitō* 3.4 [April 1913]). Here, Raichō responds to public curiosity and criticism about the *Seitō*-sha. She criticizes Naruse Jinzō (1858–1919), the president of Japan Women's College, for his lack of understanding of the group's mission. Although government censors did not ban the issue carrying this essay, they reprimanded the group for publishing such material and cautioned the group to avoid writing anything that could harm conventional morals and customs or the traditional virtues of the Japanese woman.

*To the Women of Today*  
by *Hiratsuka Raichō*

I deeply regret that even now I must say this kind of thing to today's women.

I frequently encounter the following kinds of questions, especially from women. They ask, “Are you and other *Seitō* Society members against marriage?” When contending with such odd questions — and, indeed, they are odd — I have always responded, “No.” Sometimes I have gone further, adding that “I have never once spoken in support of women remaining single nor do I remember ever advocating the idea of marriage or the concept of the ‘good wife and wise mother.’ Much less have I ever indicated that *Seitō* Society members were proponents of any

such ideas." Thereupon, the women respond simply by saying, "Oh, is that so? Since everyone says you're against marriage, we just assumed it was so." Since they do not ask me anything further, I lose the courage to go into any more detail and leave it at that.

I act this way because I am so completely taken aback by their questions. These questions reveal just how simple and carefree are both their own inner lives and their thoughts on the inner lives of modern women such as ourselves. I dare say they have nothing of substance in mind when they say such idle, mindless things as: "Despite the fact that she's old enough, Raichō still hasn't married anyone so she's most likely against marriage," and "Since everyone says she's against marriage, I guess it must be so. I'll just ask and see if it is true or not. Besides, there are rumors that most of the other Seitō Society members are also single." I can also guess from the thoughtless manner in which these women ask their questions, and from their sarcastic tone of voice, that they haven't given the matter any more thought or examination than this. If this were not so, I suspect they would hesitate to confront us with such silly questions.

Why doesn't a more basic doubt occur to most women today in regard to such homilies as, "women must marry at least once," "marriage is the only way for women to live," "all women must be good wives and wise mothers," "marriage and motherhood are a woman's whole life"? That this doesn't happen strikes me as strange. Why do they make no attempt at a fundamental examination of what, by rights, a genuine life for women should be? This should be examined completely apart from accepted notions of female virtue which have been passed down through the ages for the convenience of men.

We do not presume to advocate that all women remain single. We simply do not have the leisure to become involved in ideological disputes over such issues as the rejection of marriage or being "good wives and wise mothers." However, we do have fundamental doubts about the way women have led their lives, and we ourselves can no longer tolerate such an existence. Whether women should, in fact, marry has long been at issue. Must a

woman's entire life be sacrificed for the necessity of preserving the race? Is there no other vocation for women outside procreation? Is marriage absolutely the only door to women's lives? Is being a wife and mother the whole of a woman's mission in life? We can no longer believe in such ideas. Besides marriage, shouldn't there be limitless doors for women, open to each of us? Besides meekly becoming a "good wife and wise mother," shouldn't defining a woman's mission in life be up to each of us? Shouldn't freedom of choice be readily available to each individual? Surely, this goes without saying.

For this reason, we demand for women as much liberal education as possible. Furthermore, we demand a high level of education to nourish the spirit and the minds of those women who, independently of men, shall find meaning in their own lives as women. And although I do not attempt to explain everything from a solely materialistic point of view as many socialists do, I must say that we also demand vocational training in order to eliminate the many insecurities and obstacles that arise from a lack of economic independence. Whenever women do not depend on marriage, the issue of immediate concern is always the question of employment.

For example, the women's movement in Europe was, of course, both motivated by Rousseau's theory of the natural rights of man to freedom and equality, and based on an awakening of women that went hand in hand with the development of the concept of individualism. However, I suspect that, apart from this intellectual dimension, the women's movement was largely instigated by the actual problems of the economic conditions in European society and the imbalance of males and females in the population. It did not matter whether these women themselves questioned or disliked the idea of marriage. The fact was that many women could not get married even if they wanted to, and thus the question of employment was the most pressing issue for them.

Whether fortunate or unfortunate, we modern Japanese women are not motivated by this kind of extreme necessity. This is not to say that such does not exist, but rather that it is our own inner

needs that make us also long to step out of the small haven of the home, take jobs, and lead our own lives.

I have heard that women's education in the United States and Europe leans increasingly toward vocational training. Recently, a certain newspaper carried an interview with Naruse Jinzō, the president of Japan Women's College, just returned from a trip abroad. Naruse said that although women's vocational training was flourishing abroad, he was most pleased that women's education in Japan was entirely directed toward creating good wives and wise mothers. He also said that in England, too, the young women of the upper classes were generally educated in the home. I also noticed he mentioned something like, "In Japan these days, although New Women might be causing quite a stir, they are nothing but worthless tomboys." Because I have not had the opportunity to speak with Mr. Naruse in a long time, I may be much too hasty in criticizing him on the basis of this one article which appeared in a newspaper that is not always reliable. I am deeply saddened, however, to hear these words from a women's educator whom I respect. Has old age caught up with this zealous educator who was once so ahead of his times? It saddens me, too, to think the old must cater to such conventional ideas.

Seen in the light of Mr. Naruse's emphasis on so-called character-building education, vocational training is, indeed, not ideal. But where does such criticism leave the pathetic "good wife and wise mother" education for girls we have in our own country? Clearly, Mr. Naruse does not understand in the slightest, nor does he even care to understand, women such as ourselves whom society has labeled New Women. He does not see the new vitality emerging within us and does not hear our crying needs that will not be silenced. Echoing the narrow views of an ignorant and excitable majority and the insults hurled by fools who find fault with anybody who attempts something new, Mr. Naruse coolly censures us in the most thoughtless terms, saying we are "tomboys" or that we are "eroding female virtues." For the president of the only women's college in Japan to say such things, is, I believe, quite unwise and quite irresponsible.

Modern women who have more or less awakened as individuals

can no longer feel any appreciation for the so-called womanly virtues of submission, gentleness, chastity, patience, self-sacrifice, and so on, that men and our society have so long forced upon us. This is because we have questioned the reasons for, and the roots of, assumptions regarding female virtue. We have asked: Why have these behaviors been required of women? Why did society come to recognize them as feminine virtues, and why, in the end, did people even go so far as to believe these virtues formed the essential nature of woman? I will not give any details here about the conclusions our questions produced. I can say, however, that only one reasonable explanation exists. That is, these virtues have been created "for the sake of men." In short, such behaviors have absolutely no fundamental value whatsoever. Because of unthinking prejudice and a customary antagonism to change, however, most of today's women simply do not understand such things. Rather, deluded by the slander of those who disparage anything new, these women blindly oppose women like us. If even these women were to consider such issues more deeply, I believe they would surely find many things to their own dissatisfaction.

I am afraid that saying these things will only make most of today's women immediately jump to such arbitrary conclusions as, "The New Woman wants to rebel against men," and "A woman's awakening seems to lead to her divorce." It is true that we might rebel against men, and at times, I imagine divorces will occur. But rebellion itself is not our purpose, and divorce is not our goal. Indeed, the extent to which we do not even interest ourselves in such questions as whether rebellion or divorce is right or wrong shows how greatly we value our lives as individuals and our lives as women. If, thus far, however, women's lives have been trampled on because of men's personal advantage and desires, not to mention their convenience, then isn't it natural for us to take a defiant stance toward men at some time in order to recover what has been lost?

Were even those women who are so lucky as to be called "wives" to rub their eyes a bit more, could they be entirely satisfied with the lives they've been leading? I wonder how many of today's wives have consented to marry without love in order to

secure their own livelihood. How many serve their husbands as maids by day and prostitutes by night? Sadly, I have heard that some women, believing they must be obedient, submit even to the excessive sexual desires of their husbands, and grow very weak as a result of multiple pregnancies. Even if a husband and wife should feel affection after they have been living together, in most cases such feelings are born of nothing more than expedience. It is not a love that, in and of itself, transcends self-interest.

Even if we do not, for example, go so far as to oppose marriage itself, we cannot submit at all to today's idea of marriage nor to the marriage system as it presently operates. In today's social system, does not marriage enforce a relationship of authority and subjugation that continues throughout one's entire life? Are not wives treated in the same way as minors or cripples? Isn't it true that they have neither property rights nor legal rights to their children? Isn't it also true that adultery is not a crime for the husband but is a crime for the wife? We do not wish to marry so long as it means submitting to this kind of absurd, illogical system. We do not wish to become such wives.

Once our eyes have been opened, we cannot close them again. We are alive. We are awake. We cannot exist without letting the vitality of our inner lives radiate outward. No matter what pressures we may face, our new vitality cannot stop searching for such escape.

Now, seeking the door to a genuine life for women, we find ourselves at a loss. Where should we direct all our energy? Off-hand comments as to whether New Women are frivolous or serious are no longer of any consequence to us. In short, no matter how loudly or how many times we are fed such homilies as, "Live an earnest, spiritual life" or "Live in a noble, respectable, and genuine way," we will never yield our ideals. Although we have only just finished the grammar school of spiritual awakening, we cannot go on living blindly by these mere silhouettes of meaning preached and defined by others. We are searching, through our own efforts, to know the meaning of our lives. Battling against insecurity within and a great deal of unreasonable persecution without, we shall continue our search, fundamentally doubting

and fundamentally questioning, what indeed the life of a genuine woman should be.

If, however, our inner power and newly awakened vitality do not find satisfying channels, then we are surely headed for destruction. We shall have no choice then, I fear, but to end our lives, just as Hedda did.

NOTES

I would like to thank Mr. Okumura Atsubumi and Fuji Shuppan Publishers for permission to translate and publish this essay.

1. In historical accounts in Japanese and English, one often finds *Seitō*, the journal, and *Seitō-sha*, the group, almost interchangeably referred to simply as *Seitō*.
2. For information on Yōsano Akiko, see Laurel Rasplica Rodd, "Yōsano Akiko and the Taishō Debate over the 'New Woman,'" in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 175-198.
3. *Seitō* 1 (September 1911), p. 37. All translations from the Japanese are mine.
4. One may purchase the entire set through Nihon Shuppan Bōeki (Tokyo 101, Chiyoda-ku, Sarugaku-cho 1-2-1; tel: 03-3292-3751; fax: 03-3292-0410) for 123,600 yen.
5. This series includes writing by twenty women actively writing in the 1910s and twenties who had either been contributors to *Seitō* or had some association with members of the group. It includes such items as the complete works of writers Iwano Kiyō and Mizuno Senko, the autobiography of Itō Noe, and a collection of essays by Raichō. Each volume also has an interpretive essay. These essays were contributed by Japanese historians in this area such as Ide Fumiko and Maruoka Hideko, and novelists such as Setouchi Harumi and Sata Ineko.
6. Margaret Neuss published a lengthy study of *Seitō* in German. See "Die *Seitō*sha — Der Ausgangspunkt der Japanischen Frauenbewegung in seinen zeitgeschichtlichen und sozialen Bedingungen," *Oriens Extremus* 18 (July 1971), pp. 2-66, and (December 1971), pp. 138-201.
7. Hiratsuka Raichō, *Genshi josei wa taiyō de atta: Hiratsuka Raichō jiden* (Tokyo: Otsuki shoten, 1971).
8. See, for example, the following works by Ide Fumiko: *Seitō no onna-tachi* (Tokyo: Kaien shobō, 1975);

- Jiyū: sore wa watakushi jishin: hyōden* — Itō Noe (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1979); and *Hiratsuka Raichō: kindai to shinpi* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1987). See also Kobayashi Tomie, *Hiratsuka Raichō* (Tokyo: Shimizu Shoin, 1983).
9. Hiratsuka, *Genshi*, p. 614.
  10. *Ibid.*, p. 625.
  11. See as examples Wakamori Tarō and Yamamoto Fujie, *Nihon josei shi* (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1975), vol. 6; *Meiji josei shi* (Tokyo: Rironsha, 1974), vol. 2; and Takamura Itsue, *Josei no rekishi* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1972), vol. 2.
  12. See, for example, Setouchi Harumi's two-volume novel *Seitō* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1984) and her novels about Itō Noe: *Bi wa ranchō in ari* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjū, 1984) and *Kaichō wa itsuwari nari* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjū, 1984).
  13. See Sharon L. Sievers, *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983), p. 188.
  14. See Rodd, "Yōsano Akiko."
  15. Noriko Lippit, *Stories by Contemporary Japanese Women Writers* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1982). See also her article "Seitō and the Literary Roots of Japanese Feminism," *International Journal of Women's Studies*, no. 2 (March-April 1979), pp. 155-163.
  16. Janice Bridges Bardsley, "Writing for the New Woman of Taishō Japan: Hiratsuka Raichō and the *Seitō* Journal, 1911-1916" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1989). See the dissertation bibliography for citations of more research on *Seitō* in Japanese and English.
  17. Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984), vol. 1, p. 1115.
  18. Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985).

GLOSSARY

Fuji Shuppan 不二出版	Naruse Jinzō 成瀬仁藏
Hiratsuka Raichō 平塚らいちよう	<i>Seitō</i> 青踏
Ide Fumiko 井手文子	<i>Seitō no onna-tachi</i> 青踏の女たち
Ikuta Chōkō 生田長江	Seitō-sha 青踏社
Itō Noe 伊藤野枝	Setouchi Harumi 瀬戸内晴美
Kobayashi Tomie 小林登美枝	Taishō 大正
Meiji 明治	<i>Yō no fujin-tachi ni</i> 世の婦人達に
<i>Midaregami</i> みだれ髪	Yōsano Akiko 与謝野晶子



A Mirror to Marriage in  
Traditional China:  
Notes on *A Tangle of Emotions*  
(*I-p'ien ch'ing*)

HUANG LIN

Among the collections of rare traditional Chinese novels held by Tokyo University's general library, the libraries of the Department of Letters, and the Institute of Oriental Culture, the institute's Sōkōdō collection (Chinese: Shuang-hung t'ang, after Professor Nagasawa Kikuya's private library) is the richest and most spectacular. The Sōkōdō collection holds such rare Chinese works as *Random Gleanings from the Three Teachings* (*San-chiao ou-nien*), *A Life of the Imperial Concubine's Mother* (*T'ien-fei niang-ma chuan*), *A Tangle of Emotions* (*I-p'ien ch'ing*), and *The Queen of All Flowers* (*Pai-hua k'uei*). Each of them represents one of the few extant copies of its kind. *A Tangle of Emotions*, however, has long been considered a pornographic work, and has therefore not received appropriate scholarly appreciation or attention. This work, for instance, is on the list of "pornographic novels" compiled by Ting Jih-ch'ang (1823–1882) during the T'ung-chih reign period (1862–1874). In his *A Bibliography of Chinese Popular Novels* (*Chung-kuo t'ung-su hsiao-shuo shu-mu*), Sun K'ai-ti, a modern bibliographer, classifies it with novels "concentrating solely on the description of obscene affairs."<sup>1</sup> Even a recent work, *Essentials of a Comprehensive Bibliography of Chinese Popular Novels* (*Chung-kuo t'ung-su hsiao-shuo tsung-mu t'i-yao*), com-

piled by the Academy of Social Sciences, Kiangsu Province, describes it as a novel of "bawdy and salacious content."<sup>2</sup> In fact, however, the author of *A Tangle of Emotions* displays a skillful mastery of colloquial terms, and the novel is written in an easy and fluent style. More important, *A Tangle of Emotions* reflects quite faithfully the marital system and the traditional concept of marriage in China. It holds up a mirror to marriage in ancient China, and for this alone it deserves more attention from modern scholars.

Only two copies of *A Tangle of Emotions* are known to exist anywhere in the world: the Sōkōdō exemplar and one preserved in the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Peking. On the slipcase of the Sōkōdō copy, a title reads "*A Tangle of Emotions: a novel with fine-line illustrations*" (Hsiu-hsiang hsiao-shuo *I-p'ien ch'ing*). The titles that appear in the table of contents and in the text are, however, slightly different from the slipcase. They contain two more characters, which read "newly printed" (*hsin-chüan*). A preface on the opening page was written by "Ch'u-hsien of the P'ei Kingdom [in modern Su-hsien County, Anhwei Province] while boating on the West Lake." Although the original version must have been illustrated, the Sōkōdō exemplar contains no illustrations. The book is well printed in a format of eight lines each half-folio and eighteen characters per line. The table of contents shows the text's division into four volumes; the whole work contains fourteen chapters (*hui*).

The copy held by the Central Academy of Fine Arts is incomplete. It was published by the "Hsiao-hua Veranda." An inscription on its slipcase describes it as "an incomplete copy of the Ming-edition *A Tangle of Emotions*." The words "odd and amusing affairs" appear on the upper righthand corner of the inner cover; in the center is the title; and on the lower lefthand corner is another remark, "printed with woodblocks preserved in the Hsiao-hua Veranda." The next page contains the table of contents. An inscription at the beginning says "a newly printed novel." This version of *A Tangle of Emotions* consists of nine chapters, which correspond to chapters one to five, eight to ten, and twelve of the Sōkōdō exemplar. It has some printing errors but no illustrations. Each half-folio of the text has nine lines, and each line has twenty characters. This Hsiao-hua Veranda exemplar obviously represents an abbreviated version derived from the book represented by the fourteen-chapter Sōkōdō exemplar. Only the first three chapters of this abbreviated version are still extant. Moreover, some characters and sentences are missing from the second half of chapter two and the first half

of chapter three. This Hsiao-hua Veranda version is therefore of much lower quality than the Sōkōdō exemplar.

Using a Chinese brush, Professor Nagasawa Kikuya wrote an inscription in Chinese on the title page of the Sōkōdō copy:

I once read this book in the Chiba Library and made some notes. Sun [K'ai-ti]'s description of the book is in fact based on my notes. When the Chiba Library started selling its collection, at first I resorted to every possible means to acquire this book, but to no avail. Eventually I obtained the whole book. Its stories indicate that the book was published during the Shun-chih reign period [1644–1661]. Although the book title is intact, all the illustrations are lost. The table of contents shows that the book has fourteen chapters. But I wonder whether chapter fourteen is indeed the last chapter. *The Vocabulary of Fiction* (*Shōsetsu jii*) has an entry for this book. Judging from its contents, the book is absolutely pornographic.

Professor Nagasawa properly identified this book as a Shun-chih reign period publication. In contrast, the inscription “Ming edition,” which appears on the slipcase of the Hsiao-hua Veranda exemplar, is inaccurate. Inner evidence in the novel supports the Shun-chih date. For instance, chapter twelve, “Little Devil Dies Miserably through Romance,” tells us that the story happened in 1645, one year after the fall of the Ming dynasty and the establishment of the Ch'ing. Some Ming loyalists fled south to create the last Han-Chinese regime, the Southern Ming, and “Emperor Hung-kuang ascended the throne in the southern capital [modern Nanking].” At the end of the chapter is a statement that “the case has not yet been settled.” Another piece of evidence is found in chapter three, “A Foolish Monk Would Rather Die for Flirtation,” in which the term “Emperor T'ai-tsu [r. 1368–1398] of the Ming” is used to refer to the first Ming emperor. This way of addressing the Ming founder was not standard during the Ming, but was commonly used by Ch'ing-dynasty scholars. These two pieces of evidence point to the fact that the author was a man of Ch'ing times, and therefore the book is not a Ming edition. The real authorship of the book, however, remains unclear, except that it is probable that he was from the Hang-chou area: chapter three mentions an imperial envoy who “came to Hang-chou on imperial decree to select three refined girls [to serve in the palace],” and

the author frequently used colloquial expressions in the Wu, a dialect spoken in the Hang-chou region.

*A Tangle of Emotions* is in four volumes (*chüan*) and fourteen chapters, each of which tells a complete story.

VOLUME ONE

Chapter one, "Tsuan-yün Yen Hides Himself in a Chest"

Chapter two, "Blind Shao Hears Love-making on the Spot"

Chapter three, "A Foolish Monk Would Rather Die for Flirtation"

Chapter four, "A Lascivious Woman Plots for Sheng-sheng's Death"

VOLUME TWO

Chapter five, "An Ugly Girl Eventually Finds Her Luck"

Chapter six, "An Old Woman Satisfies Her Sexual Desire under the Pretext of Looking for a Son-in-law"

Chapter seven, "The God of Vat Cleverly Seduces a Good Woman"

Chapter eight, "A False Eunuch Never Gives up a Woman"

VOLUME THREE

Chapter nine, "A Great Lover Wanders into a Fairyland"

Chapter ten, "Ch'i Yen-sheng Is Misled into the Abode of Immortals"

Chapter eleven, "A Husband Who Dreads His Wife"

Chapter twelve, "A Little Devil Dies Miserably in Romance"

VOLUME FOUR

Chapter thirteen, "A Cultivated Talent Turns Pretence to Reality"

Chapter fourteen, "Frivolous La-li Suffers from His Own Deeds"

As suggestive as these chapter titles may be, *A Tangle of Emotions* is nevertheless different from the Ming-Ch'ing pornographic books that "meant to describe only sexual activities."<sup>3</sup> Through the fourteen stories, the author reveals from various angles the problems of traditional marriage. He also offers his opinions on marriage and family, which were indeed quite unusual among his contemporaries: a happy, fulfilling marriage is the basis of satisfactory family life and social stability; a happy marriage should build

on love and a harmonious sexual life between the couple; and neither ethics nor law can sustain an unhappy marriage. In the novel, the author usually expresses these opinions through criticizing the behavior of certain people, making them villains in the stories.

Chapter thirteen is perhaps the only exception. Here the writer openly praises the relationship between the hero and the heroine. It tells a story about Mou T'ien-ch'eng, a scholar, and a girl Ai-ku. The two were playmates from childhood and formed a long-lasting friendship. As they grew up, friendship developed into deep affection, and they had their first sexual encounter out of total ignorance and spontaneity when playing naughty games together. Flaming love drove T'ien-ch'eng to ask a matchmaker to propose to Ai-ku for him. Once married, the two, although poor and hard pressed, lived a happy life and were deeply in love with each other. The plot thickens when Feng-chu, an official in Nan-ch'ang and a good friend of T'ien-ch'eng, goes to visit a local gentleman. He tries to make a match between T'ien-ch'eng and Jen-niang, the only daughter of the gentleman, not knowing that T'ien-ch'eng had already married. The proposal is accepted, and Feng-chu writes to T'ien-ch'eng, urging him to come to Nan-ch'ang to get married. Ai-ku, knowing that this could be the only opportunity for her husband to become wealthy and famous, tries to persuade him to go. But T'ien-ch'eng cannot bear the idea of allowing his poverty to end their love. They decide instead to go to Nan-ch'ang together in the guise of brother and sister. T'ien-ch'eng marries Jen-niang, and Ai-ku lives a lonely life but never regrets what she had done. Later, Jen-niang finds out the real relationship between T'ien-ch'eng and Ai-ku and is deeply moved. Despite her father's anger and objection, Jen-niang treats Ai-ku attentively, as though they were sisters. The three live together as husband and wives and raise a big family of many children and grandchildren.

The behavior of T'ien-ch'eng, Ai-ku, and Jen-niang is indeed unexpected to readers, but it is apparently not abnormal in the mind of the author, who considered their relationship an example of "true love" between man and woman. It is this love that linked T'ien-ch'eng and Ai-ku after he had married Jen-niang and become a rich man; it is also this love that encouraged Ai-ku to allow T'ien-ch'eng to marry Jen-niang in the first place. She then follows T'ien-ch'eng to his new home, living a lonely life without any regret. Jen-niang, a minor figure in the story, is as daring as the hero and the heroine in her pursuit of a paradise of "harmonious life between husband

and wife." Even after she finds out the real relationship between T'ien-ch'eng and Ai-ku, Jen-niang, out of the conviction that T'ien-ch'eng would never desert her, disobeys her father's will and does not leave T'ien-ch'eng, the man she deeply loves, to marry someone else.

Unfortunately, marriage in traditional China was not always based on "true love." An unsatisfactory sex life in marriage and the unsolvable conflict between obeying social ethical codes and satisfying one's physical needs often ended a troubled marriage by bringing tragedy to both parties. Through its fourteen stories, *A Tangle of Emotions* tries to reveal certain factors contributing to these tragedies.

First of all, the author of *A Tangle of Emotions* blamed troubled marriages on a mismatch between the man and the woman. Unlike the case of Mou T'ien-ch'eng and Ai-ku, traditional Chinese marriages were often not the fruit of love. Some girls married for wealth and power, some were forced into an arranged marriage by their fathers. The story in chapter twelve illustrates an extreme case of a mismatch. It takes place when Emperor Hung-kuang of the Southern Ming was about to ascend the throne in Nanking. An envoy is sent to Hang-chou to select "refined girls" to serve in the palace. These girls were expected to live a lonely palace life, many of them never even having a chance to meet the emperor. The news caused panic among many Hang-chou girls; some married in a great rush just to avoid being chosen as a "refined girl." Chang-chen, a girl in her late teens, marries Pi Ta, a boy only in his early teens. Ch'ü Hsüeh, a schoolmate of Pi Ta's who was already eighteen, marries a twelve year old. Marriage brings nothing but discontent to Chang-chen and Ch'ü Hsüeh. Later, Ch'ü Hsüeh invites Pi Ta to stay overnight in his house. At the same time he disguises himself as Pi Ta and has sex with Chang-chen, keeping her totally in the dark. After a few such incidents, Ch'ü Hsüeh gives himself away and is caught in the act by Pi Ta's mother, who, following the traditional Chinese practice of forcing an adulterous woman to divorce her husband, sends the innocent victim Chang-chen back to her parents' home that very night. The story is indicative of the problems that a mismatch or a random match would bring to marriage. The author suggests that a mismatch is usually the result of incompatibility between a couple in terms of their personality, age, physical appearance and talents, and sexual ability. And problems often arose right at the beginning of such a marriage.

Chapter eleven describes a man of the local gentry, who, although highly

respected by local people, dreads his spouse as much as a devil fears the King of Hell. Incompatibility in personality eventually leads his wife to commit adultery.

Chapter one (see illustration 1) and chapter twelve concentrate on tragedies caused by age differences. At the beginning of chapter one the author points out that "sexual passion between man and woman" is the way of the world. "An old man can hardly win the favor of his young spouse nor satisfy her sexual desire. The inevitable consequence is adultery, or even worse, violent crime committed by the wife or the husband." Fu Ch'eng, the protagonist in chapter one, is a rich landlord who possesses "gardens in the South Hill, houses in the North Village, farmland in the east, and a lake in the west." He had already taken a few concubines, but none of them gave birth to a child. Approaching sixty and anxious to have a child as heir, Fu Ch'eng decides to take another concubine in the hope that she will produce a baby for him. The new concubine is Hsin-yü, a young girl of exquisite beauty. Covetous of the lavish betrothal gifts, Hsin-yü's parents willingly present their daughter to Fu Ch'eng, who promises Hsin-yü a comfortable life. What Fu Ch'eng could not promise, however, was a harmonious and satisfactory marriage for a couple of such disparate ages. Hsin-yü is so bitter about the marriage that she cannot help "cursing the matchmaker, blaming her parents, and sighing over her unfortunate marriage." Frustration leads Hsin-yü to involve herself in an illicit relationship with a handsome young man. When the affair is discovered, Fu Ch'eng has the young man killed and all the evidence of murder destroyed. The loss of her loved one depresses Hsin-yü who soon becomes seriously ill; six months later she dies.

At the end of chapter twelve, the author voices his indignation at the old marriage system and his sympathy for the ill-fated heroine in the story:

It is truly a shame that [some parents and matchmakers] have no due consideration whether a man and a woman are about the same age, or whether she has any true feelings toward the man. They just match them at random, resulting in many unfortunate events. Be extremely cautious when choosing a husband for a girl. Marriage is no game!

It is worth noting that the author tried to search for more fundamental social reasons to account for the unfortunate marriage between an aging

man and a young lady. He was able to free himself from the traditional prejudice against women, which considered them the root of all evil and often blamed them for any failed marriage. He pointed his finger directly at the wealthy aging man and the emperor, expressing a more open-minded opinion, which is indeed praiseworthy.

Incompatibility in physical appearance and talents of the involved couple is another factor contributing to tragedy in marriage. To the author, an ideal marriage, as described in chapter two, should be a union between "the talented and the beautiful," a union between "a beauty and her bosom boyfriend," or between "a talented scholar and his beloved fair lady." In chapter ten, such an ideal is voiced through the mouth of the heroine Li-niang: "The satisfaction is truly beyond expression if you are in the arms of a clever and handsome man, enjoying the physical pleasure with him; but it would be no fun at all even to have a few words with a stupid and ugly person." Unfortunately, the wife of Ch'i Yen-sheng was an unattractive woman. Disgusted by her appearance, Ch'i plotted with his classmate to seduce Li-niang, who agreed to see him after dark. Ch'i, totally by mistake, slipped into the courtyard of his classmate's home and ended up in the bedroom of the classmate's two older sisters. This affair made Li-niang believe that she was cheated. Realizing that a momentary slip of mind almost cost her her virginity, Li-niang gives Ch'i a flat refusal when he tries once again to take advantage of her.

Incompatibility in the looks and talents of a couple is often the reason for disharmony, causing cracks or even unsolvable conflicts in marriage. Hsiu-yüeh, the heroine in chapter two, is a victim of such incompatibility. A quick-witted girl, she is forced by her parents to accept an arranged marriage with a blind fortune teller, Mr. Shao, whose fortune telling was said to have been so accurate that it drew many people to him from near and far and made him a wealthy man. But Hsiu-yüeh is not happy. She often sighs, asking herself, "What sin did I commit in my previous existence? Why has fate brought such a horrible husband to my life?" At the same time, Shao, out of the conviction that "a blind man's wife is always adulterous," keeps his wife on a short leash. Hsiu-yüeh is disgusted by the restrictions that her husband imposes on her, which, instead of keeping her safely in the marriage, drive her to seek out freedom and love. She develops an illicit relationship with Shao's cousin. Out of vengeance, Hsiu-yüeh even has sexual intercourse with her lover right in front of the poor blind man without his

knowledge. Shao eventually learns about the affair and divorces Hsiu-yüeh. She immediately marries her lover and moves to another place. In this story, incompatibility in physical appearance apparently dragged the marriage into trouble. This is also true of the hero in chapter ten, who abandons his “ugly” wife to look for a beautiful woman. Through these stories, the author was advocating the idea that in matching a man and a woman for marriage, the major consideration should be compatibility in their looks and talents. Even when a match cannot attain the ideal of one between a talented scholar and a beautiful lady, it should at least be one between “a waste basket and a broom”; that is, the couple have to be compatible. And once married, both husband and wife should make every effort to fulfill their obligations to their spouse.

Sexual dysfunction of the husband often ruined a marriage. In traditional China, a man could divorce his unfortunate wife if she suffered from sexual dysfunction. He could also keep her as his legal wife while taking as many concubines as he wished. In contrast, a woman had to put up with her husband’s sexual dysfunction. If she refused to live a life without sexual pleasure, if she dared to challenge the traditional ethical codes and tried to break away from solitude, she would subject herself to tremendous pressure from public opinion and often suffer a miserable end. In chapter eight the unlucky heroine Shui-shih marries a man who suffers from both premature ejaculation and impotence. Never satisfied sexually, she often curses her spouse and “would not let a day pass peacefully without having quarrelled with him two or three times.” Their neighbor Chia K’ung learns of this. He manages to entice the heroine by bragging about the size of his sexual organ. But the heroine’s pursuit of sexual satisfaction ends in a disaster: the husband kills her and her lover with an axe. And not only does the husband escape punishment for his capital crime, the local authorities, perhaps calculating that this violent action against adultery was useful to their efforts to maintain good social customs, reward the killer with a token of “one *liang* [fifty grams] of silver.” At this juncture the author sneers at those who “are incompetent sexually but still keep numerous wives and concubines.” In his opinion, these men, who often refuse to admit their sexual dysfunction, should be blamed for their failed marriages, because they, knowing that they were unable to bring happiness to their spouses, married them anyway. By so doing, they “entrapped” these women, but from time to time they were also humiliated by the extramarital affairs of their wives.

新鐫繡像小說一片情卷之一

第一回

鑽雲眼暗藏箱底

詩曰

古來好色膽如天，  
祇笑衰翁不自閒，  
頓使芳心隨蝶亂，  
空將畫閣鎖嬋娟。

1. Author unknown, *I-p'ien ch'ing*, text 14 chaps. in 4 ch., table of contents 4 ch. Eight cols. of 18 chars.; block 11.5 x 20 cm. Shun-chih edition (1644-1661). Collection of the Institute of Oriental Culture, Tokyo University.

Separation also had a detrimental effect on marriage. In traditional China, husbands and wives were separated for a variety of reasons, one of which was the thirst for profit which drove some merchants to places far from home and resulted in their neglect of family life. For example, in chapter four, Ch'eng Sheng-sheng, a trader in medicinal herbs, goes on a business trip to Peking, leaving behind his wife who is five months pregnant. Away from home, Sheng-sheng is sad and lonesome. He goes to a brothel where he encounters a lascivious woman whom he later takes as his concubine. The relationship brings him not tender love but trouble. First, the concubine steals his money; then she deliberately provokes him. When Sheng-sheng becomes sick and broke, she plots with her sister to do away with him. Their idea is to take turns having sex with Sheng-sheng in the dark in the hope that excessive sex will weaken him physically and eventually lead to his death. Fortunately, Sheng-sheng learns of the plot. He divorces his concubine and leaves Peking for South China, where he starts a dried fish business. After more than ten years, Sheng-sheng makes a fortune. He returns home, and the family is reunited.

In chapter seven, the marriage of a newly wed couple also deteriorates when the husband leaves home on a business trip. Sheng-erh, the lonely heroine, cannot help shedding tears and blaming her husband for "leaving me at home for two years without ever thinking how the golden years in my life would be wasted." Her loneliness gives a young man the chance to take advantage of her. He persuades her to go to a fortune teller, where she is raped by both the men. On his return home her husband learns of the incident and takes revenge on the two men: they are beaten to death by order of the county magistrate. But soon thereafter Sheng-erh also dies, of illness.

Keeping concubines was a common practice in traditional Chinese marriages, and just as happened in a marriage, a man could end up separated from his concubine. At the beginning of chapter five, the author points out that "when a man wants a concubine, he will find one at all costs. But he often dares not bring her home for fear of objection from a shrewish wife." Or "sometimes he stops over in a place on his journey and takes a concubine only to find out later that it is inconvenient to bring her along." Whatever the reason might be, these women often ended up in a vulnerable position: they were left behind by their men. This situation from time to time brought disasters to them. In the story, a general is ordered by imperial

decree to lead his troops north after he has just taken a concubine in Yangchou. Since military discipline forbade anyone to bring family dependents while on the march, the general has to leave his concubine in the care of his colleague. But she later commits adultery with the sons of her neighbor. In a word, the author believed that when husbands and wives lived apart from one another their marriage was bound to suffer.

Normal family life, according to the author, is the basis for social stability. Without it, society is endangered. In *A Tangle of Emotions* we see two kinds of people who did not have normal family lives: widows and monks. The author argues that "human beings are the most intelligent of all living creatures on earth. They would naturally pair themselves off even though some of them are as foolish as birds and beasts and as innocent as ants and insects." He also stresses the importance of physical pleasure in human relationships: "Of all the joyous things in this world, sexual love is the only real pleasure." Since sexual desire is a fundamental desire of all human beings, "only death will make it cease to exist." Through his stories, the author shows us examples of men and women who were deprived of normal family life, with horrible consequences. In chapter nine, three brothers die one after the other, leaving behind their mother and three young widows. When a young man sees the three beautiful widows, his desire for these women is aroused. Longing for sex, the widow of the eldest brother is the first to give up her chastity to join him. They then manage to involve the other two widows in a promiscuous relationship. The affair is eventually discovered by their mother-in-law, who immediately marries them off. And all of them come to a disgraceful end. The author, however, was rather sympathetic with these three widows. He points out that it was against human nature to urge the three "young and beautiful women" to live in widowhood only for the sake of chastity. "When they were forced to do so, they could hardly stay chaste or widowed forever."

In contrast, the author was rather sarcastic toward monks. In the story, monks are described as distorted human beings, forced to give up sexual pleasure to comply with monastic discipline. Their suppressed sexual passion nevertheless needed a way of release, which led some monks to abnormal and despicable conduct beyond the imagination of ordinary people. Liu-ho in chapter three is such a monk. He takes a fancy to a young woman. Since monks were not allowed to marry, Liu-ho, by a dirty trick, tries to force her into a double arrangement: she would become the nominal

wife of his friend, but a real sex slave of Liu-ho himself. The young woman refuses to go along with this arrangement. Liu-ho, after a disappointing sexual encounter with the woman, decides to let his friend have her. He then tries to seduce another woman but is beaten up by the woman and her husband. He flees to another place, where he claims that he is a living Buddha. But the local prefect soon finds out his real identity and sentences him to death.

As the author saw it, promiscuous monks were not the only threat to marriage coming from religion. Sometimes, a devoted Buddhist believer could also endanger his own marriage if he neglected family life. His unsatisfied spouse would involve herself in relations offensive to public decency. In chapter six, we read about a husband who "stayed in a temple twenty-nine days a month," leaving his wife in sexual hunger. A woman in her late forties still very active sexually, she comes up with a self-serving arrangement: under the pretext of looking for a suitable husband for her daughter, she lures many young men into her bed. But she soon becomes the victim and laughingstock of the three brothers of a local family, who make her their sex toy.

Certain stories in *A Tangle of Emotions* indicate that the author, although remarkably open-minded for his time, was not yet completely free of traditional prejudices against women. Sometimes women are still depicted as "the root of all evil." In chapter fourteen, for example, a promiscuous wife of a tailor first commits adultery with her husband's apprentice, and then becomes romantically involved with a new apprentice. Jealous, the senior apprentice encourages his master to catch the two in the act. In disarray, the tailor kills his wife by accident, but the junior apprentice manages to get away unharmed. Shocked and enraged, the tailor kills the informant. The adulterer is so terrified by the violence that he dies half a year later. Some stories in the novel are also indicative of the author's belief that "a husband is the master of his wife." From time to time such superstitious ideas as "pre-ordained fate," and "marriage is in the hands of the gods" are also evident in the work. Nevertheless, the major theme of *A Tangle of Emotions* is the author's sharp criticism of the traditional Chinese marriage system from a humanitarian point of view. His criticism is not incisive nor does it have much depth. But his stories touch on problems in traditional marriages that arise from a variety of causes, and the misfortune and tragedy that the old marriage system brought to many men and women in many

different social strata. In that sense, *A Tangle of Emotions* as a literary work is perhaps as valuable as the *Golden Lotus* (*Chin p'ing mei*) and *The Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Hung-lou meng*).

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was translated into English by Ms. Chen Yangling, a graduate student under Professor Huang Lin at Fudan University, Shanghai, and revised by the staff of the journal.

NOTES

1. Sun K'ai-ti, *Chung-kuo t'ung-su hsiao-shuo shu-mu* (Peking: Tso-chia ch'u pan-she, 1957), pp. 109-110.
2. Kiangsu-sheng she-hui k'o-hsüeh-yüan Ming-Ch'ing hsiao-shuo yen-chiu chung-hsin, *Chung-kuo t'ung-su hsiao-shuo tsung-mu t'i-yao* (Peking: Chung-kuo wen-lien ch'u-pan kung-ssu, 1991), pp. 239-240.
3. Lu Hsün, "Chung-kuo hsiao-shuo shih-lüeh," in his *Lu Hsün ch'üan-chi* (Peking: Jen-min wen-hsüeh ch'u-pan-she, 1973), vol. 9, p. 328.

GLOSSARY

Ai-ku 愛姑	Hang-chou 杭州
Anhwei 安徽	Hsiao-hua veranda 嘯花軒
Chang-chen 掌珍	hsin-chüan 新鐫
Ch'eng Sheng-sheng 程生生	Hsin-yü 新玉
Ch'i Yen-sheng 奇彥生	Hsiu-hsiang hsiao-shuo <i>I-p'ien ch'ing</i>
Chia K'ung 賈空	繡像小說一片情
<i>Chin-p'ing mei</i> 金瓶梅	Hsiu-yüeh 羞月
Ch'ü Hsüeh 瞿雪	hui 回
chüan 卷	Hung-kuang 弘光
Ch'u-hsien 擲仙	<i>Hung-lou meng</i> 紅樓夢
<i>Chung-kuo t'ung-su hsiao-shuo shu-mu</i>	<i>I-p'ien ch'ing</i> 一片情
中國通俗小說書目	Jen-niang 任娘
<i>Chung-kuo t'ung-su hsiao-shuo tsung-mu t'i-yao</i>	Kiangsu 江蘇
中國通俗小說總目提要	La-li 臘梨
Feng-chu 鳳竹	liang 兩
Fu Ch'eng 符成	Li-niang 利娘

MARRIAGE IN TRADITIONAL CHINA

Liu-ho 六和

Mou T'ien-ch'eng 謀天成

Nagasawa Kikuya 長澤規矩也

Nan-ch'ang 南昌

Pai-hua k'uei 百花魁

P'ei (Kingdom) 沛

Pi Ta 畢達

San-chiao ou-nien 三教偶拈

Shao 邵

Sheng-erh 勝兒

Shōsetsu jii 小說字彙

Shui-shih 水氏

Shun-chih 順治

Sōkōdō (Shuang-hung t'ang) 雙紅堂

Su-hsien 宿縣

Sun K'ai-ti 孫楷第

T'ai-tsu 太祖

T'ien-fei niang-ma chuan 天妃娘娘傳

Ting Jih-ch'ang 丁日昌

Tsuan-yün Yen 鑽雲眼

T'ung-chih 同治

Yang-chou 揚州



# A Guide to Ming-Ch'ing Anthologies of Female Poetry and Their Selection Strategies

KANG-I SUN CHANG

No nation has produced more women poets than imperial China. Especially from the seventeenth century onward (that is, during the late Ming and early Ch'ing dynasties), there was a sudden increase of women poets, partly attributable to a dramatic rise of female literacy and the widespread development of printing. Hu Wen-k'ai's *A Study of Women's Writings through the Ages* (*Li-tai fu-nü chu-tso k'ao*) records more than two thousand women poets published during the Ch'ing dynasty alone.<sup>1</sup> And the proliferation of anthologies and collections of women's poetry during the late Imperial era, altogether reaching a total of three thousand publications, is simply stunning. This is especially impressive if compared to the situation before the late Ming: few collections of pre-Ming female poetry have survived.

Why were there suddenly so many anthologies and private collections of women's writings from the late Ming onward? First of all, it was not until this time that scholar-poets, male and female alike, began to notice that writings by women, whatever their quality, were simply not being preserved. Many of these scholars and poets therefore assumed the role of editors and anthologists, comparing their efforts in collecting women's works to Confucius's compilation of the *Classics of Poetry* (*Shih-ching*), an anthology that, as the new anthologists were quick to remind their public, was thought by many scholars to have contained a large percentage of songs

written by women. T'ien I-heng, editor of the anthology *Shih nü-shih* (published sometime during the Chia-ching reign, 1522–1566), was perhaps the first male scholar in the Ming to dwell so much on the importance of transmitting women's works.<sup>2</sup> He observes that there were numerous women poets from ancient times whose literary achievements were equal to men's. But, as he explains in his preface, it was the lack of "collecting or anthologizing" (*ts'ai-kuan*) that had kept women's names so obscure in literary history.<sup>3</sup> In a similar way, the woman poet Shen I-hsiu (1590–1635), mother of the legendary female genius Yeh Hsiao-luan (1616–1632), stepped into the gap and assumed responsibility for the transmission of female poems and poetic reputation. She stressed the importance of collecting *contemporary* works, claiming that her anthology *I-jen ssu* (published posthumously in 1636) departed from the conventional way of "following the old" (*yen-ku*).<sup>4</sup> Whatever their approaches, it is obvious that all these scholars and poets were inspired by the curatorial function of anthology making.

Unfortunately, until very recently, scholars of Chinese literature (men or women) have failed to consider the numerous anthologies and collections of women's poetry produced in the Ming-Ch'ing, and hence many valuable texts have been lost. As a result, histories of Chinese literature have consistently provided a misleading picture of women's literary position in the Ming-Ch'ing. As was noted by Maureen Robertson, "in the 1,355 page edition of his history of premodern Chinese literature, a history that spans over 2,500 years, Liu Dajie mentions only five women who produced literary texts, none of them from periods later than the Sung Dynasty."<sup>5</sup>

This brings us to an interesting question: Why have modern scholars failed to take note of the existing bulk of anthologies and collections of female poetry that would have revised our general perceptions of women's literature, or for that matter the whole of Chinese literature? My own study of Ming-Ch'ing women poets has inspired me to contemplate the many implications of this broad question, leading me to seek further information in a host of anthologies and collections that have gradually shaped the framework of my research. In this paper, I would like to share my thoughts and experience concerning the use of some of these sources on Ming-Ch'ing women poets, which I believe are extremely relevant to our study of Chinese literature in general.

First of all, my past failures in locating the right poems and other source materials have more to do with a blind spot in my general conception and

methodology than with the availability of texts. For a long time, I had been using primarily anthologies such as Chu I-tsun's *Ming-shih tsung* (1705), Shen Te-ch'ien's *Ming-shih pieh-ts'ai chi* (1739) and *Ch'ing-shih pieh-ts'ai chi* (1760), Chang Ying-ch'ang's *Ch'ing shih to* (1869), Ting Shao-i's *Ch'ing-tz'u tsung pu* (ca. 1894), and Hsü Shih-ch'ang's *Ch'ing shih hui* (1929) — texts that happen to have convenient modern reprints. These are indeed important sources, for all of them are first-rate anthologies that aim at preserving what the anthologists deem to be the “best works” in the designated periods. But the problem with these “standard” anthologies is that, although they generally include an impressive number of women poets, the selections from each poet are not at all generous, with only two or three poems from each. Moreover, these anthologies have explicitly assigned a marginal position to women by putting their works at the end, alongside those by monks — a procedure of selection first adopted by the Five Dynasties poet Wei Chuang (836–910) in his *Yu-hsüan chi*.<sup>6</sup> Such a policy of selection — reflecting what the modern scholar Shih Chih-ts'un calls “a regressive view of literature”<sup>7</sup> — makes for a misleading profile of women's place in Ming-Ch'ing literature. In fact, not only was the number of women poets recorded in Late Imperial China unprecedented, but many learned women during the period actually did share a world with men. They acted not as auxiliary attachments to a male sphere or as denizens of a parallel female world, but often fully took part in the poetic traditions and expressions that defined the larger cultural and social context.

It took me quite some time to realize that the best available source materials on Ming-Ch'ing female poetry are those anthologies that record women's works exclusively. Ironically, it is through reading and using these *separate* — that is, separate from male authors — anthologies that we are able to get a view of the “total history” and to appreciate fully the close relations and interdependence between male and female literary activities. This is because the published products of the Ming-Ch'ing women poets were simply too numerous for the traditional form of anthology, recording male and female poets, to do them justice. And given the existing underrepresentation of female poets in conventional anthologies and the severe problem of preservation mechanisms for women's works, it is not surprising that forward-looking Ming-Ch'ing women and their male friends and patrons would pursue a new and different selection strategy for their anthologies. There is enough pluralism in the arenas of women's writings

during the Ming-Ch'ing — similar to the diversity of male literary works — to necessitate the creation of separate anthologies. Thus, it would be simplistic to conceive of the whole phenomenon of women's anthologies as what Maureen Robertson calls the "traditional rule of separate spheres of activity," an "institutionalization of women's exclusion from all intellectual and literary activity."<sup>8</sup> I am not trying to deny the existence of a male-dominated principle in the conventional anthologies such as those by Shen Te-ch'ien. My purpose is simply to call attention to the importance of a new "female" approach in anthology making in this period — an approach that provided the right kind of preservation mechanism necessary for women poets to thrive. In other words, what we need is a "bifocal view" (to borrow Dorothy Ko's term)<sup>9</sup> of Ming-Ch'ing scholarship, taking into account both male- and female-oriented source materials.

Indeed, when I started to explore the many female anthologies and collections of poetry, I found the experience immensely gratifying. Overwhelmed by the number of texts and the amount of information available to me, I began to wonder why I used to complain about the lack of source materials on women poets. Indeed, as Dorothy Ko says, "the source materials do exist, if we look for them in the right places."<sup>10</sup>

What these sources "in the right places" told me is a story about how men and women in the Ming-Ch'ing worked *together* to revalue and promote women's writings. Indeed, male scholars, rather than the female writers themselves, served as the major editorial brain behind most of the early female anthologies. These editors and compilers tried to "canonize" women's writings by repeatedly associating their anthologies with the classical canon, the *Shih-ching*. Yet at times, the *Li sao* also enjoyed the privilege of being the classical canon to which women's collections were compared. A case in point is the *Female Sao* (*Nü-sao*) published in 1618, obviously named after the *Li sao*. In his foreword to *Nü-sao*, Chao Shih-yung says that the purpose of the anthology is to ensure that poems by women "be remembered forever by posterity," just like "classics and edicts."<sup>11</sup> One also notices with great interest that Ming-Ch'ing scholars began to give their anthologies titles that reveal their respect for women — titles that include words like "female talents" (*nü-chung ts'ai-tzu*), "gentry women poets" (*shih-yüan*), "female scribes" (*nü-shih*), "famous masters" (*ming-chia*), and the like.

It is not surprising that, encouraged by these liberal-minded male literati, many Ming-Ch'ing women began to compile poetry anthologies in which

they confidently stated their principles of inclusion and exclusion. Indeed, there finally emerged a kind of “contextual poetics”<sup>12</sup> for women’s poetry whereby anthologies became a crucial means of literary promotion and critical evaluation. Most important, various sources have established that, as Ellen Widmer says, “contemporary women writers strove to be included in women’s poetical anthologies.”<sup>13</sup> Apparently for them, anthologies were selective canons that provided “models, ideals, and inspiration.”<sup>14</sup> And through the anthologies and private collections, these women wished to become known to future generations.<sup>15</sup>

#### A BASIC LIST OF ANTHOLOGIES

In the following, I would like to provide a basic, or minimum, list of women’s anthologies produced in Late Imperial China, which I hope will throw light on the particular acts of selection on the part of the anthologists, male or female. In my selection of this short list, I had to rely on my own experience and judgment in deciding what is central and what is secondary. I do not claim that this list is definitive, but I believe it will provide a kind of “cultural literacy” in researching Ming-Ch’ing women’s poetry and its literary status.

1. *Ming-yüan shih-kuei* (ca. 1620), 36 *chüan*, comp. Chung Hsing.

This item is essential for studying women’s *shih* poetry from ancient times to the late Ming. It contains useful biographical notes and short commentaries on individual poems. It covers works by all kinds of women — gentry women, courtesans, Taoist nuns, painters, women officials, Korean ladies who wrote in Chinese. The selection of Ming writers is extremely extensive (*chüan* 25–36). The anthology has been dated loosely from 1573 to 1620 (the Wan-li reign), simply because the editor Chung Hsing (1574–1624) lived during that period. But the fact that it includes (in *chüan* 36) many poems by the courtesan-Taoist Wang Wei (ca. 1600?–ca. 1647), whom I believe to have been born around 1600, makes me inclined to date the anthology to around 1620 rather than to the earlier part of the Wan-li period.

Some Ch’ing scholars, chief among them Wang Shih-chen (1634–1711), seriously doubted that Chung Hsing was in fact the editor.<sup>16</sup> But the “evidence” these Ch’ing scholars used for their argument is rather shaky — it

is simply that the anthology contains some works whose authorship is in question. From this they came to the conclusion that the collection must have been put together by some book dealers who did not understand much about scholarship. In fact, in his *Ssu-k'ü ch'üan-shu tsung-mu t'i-yao*, Chi Yün (1724–1805) used exactly this argument to raise doubts about T'ien I-heng's editorship of *Shih nü-shih*,<sup>17</sup> an anthology printed almost a century before *Ming-yüan shih-kuei*. It is indeed true that, as Chi Yün points out, Ming anthologists often seem to be rather lax in their selection policies, as compared to those of the Ch'ing.<sup>18</sup> But at a time when the tradition of female anthologies was in its infancy, it is entirely understandable that such editorial inexactitudes would exist. For our purpose, however, it is good to remember that *Ming-yüan shih-kuei*, whether edited by Chung Hsing himself or not, was an ambitious and important Ming anthology that offers more primary source materials than do other similar poetry collections published at the time.

Most important, Chung Hsing's preface to *Ming-yüan shih-kuei* is an excellent example of the way late-Ming male scholars assigned value to women's writings. Chung Hsing relies on an alleged female "purity" (*ch'ing*) to make his argument — claiming that ideal poetry must come from this quality of *ch'ing* with which women are innately endowed. Since poetic "purity" is a "female" attribute, he further suggests, women's poetry could be used as an ideal remedy for the problem of artificiality (*ch'iao*) in contemporary male poetry. This faith in the corrective function of women's poetry no doubt encouraged more women to take on poetry writing as their vocation.

2. *Ku-chin nü-shih* (1628), comp. Chao Shih-chieh (1628). Modern reprint in two volumes: *Li-tai nü-tzu shih-chi*, 8 *chüan*; and *Li-tai nü-tzu wen-chi*, 12 *chüan* (Shanghai: Sao-yeh shan-fang, 1928).

Unlike Chung Hsing's anthology where Ming works figure most prominently, *Ku-chin nü-shih* devotes most of its space to women's poetry before the Ming. (Its small selection of Ming works focuses on major poets such as Lu Ch'ing-tzu, Hsü Yüan, and Tuan Shu-ch'ing.) In his preface Chao Shih-chieh dwells at length on the curatorial function of anthologies, for he obviously recognizes the ultimately tenuous nature of the transmission process:

In the days of the Seven Warring States (475–221 B.C.), with battles going on day and night, no time was left for literary composition, but Lady Fan and Cheng Hsiu were not without wit and conversational skill. Han O sang but once, and her sorrows and grief clung to the beams of the inn. And yet their compositions have been lost without a trace — whether on account of wars, or as a result of the fires of Ch'in.<sup>19</sup>

Thus in his role as preserver and editor of women's poetry, Chao Shih-chieh finds himself a precedent in the example of the editor-sage Confucius. He says:

Confucius surveyed the *Airs of the States* and said: “[Poetry] stimulates; it teaches observation, sociability, and the expression of grief.” In collecting those rhymed sayings, he did not reject [the songs of] the “wandering girls” of the Han and the Yangtze River. Who will say that the Three Hundred Odes [of the *Shih-ching*], the *Elegantiae* and the rest, can only have been composed by upright scholars and sages.”<sup>20</sup>

We used to assume that it was Yüan Mei (1716–1797) who first pointed out that “the speakers in many of the poems in the *Book of Songs* were obviously women.”<sup>21</sup> But from Chao Shih-chieh's preface to his *Ku-chin nü-shih*, we have come to learn that at least a century before Yüan Mei's time, male scholars had already used this claim as one of their main strategic constructs by which they tried to elevate and legitimize the literary status of women's poetry. Of course, such a claim might sound problematic to modern scholars, for it seems to be dependent on a conflation of two separable notions, that of the “author” and that of the “persona.” But the stratagem not only was convincing to contemporary editors and readers alike but also remained compelling for subsequent collections of female poetry.

3. *Chüan* four of “Jun-chi,” ed. Liu Shih. In *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi*, ed. Ch'ien Ch'ien-i, completed 1649; printed 1652? (See illustration 1.)

It is common knowledge that the compiler and editor of *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi*, a most extensive anthology of Ming poetry with about two thousand biographies appended to it, was the poet and bibliophile Ch'ien Ch'ien-i

列朝詩集

閩集第四

香奩上三十六人

王司綵一首

王妃一首

宮人媚蘭詩

夏氏雲英 三首

郭氏真順 一首

李夫人陳氏 一首

濮孺人鄒氏 一首

王太淑人金氏 三首

楊安人黃氏 二首 小令一首

陳宜人馬氏 五首

于太夫人劉氏 一首

鄭高行鄧氏 二首

女學士沈氏 十二首

王莊妃 一首

安福郡主 一首

金華宋氏 一首

武定橋節婦 一首

錢氏女 一首

孫夫人楊氏 一首

韓安人屈氏 三首

儲氏 一首

劉文貞毛氏 三首

端氏淑卿 三首

王氏鳳嫺 六首

列朝詩集



1. From the *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi, jun-chi*, comp. Liu Shih (1618-1664). Fifteen cols. of 28 chars.; block 13 x 20.5 cm. Collection of the Gest Oriental Library.

絳雲樓選

列朝詩集

本府藏板



(1582–1664). But few knew, until very recently, that its section on women poets (*chüan* 4 of “Jun-chi”) was edited by the famous courtesan poet Liu Shih (1618–1664). According to Hu Wen-k’ai (who based his research partly on the *Kung-kui shi-chi i-wen k’ao lüeh*), Liu Shih not only edited the poems but was also responsible for the extensive annotations on women poets in that particular section.<sup>22</sup> Although I have been unable to verify Hu Wen-k’ai’s theory, I nonetheless find his views extremely plausible on the basis of what I know as Liu Shih’s particular manner of expressing herself. Therefore in this paper I simply assume that Liu Shih was the editor, or at least a co-editor, of the section on women poets in *Lieh-ch’ao shih-chi*.

The story goes that in the winter of 1640 Liu Shih went to visit Ch’ien, then almost sixty years old, at his private residence called Pan-yeh t’ang (see illustration 2). By then, Liu Shih was already a recognized author, having published her two collections of poems, the *Wu-yin ts’ao* (1638; see illustration 3) and *Hu-shang ts’ao* (1639; see illustration 4).<sup>23</sup> Ch’ien and Liu exchanged many poems (later to be collected in *Tung-shan ch’ou-ho chi*), and Ch’ien was immensely struck by the talent and beauty of Liu. The couple married the following year, and in 1643 Ch’ien built for Liu a studio, the famous Chiang-yün-lou, where they together compiled the *Lieh-ch’ao shih-chi*<sup>24</sup> and where their great collections of rare books were housed. (Unfortunately, a fire in 1650 destroyed the studio and most of their collections.)

In her role as literary editor, Liu Shih distinguished herself as one who understood well the power of editorial selection in an anthology. A courtesan poet who had struggled to establish a literary position, Liu Shih seemed to be primarily concerned with elevating the status of courtesan poetry. As I have shown elsewhere, courtesans played a crucial place in the development of early seventeenth-century literature and arts.<sup>25</sup> In particular, the famous anthologist Chou Chih-piao lists the courtesan Wang Wei as one of the “seven female talents” in his collection *Nü-chung ch’i ts’ai-tzu lan-k’o chi*, and devotes two entire *chüan* to her.<sup>26</sup> Other major anthologies and studies such as Chung Hsing’s *Ming-yüan shih-kuei* (see also item 1 above) and Ch’ên Wei-sung’s *Fu-jen chi* all gave prominent place to contemporary courtesan poets — not to mention the numerous anthologies devoted exclusively to courtesan poetry, such as the famous *Ch’in-huai ssu-chi shih* celebrating the literary status of four famous courtesans of the Ch’in-huai quarters of Nanking.<sup>27</sup> It should also be mentioned that in his *Ku-chin nü-shih* (see also item 2 above), Chao Shih-chieh emphasizes the distinction

河東君初訪野半堂小景



清余秋室繪東河君初訪野半堂小景

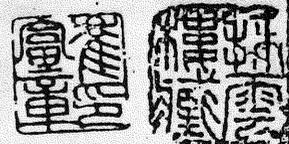
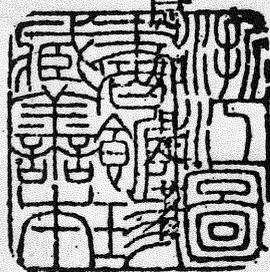
2. A portrait of Liu Shih by Yü Chi (1739–1823). From Ch'en Yin-k'o, *Liu Ju-shih pieh-chuan* (1980). By permission, Shanghai Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she.

戊寅草

擬古詩十九首

浩歌發淥水媚風激青帷宿管承  
 眇昧志意共綺靡豈期有離別  
 送君春水滑芳素長自守遠邁  
 竟何之桐花最哀怨碧柰空參  
 差思君漳臺北臺流吹易長  
 燦爛雲中錦上著雙鴛鴦黃鶴  
 飛已去鯉魚何肯將

柳隱



戊寅草

3. From Liu Shih (1618-1664), *Wu-yin ts'ao*, 1 ch., 1638. Eight cols. of 18 chars.; block 17 x 25 cm. Collection of Chekiang Library, Shanghai. It should be noted that Ch'en Yin-k'o did not have access to either this item or *Hu-shang ts'ao* (see illustration 4) when he wrote his highly acclaimed *Liu Ju-shih pieh-chuan* (Shanghai: Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she, 1980).

湖上草 巳卯春

雨中游斷橋

野橋丹閣穩通煙  
春氣虛無卷影前  
北浦問誰芳草後  
西冷應有恨情邊  
看桃李夜論鶯鷓  
折柳孤亭憶杜鵑  
神女生涯倘是夢  
何妨風雨照嬋娟

上巳

湖上草

柳隱如是著



4. From Liu Shih (1618-1664), *Hu-shang ts'ao*, 1 ch., 1639. Eight cols. of 18 chars.; block 17 x 25 cm. (Printed together with a collection of Liu Shih's letters, *Liu Ju-shih ch'ih-tu*, 1 ch.) Collection of Chekiang Library, Shanghai.

of the T'ang courtesan-poets Hsüeh T'ao (ca. 768—ca. 831) and Yü Hsüan-chi (845—868) by including an unusually large selection from them. Most important of all, in all these collections courtesans and gentry-women poets are treated as equals and placed in the same category.

In her section on women poets in the *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi*, Liu Shih not only puts courtesans in the same category as gentry-women poets, she predominantly selects poems by major courtesans. For example, she includes sixty-one poems from Wang Wei, fifty-two poems from Ching P'ien-p'ien (fl. late 16th century), and nineteen poems from Yang Wan (fl. early 17th century). Indeed, it was unprecedented to make such generous and representative selections from courtesan poets. Although the anthology also includes works of many gentry-women poets of the Ming, the selections from such major poets as Hsü Yüan (fl. 1596) are surprisingly few, in Hsü's case only two poems. Generally, among gentry-women poets, Liu seems to favor those who dwell on images of romantic love in their poetry — a style resembling that of courtesan poetry, where personal meaning seems to be determined by the male-female relationship. In any case, Liu's generous selections from such "romantic" gentry poets as Chang Hung-ch'iao (fl. 14th century, 12 poems), Yeh Hsiao-luan (14 poems), and Tung Shao-yü (fl. 1544, 17 poems) seem to confirm my speculation.

One notices also that, as a commentator, Liu Shih was very forthright in her criticism (and her praise) of individual poets. A case in point is her criticism of the Korean poet Hsü Ching-fan (Hönsörhön), whom she accuses of plagiarism.<sup>28</sup> When Liu passes judgment on Hsü Yüan and Lu Ch'ing-tzu, the "two great poets of Wu-men (Su-chou),"<sup>29</sup> she adopts the traditional male critical method of *p'in*, a procedure of ranking first made popular by the Six Dynasties critic Chung Jung (459—518). In evaluating the two female talents of Su-chou, for example, Liu ranks Lu Ch'ing-tzu above Hsü Yüan — adding that in her view, Lu Ch'ing-tzu is even superior to most literati men.<sup>30</sup> As for Hsü Yüan, Liu cannot agree with the extreme views of Lady Fan of T'ung-ch'eng who accuses Hsü Yüan of "fishing for fame and lacking in learning" (*hao-ming erh wu-hsüeh*), but she nonetheless thinks that there might be some justification for such severe criticism.<sup>31</sup> This might be why Liu's anthology includes only two poems of Hsü Yüan.

Liu Shih's Ming-loyalist concerns were revealed in her comments on the courtesan-Taoist Wang Wei, the poet who occupies the most space (66 poems) in Liu's anthology. Unlike Chung Hsing, who gives a very brief bio-

graphical note on Wang Wei in his *Ming-yüan shih-kuei* (naturally enough, given that Wang Wei was still quite young around 1620), Liu Shih provides detailed notes on Wang Wei's life — especially on her role as a Ming loyalist, participating in various resistance activities against the Manchu invaders. As far as I know, Liu Shih was the first person to report that Wang Wei died “three years” after the “political crisis” (*luan*), which I take to mean the Ming-Ch'ing transition.<sup>32</sup> It is because of Liu Shih's findings that I feel confident in assigning the dates circa 1600–1647 for Wang Wei.

Liu's loyalist approach was of course in keeping with Ch'ien Ch'ien-i's general method of commentary in the whole *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi* which, as we know, was the main reason the anthology was banned by the Ch'ing government during Emperor Ch'ien-lung's reign (1736–1795). Although Ch'ien Ch'ien-i had submitted to the Manchus in 1645, it was felt that his true loyalty was still to the Ming; his commentary seems to confirm this suspicion.<sup>33</sup> In any case, Ch'ien's *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi* was harshly criticized by the Ch'ing scholar-official and apologist Chi Yün (1724–1805), who accused Ch'ien of “twisting the facts and confusing right and wrong.”<sup>34</sup> According to Chi Yün, Chu I-tsun's (1629–1709) anthology of Ming poetry, *Ming-shih tsung* (1705), was compiled in order to correct the “factual errors” found in Ch'ien Ch'ien-i's *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi*.<sup>35</sup> Whether Chi's theory is right or wrong, it is true that in compiling his anthology, Chu I-tsun took a very different tack indeed from Ch'ien Ch'ien-i (and Liu Shih). With regard to women poets, for instance, Chu has clearly distinguished gentry-women poets from courtesan poets, putting the former under the category of “kuei-men” (*chüan* 86) and assigning the latter the unflattering classification of “chi-nü” (*chüan* 98). As for his biographical notes on the courtesan-Taoist Wang Wei, the description of Wang Wei's life is again different from the one given by Liu Shih. In particular, Liu's version of Wang Wei's loyalist activities is completely omitted from Chu's anthology.<sup>36</sup>

From the perspective of Ming studies, it is indeed regrettable that Ch'ien's *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi* and Liu's section in the “Jun-chi” were banned in the eighteenth century. This no doubt led to the Ch'ing scholars' “misreading” of many Ming poets, including major women poets like Wang Wei.

Liu Shih also compiled an anthology entitled *Ku-chin ming-yüan shih-tz'u hsüan*, which includes poetic works (both in *shih* and *tz'u*) of women from ancient times to the Ming. The anthology existed only in manuscript form

until 1937 when it was finally printed by the Chung-hsi shu-chü.<sup>37</sup> Unfortunately, I have not yet had access to this anthology.

4. *Shih-yüan pa ming-chia hsüan* (preface 1655), comp. Tsou Ssu-i. Original in the Science Institute of Beijing.<sup>38</sup>

This anthology, whose title literally means "Selected Works of Eight Famous Women Poets," is a rare item. It includes works by eight poets, arranged in the following order:

- Wang Tuan-shu (1621–ca. 1706; see item 5 below)  
 Wu Hsiao (fl. mid-17th century, poet-painter)  
 Wu Ch'i (fl. mid-17th century, poet-painter and sister of Wu Hsiao)  
 Liu Shih  
 Huang Yüan-chieh (fl. mid-17th century, poet-painter)  
 Chi Hsien (fl. mid-17th century)  
 Wu Shan (fl. mid-17th century, poet-painter)  
 Pien Meng-chüeh (fl. mid-17th century, daughter of Wu Shan)

Like Wang Shih-lu (elder brother of the famous poet Wang Shih-chen), Tsou Ssu-i was one of those "male feminists" of the mid-seventeenth century who seemed to devote their lives to the promotion of contemporary women's writings. But unlike Wang's anthology *Jan-chih chi* (preface 1658), which appears all inclusive in its approach,<sup>39</sup> Tsou's is selective and dwells on the evaluation of a few female talents. Tsou's detailed comments on the eight poets' lives and works are meant to provide a frame of reference and explanatory basis for assigning value. For example, his preface to the section on Liu Shih begins with this statement based on the principle of *p'in*: "After evaluating works of the many contemporary famous women poets, I will have to say that Ho-tung [Liu Shih] ranks first." Then he continues to explain (by citing examples) why Liu Shih's poetry is more gentle and beautiful than the works of Po Chü-i (772–846) and many other male poets of ancient times.

Tsou's anthology of eight famous women poets was later expanded to an anthology of ten poets in his *Shih-yüan shih ming-chia hsüan*, which supposedly includes works by two other poets, Ku Wen-wan and P'u Ying-lu.<sup>40</sup> The Beijing Library has an incomplete copy of the *Shih-yüan shih ming-chia*

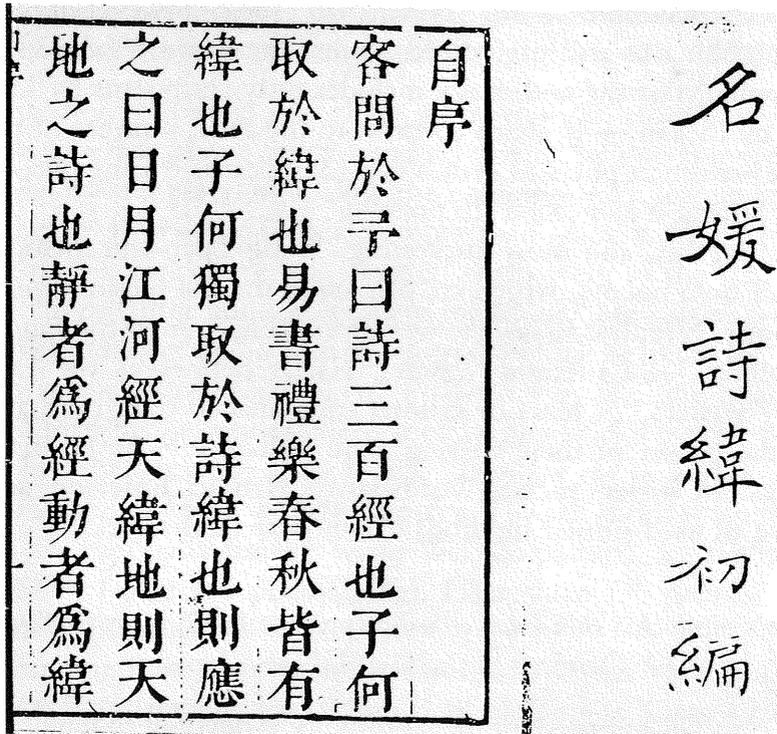
*hsüan*, from which the parts on Ku Wen-wan and P'u Ying-lu are unfortunately missing.

5. *Ming-yüan shih-wei* (completed 1664; printed 1667), comp. Wang Tuan-shu. Originals in the Beijing Library and the Central Library of Taipei.

Like Liu Shih, Wang Tuan-shu was one of the most prominent women poets and scholars of the seventeenth century. But whereas Liu Shih's origins were obscure, Wang was born and raised in a respectable gentry family. Daughter of the famous scholar Wang Ssu-jen (1575–1646), Wang Tuan-shu was taught to read all kinds of classics from an early age. She was one of those literate women who enjoyed the respect and friendship of contemporary male scholars.<sup>41</sup> The number of male friends who called themselves “sworn brothers” (*meng-ti*) and signed their names as sponsors for Wang's own collected works, *Yin hung chi* (see illustration 5), is simply astonishing.<sup>42</sup> And most important, Ch'ien Ch'ien-i was among those who wrote prefaces to Wang's anthology of women's poetry, the *Ming-yüan shih-wei*.<sup>43</sup> Wang Tuan-shu also compiled a comparable anthology of prose works by women (*Ming-yüan wen-wei*) and was the author of a collection of biographies of imperial princesses and consorts, entitled *Li-tai ti-wang hou-fei k'ao*.<sup>44</sup>

Compared to Liu Shih's anthology in the “Jun-chi” of *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi*, Wang Tuan-shu's *Ming-yüan shih-wei* is more ambitious in scope. It contains forty-two *chüan*, covering works of about one thousand women poets. Almost all these women were poets of the Ming-Ch'ing, although the anthology also includes some newly found poems by earlier authors. The whole project took Wang twenty-five years to complete, from 1639 to 1664. Liu's anthology is selective in nature, Wang's comprehensive. Wang even urged contemporary poets and readers to send her any more selections they might have.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, in Wang Tuan-shu, we see for the first time a female editor working so conscientiously to perform her proper curatorial duties in passing along such a great volume of poetic works to contemporary and future readers. Wang believed that the problem of the transmission process for women's works resulted chiefly from their being “restricted in speech and public activities” (*nei-yen pu-ch'u*). Thus, it was up to her (Wang Tuan-shu) to preserve women's works for later generations, and to make sure that she herself was not guilty of failing to rescue the poems from





6. From Wang Tuan-shu (1621–ca. 1706), comp. and ed., *Ming-yüan shih-wei*, 42 ch., 1677. Nine cols. of 19 chars.; block 13 x 20 cm. Collection of the Central Library, Taipei, Taiwan.

Notable also is Wang Tuan-shu's attempt to establish proper literary credentials for gentry-women poets, as opposed to courtesan poets. For, as I have shown elsewhere, by the early seventeenth century, courtesans had become the prototype of the "talented woman" (*ts'ai-nü*) in both real life and contemporary fiction.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, the popular image of courtesans as "talented women" symbolizing the ultimate ideal of literature and arts in effect slighted such gentry-women poets as Wang Tuan-shu. In any case, she arranged her anthology of about one thousand women poets in descending order of social status. Gentry women are grouped in the category of "the proper" (*cheng*), courtesans in the category of "the erotic" (*yen*). The only exceptions are people like Liu Shih, Li Yin, and Wang Wei — for although they had been courtesans, they later did manage to become "gentry women" by marrying prominent male literati. Therefore, their works are

included in the section of “*cheng*” rather than “*yen*.” However, it is clear that Wang Tuan-shu was still prejudiced against these courtesans who turned gentry women. For the anthology includes only six poems by Liu Shih,<sup>50</sup> and three by Li Yin — in sharp contrast to the great number of poems by such gentry-women poets as Hsü Yüan (28 poems),<sup>51</sup> Fang Wei-i (20 poems), and Huang Yüan-chieh (16 poems).

Most important, and most interesting, Wang Tuan-shu includes sixty-three of her own poems, which are printed in the last section (*chüan* 42) of the anthology. Needless to say she was attempting to enter the canon herself by “logrolling” — a method Wendell Harris defines as the “active espousal” by writers “of texts or criteria congenial to their own aims” and also “by the power of their writing” and influence.<sup>52</sup> As Harris demonstrates, Western writers such as Wordsworth, Arnold, Emerson, and Longfellow have all used similar methods to canonize themselves.<sup>53</sup>

6. *T'ien-hsia ming-chia shih-kuan ch'u-chi* (preface 1672), comp. Teng Han-i.<sup>54</sup> Original in the Diet Library, Japan.

Although only *chüan* twelve of this anthology is devoted to female authors, this is an extremely important source for studying poetry of the Chiangnan area during the mid-seventeenth century. It includes works by forty-five major women poets. The fact that Teng Han-i puts female authors in the general category of “Famous Poets” (*ming-chia*) — for the title of his anthology literally means “A Look at the Famous Poets in the Whole Nation” — is significant in itself. In reading through the poems (along with Teng’s comments), one gets the impression that women poets are judged independently of gender — or, rather, they seem to be evaluated largely as if they were male poets. Their status as “famous poets” is attested to through the many detailed biographical notes prepared by Teng Han-i, which often contain interesting anecdotes concerning their involvements with other literary figures, male or female. The anthology is especially useful for tracing the literary association between women poets. For example, in the section on Shang Ching-lan and her daughters (and daughters-in-law), one notices that all the poems selected are farewell poems to the famous poet-painter Huang Yüan-chieh.<sup>55</sup> Teng Han-i’s comments especially call our attention to the fact that Li Yin was an admiring friend of Liu Shih. It was Li Yin who provided Teng (supposedly sometime after Liu Shih’s death) with the remarkable story of Liu’s life.

7. *Ts'ui-lou chi* (1673), comp. Liu Yün-fen. Modern punctuated edition by Shih Chih-ts'un (Shanghai: Tsa-chih kung-ssu, 1936).

This anthology is divided into three parts (*ch'u-chi*, *erh-chi*, and *hsin-chi*), altogether covering about seven hundred poems by two hundred women poets. Perhaps as a reaction against the contemporary female anthologies that had begun to dwell on Ch'ing rather than Ming works, Liu Yün-fen claimed that his anthology was devoted exclusively to the female poetry produced "in the three hundred years of the Ming." He says he is impressed by the "sheer bulk" of Ming women's verses (which he likens to "an expansive sea") and is extremely "taken" (*hsin-tung*) by the fine quality of the poems.<sup>56</sup> Since his selections were mostly newly discovered poems not available in other current anthologies, *Ts'ui-lou chi* is a very important source for studying Ming women's poetry. The selections from the following poets are especially useful: Wang Wei (26 poems), Lu Ch'ing-tzu (23 poems), Shen I-hsiu (40 poems), Yeh Hsiao-luan (36 poems), and Hsü Ching-fan (25 poems).

Liu, who remarked that research on women's works was his lifelong ambition (*chih*),<sup>57</sup> apparently devoted much of his time to literary archaeology since he was able to come up with many interesting discoveries. In his foreword to the anthology, Tsung Yüan-ting sums up the two main obstacles encountered in anthologizing earlier women's works: (1) it was extremely difficult to search for the unpublished sources, and (2) even published materials registered in major catalogues were often lost. Tsung further compliments Liu Yün-fen for producing such a carefully researched anthology under these difficult circumstances.

*Ts'ui-lou chi* is unusual also for its section called "*tsu-li*," which highlights the regions the women poets came from. It is an immensely helpful guide for those interested in studying the regional distribution of female talents in the Ming.

8. *Chung-hsiang tz'u* (1690), comp. Hsü Shu-min and Ch'ien Yüeh. Reprint (Shanghai: Ta-tung shu-chü, 1934).

*Chung-hsiang tz'u* was one of the three major anthologies of "song lyrics" (*tz'u*) of women poets — the other two being *Lin-hsia tz'u-hsüan* (1671) and *Ku-chin ming-yüan pai-hua shih-yü* (1685) — that were published in the last decades of the seventeenth century. The anthology focuses on more than

新城王士禛阮亭

玉峯徐樹敏師魯

大同李宗孔秘園

選

同閱

金閨錢 岳十青

商丘宋 犖漫堂

涇陽劉 涵海觀

徐

燦

字湘蘋長洲人海昌相國陳素菴夫人善詩文兼精書畫其詞極得北宋風格絕無纖佻之習可為本朝

第一大家後相國沒塞上夫人扶櫬歸嘗手繪大士像萬餘軸種種變相絕不雷同真所謂千百億化身也賞鑒家藏為拱璧有拙政園詞傳世

如夢令 垂絲海棠

昨夜雨添春重滴潤小眉愁動剪剪海棠風一點殘燈紅弄如

夢如夢夢斷五更風送

卜算子 春愁

小雨做春愁愁到眉邊住道是愁心春帶來春又來何處

屈

7. From Hsü Shu-min and Ch'ien Yüeh, comps. and eds., *Chung-hsiang tz'u*, 6 ch., 1690. Thirteen cols. of 24 chars.; block 13 x 20 cm. Rpt. Shanghai: Ta-tung shu-chü, 1934. Collection of Kang-i Sun Chang.

four hundred women *tz'u* poets during the Ming-Ch'ing transition, and the scope of its coverage testifies to the important role women played in the movement to revive the song-lyric genre in the early seventeenth century.<sup>58</sup> As I have shown elsewhere, by the late Ming the *tz'u* genre had been viewed more or less as a "dying genre" for over three centuries. It was Liu Shih, the courtesan poet, who helped her lover Ch'en Tzu-lung (1608–1647) establish the important Yün-chien School of *Tz'u* Revival.<sup>59</sup> Both men and women were strongly affected by this *tz'u* revival, but especially for women *tz'u* suddenly became the main expressive vehicle. The number of women *tz'u* poets during the Ming-Ch'ing transition was simply unprecedented.

In his foreword to *Chung-hsiang tz'u* (which literally means "Song Lyrics of Numerous Fragrances"), Wu Ch'i dwells on the conception of "femininity" as a generic trait of *tz'u*. He suggests that women, being female, are able to produce better song lyrics. Wu's argument, whether right or wrong, reflects a convergence of biological femaleness and stylistic femininity common to the thinking of many Ming-Ch'ing critics that no doubt encouraged many women to embark on *tz'u* writing as the vehicle of their poetic ambitions.

In fact, the two other near-contemporary anthologies of women *tz'u* poets also took this same theory of "femininity" as their basic premise. In his foreword to *Lin-hsia tz'u-hsüan* (1671) compiled by Chou Ming,<sup>60</sup> the famous scholar Yu T'ung (1618–1704) claims that *tz'u* writing, rooted in the feminine style of "delicate restraint" during the Sung, is particularly suitable for women poets.<sup>61</sup> In a similar way, Sun Hui-yüan — one of the four female compilers of *Ku-chin ming-yüan pai-hua shih-yü* (1685) — argues in her preface that theirs is a truly female and feminine anthology, indeed more convincing than the "feminine mode" written by men that seems to fill the earlier *tz'u* anthologies such as *Hua-chien chi* and *Ts'ao-t'ang shih-yü*.<sup>62</sup> In passing, I should also mention that *Ku-chin ming-yüan pai-hua shih-yü* was an unusual anthology not only because it was edited and compiled by four women poets, but also because it was organized by a special symbolic device. In it ninety-one women *tz'u* poets dating from the eleventh to the seventeenth century were arranged according to the sequence of the four seasons — a device that emphasized "femininity" as the unique quality of song lyrics.<sup>63</sup> In particular, Sun Hui-yüan's preface is noted for its "spring metaphors":

Let its beauty surprise you, since, like the rain, it is always the same and always new. The spring colors of the Shang-lin garden do not need to be adorned with ribbons; must the plant branches of the Chin-ku garden wait for the East Wind's imperial breath? Truly, the flower-historians are female historians, and the rhyming of words is a rhyming of minds.<sup>64</sup>

According to Hu Wen-k'ai, this anthology was particularly well edited and printed, containing selections that often were not available in the *Chung-hsiang tz'u*.<sup>65</sup> Unfortunately, I have not yet been able to gain access to either the *Ku-chin ming-yü pai-hua shih-yü* or the *Lin-hsia tz'u-hsüan*.

In general, the *Chung-hsiang tz'u* differs from these two anthologies in its arrangement of poets. Most noticeable is the fact that its six parts are named after the six arts that ancient Confucian scholars were required to master: *li* (rites); *yüeh* (music); *she* (archery); *yü* (chariot driving); *shü* (learning); and *shü* (mathematics). Although there seems no real correlation between the names of the six sections and the poets included in them, these Confucian designations work to reflect the anthologist's value judgment. The anthology arranges its over four hundred female authors in a descending order of social status, with courtesans coming at the end (in part 6). Courtesans such as Liu Shih, Tung Pai, and Ku Mei who later married famed scholar-officials, however, belong to part five. This organizing principle certainly recalls that of Wang Tuan-shu's *Ming-yüan shih-wei*, though it is far more rigid and elaborate.

Through this particular method of arrangement, or classification, the compilers of *Chung-hsiang tz'u* had in mind a certain interpretive strategy that would help them canonize and judge the writings of certain distinguished gentry women. We find, for instance, Hsü Ts'an (ca. 1610–after 1677) at the very beginning of the anthology hailed as “the greatest poet of the present dynasty” because her song lyrics were imbued with “Northern Sung style, devoid of ornate and frivolous qualities.”<sup>66</sup> In a similar way, her grand-aunt Hsü Yüan — who incidentally was one of those criticized by Liu Shih — also received high marks from the compilers. Hsü Yüan was singled out for praise: “Poems by Lo-wei [Hsü Yüan] can be compared to the first and the third songs in the *Shih-ching*, “Kuan-chü” and “Chüan-erh.”<sup>67</sup> Thus, by referring to the canonical text, the *Shih-ching*, the compilers were again able to claim for themselves a moral power that would support the canonical status they claimed for women in literature. This strat-

egy certainly worked in the case of Hsü Ts'an, who has been recognized (even up to this day) as the best of the Ming-Ch'ing women *t'zu* poets.<sup>68</sup>

All things considered, *Chung-hsiang tz'u* seems to have satisfied the changing needs and tastes of the *tz'u* critics during the last decades of the seventeenth century. By then the romantic "Southern T'ang style" *tz'u* promoted by Ch'en Tzu-lung and Liu Shih in the 1630s had already gone out of fashion. In its place, the "Sung-style" *tz'u* became the favored mode of *tz'u* writing, as may be demonstrated by the elevated position of Hsü Ts'an in *Chung-hsiang tz'u*. This shift in poetic taste can also be seen in the contemporary anthologies of male *tz'u* poets. For example, the male anthology *Ch'ing-p'ing tz'u-hsüan* (1678) was compiled and edited by two scholars from Yün-chien (i.e., Sung-chiang, Ch'en Tzu-lung's hometown) in an attempt to propagate the Southern T'ang style *tz'u*, no doubt as a reaction to the Sung-style *tz'u* championed by the poets Ch'en Wei-sung and Chu I-tsun, which was gradually gaining in importance.<sup>69</sup> Then a decade later the famous anthology *Yao-hua chi* (1687) was almost entirely given over to the Sung-style *tz'u* — for it selects 148 poems from Ch'en Wei-sung and 111 poems from Chu I-tsun, in sharp contrast to the 29 poems from Ch'en Tzu-lung.<sup>70</sup> Although *Yao-hua chi* also includes some poems by women poets such as Hsü Ts'an (10 poems) and Hsü Yüan (5 poems), there are no selections from Liu Shih.

Thus, in many ways, *Chung-hsiang tz'u* could be seen as an exact parallel to *Yao-hua chi* — with the former focusing on female poets and the latter on male poets. It is important to remember that although their works might be preserved in two different anthologies, male and female poets of the time were the products of the same literary milieu.

9. *Sui-yüan nü-ti-tzu shih-hsüan* (1796), comp. Yüan Mei. Modern punctuated edition (Shanghai: Ta-ta t'u-shu kung-ying-she, 1934).

This is an anthology of poems by Yüan Mei's female disciples, compiled by Yüan Mei himself. It is common knowledge that Yüan Mei was the first person in Chinese history to collect an entourage of women students. But few realize that it was not until he was in his seventies that Yüan actively sought to teach women. When he published his anthology *Sui-yüan nü-ti-tzu shih-hsüan* at the age of eighty, he had already acquired as many as twenty-eight female disciples.

There are six *chüan* in the anthology. According to the table of contents,

the anthology selects poems by all of the twenty-eight disciples. But for some reason, works by nine students — including famous ones like Ch'ü Ping-chün, Kuei Mao-i, and Wang Yü-chen — are missing from the anthology as it exists today. Hsi P'ei-lan (Yüan Mei's prize student) appears at the beginning of the collection, with two congratulatory verses for the anthology, written at the request of Yüan Mei.

It is indeed not a coincidence that Chang Hsüeh-ch'eng's (1738–1801) famous essay “Women's Learning” (“Fu hsüeh”), a bitter personal attack on Yüan Mei and his female disciples, was written right after the publication of Yüan Mei's anthology. In a sense, the publication of this anthology served as the catalyst that triggered the important controversies centered on women — controversies that seemed to have sharply divided the literati class of late eighteenth-century China. For Chang's “Fu hsüeh” ridiculed a certain unnamed patron of women poets for distorting the true meaning of the great classics — such that “women today” forgot the true function of their learning and “wantonly flung themselves into poetry.”<sup>71</sup>

Perhaps it was in anticipation of such criticism that Yüan Mei had asked Wang Ku (the publisher) to write a foreword to the *Sui-yüan nü-ti-tzu shih-hsüan*, defending the close relationship between women's poetry and the ancient classics. In his foreword, Wang Ku bases his promotion of women poets directly on his interpretation of the *Book of Changes* (*I-ching*). He reminds the reader that according to the *Book of Changes* commentary, the *tui* trigram (lake), which symbolizes “the third daughter” (*shao-nü*), provides the principle by which the sage “joins with his friends for discussion and practice.” And similarly, the *li* trigram (fire), which symbolizes “the second daughter” (*chung-nü*), is the source from which the sage built the civilization “by perpetuating this brightness.”<sup>72</sup> He also repeats the (by then) common argument that odes written by women (e.g., “Ko t'an” and “Chüan-erh”) had been placed at the beginning of the canonical *Shih-ching*, a view to which Chang Hsüeh-ch'eng strongly objected.<sup>73</sup>

Ultimately, despite Chang Hsüeh-ch'eng's far more traditional interpretation of the role of women in the Confucian classics, this anthology of Yüan Mei's female disciples became Yüan's strongest argument in favor of women's poetry. In promoting his female students, Yüan was at the same time corroborating his own poetic theory centered around the idea of “innate sensibility” (*hsing-ling*).<sup>74</sup> This is because central to the concept of *hsing-ling* is the notion of spontaneous self-expression — and the basic assump-

tion that both men and women, when poetically inspired, could create a true voice in poetry. It was a theory that Yüan Mei's female disciples learned well.

10. *Kuo-ch'ao kuei-hsiu cheng-shih chi* (The correct beginnings: Collected women's poetry of our dynasty; 1831), comp. Wan-yen Yün-chu. *Hsü-chi* (1863), ed. Miao Lien-pao.

This is an ambitious anthology of more than fifteen-hundred Ch'ing women poets, comprising over three thousand *shih* poems.<sup>75</sup> Known in her day as "the female Confucianist" (*nü-chung chih ju*),<sup>76</sup> Wan-yen Yün-chu (a Manchu) adopted the attributes of "meekness and gentleness" (*wen-jou tun-hou*) as the criterion of selection for her anthology. *Wen-jou tun-hou* was a typical quality of emotional restraint long celebrated in the Confucian hermeneutic tradition and specifically in the appreciation of the *Shih-ching*. And, of course, it was also the principle of selection invoked by Shen Te-ch'ien's (1673–1769) *Ch'ing-shih pieh-ts'ai chi* (1760), an anthology that Wan-yen Yün-chu acknowledged to have taken as her model.<sup>77</sup>

Wan-yen Yün-chu's anthology is thus a perfect example of how Neo-Confucianism influenced some literati women after the mid-Ch'ing. In making moral edification her principle of selection, Wan-yen Yün-chu seemed to be challenging (though never explicitly) Yüan Mei's liberal-minded view of literature, according to which spontaneous self-expression came before the didactic function of poetry. Although her claim that the *Shih-ching* "did not eliminate writings from the women's quarters"<sup>78</sup> seems to recall Yüan Mei's famous view, her insistence on women poets' moral function instead of their literary innovation<sup>79</sup> echoes Neo-Confucian concerns. The fact that the title of her anthology, *Kuo-ch'ao kuei-hsiu cheng-shih chi*, takes the term *cheng-shih* directly from the "Little Preface" to the first two books of the *Shih-ching*, is especially worth noting. *Cheng-shih* is of course the epithet for "Kuan-chü," which gives prominence to "the virtues of the queen." Thus, whereas Yüan Mei took the love songs in the *Shih-ching* at their word, Wan-yen Yün-chu would be inclined to read them as allegorical poems, promoting the moderate emotions of the virtuous wife.

A consequence of this is that Wan-yen Yün-chu's antagonism to courtesans is far greater than that of the anthologists who preceded her. To her, courtesans represented an affront to wifely virtues. She called the courtesans

sans “women who had lost their virtue” (*shih-hsing fu-jen*), and prided herself on excluding their works from her anthology.<sup>80</sup> The only exceptions were a few earlier “reformed” women like Liu Shih, Wang Wei, and Pien Yü-ching (fl. early 17th century), who managed to cultivate their “virtues in their late years” (*wan-chieh*). Even so, Wan-yen Yün-chu put their poems in the appendix (not in the main text) — with only two poems by Liu Shih, two poems by Wang Wei, and one poem by Pien Yü-ching. As for *contemporary* courtesans, they were completely ignored. Of course, this may in part result from the fact that by the middle Ch’ing, courtesans were no longer prominent in the world of refined letters and seldom published their poems<sup>81</sup> — in sharp contrast to the early seventeenth-century courtesans who so often provided the popular model of the “talented woman.”

As an anthology of Ch’ing gentry-women poets, however, Wan-yen Yün-chu’s *Kuo-ch’ao kuei-hsiu cheng-shih chi* is indispensable. It is much more ambitious in scope than Shen Te-ch’ien’s *Ch’ing-shih pieh-ts’ai ch’i* (her acknowledged model), and unlike Shen’s anthology, which has only the work of authors no longer living, it includes extensive selections from contemporary writers.

11. *Kung-kuei wen-hsüan* (1843), comp. Chou Shou-ch’ang (1814–1884).<sup>82</sup>

This anthology, as its title clearly indicates, is a “female *Wen-hsüan*,” which was deliberately modeled on Hsiao T’ung’s (501–531) prestigious anthology, *Selections of Refined Literature*.<sup>83</sup> Like Hsiao T’ung, Chou Shou-ch’ang arranged the works according to different genres — *fu* poetry, prose (*wen*), *yüeh-fu* songs, *shih* poetry, and so on. Again, like Hsiao T’ung’s, Chou’s *Kung-kuei wen-hsüan* is a comprehensive, representative anthology. It selects works of women writers from ancient times to the end of the Ming — with *chüan* 1–10 covering works in *fu* and *wen*, and *chüan* 11–26 covering *yüeh-fu* and all forms of *shih* poetry.

In some other ways, however, *Kung-kuei wen-hsüan* recalls Hsü Ling’s (503–583) anthology, the *New Songs from the Jade Terrace* (*Yü-t’ai hsin-yung*), which was compiled under the patronage of Hsiao Kang (503–551) in an attempt to challenge the basic selection policy of the *Wen-hsüan*. First, Chou’s own preface, written in a flowery parallel prose (*p’ien-wen*) style, reminds us of Hsü Ling’s preface to *Yü-t’ai hsin-yung*, which focuses on the description of languishing beauties indulging in editing and reading verses.

The fact that *Yü-t'ai hsün-yung* included numerous poems by women — and the fact that it was intended for female readers — made it a wonderful precedent for Ming-Ch'ing women's anthologies, although these later anthologies never made women readers their sole audience. Still, as an anthology *Kung-kuei wen-hsüen* departs from *Yü-t'ai hsün-yung* in one significant way: it does not claim, as *Yü-t'ai hsün-yung* did, to be a "contemporary" collection comprising mostly "new" poems by living authors. Instead, Chou Shou-ch'ang deliberately took an "archaic" approach, excluding all Ch'ing works from his anthology, making the end of the Ming (200 years before his time!) his cut-off date. Was Chou a Ming loyalist? Or was he simply presenting pre-Ch'ing women's literature as a kind of model literature — the kind that in his view preserved the best of women's writings? I do not have immediate answers to these questions. But Chou's way of mixing together a large number of courtesans' poems with the gentry women's verses does lead us to suspect that his open-minded approach might be a direct reaction to the Neo-Confucian approach adopted by Wan-yen Yün-chu's anthology, published twelve years before Chou's.

12. *Hsiao-t'an-luan-shih hui-k'o pai-chia kuei-hsiu tz'u* (1896), comp. Hsü Nai-ch'ang.

This anthology — or more precisely this composite compilation of "collected editions" of one hundred poets — is by far the most valuable source material for the study of Late Imperial women's *tz'u* poetry.<sup>84</sup> With a preface by Wang P'eng-yün (1849–1904), a renowned poet and scholar largely responsible for the late-Ch'ing revival of song lyrics, Hsü Nai-ch'ang's *Hsiao-t'an-luan-shih hui-k'o p'ai-chia kuei-hsiu tz'u* reveals how female poets of the time were deeply involved in the revival movement. As William Schultz has pointed out, this late renaissance of the *tz'u* is "in part traceable to the emergence of the so-called Ch'ang-chou school in the late eighteenth century, and its insistence on the use of allegory and allusion in commenting on contemporary realities."<sup>85</sup> That late Ch'ing women poets writing in the *tz'u* style (like their male contemporaries) became deeply interested in current affairs, and hence in writing topical allegories, no doubt helped *tz'u* become an elevated form of poetry.

Hsü Nai-ch'ang's *Hsiao-t'an-luan-shih hui-k'o pai-chia kuei-hsiu tz'u* is primarily a Ch'ing anthology, for among its 100 women poets only 4 were

late Ming authors (Shen I-hsiu, Yeh Wan-wan, Yeh Hsiao-luan, and Shang Ching-lan). But later, in 1906, Hsü Nai-ch'ang compiled a sequel called *Kuei-hsiu tz'u-ch'ao*, which collected works by 521 more poets, many of them Ming poets. Indeed, Hsü Nai-ch'ang's two anthologies were unprecedented in scope. By comparison, Ting Shao-i's famous *Ch'ing-tz'u tsung pu*, which also contains works by female authors, seems almost inconsequential. And certainly, if compared to the thin volume of the *Ch'ing-tai kuei-hsiu shih-ch'ao* (1922), Hsü's two collections of female writers in the *tz'u* style are much more impressive.

#### OTHER RELEVANT ANTHOLOGIES AND SOURCE MATERIALS

Many other female anthologies of the Ming-Ch'ing deserve to be examined as well — such as those defined by their “local” nature, among them the *Hsiang-t'an Kuo-shih kuei-hsiu chi* (The collected works of Madame Kuo of Hsiang-T'an [in Hunan]; 1837) and *Ch'ang-sha Yang-shih kuei-hsiu shih* (The collected poems of Madame Yang of Ch'ang-sha [in Hunan]; 1878) from Hunan.<sup>86</sup> In addition, the importance of the recently discovered “women's script” (*nü-shu*) in Hunan should also be weighed.<sup>87</sup> The “women's script” reveals the existence, according to some reports since early times, of a long-standing female oral tradition supported by a written tradition unique to country women in one small region of southern China. (See illustration 8.) The numerous folk songs and ballads set down in the “women's script” are especially worth noting, for their styles resemble the traditional *yüeh-fu* and other popular songs.<sup>88</sup> The mere presence of these folk songs could have been used to refute Chang Hsüeh-ch'eng's argument that “women of ancient times” could not possibly have “opened their mouths and poured out complete verses.”<sup>89</sup> But Chang Hsüeh-ch'eng obviously did not know of the “women's script,” which however limited in time and space its use may prove to have been, transmitted a genuine “women's voice” among those who used it.

Finally, an anthology of male poets (entitled *Ming san-shih chia shih-hsüan*) compiled by the woman poet Wang Tuan (1793–1838) deserves our special attention (see illustration 9).<sup>90</sup> In this anthology we can see how broad and thorough was the education of gentry women; it was not restricted to the so-called female tradition. Wang Tuan's *Ming san-shih chia shih-hsüan* (printed 1822, rpt. 1873) was unusual not only because it was compiled by



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9. From Wang Tuan (1793–1838), comp. and ed., *Ming san-shih chia shih-hsüan*, 8+8 ch., 1822. Eleven cols. of 22 chars.; block 14 x 18.5 cm. Collection of the Gest Oriental Library.

a woman, but also because it was judged by many to be the finest anthology of Ming poetry. According to *Jan-chih yü-yün*, for example, Wang Tuan's anthology is far superior to those compiled by Ch'ien Ch'ien-i, Chu I-tsun, and Shen Te-ch'ien.<sup>91</sup> Wang Tuan's anthology was distinguished especially for her insightful views on Chinese poetry, expressed through extremely thoughtful introductions to each of the thirty male poets she included. Her "Fan-li" (Editorial principles) departs from the conventional pattern of dwelling on the technical points involved in the anthologist's policy of selection. Instead, it reads like a superb essay of literary criticism, demonstrating Wang Tuan's brilliant exploration into the three-hundred-year history of Ming poetry. Deeply concerned with the qualities of "purity" (*ch'ing*) and "sincerity" (*chen*) in poetry, Wang Tuan especially praised the poet Kao Ch'i (1336–1374). Wang Tuan was apparently influenced by her famous father-in-law, Ch'en Wen-shu, who was deeply interested in Ming loyalism, for she devoted a whole *chüan* of her anthology to the loyalist poets Chen Tzu-lung and Ku Yen-wu (1613–1682; see *chüan* 7). But as Ellen Widmer has pointed out in another context, such interest in loyalism on the part of Ch'en Wen-shu's circle (which included many women poets) was meaningful "perhaps more for its romantic than its political side."<sup>92</sup> As a critic, Wang Tuan had an enthusiasm for ideas, especially ideas about originality and poetic traditions, as her able recounting of the history of poetic trends and individual creativity shows. Indeed, Wang Tuan wrote with a self-assurance and authority that she seemed to have inherited from the Sung poet Li Ch'ing-chao (ca. 1084–ca. 1151), the first female critic to write so confidently about male poets. In many ways, however, Wang Tuan was the exact opposite of Li Ch'ing-chao. Whereas Li Ch'ing-chao was always finding fault with male poets, Wang Tuan affirmed the artistic achievement of many male poets who suffered undeserved obscurity. Most important, as the first female anthologist of male poetry in the Chinese tradition, Wang Tuan demonstrated how compiling anthologies gave power and prestige to one's critical vocation. Clearly her goal was not to celebrate the "female" tradition in poetry. She seemed to prefer instead to erase the boundaries between the male and the female by reversing the usual gender roles in Chinese criticism — for previously it was the male critic who judged the female poet rather than the other way around. Thus, Wang Tuan's anthology became for her an excellent, if indirect, strategy for elevating the literary status of women.

As Pauline Yu says, “anthologies put poems in their place metaphorically and historically, addressing directly or indirectly the values of the time.”<sup>93</sup> The Ming-Ch’ing poetry anthologies, as I have outlined them above, can serve as a perfect means of understanding the place of female (and male) poets of the time. Indeed, Shih Shu-i points out in her *Biographies of Ch’ing Women Poets* (1922) that she based her choice of significant figures largely on whether those poets had been included in previous anthologies.<sup>94</sup> For the very variety of selection strategies and criteria evident in the Ming-Ch’ing anthologies of women poets reveals a rather pluralistic and evolving literary scene — a picture that other kinds of sources might not have offered. Unfortunately, modern scholars of Chinese literary history have failed up to now to take advantage of the numerous anthologies of female poetry produced in the Ming-Ch’ing. Their neglect is regrettable, for these important anthologies would have constituted perhaps the strongest argument against the modern view of literary history that claims traditional women were largely excluded from the literary establishment.

## NOTES

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1. Hu Wen-k’ai, *Li-tai fu-nü chu-tso k’ao* (1957; rev. edn. Shanghai: Shanghai

Ku-chi ch’u-pan-she, 1985), hereafter referred to as “Hu.”

2. There is an original copy of *Shih nü-shih* in the Beijing Library, and the University of Chicago has a microfilm made from the original. It should be noted that long before the Ming, the Sung poet Ou-yang Hsiu already expressed views similar to T’ien I-heng’s. In his foreword to Hsieh Hsi-meng’s collected works, Ou-yang writes: “In the past, works of Chuang Chiang of Wei and Lady Hsü-mu were recorded by Confucius and ranked among the *Kuo-feng* [of the *Shih-ching*]. If there were today a heroic person who could evaluate contemporary poets and inspire confidence in later generations, people

- would rank her [Hsi-meng] highly, and her name would not be lost to memory" (Hu, p. 66). Such views did not, however, become prevalent until the late Ming.
3. Hu, p. 876.
  4. See Shen I-hsiu's preface to her *I-jen ssu*, p. 1. In Yeh Shao-yüan, *Wu-meng-t'ang ch'üan-chi* (1636; punctuated edn. Shanghai: Shanghai tsa-chih kung-ssu, 1936), vol. 2.
  5. Maureen Robertson, "Voicing the Feminine: Construction of the Female Subject in the Lyric Poetry of Medieval and Late Imperial China," paper presented at the Colloquium on Poetry and Women's Culture in Late Imperial China, UCLA, October 20, 1990, p. 1.
  6. See Shih Chih-ts'un, *T'ang-shih pai-hua* (Shanghai: Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she, 1987), p. 769.
  7. *Ibid.*, p. 775.
  8. Robertson, "Voicing the Feminine," p. 1.
  9. Dorothy Yin-yeo Ko, "Toward a Social History of Women in Seventeenth-Century China" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1989), p. 2.
  10. *Ibid.*
  11. Hu, p. 885.
  12. "Contextual poetics" is a term coined by Neil Fraistat. See the introduction to his edited volume, *Poems in Their Place: The Intertextuality and Order of Poetic Collections* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), pp. 3-17. I owe this specific citation to Pauline Yu; see her "Poems in Their Place: Collections and Canons in Early Chinese Literature," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 50.1 (1990), p. 195.
  13. Ellen Widmer, "The Epistolary World of Female Talent in Seventeenth-Century China," *Late Imperial China* 10.2 (1989), p. 22.
  14. See Wendell V. Harris's idea of the canon as a means of "providing models, ideals, and inspiration," in his "Canonicity," *PMLA* 106.1 (1991), p. 111.
  15. K'ang Cheng-kuo, *Feng-sao yü yen-ch'ing* (Honan: Jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1988), p. 345.
  16. *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu tsung-mu t'i-yao* (rpt. Taipei: Shang-wu yin-shu-kuan, 1971), 193, p. 4301.
  17. *Ibid.*, 192, p. 4287.
  18. *Ibid.*, 193, p. 4318.
  19. Hu, p. 888; trans. Haun Saussy. See "Female Scribes, Ancient and Modern," trans. Haun Saussy, to be included in "An Anthology of Chinese Women Poets from Ancient Times to 1911," ed. Kang-i Sun Chang (New Haven: Yale University Press, forthcoming).
  20. Hu, p. 888.
  21. Arthur Waley, *Yüan Mei: Eighteenth Century Chinese Poet* (1957; rpt. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970), p. 179.
  22. Hu, p. 433.
  23. The *Wu-yin ts'ao* and *Hu-shang ts'ao* are now in Shanghai's Chekiang Library. It was Shih Chih-ts'un who acquired for me (by special permission) photocopies of these two valuable collections.
  24. According to reliable sources, the project of *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi* was started in 1646 and completed in 1649. (See the foreword by the Publishing

- Committee of Shanghai Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she. In *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi hsiao-chuan*, rev. edn., 2 vols. [Shanghai: Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she, 1983], vol. 1, p. 1.)
25. See my *The Late-Ming Poet Ch'en Tzu-lung: Crises of Love and Loyalism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 19.
  26. Hu, p. 844.
  27. Ibid.
  28. Ibid., p. 433. See also Widmer, "The Epistolary World," p. 20.
  29. *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi hsiao-chuan*, vol. 2, p. 752.
  30. Ibid., p. 751.
  31. Ibid., p. 752.
  32. Ibid., p. 760.
  33. I accept the view of the modern scholar Ch'en Yin-k'o who claimed that it was Liu Shih who turned Ch'ien into a true Ming loyalist, albeit one involved only in underground resistance activities. See Ch'en Yin-k'o, *Liu Ju-shih pieh-chuan* (Shanghai: Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she, 1980), vol. 3, pp. 827-1224.
  34. *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu tsung-mu t'i yao*, 190, p. 4229.
  35. Ibid.
  36. See *Ming-shih tsung* (rpt. in 2 vols. Taipei: Shih-chieh shu-chü, 1989), vol. 2, p. 712.
  37. Hu, p. 434.
  38. This information was first given me by Ellen Widmer. Kung Wen-k'ai has acquired for the Yale University Library a microfilm copy from the Science Institute of Beijing.
  39. Wang Shih-lu's *Jan-chih chi* exists only in manuscript form. The Shanghai Library has the original of the anthology, though *chüan* 16-20 are missing (Hu, p. 906).
  40. Hu, p. 849.
  41. For example, Tsou Ssu-i places her at the beginning of his anthology "Eight Famous Women Poets." And in 1661 the dramatist Li Yü asked Wang to write a foreword to his play, *Pi-mu yü* ("Sole" Mates); see also Widmer, "The Epistolary World," p. 11.
  42. Naikaku Bunko has the original of *Yin-hung chi*. According to Shih Chih-ts'un, mainland scholars have been looking for *Yin-hung chi* for a long time (private communication, letter dated October 23, 1991). My photocopy was provided by Ellen Widmer.
  43. For some reason, Ch'ien Ch'ien-i's important preface is missing from the Central Library copy. The Yale microfilm, which was acquired by Kung Wen-k'ai from the Beijing Library, does contain Ch'ien's preface.
  44. Hu, p. 248.
  45. See "Fan-li," p. 3a.
  46. Ibid., pp. 3a-b.
  47. Ibid., p. 1.
  48. Wang Tuan-shu never mentions the historical *Wei-shu*. But it might be significant that the original *Wei-shu* is a lost book which gave unorthodox interpretations of the classics (see *Sui shu*, "Ching-chi chih"). I am indebted to Haun Saussy for this point.
  49. See my *The Late-Ming Poet Ch'en Tzu-lung*, chap. 2, pp. 9-18.
  50. Incidentally, Wang Tuan-shu once wrote a poem (in *Ming-yüan shih-wei*, *chüan* 42, p. 11b) recalling her meeting with Ch'ien Ch'ien-i and Liu Shih. (I am indebted to Ellen Widmer for this

- reference.) But this does not rule out the possibility that Wang Tuan-shu was biased in her opinions or subject to feelings of rivalry — for although Tsou Ssu-i places Wang Tuan-shu at the beginning of his anthology, he also states that Liu Shih “ranks first” among famous women poets.
51. Readers should be reminded that Liu Shih’s *Lieh-ch’ao shih-chi, jun-chi* includes only two poems by Hsü Yüan.
  52. Harris, “Canonicity,” p. 116.
  53. *Ibid.*
  54. For information on this anthology, see Widmer, “The Epistolary World,” p. 41.
  55. Teng Han-i, comp., *T’ien-hsia ming-chia shih-kuan ch’u-chi*, vol. 22, pp. 24a–25b.
  56. See the modern punctuated edition by Shih Chih-ts’un, p. 1.
  57. See Tsung Yüan-ting’s foreword to the anthology (Hu, pp. 903–904).
  58. See also my paper, “Liu Shih and Hsü Ts’an: Feminine or Feminist?” in “Voice of the Song Lyric in China,” ed. Pauline Yu (Berkeley: University of California Press, forthcoming).
  59. See my *The Late-Ming Poet Ch’en Tzu-lung*, chap. 4, pp. 41–68.
  60. *Lin-hsia tz’u-hsüan* selects works of women *tz’u* poets from the Sung to the early Ch’ing. The Ming-Ch’ing works are in *chüan* 6–13. According to Shih Chih-ts’un, his friend Huang Shang (the famous bibliophile) owns two copies of the original. See Shih Chih-ts’un [under pseud. She-chih], “Li-tai tz’u hsüan-chi hsü-lu,” in *Tz’u-hsüeh*, (1986), vol. 4, p. 247.
  61. Hu, p. 896.
  62. *Ibid.*, p. 900.
  63. *Ibid.*
  64. Translation by Haun Saussy. See “A Hundred and More Poetic Flowers, by Famed Beauties of Past and Present,” trans. Haun Saussy, to be included in my “Anthology of Chinese Women Poets.”
  65. Hu, p. 784.
  66. *Chung-hsiang tz’u*, pt. 1, p. 1a.
  67. *Ibid.*, preface, pt. 1.
  68. For example, Hsü Ts’an was the *only* woman poet to be included in Lung Mu-hsün’s highly acclaimed anthology of Late Imperial Chinese song lyrics, *Chin san-pai nien ming-chia tz’u-hsüan* (rpt. Hong Kong: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1979). See pp. 24–26.
  69. See Shih Chih-ts’un [under pseud. She-chih], “Li-tai tz’u hsüan-chi hsü-lun,” in *Tz’u-hsüeh*, pp. 247–248.
  70. See *Yao-hua chi* (facsimile reproduction; Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1982).
  71. See Susan Mann, “‘Fuxue’ [Women’s Learning] by Zhang Xuecheng (1738–1801): China’s First History of Women’s Culture,” paper presented at the Colloquium on Poetry and Women’s Culture in Late Imperial China, UCLA, October 20, 1990, p. 13.
  72. See “The Image” under hexagrams 58 and 30, respectively. In Richard Wilhelm and Cary E. Baynes, trans., *The I Ching, or Book of Changes*, rendered into English by Cary F. Baynes (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 224 and 119.
  73. In his “Fuxue,” Chang sums up his position on this issue: “Ignorant people believe that the airs of Cheng were written by the lovers themselves, and so they claim that the children and

- women of ancient times simply opened their mouths and poured out complete verses that were superior to those of later literati. They do not know that this belief is utterly without foundation." See translation in Mann, " 'Fuxue,' " p. 15.
74. Mark Borer, "Yüan Mei and Chang Hsüeh-ch'eng on the Education of Women," seminar paper, Yale University, 1991, p. 3.
  75. It was F. W. Mote who first informed me that Princeton's Gest Oriental Library has an original copy of this anthology. I later found out that the Harvard-Yenching Library also has a copy.
  76. See Liang I-chen, *Ch'ing-tai fu-nü wen-hsüeh shih* (1925; rpt. Taipei: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1979), p. 195.
  77. "Li-yen," in *Kuo-ch'ao kuei-hsiu cheng-shih chi*, p. 5b.
  78. See Mann, " 'Fuxue,' " p. 19.
  79. *Ibid.*, p. 5a.
  80. *Ibid.*
  81. See also my "Liu Shih and Hsü Ts'an," pp. 24-25.
  82. Both the University of Chicago Library and the Harvard-Yenching Library have the originals of this item (although the Harvard-Yenching copy is incomplete). Paul Ropp first called my attention to this useful anthology.
  83. Hu, p. 920.
  84. I have been informed that the publisher Kiangsu kuang-ling ku-chi k'o-yin-she in Yangchow is now making a facsimile reprint of this large anthology (forthcoming 1992).
  85. See Schultz's note on Wang P'eng-yün, in Irving Yucheng Lo and William Schultz, eds., *Waiting for the Unicorn: Poems and Lyrics of China's Last Dynasty, 1644-1911* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), p. 343.
  86. Hu Wen-k'ai, *Li-tai fu-nü chu-tso k'ao*, pp. 854, 864.
  87. Wang Yü-lin was the first person to call my attention to this important material. For the "women's script," see *Nü-shu: Shih-chieh wei-i te nü-hsing wen-tzu* (Taipei: Fu-nü hsin-chih chichin hui, 1991). Unfortunately, few pre-Ch'ing works written in the "women's script" seem to have survived, although we may assume that the numerous folk songs available in the *nü-shu* have a longstanding oral tradition. It was customary for country women to burn their songs written in the "women's script," because they believed that poems could thus be carried to the underworld after the woman's death.
  88. See also William Wei Chiang, " 'We Two Know the Script: We Have Become Friends': Linguistic and Social Aspects of the Women's Script Literacy in Southern Hunan, China" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1991). Chiang thinks that the genre of folk songs and folktales "merits particular notice because it may have influenced the format and literary style of all other genres in the *nü-shu*" (p. 197). Village women often sang the songs and stories recorded in the women's script while they gathered for needlework. According to Chiang there are still no data available with regard to how women's script originated, although there exist several legends on

its origins that reflect *nü-shu*'s social function — allowing women to vent personal grief and the like. One legend, for example, has it that a Sung-dynasty woman named Hu Yuxiu invented the women's script to communicate her secret lonely thoughts after becoming a royal concubine of the emperor Sung Che-tsung (p. 313). I feel that what is important to us is not when the script originated, but rather the fact that women have been actively involved in an oral tradition since ancient times, even if the script itself may not have been invented until later.

89. See Mann, " 'Fuxue,' " p. 15.
90. Both Princeton's Gest Oriental Library and the Harvard-Yenching Library have original copies of this anthology.
91. As cited in Liang I-chen "Ch'ing-tai fu-nü," p. 204.
92. Ellen Widmer, "Xiaoqing's Literary Legacy and the Place of the Woman Writer in Late Imperial China," 1992, p. 40.
93. Yu, "Poems in Their Place," p. 196.
94. Shih Shu-i, *Ch'ing-tai kuei-ko shih-jen cheng-lüeh* (1922; rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai Shu-tien, 1987), p. 5.

## GLOSSARY

Chang Hsüeh-ch'eng 章學誠

Chang Hung-ch'iao 張紅橋

Chang Ying-ch'ang 張應昌

Ch'ang-chou 常州

*Ch'ang-sha Yang-shih kuei-hsiu shih*

長沙楊氏閨秀詩

Chao Shih-chieh 趙世杰

Chao Shih-yung 趙時用

chen 真

Ch'en Tzu-lung 陳子龍

Ch'en Wei-sung 陳維崧

Ch'en Wen-shu 陳文述

cheng 正

Cheng Hsiu 鄭袖

Chi Hsien 季嫻

chi-nü 妓女

Chi Yün 紀昀

Chiang-nan 江南

Chiang-yün-lou 絳雲樓

ch'iao 巧

Ch'ien Ch'ien-i 錢謙益

Ch'ien Yüeh 錢岳

Ch'ien-lung 乾隆

chih 志

ching 經

Ch'ing 清

Ching P'ien-p'ien 景翩翩

*Ch'ing shih hui* 清詩匯

*Ch'ing shih to* 清詩鐸

*Ch'ing-p'ing tz'u-hsüan* 清平詞選

*Ch'ing-shih pieh-ts'ai chi* 清詩別裁集

*Ch'ing-tai kuei-hsiu shih-ch'ao*

清代閨秀詩鈔

*Ch'ing-tz'u tsung pu* 清詞綜補

*Ch'in-huai ssu-chi shih* 秦淮四姬詩

Chin-ku 金谷

- Chou Chih-piao 周之標  
 Chou Ming 周銘  
 Chou Shou-ch'ang 周壽昌  
 Chu I-tsun 朱彝尊  
 Ch'ü Ping-chün 屈秉筠  
 Chüan-erh 卷耳  
 ch'u-chi 初集  
 Chung Hsing 鐘惺  
 Chung Jung 鐘嶸  
 Chung-hsi shu-chü 中西書局  
 Chung-hsiang tz'u 衆香詞  
 chung-nü 中女  
 erh-chi 二集  
 Fang Wei-i 方維儀  
 fan-li 凡例  
 fu 賦  
 Fu hsüeh 婦學  
 Fu-jen chi 婦人集  
 Han O 韓娥  
 hao-ming erh wu-hsüeh 好名而無學  
 Ho-tung 河東  
 Hsi P'ei-lan 席佩蘭  
 Hsiang-t'an Kuo-shih kuei-hsiu chi  
     湘潭郭氏閨秀集  
 Hsiao Kang 蕭綱  
 Hsiao T'ung 蕭統  
 Hsiao-t'an-luan-shih hui-k'o pai-chia kuei-hsiu  
     tz'u 小檀欒室彙刻百家閨秀詞  
 hsin-chi 新集  
 hsing-ling 性靈  
 hsin-tung 心動  
 Hsü Ching-fan (Hönansörhön) 許景樊  
 Hsü Ling 徐陵  
 Hsü Nai-ch'ang 徐乃昌  
 Hsü Shih-ch'ang 徐世昌  
 Hsü Shu-min 徐樹敏  
 Hsü Ts'an 徐燦  
 Hsü Yüan 徐媛  
 Hsüeh T'ao 薛濤  
 Hu Wen-k'ai 胡文楷  
 Hua-chien chi 花間集  
 Huang Yüan-chieh 黃媛介  
 Hu-shang ts'ao 湖上草  
 I-ching 易經  
 I-jen ssu 伊人思  
 Jan-chih chi 然脂集  
 Jan-chih yü-yün 然脂餘韻  
 jun-chi 閨集  
 Kao Ch'i 高啓  
 Ko t'an 葛覃  
 Ku Mei 顧媚  
 Ku Wen-wan 顧文婉  
 Ku Yen-wu 顧炎武  
 Kuan-chü 關雎  
 Ku-chin ming-yüan pai-hua shih-yü  
     古今名媛百花詩餘  
 Ku-chin ming-yüan shih-tz'u hsüan  
     古今名媛詩詞選  
 Ku-chin nü-shih 古今女史  
 Kuei Mao-i 歸懋儀  
 Kuei-hsiu tz'u-ch'ao 閨秀詞鈔  
 kuei-men 閨門  
 Kung-kuei shih-chi i-wen k'ao lüeh  
     宮閨詩集逸文考略  
 Kung-kuei wen-hsüan 宮閨文選  
 Kuo-ch'ao kuei-hsiu cheng-shih chi  
     國朝閨秀正始集  
 Lady Fan 樊姬  
 li 離  
 li 禮

- Li Ch'ing-chao 李清照  
*Li sao* 離騷  
 Li Yin 李因  
*Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi* 列朝詩集  
*Lin-hsia tz'u-hsüan* 林下詞選  
*Li-tai fu-nü chu-tso k'ao* 歷代婦女著作考  
*Li-tai nü-tzu shih-chi* 歷代女子詩集  
*Li-tai nü-tzu wen-chi* 歷代女子文集  
*Li-tai ti-wang hou-fei k'ao* 歷代帝王后妃考  
 Liu Dajie (Ta-chieh) 劉大杰  
 Liu Shih 柳是  
 Liu Yün-fen 劉雲份  
 Lo-wei 絡緯  
 Lu Ch'ing-tzu 陸卿子  
 luan 亂  
 meng-ti 盟弟  
 Miao Lien-pao 妙蓮保  
*Ming san-shih chia shih-hsüan*  
 明三十家詩選  
 ming-chia 名家  
*Ming-shih pieh-ts'ai chi* 明詩別裁集  
*Ming-shih tsung* 明詩綜  
*Ming-yüan shih-kuei* 名媛詩歸  
*Ming-yüan shih-wei* 名媛詩緯  
*Ming-yüan wen-wei* 名媛文緯  
 nei-yen pu-chu 內言不出  
*Nü-chung ch'i ts'ai-tzu lan-k'o chi*  
 女中七才子蘭咳集  
 nü-chung chih ju 女中之儒  
 nü-chung ts'ai-tzu 女中才子  
*Nü-sao* 女騷  
 nü-shih 女史  
 nü-shu 女書  
 Pan-yeh t'ang 半野堂  
 Pien Meng-chüeh 卞夢珏  
 Pien Yü-ching 卞玉京  
 p'ien-wen 駢文  
 p'in 品  
 Po Chü-i 白居易  
 P'u Ying-lu 浦映淥  
 pu-wei tse pu-ching 不緯則不經  
 Sao-yeh shan-fang 掃葉山房  
 Shang Ching-lan 商景蘭  
 Shang-lin 上林  
 shao-nü 少女  
 she 射  
 Shen I-hsiu 沈宜修  
 Shen Te-ch'ien 沈德潛  
 shih 詩  
 Shih Chih-ts'un 施蟄存  
*Shih nü-shih* 詩女史  
 Shih Shu-i 施淑儀  
*Shih-ching* 詩經  
 shih-hsing fu-jen 失行婦人  
 shih-yüan 詩媛  
*Shih-yüan pa ming-chia hsüan*  
 詩媛八名家選  
*Shih-yüan shih ming-chia hsüan*  
 詩媛十名家選  
 shü 書  
 shü 數  
*Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu tsung-mu t'i-yao*  
 四庫全書總目提要  
 Su-chou 蘇州  
*Sui-yüan nü-ti-tzu shih-hsüan*  
 隨園女弟子詩選  
 Sun Hui-yüan 孫惠媛  
 Sung-chiang 松江  
 Ta-ta t'u-shu kung-ying-she  
 大達圖書供應社

- Ta-tung shu-chü 大東書局  
 Teng Han-i 鄧漢儀  
 T'ien I-heng 田藝蘅  
 T'ien-hsia ming chia shih-kuan ch'u-chi  
 天下名家詩觀初集  
 Ting Shao-i 丁紹儀  
 Ting Sheng-chao 丁聖肇  
 Tsa-chih kung-ssu 雜誌公司  
 ts'ai-kuan 采觀  
 ts'ai-nü 才女  
 Ts'ao-t'ang shih-yü 草堂詩餘  
 Tsou Ssu-i 鄒斯漪  
 Ts'ui-lou chi 翠樓集  
 tsu-li 族里  
 Tsung Yüan-ting 宗元鼎  
 Tuan Shu-ch'ing 端淑卿  
 tui 兌  
 Tung Pai 董白  
 Tung Shao-yü 董少玉  
 T'ung-ch'eng 桐城  
 Tung-shan ch'ou-ho chi 東山酬和集  
 tz'u 詞  
 wan-chieh 晚節  
 Wang Ku 汪穀  
 Wang P'eng-yün 王鵬運  
 Wang Shih-chen 王士禎  
 Wang Shih-lu 王士祿  
 Wang Ssu-jen 王思任  
 Wang Tuan 汪端  
 Wang Tuan-shu 王端淑  
 Wang Wei 王徽  
 Wang Yü-chen 汪玉軫  
 Wan-yen Yün-chu 完顏惲珠  
 wei 緯  
 Wei Chuang 韋莊  
 wen 文  
 Wen-hsüan 文選  
 wen-jou tun-hou 溫柔敦厚  
 Wu Ch'i (male) 吳綺  
 Wu Ch'i (female) 吳琪  
 Wu Hsiao 吳綰  
 Wu Shan 吳山  
 Wu-men 吳門  
 Wu-yin ts'ao 戊寅草  
 Yang Wan 楊宛  
 Yao-hua chi 瑤華集  
 Yeh Hsiao-luan 葉小鸞  
 Yeh Shao-yüan 葉紹袁  
 Yeh Wan-wan 葉紉紉  
 yen 艷  
 yen-ku 沿古  
 Yin hung chi 吟紅集  
 yü 御  
 Yü Hsüan-chi 魚玄機  
 Yu T'ung 尤侗  
 Yüan Mei 袁枚  
 yüeh 樂  
 yüeh-fu 樂府  
 Yu-hsüan chi 又玄集  
 Yün-chien 雲間  
 Yü-t'ai shin-yung 玉臺新詠  
 Yü-ying 玉映

# The *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng* and Traditional Illustrated Biographies of Women

SÖREN EDGREN

The long Chinese tradition of biographies of women as a separate genre of biographical writing should be regarded as an important source for the study of the role and status of women in traditional Chinese society, notwithstanding the obvious social bias of the class and gender of the authors of these works. The most famous progenitor of this category of writing is the *Lieh-nü chuan* (Biographies of distinguished women), attributed to the Western Han author Liu Hsiang (77–6 B.C.), which has been a model for the education and moral instruction of women in China since early times.<sup>1</sup> The Chinese literature of moral exemplars also had a profound influence on the neighboring countries of Korea and Japan, where this literature was reprinted and similar works by native authors were produced. Although obviously dissimilar, even the late nineteenth-century *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng* (Mirror reflections and flute sounds) nevertheless shares an important tradition with the *Lieh-nü chuan* and succeeding illustrated biographies of women.<sup>2</sup>

During the Ming period the *Lieh-nü chuan* went through various recensions, which included expanding biographies as well as adding woodcuts to accompany the text.<sup>3</sup> To distinguish the original versions of the work ascribed to Liu Hsiang, with its 125 biographies, from later augmented versions, the title is often prefixed with Liu Hsiang, the author's name, or with the character *ku*, meaning ancient. The earlier versions contained seven or

eight *chüan*;<sup>4</sup> later versions had sixteen. The most renowned of these was edited by the Ming scholar Wang Tao-k'un (1525–1593) and has illustrations said to be by the great Su-chou artist Ch'iu Ying (d. ca. 1552). It contains more than three hundred biographies, even including later and nearly contemporary biographies, accompanied by typical Hui-chou-school woodcuts. It is unlikely, however, that it was designed by Ch'iu Ying, whose name, like that of the artist T'ang Yin (1470–1524), was used freely by booksellers and publishers to promote their products. This edition has had a peculiar history and has exerted a rather great influence on the pictorial concepts behind the conventional illustrated biographies of women of the past few centuries. In 1779, it was reprinted at the Chih-pu-tsu chai, the studio of Pao T'ing-po (1728–1814), and is sometimes regarded as a new edition based on the Wan-li period (1573–1620) edition of Wang Tao-k'un. However, a careful study of some existing specimens suggests that Pao used a portion of the original woodblocks, adding replacements for the missing blocks.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, it has not yet been determined which, if any, of the existing specimens was printed entirely in the Ming period, nor what portion of the issue of 1779 was made from new rather than recut original blocks. The edition has been reprinted in facsimile in the twentieth century, which has added to its wide recognition.

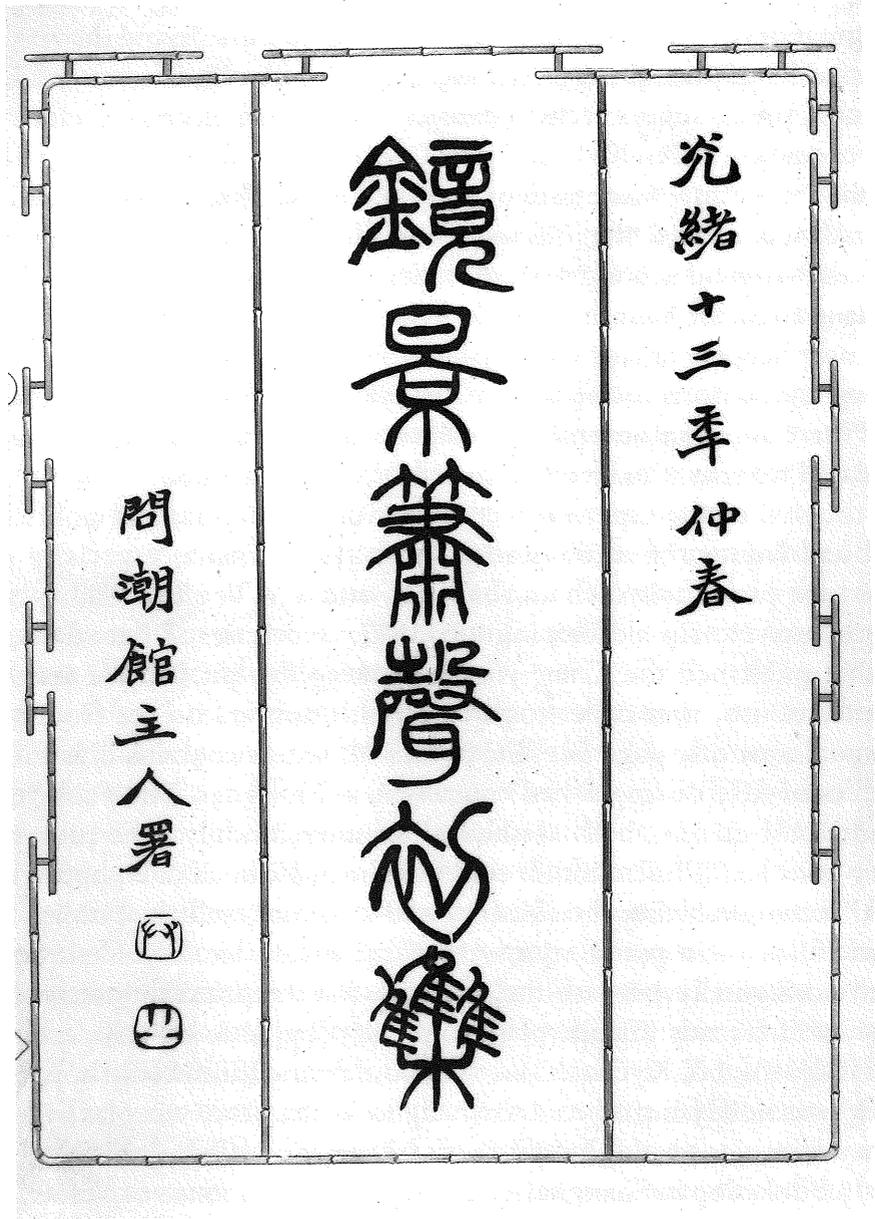
During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries several publications clearly imitated the example of the *Lieh-nü chuan*. Among the best of these was the *Kuei-fan* (Models of conduct for the women's quarters), compiled by the Confucian scholar Lü K'un (1536–1618), and the finest edition of the work, published in the late Wan-li period, contains superb woodcut illustrations by the best Hui-chou blockcarvers.<sup>6</sup> By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries some popular works began to challenge the strict moralistic tone of the earlier Confucian works by recording biographies and creating portraits of female literary personalities such as Hsüeh T'ao (768–832) and famous consorts such as Yang Kuei-fei (719–756). In fact, the illustrations of the earlier traditional illustrated biographies, which placed the subject in the midst of other figures in a didactic situation, were now giving way to rather austere portraits of the subject only. This is not to say that women of various classes and backgrounds had not already been depicted in Ming and Ch'ing woodcuts, but their appearance had been limited largely to the popular genres of drama and fiction. In the biographical literature it can be said that the paragons of virtue and strict

morality were being replaced by women of talent and influence outside the family, albeit never without references to the correctness of behavior, often accompanied by reports in a highly moral tone of the subject having overcome great personal difficulties. Many such later works avoid the references by emphasizing portraiture over biography and are classified as “art” in the traditional philosophers section (*tzu-pu*) rather than as “biography” in the histories section (*shih-pu*).

At the same time conservative scholars continued to support the Confucian tradition behind the *Lieh-nü chuan*. In 1796 Ku Kuang-ch’i (1776–1835), the eminent Ch’ing textual critic, published the *Ku lieh-nü chuan fu k’ao-cheng* together with his supplementary textual verifications. In 1812, the female scholar Wang Chao-yüan (1763–1851) published her supplementary annotations to the text as *Lieh-nü chuan pu-chu*. Around the same period there appeared several new editions and reprints of the *Lieh-nü chuan* and related texts as if in an effort to reinforce the tradition.

By the end of the nineteenth century military defeats and political upheaval had led to tumultuous social changes in China, especially in the rather open port cities such as Shanghai, and a *fin de siècle* atmosphere of excesses was clearly developing. In 1887, a coterie of “gentlemen” in Shanghai published the *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng ch’u-chi* (Mirror reflections and flute sounds, first collection), as the title appears on the front side of the *feng-mien* or title page (see illustration 1), which contains illustrated biographies of fifty distinguished courtesans in Shanghai. The publication is of the highest quality, both aesthetically and technically. The back side of the *feng-mien* leaf (illustration 2) contains the publisher’s colophon within a vertical rectangle listing the illustrator, the editors, and the publisher. All use fanciful artistic pseudonyms, as if calculated to defy identification. Printed horizontally beneath the rectangle are the printer’s statement and address, which reads: Copperplate engraving [by] Yokouchi Keizan, jūichi banchi, Sōjūrō-chō, Kyōbashi-ku, Tokyo, Japan. Commercial copperplate printing was newly introduced to Shanghai at the time, whereas in Japan it had already achieved a high reputation.<sup>7</sup> At least one Tokyo bookseller had opened a bookshop in Shanghai,<sup>8</sup> and diplomatic relations were established, so it is not difficult to understand that conditions existed for ordering the printing of the book abroad.

The late Ch’ing fiction of social satire and criticism often reflects the sort of milieu surrounding this publication. A good example is the *Nieh-hai hua*



1. Title page. *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng ch'u-chi*. Collection of the American Museum of Natural History, New York.

苕溪徐亮朗寅甫城北生繪圖  
 莫釐不過分齋主人輯豔  
 古莽司花老人填詞  
 掄花館主人藏版

大日本東京夕橋宗十郎町拾壹番地橫內桂山銅鑄

2. Publisher's colophon. *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng ch'u-chi*. Collection of the American Museum of Natural History, New York.

(Flowers in a sinful sea) by Tseng P'u (1872–1935), which, although published in 1905, is set in Peking, Shanghai, and Soochow during the final three decades of the nineteenth century, and contains veiled references to real personalities and events, describing numerous episodes involving courtesans and visits to brothals by men of all backgrounds: scholarly, official, military, commercial. As an example of relationships existing between the novel and the illustrated biographies, Hu Pao-yü is mentioned in *Nieh-hai hua* as a famous Shanghai courtesan,<sup>9</sup> and in the *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng ch'u-chi* she is described as the foster mother of Hu Hsiu-lin, who has a separate biography and portrait. No doubt a careful study of the *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng* would produce a lot of valuable biographical and historical data, not to mention revealing literary, linguistic, and sociological facts. A survey of the biographies shows that several women had been adopted by courtesans and, apparently, had grown up in the *chi-yüan* (brothal) environment. Many girls were recruited as orphans or from impoverished families, and the profession provided their only means of livelihood. Others found their way there after being solicited from poor families by itinerant musical and theater troupes, especially known for their so-called *hua-ku hsi* (flower-drum performances), which had affiliations with the *chi-yüan*. The T'ang poet Hsüeh T'ao, mentioned above, took up the same profession to support her widowed mother. Courtesans (I take this to be the best translation of *chi-nü*) of Soochow had been established in Shanghai since the early seventeenth century and were famed for their musical and recitative abilities (musical performance and vocal entertainment played a major role as an attraction in the *chi-yüan*), and the Wu dialect of the Soochow area is closely associated with the profession. In fact, of the fifty courtesans recorded in the *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng*, more than one-third are from the immediate Soochow area, and others are from the vicinity.

As stated previously, the *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng ch'u-chi* appears to be quite rare, and it is safe to assume that only a limited number of copies was printed privately for the exclusive enjoyment of the group of men behind the publication rather than for commercial gain. A specialized bibliography of thirty-eight works published between the 1860s and 1932 on Shanghai courtesans and brothal culture does not record it.<sup>10</sup> The title is referred to, however, in a passage citing Wang T'ao (1828–1897), the pioneer of Chinese journalism.<sup>11</sup> From works that are recorded, such as *Shang-hai p'in-yen pai-hua t'u* and *Hai-shang ch'ün-fang p'u*, both published in 1884, we can find

comparisons with *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng* and see the popularity of the genre at the time.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the descriptions of the two works indicate their more popular nature, and it is unlikely that either approaches the *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng* in the superb quality of its production.

The appearance and format of *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng* are as follows: folded leaves (1f. = 2 pp.); stitch-bound (*hsien-chuang*) volume (25.6 x 17.2 cm.); text bordered by irregular bamboo design (19.4 x 14.3 cm.); and illustrations bordered by rectangle of parallel lines (19.7 x 14.5 cm.). It is printed throughout on white *lien-shih* paper, and the original covers are of mauve *sa-chin* paper. The contents comprise *feng-mien* (2 pp.); five *hsü* (prefaces), all dated 1887 (each 2 pp.); *t'i-tz'u* (topical poems, 10 pp.); *li-yen* (introductory remarks, 8 pp.); *mu-lu* (list of biographies, 2 pp.); inscription dated 1887 on an oval mirror (1 p.); fifty portraits with facing biographies (100 pp.); *tseng-shih* (dedicatory poems, 7 pp.); in all 140 pages on 70 folios. The text is written in several styles of calligraphy, and the number of columns per page and characters per column is irregular. Both the text and illustrations are printed from finely engraved copper plates (see illustration 3 for the portrait and biography of one Hua Heng).

The title clearly indicates that this is the first collection, and there is mention in the prefaces of producing sequels (specifically second and third collections); as far as is known, none was ever published. I recently learned, however, that the Shang-hai t'u-shu-kuan (Shanghai Municipal Library), which holds the printed edition of the first collection, also has a manuscript entitled *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng erh-chi* (that is, the second collection). It is in the form of manuscript usually produced in preparation for publication.<sup>13</sup> The format of the *feng-mien* is similar to that of the first collection (see illustrations 1 and 2): title written large in the center of the front side, in this case using *k'ai-shu* (standard script) instead of *chuan-shu* (seal script); the calligrapher's name, Wen-ch'ao kuan chu-jen, at the lower left; the date, in this case 1888, at the upper right. The back side of the *feng-mien* is also arranged similarly to that of the first collection, with the change of only one name and slight modifications of the others. The remainder of the text follows the first collection: two prefaces (each dated 1888), topical poems, list of biographies, inscription dated 1888, and finally fifty biographies, each facing a blank page where portraits were to be added. From the terse editorial comments written on the upper margin, it appears that this portion of the publication had been reviewed and accepted for printing. Fur-

花蘅字湘雲蘇州人色藝雙絕傾動流輩居恒罷梳雲髻試換  
羅裳往：醉卧花陰怡然自得慕史湘雲之意態而柔媚勝之故豔  
聲遠布舞衫歌扇隨處撩人煙波釣徒寄以詩云最愛名花坐  
耐時湘簾幾几總相宜雲英未許裴航問分付東風好護持釣  
雪翁寄以詩云娟：楚：氣相親碧柳垂隄不染塵津問堯源風  
信香詞據芸簡露華勻湘帆兀轉來香海雲水重遊締夙因一  
字一珠新詠在勸卿珍重鏡臺春學稼山人得小影請城北生臨  
摹之桐陰和笛石磴招涼頰上添毫如親晤對歌曰湘水湯：雲山  
蒼：蘅蕪入夢一曲官商絢霞朝爛過雨夕涼誰家玉笛如此悠揚



ther information about the fate of the second collection remains to be discovered.

Despite falling within the tradition of portraits of *mei-jen* (beautiful women) and biographies of women who have overcome difficulties through fortitude, as well as combining the pathos of traditional *ts'ai-tzu chia-jen* (scholar and beauty) literature, the *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng* contains a few distinguishing features yet to be mentioned. As a finely printed book, the distinctive border designs of bamboo for the text and cloud and wave patterns for the portraits, for example, may owe more to contemporary Japanese book design than to traditional Chinese. The symbolism of "mirror and flute," occurring in the title and fundamentally being a reference to the reflections (of beautiful faces) and sounds (of musical entertainment) of the *chi-yüan*, is exploited in the form of visual and literary puns in the illustrations as well as in the text of prefaces and biographies. Attention to detail in the portraits, especially regarding elaborate patterns of costumes and glimpses of complex room interiors may have resulted from the use of photography in preparing the illustrations. Needless to say, there is a strong undercurrent of eroticism, not only in the text but in such extended meanings of symbolism as the cloud and wave pattern on the borders of the illustrations.<sup>14</sup> In fact, the exposure of bound feet in miniature shoes, which occurs in nearly three-fourths of the illustrations, was considered profoundly erotic and was generally reserved for the most uninhibited exhibitions,<sup>15</sup> such as illustrations in traditional pornographic books (see, for example, the highly suggestive pose of Wang Feng-yün in illustration 4). Of course, the very question of a separate set of mores for women, as represented by the earlier biographies of moral exemplars, as well as the customs of footbinding and prostitution, were all implicated in the growing movement in China for female emancipation. Thus, it appears that this simple introduction to a little-known source for the history of women in traditional China leaves room for exploration from many angles.

#### NOTES

1. The biographies are rendered in the form of stories, which derive from legends and anecdotes as well as from

historical writing. The *Lieh-nü chuan* marks an important point in the early development of prose writing in



4. Portrait of Wang Feng-yün. From *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng ch'u-chi*. Collection of the American Museum of Natural History, New York.

- China. It has been studied and translated by several Westerners; the first complete translation seems to have been done by Albert R. O'Hara as his Ph.D. thesis, *The Position of Woman in Early China according to the Lieh nü chuan*, "The biographies of eminent Chinese women" (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1945).
2. The *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng* is very rare, and the original edition used here was collected in Shanghai in 1901 by Berthold Laufer for the American Museum of Natural History, New York. I am grateful to Dr. Laurel Kendall, Department of Anthropology, for arranging to make it available to me. For further information about the collection of which it is part, see Sören Edgren, "The Laufer Library in New York," *Committee on East Asian Libraries Bulletin* no. 93 (1991), pp. 1-7.
  3. The early tradition of illustrations to the *Lieh-nü chuan* is associated with the great Chin-period painter Ku K'ai-chih (346-407), and, indeed, some extant paintings attributed to him bear such identifications. It is said that some pre-Ming editions of the work, as well as the earlier manuscript tradition, owe their illustrations to his influence.
  4. *Chüan* 8 seems to have been added after Liu Hsiang's time. See *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu tsung-mu t'i-yao*, *chüan* 57.
  5. The Laufer Library (see note 2 above) also contains an example of the Chih-pu-tsu chai printing of the *Lieh-nü chuan*.
  6. It was first published in 1590 and 1595, and was surrounded by considerable controversy, before it was published again later in the Wan-li period. See Ellen Soulliere, "Palace Women in the Ming Dynasty" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1987), for a full description of the book. Incidentally, Soulliere used a later Ch'ing edition entitled *Kuei-fan t'u-shuo*.
  7. A pamphlet introducing the techniques and materials for copperplate engraving and printing by Wang Chao-hung, entitled "T'ung-k'o hsiao-chi," was published in 1889 and is reprinted in Chang Ching-lu, ed., *Chung-kuo chin-tai ch'u-pan shih-liao ch'u-pien* (Shanghai: Ch'ün-lien ch'u-pan-she, 1954), pp. 298-308. The previous year the *Hsi-ch'ing ku-chien* (Illustrated catalogue of antique bronzes in the Ch'ing imperial collections) was reprinted by the Maisōshokan in Japan from engraved copper plates and published in twenty-four folio volumes. It should be remembered that the Jesuits had introduced into China the technique of printing from engraved copper plates long before that, and more than a century earlier a major project had been undertaken at the Ch'ing court. Joseph Castiglione (1688-1766) and three other priests prepared drawings of battle scenes and accompanying texts to be engraved and published in Paris, which was accomplished in 1774. A similar series was also engraved and printed in Peking. See Paul Pelliot, "Les conquêtes de l'empereur de la Chine," *T'oung Pao* 20 (1921), pp. 183-274.
  8. According to Chang Ching-lu, ed.,

- Chung-kuo chin-tai ch'u-pan shih-liao erh-pien* (Shanghai: Ch'ün-lien ch'u-pan-she, 1954), [facing] p. 105, a Japanese named Kishi Ginkō introduced the first reduced-size copperplate editions of Chinese literature in China. In 1886 he set up a bookshop called Lo-shan t'ang shu-chü (Rakuzen-dō shokyoku) in Shanghai, which specialized in selling books and maps printed from engraved copper plates as well as modern typographic and lithographic editions. The following year, the catalogue of the shop boasted of its introduction of the new technique for producing reduced-size editions. Kishi, or someone like him, doubtless arranged for the printing in Japan.
9. See Wei Shao-ch'ang, ed., *Nieh-hai hua tzu-liao* (*tseng-ting-pen*) (Shanghai: Shang-hai ku-chi ch'u-pan-she, 1982), p. 335.
10. The bibliography, *Hu ch'ang yen-chiu shu-mu t'i-yao*, was originally published in 1936. See *Shang-hai yen-chiu tzu-liao* (rpt. Taipei: Chung-kuo ch'u-pan-she, 1973), pp. 578-608.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 582.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 583-585, 588-590.
13. I wish to thank Mr. Ren Guangliang of the Department of Special Collections for showing the manuscript to me.
14. *Yün-yü* (clouds and rain) is a euphemism for sexual intercourse and generally suggests feelings of passion.
15. See Howard Levy, *Chinese Footbinding: The History of a Curious Erotic Custom* (Tokyo: John Weatherhill, 1966).

## GLOSSARY

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Chih-pu-tsu chai 知不足齋                  | Hu Pao-yü 胡寶玉                         |
| <i>Ching-ying hsiao-sheng ch'u-chi</i> | Hua Heng 花蘅                           |
| 鏡影簫聲初集                                 | hua-ku hsi 花鼓戲                        |
| chi-nü 妓女                              | Hui-chou (school) 徽州                  |
| Ch'iu Ying 仇英                          | jūichi banchi 拾壹番地                    |
| chi-yüan 妓院                            | k'ai-shu 楷書                           |
| chuan-shu 篆書                           | ku 古                                  |
| feng-mien 封面                           | Ku Kuang-ch'i 顧廣圻                     |
| <i>Hai-shang ch'ün-fang p'u</i> 海上群芳譜  | <i>Ku lieh-nü chuan fu k'ao-cheng</i> |
| hsien-chuang 線裝                        | 古列女傳附考證                               |
| hsü 序                                  | Kuei-fan 閨範                           |
| Hsüeh T'ao 薛濤                          | Kyōbashi-ku 京橋區                       |
| Hu Hsiu-lin 胡繡林                        | <i>lieh-nü chuan</i> 列女傳              |

*lieh-nü chuan pu-chu* 列女傳補注  
*lien-shih* (paper) 連史 (紙)  
*Liu Hsiang* 劉向  
*li-yen* 例言  
*Lü K'un* 呂坤  
*mei-jen* 美人  
*mu-lu* 目錄  
*Nieh-hai hua* 孽海花  
*Pao T'ing-po* 鮑廷博  
*sa-chin* (paper) 撒金 (紙)  
*Shang-hai p'in-yen pai-hua t'u*  
 上海品艷百花圖  
*Shang-hai t'u-shu-kuan* 上海圖書館  
*shih-pu* 史部

*Sōjūrō-chō* 宗十郎町  
*T'ang Yin* 唐寅  
*t'i-tz'u* 題詞  
*ts'ai-tzu chia-jen* 才子佳人  
*Tseng P'u* 曾樸  
*tseng-shih* 贈詩  
*tzu-pu* 子部  
*Wang Chao-yüan* 王照圓  
*Wang Feng-yün* 王鳳雲  
*Wang T'ao* 王韜  
*Wang Tao-k'un* 汪道昆  
*Wen-ch'ao kuan chu-jen* 問潮館主人  
*Yang Kuei-fei* 楊貴妃  
*Yokouchi Keizan* 橫內桂山

## NEWS AND NOTES: FOR THE FRIENDS OF THE GEST LIBRARY

### THE GEST LIBRARY SPACE PROBLEM: AN UPDATE

The Gest Library's most urgent problem, that of space for present use and future growth, has been the subject of previous reports to the Friends of the Gest Library in these pages. In volume three, numbers 1-2, Spring 1989, we discussed possible options in "A New Gest Library" (pages 56-64). In that article we not only described the present space crisis, we also asked Cary Y. Liu, a member of the American Institute of Architects who received his A.B., M.A., and M. Arch. degrees at Princeton and is now a doctoral candidate in Art and Archaeology, to analyze possibilities for enlarging Palmer Hall to accommodate new physical space for the Gest and the East Asian collections. In volume four, number 1, Spring 1991, we published an interview with Mr. Antony Marr, then new in his job as curator of the East Asian Collections, in which he reported on emergency plans to gain space by moving some books out of the collection, and also proposed a different plan to gain physical space by creating mezzanines on each of the two floors in Palmer now occupied by the Gest stacks (pages 66-68). Mr. Marr has provided us with a current report on the space problem in an interview held on May 8, 1992, on which the following is based:

Following the decision to gain space temporarily by moving some books from the Gest Library to the Forrestal Annex, Mr. Marr had to select books whose removal would interfere the least with our day-to-day use of the collections. Instead of arbitrarily moving out certain subject categories en bloc, the easiest but most harmful way of accomplishing the task, Mr. Marr personally examined each title in the entire collection and selected 91,486 less-used volumes and second editions for removal to Forrestal. That task of selecting and removing was completed at the end of October 1991. Users can recall items from Forrestal and receive them the second day. The care with which that selection for removal was performed is seen in the fact that the average call for books to be returned from the Annex runs at about eight to ten items per month. Once called back, they remain in Gest.

Nonetheless, no one considers this plan a success. One senior faculty member refers to it as "an amputation," and Mr. Marr himself calls it a "painful compromise." Even though the number of items users have called back is small, that masks the fact that browsing, a major means of using an open-stacks collection, has been seriously reduced. Books that otherwise would be used, and used significantly, simply cannot be used in the many ways implied by the word "browsing." Those ways include informing oneself about the full scope of a collection (something that cannot be done by using

catalogues, especially when subject cataloguing does not exist), comparing content in different editions, and spot checking for bibliographic identification, not to mention the sheer pleasure of looking into books that one has not seen before.

Moreover, the space so dearly purchased by this draconian measure will suffice to accommodate new acquisitions only until the summer of 1997. We cannot stop purchasing new books, nor can we again select books for removal to the Annex. Neither the library staff or the faculty and student users would agree to that. Mr. Marr says that he dreads each new day that brings him one day closer to the summer of 1997 with no fundamental solution in sight.

The provost has been asked to rule on the possible use of two additional rooms on the top floor of Palmer Hall, adjacent to the Gest stacks, to relieve space for the serials collections. Urgently as that is needed, it is of course but a small part of the solution that must be achieved, and soon, if there is to be time to build before the dreaded date of 1997 is at hand.

In his interview carried in the Spring 1991 *Gest Library Journal*, Mr. Marr called attention to his proposal that an engineering study be made to see whether mezzanines could be built to double the floor space of the two floors of Palmer Hall now occupied by the Gest stacks. That study was carried out, and the results are that to build such added floors within existing space is not feasible, either from an engineering point of view or from that of costs. We must therefore again call attention to the article "A New Gest Library" in volume 3, numbers 1-2, in which Cary Liu discusses possibilities for adding a wing to Palmer Hall. If any of our readers can suggest a way to solve the space problems, by adding space or by other means, or has ideas on ways of helping to raise some of the funds that will be necessary, the entire East Asian academic community at Princeton and all the Friends of the Gest will be grateful. It will challenge our energy and our ingenuity; may we hear from you with your ideas about how to meet the challenge?

#### A NOTE ON NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES

The *Gest Library Journal* has not raised subscription rates in the six years since it began publication. It now faces the need to do just that. Present rates for individuals will remain in effect for subscriptions to volume six, to be published in 1993, if renewals or new subscriptions are received before January 31, 1993. After that, the current rate of twenty-five dollars will be raised to thirty dollars per year. Enrolled students may continue to subscribe for fifteen dollars per year. Also, beginning with volume six, subscriptions to addresses outside of North America will carry a surcharge of ten dollars for postage.

## FRIENDS OF THE GEST LIBRARY

The Friends of the Gest Library is a group of private individuals dedicated to the idea that an East Asian library resource like the Gest Oriental Library (the East Asian Research Library at Princeton University) must be known, supported, and encouraged in order to enrich both the aesthetic knowledge of East Asia and the growth of scholarship and contemporary information concerning that part of the world. Many individuals have already been active for years in guiding the Gest Library, and contributing their time and resources ad hoc. In 1986 they formed the Friends of the Gest Library in order to broaden the Library's support and foster communication among other interested parties.

As a group, the Friends sponsor colloquia and exhibitions on East Asian books, calligraphy, art, and their historical relationships. They secure gifts and bequests for the Library in order to add to its holdings items and collections of great worth. They disseminate information about the Library (and about other East Asian libraries) so that members and non-members alike can benefit from its resources.

### JOINING THE FRIENDS

Membership is open to those subscribing annually twenty-five dollars or more. (As of January 31, 1993, this will be raised to thirty dollars.) With that membership fee is included a yearly subscription to the *Gest Library Journal*. Members will be invited to attend special exhibitions, lectures, and discussions that occur under the aegis of the Friends. Checks are payable to the Trustees of Princeton University and should be mailed to:

Friends of the Gest Library  
c/o East Asian Studies Department, Jones Hall 211  
Princeton University  
Princeton, N.J. 08544 USA

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