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*Frederick W. Mote, Hung-Lam Chu, "6. The Best of Ch'ing Books", The Gest Library Journal 2, no. 2 (1988): 203-231, accessed January 14, 2017,  
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## 6. THE BEST OF CH'ING BOOKS

The printing industry in China during the Ch'ing dynasty was very different from that of Europe. The woodblock printed book was the primary form of mass communication. The printing industry was not so advanced as in Europe, but it was very high-level in book printing for a long time. Europe produced about 150 editions per year between the introduction of printing from movable type about 1450 and the end of the century. But the number of individual titles was much smaller. Europe produced between 1,500 and 2,000 editions per year on average in the sixteenth century, and in the seventeenth century reached the figure comparable to the Ch'ing, but again, less than a million, not tens. Once available, printing had explosive impact in Europe. Moreover, the technology was rapidly industrialized in the West. In China it remained a handicraft technology, albeit a highly refined one, because of the nature of Chinese script; it was simply more practical to engrave wooden blocks by hand for printing a complete page at a time than to cast metal type by mass production methods. Thus China's printing technology remained basically unchanged until the late nineteenth century. The woodblock printed book was the standard form of the Chinese book throughout the Ch'ing, although the use of multi-color printing (known as *Yang*), typography (printed in wood, or metal movable type, known since the sixteenth century) and lithography (introduced from Europe only in the nineteenth century) all were of increasing importance.

The growth, prosperity of late Ming times continued through the Ch'ing. The population of China more than doubled. An elite official-commercial sector of society lived on scholarship and the arts. The Manchu conquerors stimulated a rebirth of Chinese civilization and were particularly active to protect and disseminate old and new



The quantity of publishing during the Ch'ing dynasty (1644-1911) far surpassed that of any previous era. One statistic cited by Tsien Tsuen-hsuei (even though subject to certain qualifications) makes the point: A survey of published bibliographies including those in the dynastic histories and others, ranging from the Han dynasty to the 1930s, gives a cumulative figure of 253,433 titles published; 126,649 of those, roughly half, were produced during the Ch'ing dynasty.<sup>1</sup> That works out to more than 4,600 titles per year for the 267 years of the Ch'ing. When we consider how many of those were standard works whose subsequent reprintings were not counted, that is a very high level of book printing for a pre-modernized society. Europe produced about 650 editions per year between the introduction of printing from movable type about 1440 and the end of the century, but the number of individual titles was much smaller. Europe produced between 1,500 and 2,000 editions per year as an average in the sixteenth century, and in the seventeenth century reached the figure comparable to the Ch'ing, but again, those are editions, not titles. Once available, printing had explosive impact in Europe. Moreover, the technology was speedily industrialized in the West. In China it remained a handcraft technology, albeit a highly refined one, because of the nature of Chinese script; it was simply more practical to engrave wooden blocks by hand for printing a complete page at a time than to cast metal type by mass production methods. Thus China's printing technology remained basically unchanged until the late nineteenth century. The woodblock printed book was the standard form of the Chinese book throughout the Ch'ing, although the use of multi-color printing (known since T'ang), typography (ceramic, wood, or metal movable type, known since the eleventh century), and lithography (introduced from Europe early in the nineteenth century), all were of increasing importance.

The growing prosperity of late Ming times continued through the Ch'ing. The population of China more than trebled. An elite official-commercial sector of society lavished wealth on scholarship and the arts. The Manchu emperors assumed a role as patrons of Chinese civilization and were particularly active as printers and disseminators of old and new

books. They particularly favored books that incorporated elements of Western art. Book collecting was greatly in vogue, the emperors competing with their subjects as collectors of books, calligraphy, and the other arts. Both private scholars' publishing and trade publishing flourished. Moreover, several of the Ch'ing rulers fancied themselves first-rate calligraphers; they collected, duplicated masterworks, and stimulated scholarly attention to the subject. Important calligraphers abounded.

Not surprisingly, the Ch'ing period witnessed the printing of many books of high artistic standards. These included illustrated books, handwritten or manuscript books, books designed in the best traditions of honored Sung printing and carefully executed to emulate, or actually to duplicate, famed antique editions, and many books printed in full or in part in facsimile (*hsieh-k'o*) of a fine calligrapher's original. The Gest Collection holds about 100,000 volumes of Ch'ing editions. From that vast collection the best in various categories have been selected for inclusion here, with emphasis on the links between calligraphy and printing.

This entire section is by Chu.

*Huang-ch'ao li-ch'i t'u-shih* (nos. 114a-b) contains illustrations and descriptions of sacrificial vessels, robes, musical instruments, and insignia used in official ceremonies of the Ch'ing dynasty. A court ordered compilation, intended as reference for imperial rituals, it was completed in 1759 and revised in 1766, to which the present edition belongs. Both editions were published by the Palace Printing Office.<sup>2</sup>

The chief compiler, P'eng Yüan-jui from Nanchang, Kiangsi, was one of the most eminent court erudites of his time, known also as one of the "two celebrities from Kiangsi." Other contributors include such men as Tung Kao (1740-1818), eminent painter and calligrapher from Fuyang, Chekiang. The illustrations were made by a team of six low-ranked officials.

As Frances Wood remarks, the illustrations in this book are fundamentally technical, which are therefore accompanied by matching descriptions. The vessel illustrated (no. 114a) is a *tsun*, used for offering sacrifice in the main palace in the last month of spring. Its historical usage as a ritual object and the shape and size of its components are given in the accompanying descriptive text. The calligraphy of the text still displays an individual style, one that bears the influence of Ou-yang Hsün of the T'ang, which is unlike the standardized Sung style found in other books produced by the Palace Printing Office. The chief of the three copyist officials for the text was a Hanlin compiler called Jao Hsüeh-shu.

*Nan-hsün sheng-tien* contains scenic and geographic illustrations and detailed chronological accounts of the Ch'ien-lung emperor's first four trips to the south in 1751, 1757, 1762, and 1765. The chief ed-

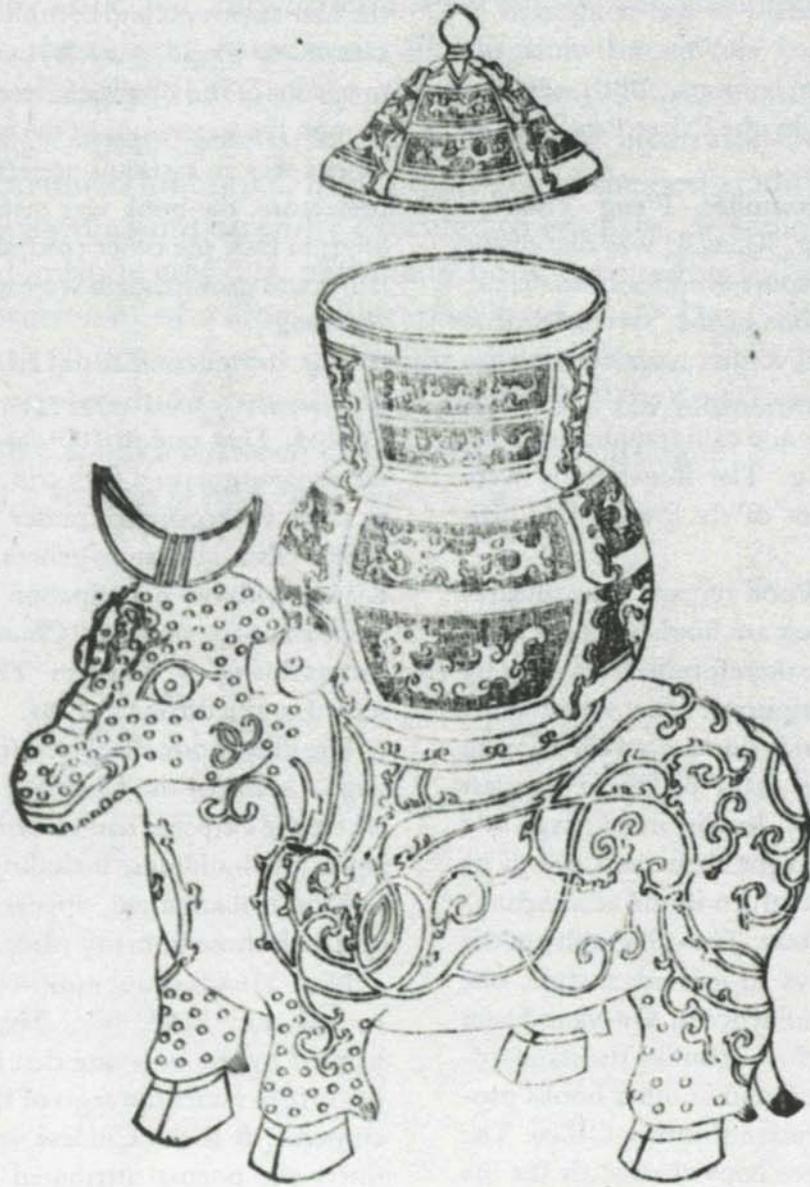
itor, Kao Chin, was a specialist in river control and a member of the Manchu Bordered Yellow Banner. The book's compilation started when Kao was governor-general of the Liang-Kiang area (Kiangsu and Chekiang) as well as nominal tutor of the heir apparent, and completed when he was made grand secretary and honorary president of the Board of Ceremonies. Although the supervisor of the cutting of the blocks was an assistant prefect of Huai-an prefecture, the book was printed in Nanking; in fact, the other compilers and collators and proofreaders were all officials in Nanking.<sup>3</sup>

This compilation is not to be confused with another, which was apparently never printed. That one in 100 *chüan*, covering the same emperor's fifth trip to the south in 1780, was compiled under Sa-tsai (died 1786), also governor-general of Liang-Kiang, with the participation of such eminent scholars as Wang Chung (1745-94) from Chiang-tu, Kiangsu. That was presented to the throne in 1784.

The illustration displayed (no. 115) presents a scene of the Chekiang coastal area where the emperor had visited. The drawing of the buildings, including the bridge and the embankment, appears more realistic than those in many Ming books.

Nos. 116a-b show multi-color printing in red and black ink. The book was printed by the Wu-ying tien Palace Printing Office under the aegis of the K'ang-hsi emperor. It is the Chinese version of the thirty-six poems attributed to the emperor himself and thirty-six matching illustrations about the scenery of K'ang-hsi's summer retreat at Jehol, known as Pi-shu shan-chuang (Mountain Village for Escaping Heat), some 150 kilometers northwest of Peking and built beginning in 1703. This "village" became one of the

太廟正殿犧尊



皇明豐寧圖  
卷二 祭器

時享用之

欽定祭器

太廟正殿犧尊 謹按周禮春官司尊彝春祠夏禴其  
朝踐用兩獻尊禮記禮器犧尊在西注犧周禮  
作獻明堂位犧象周尊也王肅注禮犧尊全刻  
牛形鑿背為尊乾隆十三年

太廟正殿犧尊範銅為之作犧形尊加其上高四寸八  
分口徑三寸三分腹圍一尺三寸五分四面有  
棱為回紋夔龍紋底徑二寸六分蓋高二寸一  
分徑與口徑同上為垂花紋下為夔龍紋犧高  
五寸一分長八寸三分孟春

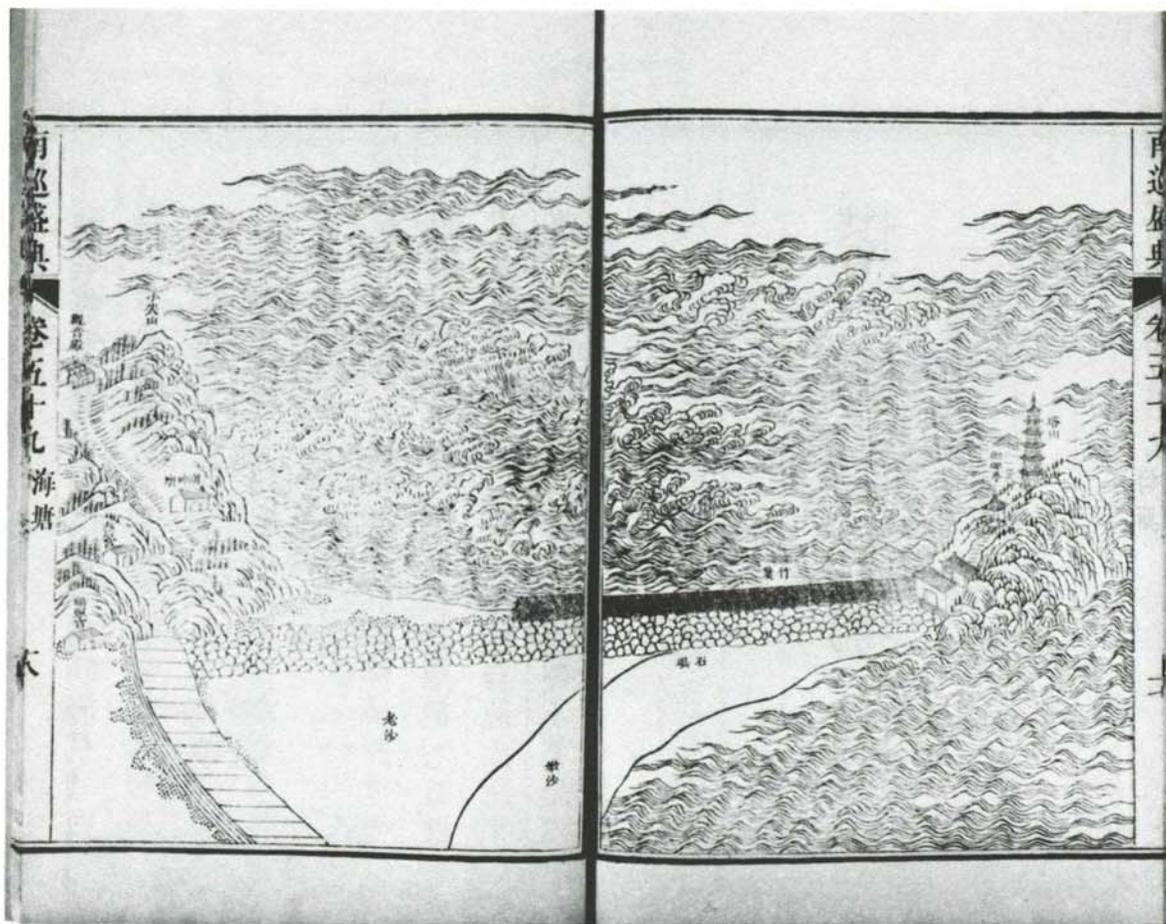
114a-b. *Huang-ch'ao li-ch'i t'u-shih*. 18 ch.  
(32 vols.).

Author: P'eng Yüan-jui (1731-1803).

Date: 1766 (Peking).

Dimensions: 11 cols. of 20 chars.; block, 20 x  
16.3 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library



115. *Nan-hsün sheng-tien*. 120 ch. (48 vols.).

Author: Kao Chin (1707-1779), ed.

Date: 1771 (Nanking).

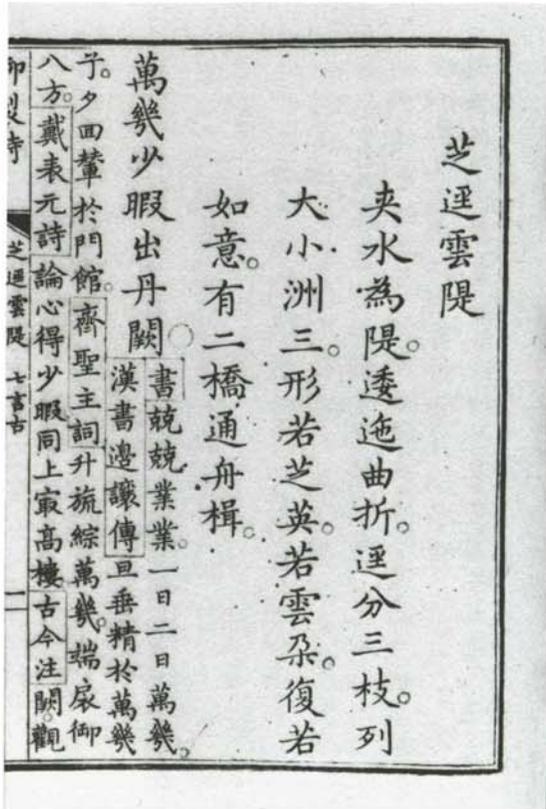
Dimensions: 9 cols. of 19 chars.; block, 21.2 x 16.5 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

most famous gardens in imperial China. The poems were annotated by K'uei-hsü (1674?-1717), a Manchu aristocrat of the Plain Yellow Banner and chancellor of the Hanlin Academy, and by other officials. The book bears a preface by the emperor dated 1712.<sup>4</sup>

While the punctuation marks and the boxes surrounding characters that represent works cited in the annotation are

printed in red (no. 116a), the illustrations are all in black (no. 116b). The two seals at the end of the "imperially autographed" preface are also printed in red. Characteristic of traditional paintings of the genre, the illustrations appear to be rather faithful of the buildings, if not of the sites as well; they are based on paintings made for the emperor by the court painter Shen Yü, and engraved by Chu Kuei. Both artisans are credited for their work in a short inscription on the last illustration of the book, and Chu Kuei was, according to Tsiên Tsuen-hsiun, "probably the most distinguished craftsman of the early [Ch'ing] and who contributed so much to the excellence of the work of this period."



116a-b. *Yü-chih pi-shu shan-chuang shih*. 2 ch. (4 vols.).

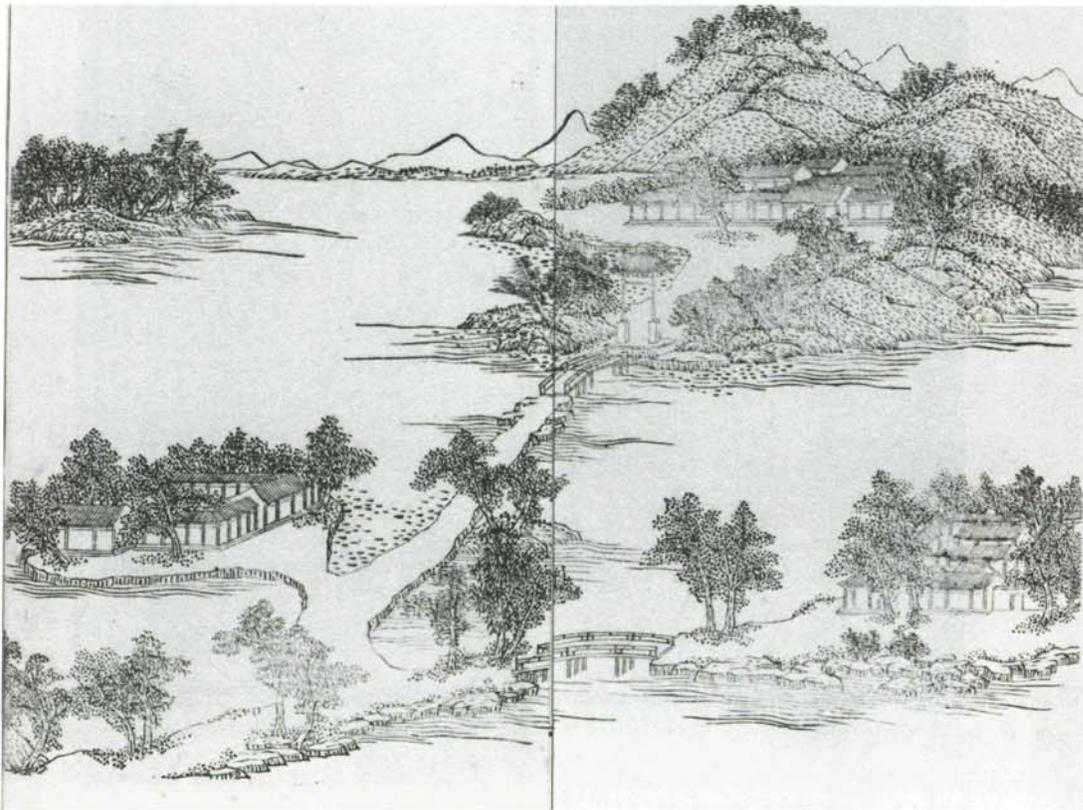
Author: Hsüan-yeh (K'ang-hsi emperor, r. 1662-1722).

Date: 1712 (Peking).

Dimensions: 6 cols. of 16 chars.; (12 of 16 small chars.); block, 19.7 x 13.5 cm.; illustrations without border.

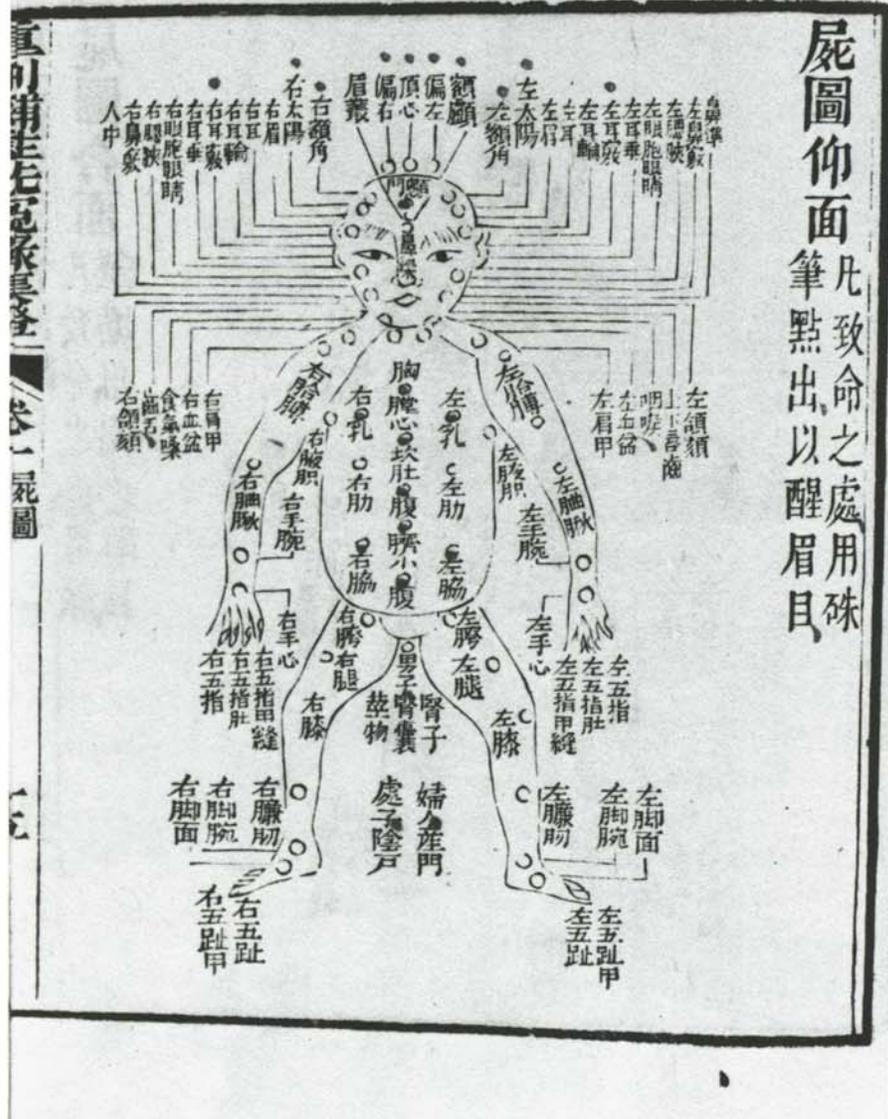
Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

116b.



歌訣  
 仰面傷痕十六方。  
 頂心左右顙門當。  
 額角額顙頭看畢。  
 耳竅咽喉并太陽。  
 兩乳胸膛心肚腹。  
 臍同肚脇更須詳。  
 腎囊有子看雙獨。  
 婦女陰門恐暗傷。

屍圖仰面  
 凡致命之處用硃  
 筆點出以醒眉目



117a-b. *Ch'ung-k'an pu-chu hsi-yüan lu chi-cheng*. 6 ch. (5 vols.).

Author: Li Kuan-lan; Juan Ch'i-hsin, annot.

Date: 1844 (Nanchang, Kiangsi).

Dimensions: 10 cols. of 18 chars.; block, 15.2 x 12.7 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

此條分別是否處女

河南固始縣處女田二姑屍身令  
穩婆試無鮮血以為被姦已成據  
老練伴作供稱人死則血寂安得  
尚有鮮血洗冤所稱原不甚確惟  
探以指頭處女察夫婦人竅圓較  
為的確

此條無痕損  
須看陰門

此條言產門受傷

踢傷致死篇  
云婦人隱處  
其骨為羞祕  
骨

按架骨大  
約勝骨兩  
梢頭鑲據  
處是也俟

架骨圖內不  
載即驗骨檢  
骨及論沿身  
骨脈各條亦

驗婦女屍

胎孕 孩屍

驗處女屍。劊四至訖。鼻出光明。平穩處所。先令  
穩婆剪去中指甲。用絲包紮。眼同屍親。竝鄰婦  
二三人。令穩婆將絲紮指頭。於陰戶內。試有黯  
血。即是處女。無即非。

凡驗婦人。無痕損處。須看陰門。恐自此進刃於  
腹內。離皮淺。則臍上下微有血沁。深則無。

婦人因產門受傷身死。皮肉消化者。其顙門骨  
并架骨。俱紫赤色。架骨橫環小腹之下。與  
後尾蛆骨相連者也。

婦人有胎孕不明致死者。令穩婆驗腹內有無

真可辨其死否原其登

卷一 驗婦女屍

三

A second set of illustrations, also modeled after the Shen Yü paintings, was made by the Italian Jesuit Matteo Ripa (1682-1725) to accompany the 1712 Manchu version, and represents the earliest use of copper engraved printing in China. The woodblock prints, however, became the model for later editions, including a 1741 recutting that included seventy-two new poems by the Ch'ien-lung emperor to dedicate the completion of renovation work at the site. This not only emphasizes the dedicatory purpose of the type of book, but also points out the relationship between poetry, painting, and architecture in China.

The scene illustrated is called "Iris path and cloud dike," in which two bridges link three islands, on each of which are summer buildings for the emperor's leisure and pleasure. Like that of *Huang-ch'ao li-ch'i t'u-shih*, the characters of the text were cut in facsimile of a calligrapher's original; but the calligrapher is not identified. The calligraphy, good looking but by no means artistically outstanding, appears to be the one most endorsed by the early Ch'ing emperors, as the same can be found in most other imperial books printed in facsimile calligraphy.

The multi-color blockprinting of *Ch'ung-k'an pu-chu hsi-yüan lu chi-cheng* was in black, red, blue, and green; it was produced by the Han-mo yüan (Garden of literature and calligraphy) in the provincial capital of Kiangsi, Nanchang. The book is an expanded version of an age old manual for criminal autopsy, with new annotations and illustrative cases supplied by Li Kuan-lan and Juan Ch'i-hsin, and two other physicians, all of whom were from Chekiang. It is a technical work with a number of illustrations, like the one shown in no. 117b, meant for identifying

vital organs and critical physiological systems. The annotations on top of the folios appear in all four colors (no. 117a), each signifying a special category of annotation.

The evenness and clarity of printing both in the main text and the annotation demonstrate the high skill in block cutting and the high quality of inks used.

*Ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'eng* is the largest encyclopedia (collectanea) ever printed in China. This famous imperial work contains 800,000 pages and over a hundred million characters, and it was printed in 1726 in the Ch'ing palace from perhaps the finest copper movable type China had ever made.<sup>5</sup> As Denis Twitchett notes, "the type face used was a very large one, and when the font was cast, using ceramic moulds made from wooden models, it comprised over a quarter million pieces of type, which took nine years, from 1713 to 1722, to manufacture." The illustrations in this book are, however, from woodcuts (no. 118a). The encyclopedia is comprised of six parts, dealing with the calendar, geography, social relationships, natural sciences, Neo-Confucianism, and things of political and social-economic relevance. The original and major part of the work was done by Ch'en Meng-lei, a court erudite from Foochow, Fukien, whose political life as a courtier was marked with ups and downs. It became a state enterprise later on when the K'ang-hsi emperor appointed officials to help Ch'en in the compilation and in other works. The official most responsible for the task was Chiang T'ing-hsi (1669-1732), a grand secretary from Ch'ang-shu, Kiangsu.

Despite being "perhaps the greatest typographical feat that the world has seen," only about sixty sets were originally produced; only about one sixth of which are



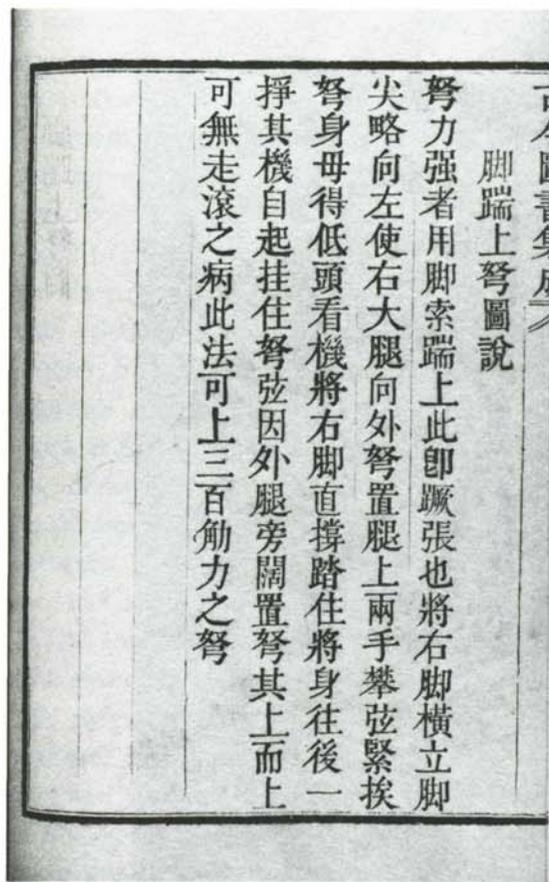
118a-b. *Ch'in-ting ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'eng*. 10,040 ch. (5,020 vols.).

Author: Ch'en Meng-lei (1651-1741?), comp.

Date: 1726 (Peking).

Dimensions: 9 cols. of 20 chars.; border, 21.3 x 14.7 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.



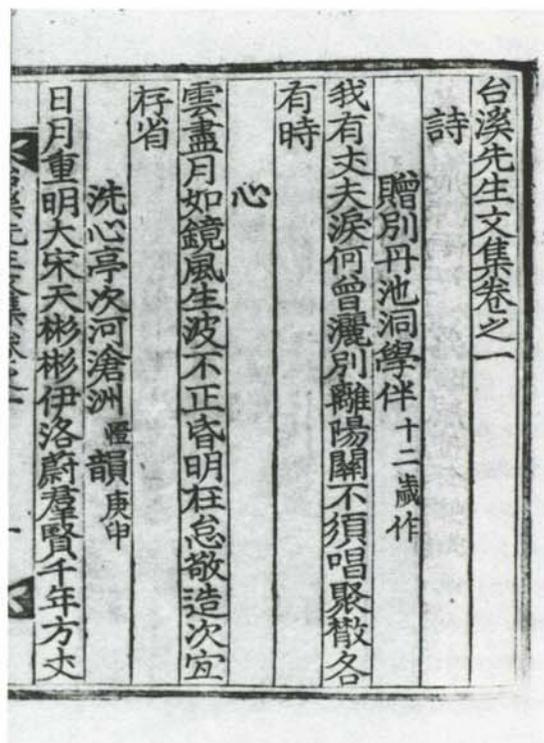
118b.

still extant in complete form. Originally owned by the Manchu prince in Nanking, the Gest set bears an ownership seal with inscriptions reading, "Ning-ti chen-ts'ang t'u-shu" (book treasured by the princely household of Ning). The illustration and its companion descriptive text (no. 118b) are taken from the section devoted to weaponry; it contains instructions for maneuvering a crossbow.

Two books printed from movable metal type outside of China at the beginning of the present century offer a comparison with Chinese skills in metal typography from a century before. The one illustrated here (no. 119) is an anthology of poems and essays by an Yi dynasty

Korean scholar-official, Ha Chin, from Chinju in the southeastern part of the Korean peninsula; it also contains biographical writings about him and his family. It was printed in 1900 from movable iron type and is one of a collection of Korean printed books in the Gest Library, some of which date to the sixteenth century.<sup>6</sup>

The outstanding history of metal type casting and printing in Korea, going back to the twelfth century, is exemplified by Ha Chin's product. The font is beautiful and legible, but in addition the cast characters show a liveliness that makes them

119. *T'aegye sonsaeng munjip* (*T'ai-hsi hsien-sheng wen-chi*). 8 ch. (4 vols.).

Author: Ha Chin (1597-1658).

Date: 1900 (Chinju, Korea).

Dimensions: 10 cols. of 18 chars.; border, 20.8 x 17.2 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

difficult to distinguish from many of the best woodblock printed books of China. Unlike the characters of *Ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'eng*, which clearly are influenced by standardized calligraphy, those illustrated here have a touch of the kind of artistic individuality that was widely evident in China before the mid-sixteenth century. The calligraphy is modeled basically upon that of the great T'ang dynasty (618-906) master Yen Chen-ch'ing. Whether or not Koreans had maintained a higher respect for and devotion to the T'ang master, from an artistic point of view the calligraphy appears to have excelled that of the imperial encyclopedia.

Our other example from outside China is the handy abridgement of the Vietnamese chronicle *Kham dinh thong giam cuong mue*; it is written in Chinese and in the style of the Chinese *Outline of The Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*. The author, Hoang, was originally a prefectural school instructor, but was made an official of the Vietnamese Hanlin Academy when summoned to write this work. Whether it was meant to symbolize Vietnamese resentment against French domination, this government commissioned book is couched in some rather anti-Chinese language.

The cover page of the book has lines engraved showing the date and place of publication. The history of book printing in Annam, unlike that in Korea, Japan, and China, is still obscure to us. The book is printed with movable type; the type appears to be copper. Being commissioned, it should have elicited the highest printing skills and reader appreciation. But the Vietnamese technology in typography seems not to have been advanced, as compared with that of Korea and China. The irregular planting of the type, the irregular

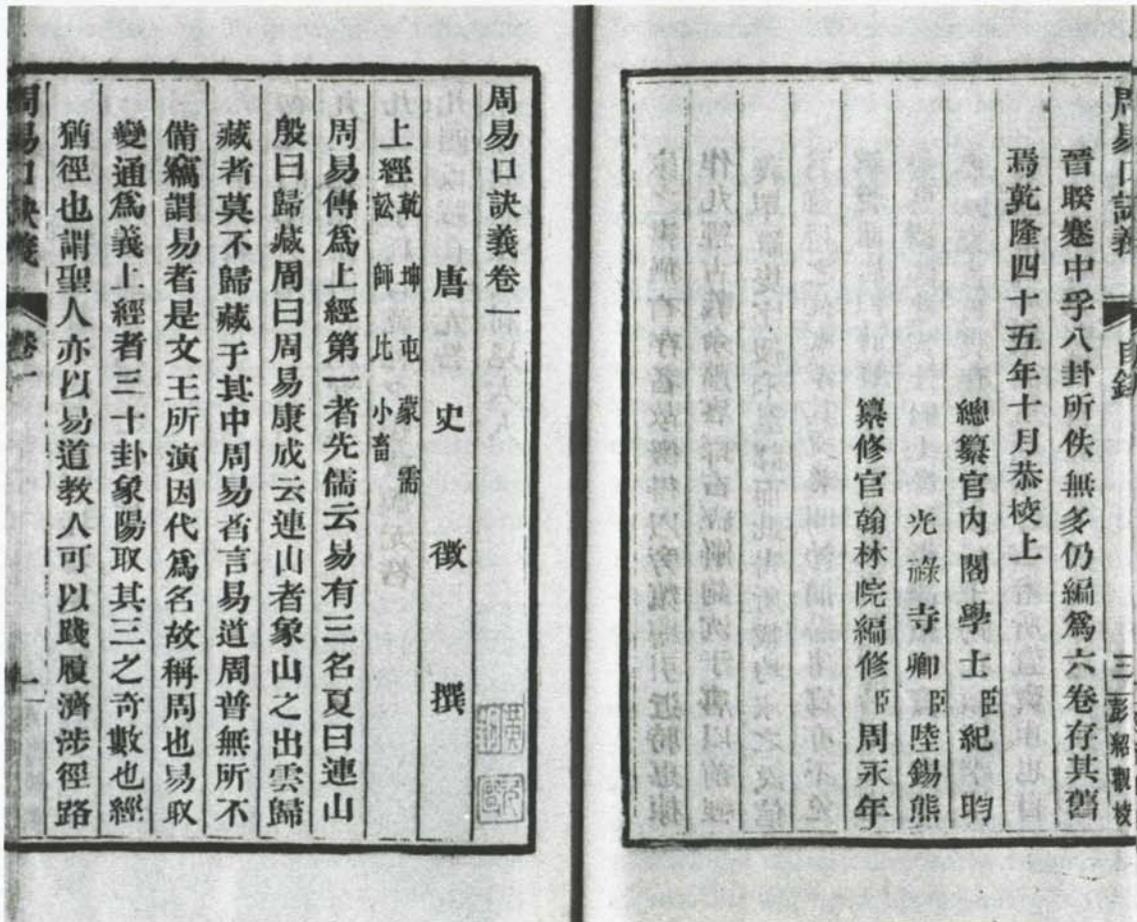
sizes of the characters, and the unevenness of inking all show signs of inferior technique (no. 120). Nonetheless, at least in this case, the Vietnamese, like the Koreans in the previous illustration, also did not subscribe to the increasingly standardized calligraphy that came to dominate Ch'ing Chinese typography.<sup>7</sup>

*Chou-i k'ou-chüeh i* (no. 121) is an exegesis of the Confucian classic *Book of Changes* (*Chou-i*, or *I-ching*) and is one of 134 titles in the eighteenth-century *Wu-ying tien chü-chen pan ts'ung-shu*, a famous collectanea printed from wooden movable type in the Palace Printing Office. Aspects of the printing and circulation of this collectanea have been discussed recently by Sören Edgren, whose source is also the Gest set.<sup>8</sup>

Some major points in his description can be summarized. The imperially sponsored project for the collectanea came about in 1773 as a result of the compilation and limited distribution of the *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu*. The name *chü-chen* ("assembled gems") was the Ch'ien-lung emperor's poetic description for movable type. Complete sets are scarce because the 134 titles (in 800 volumes) were printed in different quantities and issued separately over a period of twenty years, from 1774 to 1794. There are only five known complete sets of the original edition, of which Gest has two, and originally had three; the third was given in an exchange with Harvard. Woodblock facsimiles of the original movable-type edition have been so expertly made that there may be difficulty in distinguishing one from the other. Such facsimiles were made partly because most of the titles were rare in Ch'ing times and collation and proofreading throughout the collectanea were meticulous and scholarly.

According to the eminent Ch'ing





121. *Chou-i k'ou-chüeh i*. 6 ch. (2 vols.).  
 Author: Shih Cheng (T'ang period, 618-906).  
 Date: 1780 (Peking).  
 Dimensions: 9 cols. of 21 chars.; border, 19.3 x 12.6 cm.  
 Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

- < 120. *Viet su tan uoc toan bien (Yüeh-shih  
 hsin-yüeh ch'üan-pien)*. 2 ch. (4 vols.).  
 Author: Hoang Dao-thanh (fl. 1900s).  
 Date: 1906 (Hanoi).  
 Dimensions: 8 cols. of 22 chars.; border, 22.5 x 13.1 cm.  
 Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

scholar-bibliophile Chu I-tsun (1629-1709), the author, Shih Cheng, was a T'ang dynasty scholar. His work was extant only in a manuscript version preserved in the early fifteenth-century encyclopedia *Yung-lo ta-tien*; in other words, it was inaccessible even to high court officials. It is, however, an extremely valuable book, one of five pre-Sung exegetical works on the *Changes* that are extant in complete versions.

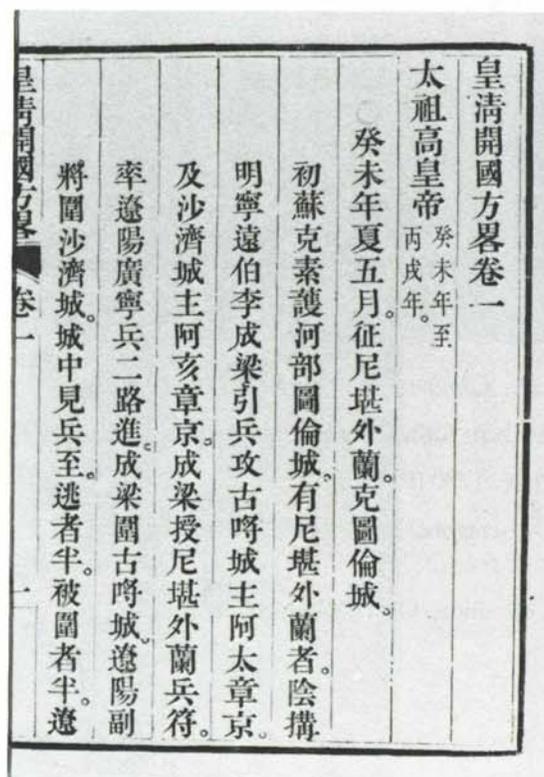
The critical remarks (on the right folio of no. 121) presented to the emperor by the scholar-officials responsible (and who, not coincidentally, were the compilers of the *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu*) reveal that the

printing occurred in 1780. The name of the proofreader, who may also be the collocator, in this case P'eng Shao-kuan, appears at the extreme bottom right of the right folio (the left side of the lower center of the block). The wooden type characters were unique products of the imperial Wu-ying tien printing office. They exemplify what has been called *fang-Sung t'i* (facsimile Sung style characters), much in vogue in other imperially sponsored printed books. Although remotely derived from Sung printed book models, they are highly standardized, displaying none of the liveliness of fine Sung printing.

We select *Huang Ch'ing k'ai-kuo fang-lüeh* (no. 122),<sup>9</sup> another example of Ch'ing palace wooden movable type, to be compared with *Wu-ying tien chü-chen pan ts'ung-shu*. It is written in the format of the *Outline of The Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*, and is the Chinese version of a Manchu history of the Ch'ing dynasty covering the period 1583-1644, from the rise of Nurhaci (1559-1626) to the child emperor Shun-chih's (1638-1661) entrance into Peking in 1644; the aim of the work was to glorify the saga of the Manchu rise. The Ch'ien-lung emperor ordered its compilation in 1774, and it was completed in 1786 and printed in 1789. The book also was translated into German and annotated by Erich Hauer under the same title and printed in 1926. The chief compiler of this version, P'eng Shao-kuan (see also no. 121) from Ch'ang-chou, Kiangsu, was an academican expositor-in-waiting; his counterpart in the Manchu version was Po-lin (1751?-1824), a Hanlin expositor-in-waiting and member of the Manchu Plain Yellow Banner.

Preceding the text are a preface by the Ch'ien-lung emperor himself and a memorial for the presentation of the book,

submitted by a group of court officials of the highest rank led by grand secretary A-kuei. The memorial claims that this 32-volume book should "rightly be placed ahead of all books in the *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu*," meaning that it was the most important book as far as the Manchu dynasty was concerned. Produced in the last years of the Ch'ien-lung reign, both the present copy and its Manchu version counterpart, also in the Gest Collection, are bound with imperial yellow cover-paper and assembled in sets bound with imperial yel-



122. *Huang Ch'ing k'ai-kuo fang lüeh*.  
32 + 1 ch. (32 vols.).

Author: P'eng Shao-kuan (c.s. 1757) et al.

Date: 1789 (Peking).

Dimensions: 8 cols. of 21 chars.; border, 28.2 x 20.3 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

low brocade. Such are evidence that they belong to the original edition issued by the Palace Printing Office. Compared with the previous item, the shape of the characters in this book appears to be relatively long and their horizontal strokes appear to be thinner (no. 122), making them look more like the facsimile Sung-style characters adopted for many later printings. This shows that modification in the style of characters for printing still took place even after the standard had been adopted.

We must consider the almanac *Hsüan-tse li-shu*<sup>10</sup> undoubtedly among the best examples of books printed by government agencies, in this case by the Imperial Observatory in the capital. It was imperially commissioned to be produced by the staff of this office; its compiler-in-chief, An-t'ai, was then supervisor of the Imperial Observatory. The material is organized under twenty-four headings, and, unlike ordinary calendars, was meant exclusively for determining auspicious and inauspicious dates for activities during the year, including marriage, travel, adoption of sons and sons-in-law, burial, and construction of graves, as well as for determining proper burial sites. When it was presented, it was granted official status, for use with the official "Ten-thousand-year Calendar" (*wan-nien li*). The front-matter includes An-t'ai's memorial for the book's compilation submitted in the last month of 1684, the imperial response early the following month, and a list of responsible officials.

The size and style of the block, the quality of paper and ink, as well as the beautiful characters shown on the illustrated page (no. 123) convincingly demonstrate excellent skill in cutting and printing a government book. However, few copies, if any others at all, are extant, although Fu

Tseng-hsiang did come across one in the early part of the present century.

*Yü-hsüan T'ang-shih*, an anthology of T'ang poems, is an example of excellent cutting and printing that was made even more attractive by highly refined calligraphic work, typical of books produced in the Ch'ing palace. It was printed in the Wu-ying tien Palace Printing Office. The copy's imperial yellow cover and yellow silk book label on top confirm the imperial flavor. The book is a two-color block print, with red applied for the punctuation marks — circles for the poems, dots for the annotation, and lines at the sides of titles quoted in the annotation (all are visible on the right folio of no. 124).

The poems were selected by the K'ang-hsi emperor after his compilers had finished the huge project of publishing the *Ch'üan T'ang shih* (Complete Anthology of T'ang Poetry). The actual editing and meticulous annotation were done by eleven Hanlin officials headed by Wu T'ing-chen (*chin-shih* 1703) from Ch'ang-chou, Kiangsu, a noted poet and Hanlin instructor who also participated in the compilation of such important works as the *P'ei-wen yüan-fu*. The book begins with the K'ang-hsi emperor's preface, dated the third month of 1713, and a long list of responsible officials, of whom two Hanlin officials and two district magistrates are named copyist officials (*shan-hsieh kuan*).<sup>11</sup>

In 1654 (instead of 1649 or earlier, as has previously been given) the famous bibliophile-printer Mao Chin (1599-1659) printed an important anthology of Ming poems, *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi*.<sup>12</sup> The compiler was the controversial poet-essayist-scholar and Ming-Ch'ing official Ch'ien Ch'ien-i of Ch'ang-shu, Kiangsu, Mao's fellow native and teacher. Divided into six parts (*chi*), this anthology selects poems

欽定選擇曆書卷之六

二十四山向洪範五行定局



太歲甲子

幹木枝水  
納音屬金

歲德在甲歲合在巳

開山凶

洪範年尅山家

甲寅辰巽戌坎辛申丑癸坤庚未山

陰府太歲

艮 吳  
天禁朱雀 亥

山家困龍

乾

穿山大羅喉

戌

開山立向凶

浮天空亡

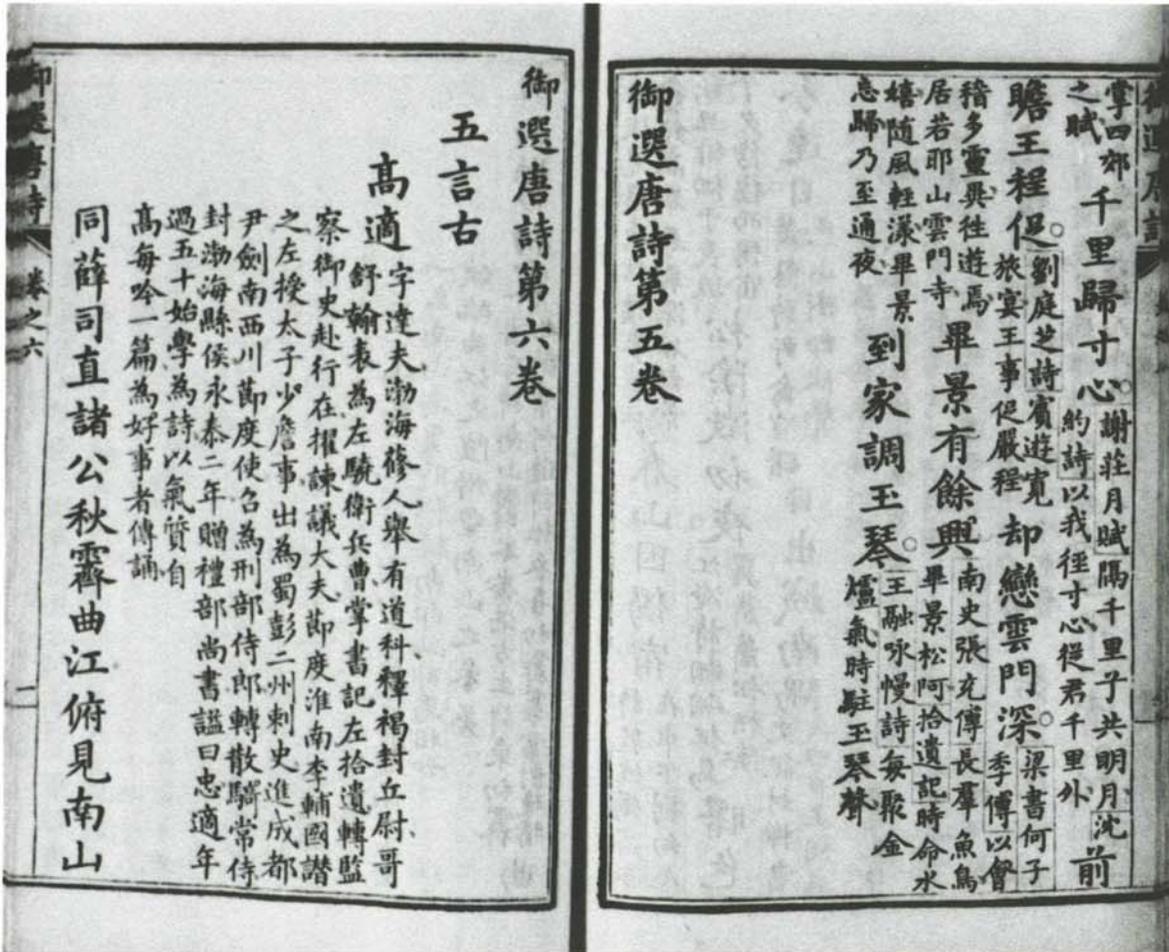
丙 壬

立向凶

巡山羅喉

乙

修方凶



124. Yü-hsüan T'ang-shih. 32 ch. (16 vols.).

Author: Hsüan-yeh (K'ang-hsi emperor) et al.

Date: 1713 (Peking).

Dimensions: 7 cols. of 17 chars. (doubled for small); block, 19 x 12.6 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

< 123. Ch'in-ting hsüan-tse li-shu. 10 ch. (16 vols.).

Author: An-t'ai (fl. 1680s).

Date: 1685 (Peking).

Dimensions: 12 cols. of 30 chars.; block, 27 x 17 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

御選唐詩第五卷

掌四郊 千里歸寸心 謝莊月賦 隔千里子共明月沈前  
 之賦 約詩以我徑寸心從君千里外  
 瞻王程促 劉庭芝詩 賓遊寬 却戀雲門深 梁書何子  
 旅宴王事促 嚴程 南史張允傳 長羣魚鳥  
 積多靈異 往遊馬 畢景有餘興 畢景松阿拾遺記 時命水  
 居若耶山雲門寺 王融咏慢詩 每聚金  
 嬉隨風輕漾 畢景 到家調玉琴 王融咏慢詩 每聚金  
 忘歸乃至通夜 爐氣時駐玉琴聲

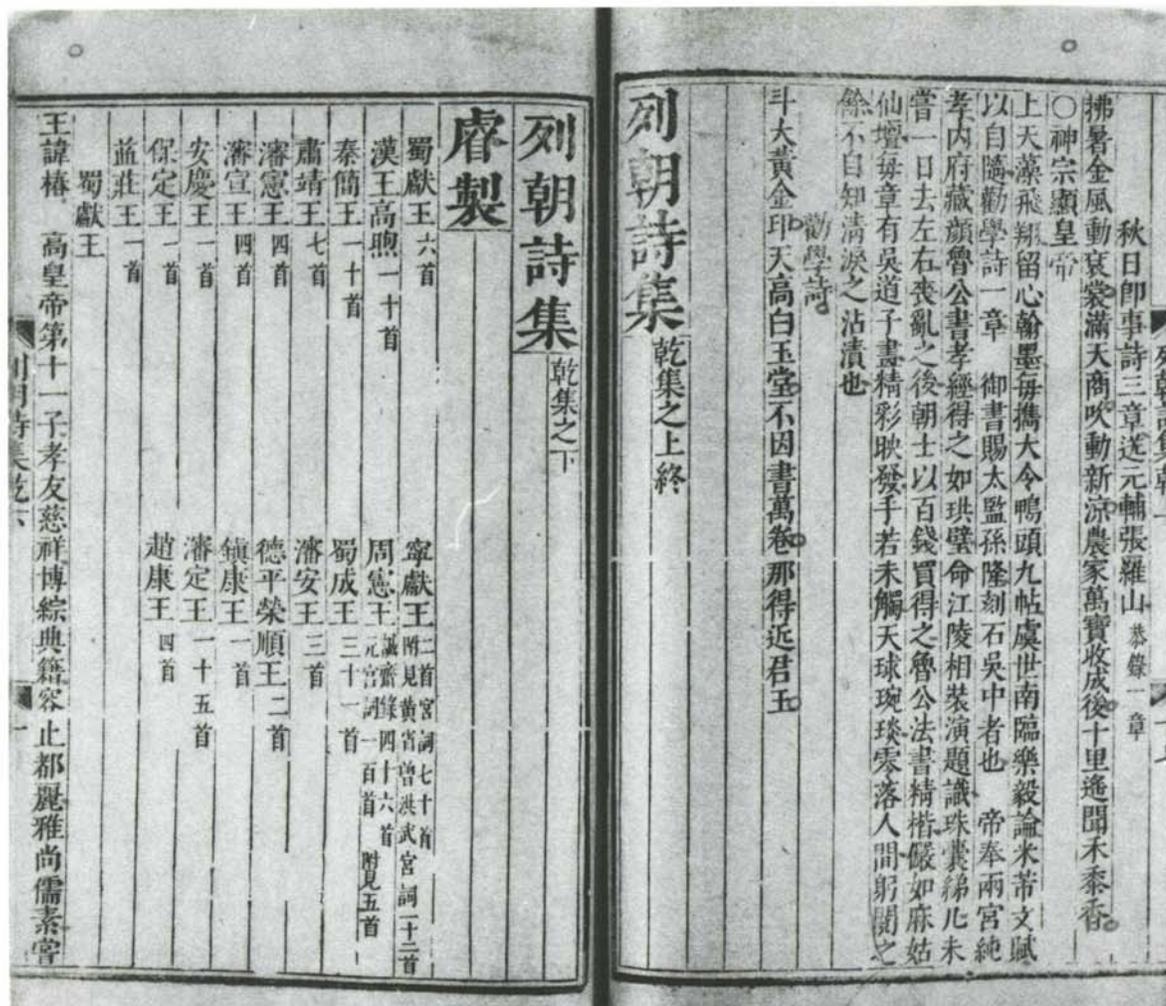
御選唐詩第六卷

五言古

高適 字達夫 渤海蓨人 舉有道科 釋褐封立尉 哥  
 舒 翰 表為左驍衛兵曹 掌書記 左拾遺 轉監  
 察御史 赴行在 擢諫議大夫 節度淮南 李輔國 譖  
 之 授太子少詹事 出為蜀 彭 二州刺史 進成都  
 尹 劍南 西川 節度使 召為刑部侍郎 轉散騎常侍  
 封渤海縣侯 永泰二年 贈禮部尚書 謚曰忠 適年  
 過五十 始學為詩 以氣質自  
 高 每吟一篇 為好事者傳誦  
 同薛司直諸公秋霽曲江俯見南山

by writers of different political and social statuses, of different religious persuasions, and of both sexes — emperors and princes, officials and scholars, Buddhist monks and Taoist priests, soldiers and courtesans.

The copy here begins with a general table of contents; Ch'ien's preface to the work is missing. The title page has two lines, one on each side: "Chiang-yün lou hsüan" (Selected by Chiang-yün lou) and "pen-fu ts'ang pan" (blocks held by [stored at] this [venerable] household). Chiang-yün lou was the name of Ch'ien's studio. That Ch'ien himself (or his family) owned the blocks indicates that he paid



125. *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi*. 81 ch. (56 vols.).

Author: Ch'ien Ch'ien-i (1582-1664), comp.

Date: 1654 (Ch'ang-shu, Kiangsu).

Dimensions: 15 cols. of 28 chars.; block, 20 x 13.3 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

the cutting and printing costs. But Ch'ien's correspondence with Mao Chin, as well as the style of the characters in the book, make it clear that Mao was responsible for the production of the book. Thus it becomes even more remarkable and valuable in terms of the art of printing, because the block style and the variously

列朝詩集

乾集之上終

斗大黃金印天高白玉堂不因書萬卷那得近君王

勸學詩

拂暑金風動袞裳滿天商吹動新涼農家萬寶收成後十里遙聞木杵香  
 ○神宗顯皇帝  
 上天藻飛翔留心翰墨每攜大令鴨頭九帖虞世南臨樂毅論米芾文賦  
 以自隨勸學詩一章 御書賜太監孫隆刻石吳中者也 帝奉兩宮純  
 孝內府藏顏魯公書孝經得之如珙璧命江陵相裝演題識珠囊綈几未  
 嘗一日去左右喪亂之後朝士以百錢買得之魯公法書精楷儼如麻姑  
 仙壇每章有吳道子畫精彩映發手若未觸天球瓊琰零落人間窮閨之  
 餘不自知清淚之沾漬也

sized and positioned characters, in particular, are as distinctive as they are peculiar (no. 125). These characteristics of the present work are quite different from books bearing Mao's studio name, Chi-ku ko, many of which were printed by Mao in the 1640s; he was a creative and flexible printer. Ch'ien's works were officially banned or ordered destroyed following his posthumous denunciation by the Ch'ien-lung emperor in the 1760s. Extant copies of this anthology in its original printing are thus quite rare.

An annotated anthology of Kao Ch'i's

literary works exemplifies the fine qualities of "family printing." It was printed in 1728 and has one *chüan* of front matter, including prefaces, comments, a portrait, and a *nien-p'u* of Kao; nineteen *chüan* (including one supplementary) of poetry; one *chüan* of lyrics based on Sung and Yüan models; one *chüan* of postfaces, colophons, and miscellaneous writings about Kao; and five *chüan* of essays. The annotation was done by Chin T'an of T'ung-hsiang, Chekiang, who was also the editor and printer.<sup>13</sup>

Kao Ch'i, a native of Ch'ang-chou, a county near modern Soochow, was a truly talented literatus whose strong feeling and emotions about the turbulent late Yüan through early Ming period were subtly and thoroughly expressed in his poetry. But it was such poetry that brought him a tragic death; he was ordered executed by the founder of the Ming dynasty, who did so probably in order to intimidate potential dissidents. A modern biographer rightly remarks that his "death was a distinct loss to Ming literature," for he indisputably was one of the best Ming poets, a master of style and content. His poetry was published as early as 1403 and has never lacked admirers in China, Korea, and Japan. But it was Chin T'an who, with four years of diligent work, eventually produced this superb annotation.

Chin T'an was noted as a book collector and book printer. His family printing house was called Wen-jui lou, as appears at the lower block "mouth" of the folio illustrated (no. 126, showing at the extreme lower left), and it was responsible for printing the work. As can be seen from the illustration, Chin proofread the text with the aid of his nephew and his son. The block format, the calligraphy, the cutting and the printing, not to men-

tion the paper and ink, are all excellent. The book must be regarded as among the best examples of the "family printing" (*chia-k'o*) tradition in early Ch'ing times. In fact, it is selected in the *Chung-kuo pan-k'o t'u-lu*. The Gest copy has once been owned by the famous late Ch'ing official and scholar-bibliophile Mo Yuchih (1811-1871) of Tu-shan, Kweichow, whose six-character seal appears immediately after the title line of the book on the right of the illustrated page (no. 126). In his own catalogue Mo also remarks that of the editions of Kao Ch'i's works the one "published by Wen-jui lou is the finest."

A huge collection of classical prose entitled *Ku-wen mei-ch'üan* was cut and printed by the San-wu shu-yüan, a semi-government academy in Soochow. The editor and commentator was P'u Ch'itung of Chin-kuei, Kiangsu, a famous early Ch'ing scholar, literary critic, and celebrated annotator of the poet Tu Fu and the historiographer Liu Chih-chi, both of the T'ang era. The work was printed probably at the time when P'u was head of the prefectural school of Soochow.<sup>14</sup>

This collection includes excerpts from the Tso, Kung-yang, and Ku-liang commentaries to the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, from the *Songs of Ch'u*, the *Records of the Historian*, and others. It contains some 800 passages classified into 27 sections. Two famous scholar-officials, Ch'en Hung-mou (Jung-men) of Kweilin, Kwangsi and Wu Ta-shou (Mu-yüan) of Kuei-an, Chekiang, are named as "connoisseurs" of the book, indicating their approval of the collection's content. Two staff members of the academy are named as co-editors (see no. 127a). The persons responsible for the proofreading and printing of the book were P'u's brother, Ch'i-lin, and his student, Chang Yü-ku

青邱高季迪先生詩集卷一



桐鄉金檀星軺輯注

姪成鼎梅均

男宏熹開霞

全校

樂府

上之回

古今樂錄漢鼓吹鏡歌十八曲四日上之回樂府正聲漢短箫鏡歌曲漢書武帝紀元封四年冬十月行幸雍祠五時通回中

道遂北出蕭關歷獨鹿鳴澤自代而還幸河東師古注回中在安定北通蕭關吳兢樂府解題漢武通回中道後數出游幸焉沈建廣題漢曲

皆美當時之事

聖主重行幸

蔡邕獨斷天子車駕所至見令長三老官屬親臨軒作樂賜以食帛民爵有級或賜田租故謂之幸

六刺法乾旋

續漢書天子五輅駕六馬揚雄甘泉賦四蒼螭兮六素虬

北巡初避暑

王僧孺詩迴鑾避暑宮錢謙益列朝詩集元世每年孟夏駕幸灤京避暑七月

乃還北巡初避暑紀元事也

東祠已祈年

禮記月令天子乃祈來年于天宗

羣官從清塵

班固東都賦雨師汎灑風

青邱詩集卷一 樂府

文瑞樓

126. Ch'ing-ch'iu Kao Chi-ti hsien-sheng shih-chi. 27 ch. (10 vols.).

Author: Kao Ch'i (1336-1374); Chin T'an (fl. 1700-1730), annot.

Date: 1728 (T'ung-hsiang, Chekiang).

Dimensions: 11 cols. of 22 chars.; block, 17.8 x 14.5 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.



127a-b. *Ku-wen mei-ch'üan*. 79 ch. (32 vols.).

Author: P'u Ch'i-lung (1679-1761+).

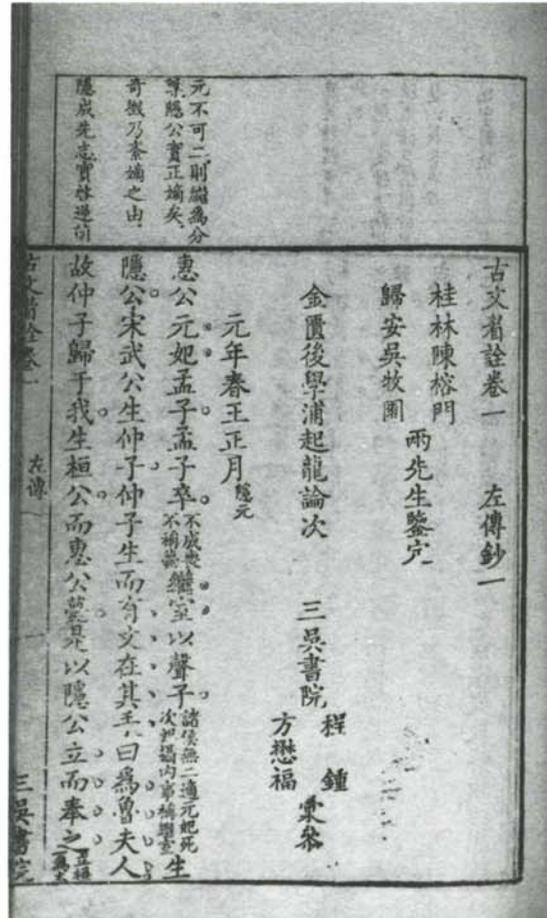
Date: 1741 (Soochow).

Dimensions: 9 cols. of 22 chars.; block, 17.8 + 4.2 x 13.3 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

(no. 127b, last column). The preface to the book states that it took three years for the book to be published.

As an example of "academy printing" and of a kind of textbook for literary appreciation, this anthology is remarkable both in the art of printing and in the meticulousness of its commentary. The engraving of the academy's name at the center bottom of each block (showing at



127a.

lower outside corners of folios) and the names of printers at the end of each *chüan* both demonstrate responsibility and pride. The small characters in the text are annotations and collations. P'u's commentaries appear both on top of the folios and at the end of the passages. Other conventions of commentary, in the forms of circles, and solid and hollow dots, are also engraved, to make pleasant and appreciative reading.

One of the most famous Ch'ing facsimile reproductions of Sung printing is an edition of the important early anthology of Chinese literature compiled by the sixth-century Prince Chao-ming (and authoritatively annotated by Li Shan of the

T'ang dynasty). The sponsor of this reprint of the *Wen-hsüan*<sup>15</sup> was Hu K'o-chia (1757-1816) of P'o-yang, Kiangsi. The book was cut and printed in Nanking when Hu was there as provincial administration commissioner of Chiang-nan. At the end of the table of contents the names of three Liu brothers were engraved, listing them as cutters of the blocks.

Except where taboo characters of Ch'ing times occurred — such as the second of the small characters on the ninth line of the illustrated page (no. 128) — the block and the characters, both in size and in style, are modeled faithfully on the 1181 (Southern Sung) edition published by the government printer of Ch'ih-yang. This faithfulness appears especially remarkable when the style of characters is considered: the Sung version of Yen Chen-ch'ing's calligraphy style gets transmitted intact. The importance of this edition is reinforced by a scholarly factor. Although essentially a facsimile, it benefited tremendously from the collation done by two eminent scholars of the day, Ku Kuang-ch'i (1776-1835) from Wu-hsien and P'eng Chao-sun (1769-1821) from Chen-yang, Kiangsu. Hu K'o-chia himself appears to have also contributed to the collation. The three seals on the illustrated page, occupying the space of the first two lines, are, in order, those of Hu, Ku, and P'eng. Such faithful tracings and meticulous collation, plus the fine quality of ink and paper earned this edition great fame; the *cognoscenti* refer to it as the "Hu k'o [the Hu edition of] *Wen-hsüan*." Like Chin T'an's edition of Kao Ch'i's anthology (no. 126), this edition is also selected in the *Chung-kuo pan-k'o t'u-lu* as representing the best Chinese block printing. As a matter of fact, it was used as the basis for yet another facsimile reproduction, by the

Ch'ung-wen shu-chü in Peking in 1869.

Our final example is a "handkerchief" edition, typified by small characters printed from small blocks. The book, an annotated version of the poetry of the greatest genius of all, Su Tung-p'o, was produced under the sponsorship and possible supervision of an early Ch'ing scholar-official, Sung Lao (1634-1713), of Shang-ch'iu, Honan.<sup>16</sup> While governor of Kiangsu, Sung purchased an incomplete edition of Su's poems as annotated by the Southern Sung scholar, Shih Yüan-chih. He then invited two famous Kiangsu scholars, Shao Ch'ang-heng (1637-1704) from Wu-chin and Ku Ssu-li (1669-1722) from Ch'ang-chou, as well as his second son Sung Chih (1656-1726), to supplement and re-edit the text. Sung himself also collected Su's missing poems and had Feng Ching (1652-1715) of Hangchow annotate them. In the process of finalizing the text, Sung also had the aid of another noted scholar-calligrapher and Hanlin official, Chang Jung-tuan (1639-1714) from Tz'u-chou, Hopei. Critical scholarship at this level makes the edition of Su's poetry the finest ever published, both in its textual reliability and its annotation. A facsimile edition was printed in Canton in 1883.

The skill of block cutting displayed in this "handkerchief" edition is superb.

> 128. *Wen-hsüan*. 60 ch. (20 vols.).

Author: Hsiao T'ung (501-531); Li Shan (d. 689), annot.

Date: 1809 (Nanking).

Dimensions: 10 cols. of 21 chars.; block 21.1 x 13.3 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

文選卷第一

梁昭明太子撰



文林郎李右率府錄事參軍事崇賢館直學士李善注

賦甲

賦甲者舊題甲乙所以紀卷先後今卷既改故甲乙並除存其首題以明舊式

京都上

班孟堅兩都賦二首

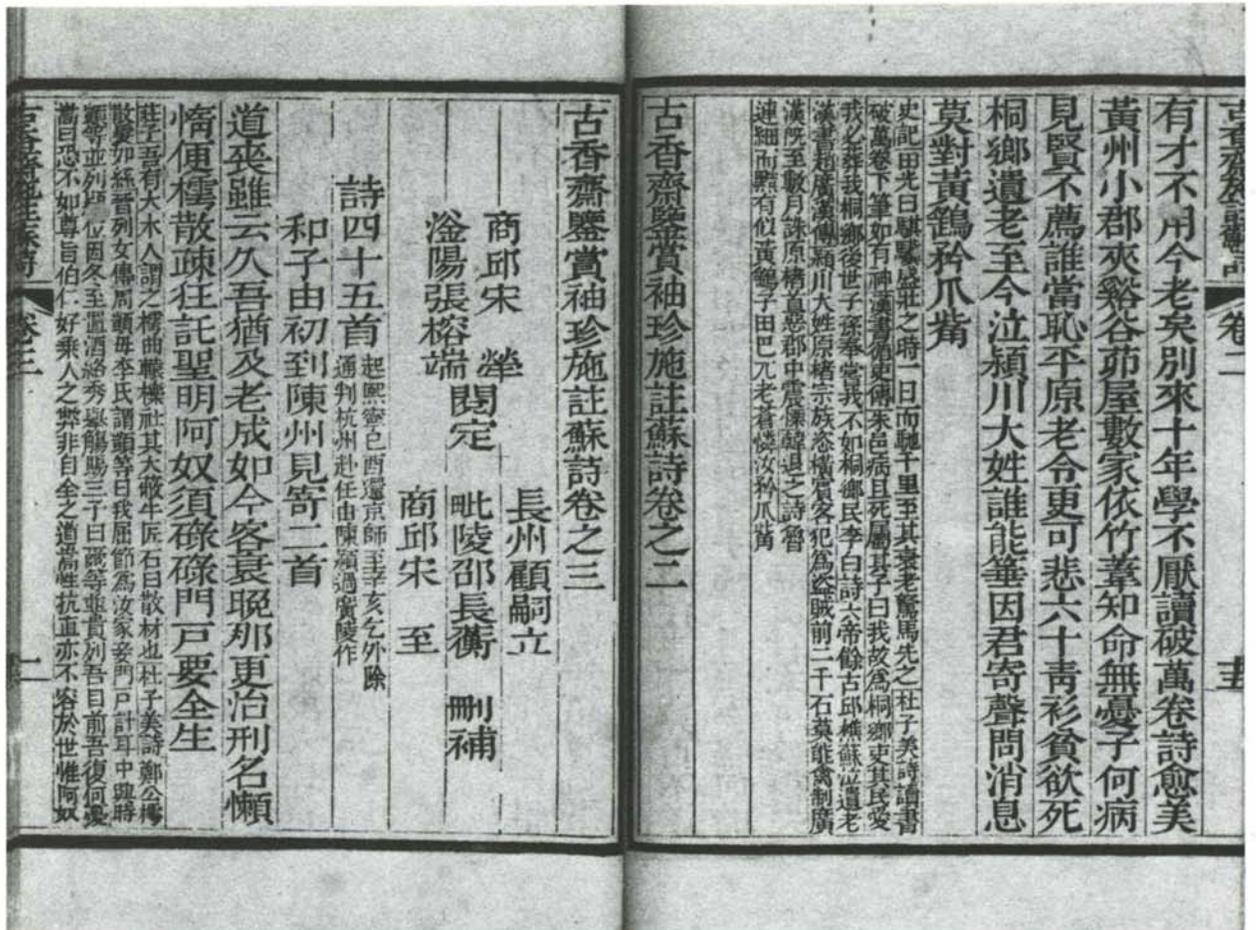
自光武至和帝都洛陽西京父老有怨班固恐帝去

洛陽故上此詞以諫和帝大悅也

兩都賦序

班孟堅

范曄後漢書曰班固字孟堅北地人也年九歲能屬文長遂博貫載籍顯宗時除蘭臺令史遷為郎乃上兩都賦大將軍竇憲出征匈奴以固為中護軍憲敗



129. *Ku-hsiang chai chien-shang hsiu-chen*  
*Shih-chu Su-shih*. 42 + 2 ch. (18 vols.).

Author: Su Shih (1036-1101); Shih Yüan-chih  
(c.s. 1154), annot.

Date: 1700.

Dimensions: 10 cols. of 21 chars. (20 of 31  
small chars.); block, 10.2 x 8 cm.

Collection: Gest Oriental Library.

That even the small characters are so remarkably legible is ample evidence also for the technique of printing and the quality of paper and ink (see no. 129). The ownership of the *Ku-hsiang chai* studio is not clear, although it is ascribed to the "connoisseur" of the book. The K'ang-hsi and Ch'ien-lung emperors each had a

study called by the same name, and a number of books published under their imperial aegis are in "handkerchief" editions.

#### NOTES TO SECTION 6

1. Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, p. 190, note f.
2. SKTY 82, p. 5b; ECCP, p. 791; *Ch'ing-shih lieh-chuan* 26, p. 34a; and Frances Wood, *Chinese Illustration* (London: The British Museum, 1985), p. 43.
3. SKTY 82, p. 5b; ECCP, pp. 411, 815.
4. ECCP, pp. 330, 430; Wood, *Illustration*, p. 42; Tsien, *Paper and Printing*,

- pp. 269, 275; Cary Y. Liu, "Ch'ing Jih-ho Pi-shu-shan-chuang ti she-chi kuan-nien," *I-shu shih chi-k'an* (forthcoming); and Wang Yün-wu et al., comps., *Hsü Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu tsung-mu t'i-yao* (Taipei: T'ai-wan Shang-wu, 1972), *shih-pu*, p. 989.
5. Twitchett, *Printing and Publishing*, pp. 80, 84; *ECCP*, pp. 93-95; Wood, *Illustration*, p. 40; and Edgren, *American Collections*, pp. 122-23.
  6. Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, pp. 319-31; and Soowon Kim, review of Sohn Pow-key, *Early Korean Typography, The Gest Library Journal* 1.1 (Winter 1986), pp. 58-61.
  7. Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, pp. 350-52.
  8. *SKTY* 1, p. 4a; Twitchett, *Printing and Publishing*, pp. 82-83; and Edgren, *American Collections*, pp. 124-25.
  9. *ECCP*, p. 685; and *Ch'ing-shih lieh-chuan*, 34, p. 1a.
  10. Fu, *Ching-yen lu*, p. 601.
  11. *Ch'ing-shih lieh-chuan*, 71, p. 26a.
  12. Ch'ü, *Gest Catalogue*, pp. 565, 570; *ECCP*, pp. 148-50; P'an and Ku, *Ming-tai pan-k'o*, pp. 410-12; and Chu Hung-lin, "Ch'ien Ch'ien-i Kuo-ch'u ch'ün-hsiung shih-lüeh tsuan-tso ching-kuo yü ch'eng-shu nien-tai t'ui-k'ao," *Bulletin of Ming-Qing Studies* 1 (1985), pp. 77-103.
  13. *DMB*, pp. 196-99; *SKTY* 169, pp. 8b-9a; and Mo Sheng-sun, ed., *Lü-t'ing chih-chien ch'uan-pen shu-mu* (rpt. Taipei: Wen-hai, 1984) 15, p. 3a; and *Chung-kuo pan-k'o*, p. 85.
  14. *ECCP*, p. 345.
  15. *ECCP*, pp. 417, 551; and *Chung-kuo pan-k'o*, p. 90.
  16. *ECCP*, pp. 549, 689; and Hsü Shih-ch'ang, *Ta Ch'ing chi-fu hsien-che chuan* (rpt. Taipei: Ta-t'ung shu-chü, 1968) 19, p. 23b.